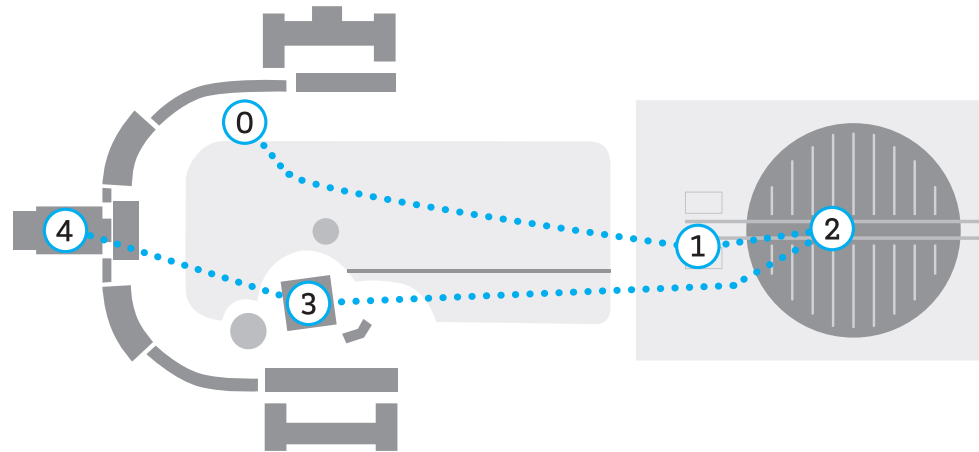


Route stations

- ① > Starting from the Crib
- ② > Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament
- ③ > Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity
- ④ > Chapel of Apparitions
- ⑤ > Tombs of the Seers
(Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary)



0

INTRODUCTION

Starting from the Crib

I start my path in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The apparition of the Lady of the Rosary in August is marked by the Virgin's admonition to the children and, with them and through them, to all believers: «Pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners; for many souls go to hell, because there are none to sacrifice themselves and to pray for them».

Already in previous year, the Angel had invited them to a life of prayer and sacrifice. In this exhortation, often stressed in Fatima, and made perceptible in the lives of the three little shepherds, we can catch a glimpse of the evangelical call to holiness: «You shall be holy, for I am holy» (1 Peter 1:16). By *prayer*, as adoration of God who is a trinitarian communion of Love, we are converted to our truth and are fed in the relationship with the God who sanctifies us; it is a relationship that, compassionately, has openings to the brothers; by *sacrifice*, we adopt an Eucharistic life according to the way of Christ, a life for others, marked by the gift of ourselves to God in favor of brothers.

In the inner path of my pilgrimage to Fatima, I welcome this exhortation of the Lady of the Rosary to prayer and sacrifice, to adoration and compassion, to a God-centered life that will lead me to the service of others. Walking the precinct of the Sanctuary, I place myself before God, the all Holy One, who invites me to holiness through the gift of his Son, Jesus.

1

ADORATION: «PRAY, PRAY VERY MUCH...»

Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament

The Fatima-event begins with an invitation to adoration before the God of mercy, just the attitude which matures and deepens the relationship between God and Man. The pressing call to prayer in Fatima recalls the Pauline intuition that prayer is the field in which the Spirit bears fruit in the believer's life: «Rejoice always. Pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit» (1 Thess 5:16-19). This core attitude permeates the life of the three children of Fatima, makes God its center, brings it into harmony with the holy God.

In the presence of the *Hidden Jesus*, in intimate relationship with the Eucharistic Sacrament, I lay my life before God, internalizing the prayer taught by the Angel of Fatima:

«My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You. I ask pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You!»

*I can prolong this moment, going into the **Chapel of Reconciliation**, if I truly feel this call. In God's light, that streamed from the hands of the Lady of the Rosary, the little shepherds saw themselves "more clearly than we see ourselves in the best of mirrors". The adoration of God brings me back to my truth, and reminds me that the holiness to which I am called to, is fidelity to this same truth; the Sacrament of Reconciliation may be an appropriate occasion to receive it.*

2

CONVOCATION: «YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY» (1 PETER 1:16)

Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity

On August 13, 1917, the little shepherds lived the troubles and trials of their arrest in Ourém with a prayerful and sacrificial spirit, offering all their life to God in behalf of others. God-centered, they mainly regret their missing the meeting promised to the Lady - «if we never see our mother again, let's be patient! The worst thing would be, if Our Lady never came back again!» In the light of this core attitude of being in the presence of God, every sacrifice is offered in behalf of all people who live away from the love of God. Sanctified by the presence of God, the little shepherds are eagerly desirous of converting the world to the all Holy One, joining their sacrifice to the sanctifying sacrifice of His Son.

In this basilica, which evokes the light of the Holy God, I do express my willingness to live a holy life, in an Eucharistic way, to become an instrument of this light, repeating together with the children of Fatima:

«Yes, I want to offer myself to God, to bear all the sufferings He wills to send me, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners».

I can prolong this moment, contemplating, on the panel of the high altar of the Basilica of the most Holy Trinity, the Heavenly Jerusalem, to which, as sanctified in Christ, I am called and invited. The community of those who accept to be washed in the blood of the Lamb is the horizon to which I am summoned, and it already feeds my hope and my engagement in Church and world. In this moment, I name the concrete commitment I feel called to in the Church.

3

COMPASSION: «... AND MAKE SACRIFICES FOR SINNERS»

Chapel of Apparitions

The appeal of Fatima is a call for compassion for all who are «like sheep without a shepherd» (Mark 6:34). It's an invitation to self-giving, to sacrifice for others, to the offer that completes in my flesh that which is lacking of Christ's afflictions (Col 1:24). It is an invitation to a life in the style of Jesus, giving myself unconditionally (Jn 19:30). Making sacrifices for sinners is to make oneself an instrument of the divine compassion and mercy.

Before the Lady of the Rosary, I consecrate my life to the God of mercy:

«O Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary».

I can prolong this moment, praying the rosary or some of its mysteries. The Lady of the Rosary unceasingly asked the little shepherds to recite this prayer measured by Mary's attitude of keeping all the surprises of Christ's life, «pondering

them in her heart" (Lk 2:19). When I meditate in the life of Christ, in each mystery, I am reminded of His sacrifice, in virtue of which I am sanctified, as I allow myself to be conformed to His life. At this moment, my prayer becomes a commitment for others.

4

CONCLUSION

*Tombs of the seers
(Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary)*

The call to holiness, with which we are challenged by the Gospel, and which Fatima causes us to remember, is the vocation that comes to us all. In the message of the Lady of the Rosary, this appeal is described with two basic attitudes: the God-centeredness in my life, through prayer, and the offering of my life in behalf of others, especially those most in need, through sacrifice. It's the way of Jesus Christ.

I go on and take the last steps of my pilgrimage, visiting the tombs of the seers, who assented to being transformed by the light of God, and now are "candles that He lit" with the splendor of holiness. In a short prayer, I commit myself to these two fundamental attitudes I'm invited to by the Holy Virgin - prayer and sacrifice -, and through the intercession of Blessed Francisco and Jacinta I implore the grace to be faithful to my commitment.

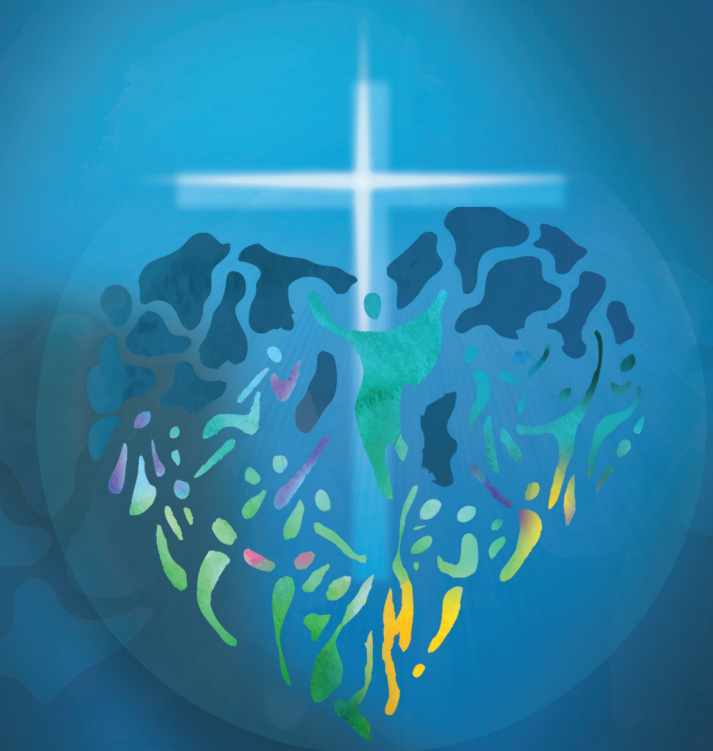
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, pray for us.
Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto, pray for us.*

I bring to an end this journey with the sign of the cross.

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