



DAILY STEPS

#pilgrimbytheheart



SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA



7.

With the comfort
of the grace of God

This May, Fatima challenges you to go on a more essential pilgrimage: an inner path that may take you far away within yourself, towards the shrine in your innermost where God is present for you. Making yourself a pilgrim by the heart is trying to live inwardly what the pilgrimage experience causes and fulfils. Fatima is calling you. Despite not being able to come to the Shrine this May, come with us on this inner pilgrimage, day by day. And place a lit candle by your window every night.

Recalling Lucia's account of the May apparition, we shall find out how much God respects the freedom of man and which is the way He chooses to reveal Himself. Today, facing the mystery of the sufferings, you are called to open yourself to the grace of God.

This May, Fatima invites you to be a Pilgrim by the heart. Open yourself to the grace of God.

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.

On the seventh day of this pilgrimage by the heart, this peculiar May you are invited to acknowledge the grace of God which acts in your innermost, comforts you.

Today, you must therefore engage in a more intensive struggle in order to reach the inner silence that you are called to every day of this pilgrimage by the heart, because the inner labour of grace is silent, delicate and subtle, even diaphanous, and only in the silence you may listen to its transparency and understand its presence and action.

Struggle within yourself for silence. That is the truth: it is necessary that you struggle within yourself to reach the inner silence. Because the secret murmur of grace, which is promised as comfort to those who suffer, lays beyond the confusing noise of the many screams emerging in your innermost self, or which converge, coming from the outside, in your innermost self. These are the screams of the growing roots of your suffering, of your sufferings, which cross and mix, perhaps stridently. What makes you suffer?

Yesterday, led by the beautiful and paradoxal words of the Lady from Heaven, we have dared to come close to the threshold of the mystery of

the suffering. Today, warned about the inevitability of suffering, but trustful in the promise proclaimed by the mouth of the woman who drank the words of Her crucified Son, do you want to utter the names of your sufferings, name before yourself and before God, in silence illuminated by the diaphanous inner labour of grace, the sufferings which your suffering is made of?

Today the stride is also larger, just like yesterday, because today is Sunday and time is longer and slower in the Lord's Day - were it not the closest day to what is bound to be eternity, of the Lord entirely. Sunday is the great day of grace, the weekly day of Easter, so that, drinking in it the grace which comes from the Resurrection of Christ, each day of the week is moved by Paschal grace. Today, we shall continue furthermore in the dialogue of May's apparition, until the warning and the promise made by the Lady to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, after their quick answer to the question She had asked them, a trustful answer, with the confidence of children - the only ones able for the kingdom of God, says the Lord - who give themselves even before they know what they are giving themselves to.

Listen to Lucia's Memoirs once again:



Our Lady asked:

- Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?

- Yes, we are willing.

- Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort.»

The resolute answer which they gave to the invitation to partake in redemption was for the little shepherds a source of many sufferings, just like the Lady had warned them. They suffered because of the mission which they willingly assumed, they have faced incomprehension from their family and their village, they were accused of lying, persecuted, arrested and threatened with death; and Lucia, who even feared the apparitions were from the devil, was later left without anything and anybody, when she was hidden, exiled in Porto, without even the right to her own name. And the two little brothers Marto in special suffered serious health

problems: a pandemic like the one making us suffer today, the Spanish flu, claimed the life of Francisco in 1919 and of Jacinta in 1920 – we are on the centenary of her death. But they were not discouraged, because the grace of God was always their comfort. They trusted. «[The grace of God will be your comfort](#)».

Listen to an excerpt of the account of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in the Gospel of John| 4,5-7.9-18.28-29:



⁵So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon. ⁷A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink". ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans). ¹⁰Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." ¹¹[The woman] said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the well is deep; where then can you get this living water ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" ¹³Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. ¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water". ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back". ¹⁷The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband". Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband, ¹⁸For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true". ²⁸The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people: ²⁹"Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?"»

You have heard the words of Jesus - a tired and thirsty man because of the heat and the effort of the path, just like you so many times -, who asks for water to a woman with a history of intense suffering, perhaps just like you; a history of misunderstandings, given meaning in the five men to whom she had belonged to and the current one was not even her own. Jesus offers her the experience of being looked at from within, a merciful look which faced her mercifully from within her own wounds, her sorrows and her faults; he promises her the grace, which will give her much more than the end of her thirsts and the weariness of having to go to the nearest well. «[The grace of God will be your comfort](#)».

Grace springs out from a source in the deepest of you, and a river flows and grows from that source, an inner river of fresh and transparent water, profoundly concealed, but in it, surprisingly, the sky and sunlight are reflected along the day, and the Moon and the stars along the night. Yes, that fountain springs out uninterruptedly, that inner river of grace never stops, unless you stop it, sometimes not even if you stop it, or try to stop it, because the source is within you, becomes indistinct from you, the person that you are, but it is not you. The source is God Himself, the Holy Spirit, a gift from the Father and the Son, called the Spirit of truth and also Paraclete, that is to say, the one who comes to our aid, which encourages, vivifies and sustains, which inhabits the concealed secret in your innermost. «[The grace of God will be your comfort](#)».

Pilgrim by the heart, remain in the silence; and remain in it to listen to that water spring up and flow, the grace of God which the Spirit causes to gush forth. Even though you may not feel it, due to lack of practice of silence, your heart misses the source, which is the source of all beauty and all kindness, the fountain of grace that springs up from that source; your heart thirsts for the fecundity of the waters of that clear and hidden river reflecting light. «[The grace of God will be your comfort](#)».

Pilgrim by the heart, remain in the silence to listen to the inner labour of the grace of God within you and reach the gratitude that you will experience when you freely decide to partake in the redemption: offer yourself, in the transformation of your sufferings into the act of love which redeems them and repairs the heart of God and the world. «[The grace of God will be your comfort](#)».

The truth is your heart needs silence as much as it resists being silent. Silence is the nudity of soul and to look at oneself intimately naked allows

to, or better, obliges to see that part which perhaps you prefer to ignore of yourself, your history and the sorrows and faults which mark it. Pilgrim by the heart, look into your suffering, the sufferings of your heart. Would you rather not see? Not know who you really are? Not be aware of what makes you suffer? Are you afraid of suffering even more by looking at what makes you suffer? «The grace of God will be your comfort».

How to heal the wounds which hurt and may infect if you don't know them? How to model the future if you don't put your hands in the fragile and moist clay from the past? «The grace of God will be your comfort».

The labour of forgiveness is among us all necessary, because it is an indispensable condition for happiness; how to endeavour the inner labour of forgiveness, asking for forgiveness and offering forgiveness to someone close or even to yourself and, of course, to God, without dwelling silently before the sorrows and faults of your history, with bare heart and hands and barefoot, because the intimate territory of your conscience is sacred? «The grace of God will be your comfort».

Silence reveals yourself to your own eyes, gives you self-awareness, makes you recognise and know your individuality; you are unique... and that can make you stand alone, facing your loneliness, sometimes a tremendous loneliness, which hurts, which you are afraid of because you feel it as a threat, which overcomes your strength and makes you feel fragile and vulnerable, without having where to rest or someone to rest on, find solace and comfort. It is as if you have found yourself to be an indigent, hurt and lonely. «The grace of God will be your comfort».

And yet, you are much more beautiful than what you dare to believe! Immensely more beautiful, and kind, worthy of being loved. You may find it if you go through the silence beyond your wounds and reach the source of grace, which makes you able to look at them, the sorrows and faults, unifying by the heart's prayer your inside look and the look of the only One who looks at your wounds from the inside of them, like Jesus with the Samaritan woman – the look of God Himself -, with His immense and profound look, all peace, all light, the light and peace of the infinite mercy that He is and speaks to you - such is grace – when you endeavour this inner labour, using, as the poet would say, the testing instrument of silence. «The grace of God will be your comfort».



My God, You inhabit the innermost of my heart
and You call me to open this closed May, to become a pilgrim by
the heart

and to meet You there.

The sufferings of my heart are so many!

Loneliness and incomprehension, anguishes and fears, losses
and faults, resentments.

There is so much that makes me doubt myself, the others
around me, even You.

But I listen to the promise you made, through the mouth of the
Lady of Fatima, also Lady of Sorrows,

to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, who had a great deal of
suffering awaiting them:

«The grace of God will be your comfort».

You, O Holy Spirit, you are the source of grace in the deepest of
me,

The fountain springing up in my innermost to the eternal life, a
river flowing throughout my days.

I shall trust. You support and comfort me, You will always relieve
me, You will vivify me

and welcome me at the river mouth, at the end of the journey,
when struggling ceases.

I am a pilgrim by the heart, I trust Your grace, which comforts
me.

I want to go on a pilgrimage by the heart

into Your mother's heart, mother of mine, Our Lady of the
Rosary of Fatima.

In Her heart, You will be waiting for my heart

and this May, away from the Little Chapel,

I make myself a pilgrim by the heart: I shall follow my heart

and in Mother's immaculate heart I shall listen to the merciful
beating of Your heart. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are you
among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at
the hour of our death. Amen.

Mother of Heaven, be attentive to the supplications of a world facing tribulation. Answer the cry of the poor and the sick, give comfort and hope to all those who suffer, give strength and compassion to all those who care for and work. Bring peace to the world. In your immaculate heart, be for all your children a refuge and a way to God.

Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, pray for us.

Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, pray for us.

Place a lit candle again in your window tonight, let it be a sign that in your home lives a pilgrim of Fatima by the heart. Our Lady watches over you along the way. She reflects the grace and, as a mother, She comforts you. See you tomorrow.