

1

HIGH CROSS



I begin my journey
in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

I stand beside the High Cross, the distinctive mark of this place in the Cova da Iria where the mother of Jesus appeared pointing to Christ—the way, the truth and the life. I am touched by the starkness of its features and the hardness of the steel. Its minimal appearance and colossal scale speak to me of the radicalness of God’s love. The Cross shines forth as the place where God receives, from its root, all human weakness and suffering and, in his infinite love, redeems and saves them. There is no suffering to which God is indifferent. He makes his dwelling there to raise us up from within and to give us his new life.

I look at the Crucified One and from him I look at the Shrine and the silence.

I bring to memory and to the prayer my story, my weakness and my wounds and the story of the suffering of so many people, of all humanity.

Here, next to the cross, I feel Jesus’ embrace. He offers me to the heart of his mother, as a companion and help to find peace. I hear addressed to me the words that Mary said to Lucia at a moment of suffering, here in the Cova da Iria:

*Are you suffering a great deal? Don't lose heart.
I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge
and the way that will lead you to God.*

I open myself to this gift. And, with trust, I prepare myself to follow the path that Jesus points out to me.



ISANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA



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PILGRIM'S ITINERARY SHRINE

2020-2023

LIKE MARY, CARRIERS OF JOY AND LOVE

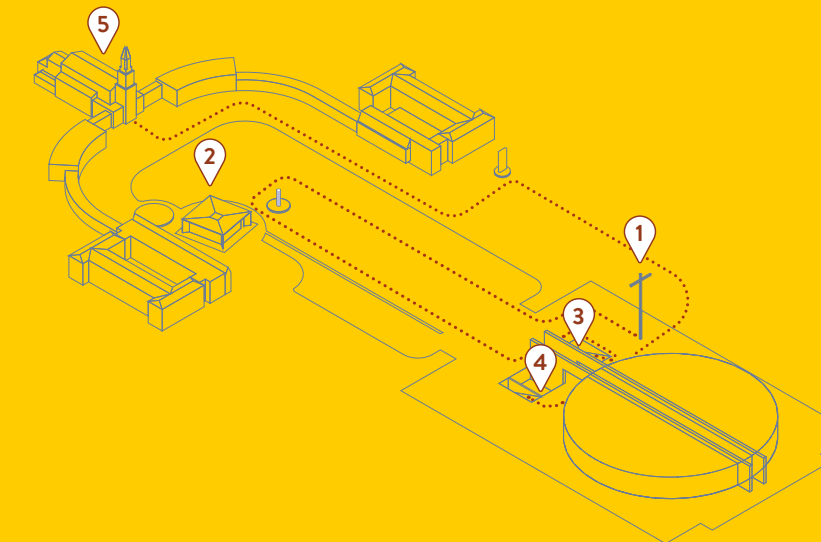


PILGRIM'S
ITINERARY
SHRINE
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PILGRIM'S ITINERARY 2020-2023

ROUTE STATIONS

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2

LITTLE CHAPEL OF THE APPARITIONS



I am silent as I enter this place, the “heart” of the Shrine.

The pedestal where the statue of Our Lady is located marks the place where, on 13 May 1917, Mary appeared on a small holm oak tree. I contemplate Mary’s gaze and I see myself looked at. In her tenderness and purity radiates the love of God, who wants to pour out his grace and mercy on me, on everyone and on everything. I listen inwardly to Mary’s invitation to adhere to and commit myself to this love: “Do you wish to offer yourselves to God...?”

Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta said “Yes, we do” and saw themselves in God, in the light of his infinite love with which Our Lady enveloped them.

Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort. As she pronounced these last words, Our Lady opened her hands for the first time, communicating to us a light so intense that, its rays penetrated our hearts and the innermost depths of our souls, making us see ourselves in God.

This light remains a gift which shines for me today and which God offers to those who are willing to welcome him by the total offering of themselves. If I wish, I too remain silent and allow this light, reflected from the hands and the pure and transparent heart of Mary, to penetrate, envelop and strengthen me, as it did the Little Shepherds, and lead me to the same openness and confidence to offer God my “yes”.

If opportune, I pray the Rosary here, as Our Lady asked, as a means to unite myself more closely to God and to foster the way of peace.

3

WATER MIRRORS



I stop for a moment to contemplate the beauty and serenity of the light reflected in the water. These mirrors, especially the one on the right, are an image of my baptismal condition, of my life touched and transformed by God’s grace – a light in which I see myself in God and I see God in myself.

In a brief moment of silence, I ask him to transform me by his love and to complete in me the work that his grace has begun.

If necessary and appropriate, I go to the Chapel of Reconciliation to celebrate the sacrament of forgiveness and allow the recreative power of God’s merciful love to renew my life.

I go on to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

The atrium of this chapel is the usual place of the sculpture “**In the Heart of Mary**”, by Cristina Rocha Leiria. It shows how the Mary’s heart is full of grace, that is, full of God, totally configured to him and filled with his light. Therefore, it is totally white, immaculate, luminous and mirrors the face of every person, my face. The Immaculate Heart of Mary is a sign and stimulus of what God wants and can do in me, in my heart, unifying and liberating it with his grace and mercy.

4

CHAPEL OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



“The hidden Jesus” – as the Little Shepherds called him – is here, exposed to me in the small white host, suspended over the altar. I allow his silent presence to envelop me and to shelter me interiorly. Like Saint Francis, the silent shepherd boy, I contemplate Jesus, and, in profound silence, I enter into friendship with him. With trust, I place myself in his presence, I open my heart to him, my weakness, my wounds, concerns, desires and fears. I listen willingly to what he tells me.

I make myself available to welcome him in my heart and let his light and love strengthen me and lead me to an ever-greater communion with him, to the full and abundant life that he wants to give me.

*O most Holy Trinity, I adore You.
My God, my God, I love You in the most Blessed Sacrament.*

I can formulate a resolution here, as an offering to God, in the desire to live more and more in his presence.

After having been united to God in her heart, after the Annunciation of the Angel, Mary left in haste to bring to others the love that was made flesh in her.

I too leave in the direction of the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima. As I climb the stairs, I stop briefly before the **glass panels** of the facade of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity. Among the words engraved on the glass in twenty-six languages, this expression stands out:

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with you all.
(cf. 2Corinthians 13:13)*

It speaks to me of the universality of God’s grace and mercy, of the brotherhood that he wants to extend to all humanity. I also make this desire of God my own.

On the way to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, on the right-hand side, there is a fragment of the **Berlin Wall**. In front of it, I become aware of how the power of God’s grace and mercy, at work in the depths of his children — in their turn at work in history — is capable of breaking down every wall and healing every wound.

5

BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY OF FATIMA



I enter the Basilica. I go through the itinerary that is suggested to me inside the Basilica.

When I arrive at the tombs of St. Jacinta and Lucia de Jesus, I stop for a few minutes. I meditate briefly on how each one of them, with their lives and in different ways, fulfilled the mandate of Jesus to bring the Heaven of God to the world, collaborating in the establishment of universal brotherhood.

I can repeat interiorly Jacinta’s words, asking through her intercession the grace of the same desire and the same determination:

If I could only put into the hearts of all, the fire that is burning within my own heart, and that makes me love the Hearts of Jesus and Mary so very much. Yes, I am [suffering]. But I offer everything for sinners. I want to do the same as Our Lord.

I can pray inwardly with Lucia of Jesus, with her own words:

Here is my way, deny myself, embrace the Cross which the Lord has given me, for love of Him and of my neighbour for his sake. Because it is love that purifies us, dignifies us and unites us with God. St John tells us that God is love; hence only love can cause us to plunge into the immense being of God, in order to be one with God. But this love is not content with being happy. It seeks to bring our neighbour, too, to share in that same happiness.

Next to the great Cross of the Basilica is the image of Mary, white and simple. This is the first pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima. She has already travelled the world, taking the light of the Gospel of Christ to the four corners of the earth, and preparing hearts to welcome him in faith, hope and love.

I am invited to pray here a Hail Mary for creation, for humanity, for the Church and for peace.