



# FÁTIMA LUZ E PAZ

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 Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima
 

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 Director: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas
 

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*My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge  
and the way that will lead you to God*

*Jubilee Year of the Centennial  
of the Apparitions*

## The universality of Fatima

The celebration of the Centennial of the Apparitions has revealed the universal feature of Fatima: of its message and its diffusion. This has necessarily a consequence in the Shrine itself, which is visited by pilgrims from all over the world. The consciousness of this dimension of universality led to the creation of this informative bulletin "Fatima, Light and Peace", as an interface with the devotees of Our Lady of Fatima spread around the world.

First of all, it is the message of Fatima itself that has a universal value: it is a message addressed to all and a message that invites all of us to give God the place that is only due to Him in the life of each one. The values of the message, as the peace, are universal. Its widespread diffusion was reached due to the perception of the importance and topicality of this message that also explain its wide acceptance.

The means for this diffusion were diversified, but I would like to emphasize, first of all, the importance of the trips of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which, since 1947, has been travelling throughout the whole world. These Marian pilgrimages were and still are today an excellent way of spreading the message of Fatima. The Portuguese diaspora played also a significant part in the diffusion of Fatima all over the world. The visits of the highest dignitaries of the Church had contributed as well to the transformation of Fatima into a world scale Shrine: bishops, cardinals and, above all, the Popes themselves, who, on six occasions, made pilgrimage to the Shrine of Cova da Iria.

Fatima is present all over the world. In all the continents, shrines, churches, oratories or simple altars dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima multiply themselves. Institutes of consecrated life, confraternities, associations and movements, inspired by the message of Fatima, were founded, some of which have a truly international dimension.

There is no other moment in the centennial history of Fatima where it is so clearly understood the meaning of the designation of this Marian shrine as "Altar of the World".

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

## Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima travels to South Korea for a two months visit

***The statue will run 12 dioceses and will be accompanied by the World Apostolate of Fatima in Korea***

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima is traveling next August to South Korea for an unprecedented two months visit, and will run across the 12 dioceses of the country

The initiative, a joint organization between the Catholic Church and the World Apostolate of Fatima in this country of the Korean peninsula, will be held between August 22nd and October 13th.

«The Korean peninsula needs the intercession and maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mother of God. The Korean Republic has been a devoted country to Our Lady since 1841, when the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Immaculate Conception became patroness of this part of the globe, stated those who are responsible for the organization of the pilgrimage, in a letter sent to the Shrine of Fatima justifying the request».

South Koreans also believe in the «power of the Virgin's intercession» in the process of independence, underlining that «it is not a simple coincidence that the 15th of August, Feast of the Assumption, was the day the Korean Republic was freed from the Japanese colonization».

In honour of the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, the World Apostolate of Fatima in Korea planned the visit of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to the country, «hoping for another miracle».

«We believe that Our Lady of Fatima, the most powerful help in the Kingdom of God, will provide true peace to the Korean peninsula and will bring the love of God to the hearts of people with its presence in this difficult moment for the country», the World Apostolate of Fatima in South Korea adds.

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima has already been in Korea twice: the first, in 1978, when the Statue made a world tour and a second when the whole nation was facing problems due to the International Monetary Fund.

«By believing in the Message of Fatima, that Our Lady of the Rosary will bring peace, we hope that the arrival of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady will offer God's powerful presence and Our Lady's maternal care to the country and suffering people» for internal and external political issues, problems and tensions which have been intensified in the last few months since there's a new leadership in the neighbouring North Korea.

The first great celebration with the presence of the Statue will be a Mass and a novena which will occur in the Shrine of Peace of Fatima, located near the border between North and South Korea.

Then, the Statue will run across 12 diocesan divisions of the World Apostolate of Fatima in Korea, moving every three days. Accompanying this pilgrimage there will be permanently a priest, two volunteers and two religious of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The Statue should participate, also, in the «Festival for the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima» in Busan, headquarters of the World Apostolate of Fatima in South Korea. Before the final event, on October 13th, there will be several events along the thirteen days to celebrate the fact that the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima happened on the 13th of every month, from May to October 1917.

Carmo Rodeia

# Fatima is a school of the “simplicity” and the “kindness” of the heart of God, said Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi

*President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, in an exclusive interview to the journal Voz da Fátima, highlighted that the true people of God is seen in Fatima*



*President of the Pontifical Council for Culture says that indifference is the biggest disease of today*

## **F**atima Light and Peace (FLP) – What is the role and place of the Shrine of Fatima in today’s Church and World?

**Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi** – A Shrine as the one of Fatima, which has, in our days, not only a national but a global scale must be, before everything else, the Shrine of the believers and of the faithful, in the variety of their cultures. Truly, we find people from the East, from Africa, presences that are extremely varied in their expressions, but above all we also find the possibility of initiating a dialogue with all those who come near, only curious for this very important religious phenomenon.

### **FLP – Is that plasticity that turns what is said and what is witnessed in Fatima so important?**

**Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi** – Paradoxically, the message of Fatima is a very demanding message, linked mostly to the sense of evil, to the sense of sin, and to the sense of tragedy, because Mary appears during a dramatic moment of the history of humanity: the first world war, immediately followed by Nazism, Stalinism, the second world war, the cold war. During a very dark period, we have a message that is also strong. In your question, you used a very rich expression: the plasticity. The message of Fatima contains, for example, in the first place, the thematic of peace, a subject that is also fundamental outside of Christianity. Secondly, it contains the subject of prayer. Prayer is, in a certain measure, the questioning before the mystery, which is not exclusive of the believer. Even the atheists pray. We still have a very meaningful subject, which looks to be only catholic, Christian, which is the subject of reparation. It is a meaningful subject, also secular, because if we practice the good, this good does not remain in us, rather it irradiates. But if we practice evil, evil is not only our issue, it is something that spreads. That’s why I understand that the fundamental subjects of Fatima, of the message of Fatima, are still relevant today. Naturally it is important to transcribe them; there is a language problem here: the little shepherds talked with

the devotion and ascetic language of their time, and we must search for a different language, but one that is still able to remind today’s world that evil exists but that good also exists!

### **FLP – What does the message of Fatima have to say to this world in which we live and that, though it’s not in war as in 1917, faces serious problems?**

**Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi** – The most serious disease of our time is not necessarily evil. The evil of our time is the indifference, this type of superficiality, a kind of vulgarity, in other words: we only search what is useful and immediate. This is the biggest disease that concerns us all, non-believers or believers, because sometimes the believers are also superficial, as I said: a religious act, a good action is sufficient. For this same reason, the “hardness” (let us use this term), the strength of the message of Fatima that work as a “shock”: it is a bit like a spine in the meat, something that you feel... and it provokes a return to consciousness. That is what the Church must do, but, to do it, an adapted language is needed, in other words, the language of Fatima of the past is no longer the best to do it.

### **FLP – Which language must be used then?**

**Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi** – It is adaptable from the content, the strong message, but one needs to find expressive ways, because if I declare, for example, “you will all end in a swamp of fire where there are horrible devils, and so on...”, the contemporary culture no longer uses a mythical language, that is, a symbolic language, it uses a different language. For that reason, the content of Fatima has to be transmitted, but there is a problem of language, and this also applies to the whole Church.

### **FLP – But is it not precisely what Pope Francis is doing, using new, simple metaphors that everyone understands?**

**Gianfranco Cardinal Ravasi** – Yes, undoubtedly, because he understood that the contemporary language must have some characteristics. First of all, he uses simple sentences – that we call parataxis, that is, non-subordinated coordinated, deductive sentences; secondly, he uses symbols rather often. Who doesn’t know, in the whole world, believers and non-believers, what are the “outsirts”, who doesn’t know for, example, what is “the smell of sheep” that the shepherds must have, who doesn’t know that the Church must be a “field hospital”? The symbols are fundamental. And finally, in the third place, he uses a lot – and this is also characteristic here – the body: communication is not abstract, and when someone talks and pontificates like a pharaoh or like a pastor, we see the differences... And the body is also the space of encounter with people, and here we understand it well, because it is a place where many sick people come, people who are desperate, who are sometimes only in need of a caress.

*Carmo Rodeia*

# International Congress of the Centennial suggests Fatima a new opening to new believer and non-believer approaches

*Pastoral Centre John Paul VI welcomed, during four days, more than 500 participants from 21 countries*

In the celebrative context of the Centennial of the Apparitions, the Shrine of Fatima, in a collaboration with the Faculty of Theology of the Portuguese Catholic University, promoted over the last years several symposiums, which culminated in the International Congress To Think Fatima – Interdisciplinary Readings.

The Pastoral Centre Paul VI welcomed, from the 21st to the 24th of June, this initiative which gathered about 525 participants, from 21 countries.

The president of the Organizing Committee, João Duque referred to these four days of works as a period of “great richness for the extent and quality of the presented works”.

“Here is the challenge to develop a diverse phenomenology, from more empiric roots and passing by historic readings, and the development of a Mariology and ecclesiology from this specific phenomenon”, he said.

For the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, this congress falls within the line of work that has been developed by the Shrine in order to promote interest in the scientific study of Fatima, and it will allow, not only to see what has been done, but also to deepen the many dimensions of the event of Fatima and open new study perspectives.

“So, this congress intents to underline the conviction that the celebration of this jubilee is an opportunity to deepen the knowledge of the event and message of Fatima”, he concluded.

The interventions were organized in plenary conferences, thematic conferences and researcher’s self-proposed communications in a total of 100 communications.

To Pedro Valinho Gomes, the congress secretary, this initiative “was an opportunity to conjugate and gather a series of readings made about Fatima which hadn’t yet opportunity for dialogue”, and for that reason, we must stand out “the idea of interdisciplinarity in this congress which was precisely to gather these themes, placing them for dialogue”.

The combination of the liturgical component with an academic perspective and a cultural vision, brought a great diversity of researchers and themes, in reflexive and cultural moments.

“To Talk Fatima 100 years later”, was one of those moments that gathered the bishop of Leiria-Fatima, Monsignor Antonio Marto, the journalist Helena Matos, the Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Paulo Rangel and the researcher Henrique Leitao.

Journalist and researcher Helena Matos, author of the RTP (Radio Television of Portugal) “Fatima People who pray”, said that “the life [Lucia] chose, the renunciations she made throughout her life and considering everything Fatima has become, she is definitely the most influent person of the 21st century”, said the journalist who claims herself as a non-believer and made a strong critic to “the arrogance of the elites regarding Fatima” presenting what happened in Cova da Iria as a “great lesson of survival of the Portuguese” that it’s only “misunderstood by those who have many certainties”.



*Sessions were broadcasted live on the online webpage of the Shrine*

Also in the context of the Congress To Think Fatima, the concert entitled “To Sing Fatima”, filled the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, who closed the congress with the conference “Fatima as a Promise” stated that “Fatima continues to be a faith proclamation in a secularized world; an announcement of peace in a planet tormented by wars; a poverty and simplicity school in which the choice of the last one is proprietary in a materialist society and also a school of values before an apathetic society.

“Secularism (illness of our society), apathy (more serious than agnosticism), indifference, the lack of values and references, fragmented wars all over the world, are evils striking us, and to which God calls for our attention, through Our Lady in the dialogue with the Little Shepherds, presenting paths”, he said.

“The message of Fatima is a public message that crosses Portugal’s borders treating the planetary society deviations and, although prophets always talk in precise contexts, in this case, this prophecy goes beyond the present, keeping a connection with it”, the cardinal stated.

Also in the closure session, the Shrine of Fatima distinguished the Faculty of Theology of the Portuguese Catholic University (UCP) offering the commemorative medal of the Centennial of the Apparitions.

## SYNOPSIS

Participants: 525	Staff Members: 15
Origin Countries: 21	Used Halls: 8
Panels: 18	Organizing Institutions: 2
Communications: 100	Organizing Committee: 10
Scientific Areas: 7	Scientific Committee: 43
Official Languages of the Congress: 3	Speakers: 104

## The problem with persecution “is with the fundamentalists and terrorist organizations, which are not originally Christians nor Muslims”, says the Maronite patriarch

**L**ebanese have a strong connection with Our Lady of Fatima and on the last weekend of June, during a national pilgrimage, the leader of the Maronite Church in the Orient consecrated, once more, Lebanon and the entire Middle East to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. “Our people has a strong love for Our Lady, but most of all for Our Lady of Fatima”, to who they pray for peace. “We know Our Lady will hear our prayers”. The Bulletin Fatima Light and Peace spoke with the Patriarch Cardinal Béchara Pierre Raï, leader of the Maronite Church of Lebanon and all the East.

**Bulletin Fatima light and Peace (BFLP) – The Middle East is living in a very difficult war. This group has come to pray for peace.**

**Béchara Raï** – Middle East Christians have never entered in wars; we are a people of peace. The wars are not our doing, they are the result of political interests and conflicts. The Christian by baptism, is someone of peace, with an open spirit and always available to open his heart to others. Our calling is towards peace and unity. We cannot live in hate and war.

**FLP – Is that what you came to ask here: peace?**

**Béchara Raï** – All we came here to ask, with much faith, is peace, and we know that Our Lady will hear our pleas.

**FLP – Do you pray for the persecuted Christians?**

**Béchara Raï** – Christians who live with Muslims are not persecuted. They live in peace. We live peacefully for more than 1300 years; it's part of our culture. The problem with persecution is with the fundamentalists and terrorist organizations, which are not originally Christians nor Muslims.

In the Middle East there are persecuted Christians, but there are also persecuted Muslims. That happens because people let themselves carry away and lose the capacity to distinguish between good and evil. Their goal is strictly economic and political.

Refugees are Muslims and Christians, but Muslims are in a larger number. They are in fact victims of this fundamentalism, and not of a religious war.

For that reason, here in Fatima, we pray for the end of the war, for the return of the refugees and for the peaceful living in their countries.

**FLP – How do you think Lebanese pilgrims are living this pilgrimage?**

**Béchara Raï** – It was beautiful to see the Prayer Area filled with people to pray the rosary. It is Our Lady calling her children, who leave everything to be there with Her. Another thing that impressed me was the way it started and ended... it seems people started tired and very worried but ended filled with joy and pleased.

**FLP – What is the importance of this national pilgrimage in the Centennial of the Apparitions year?**

**Béchara Raï** – The first wish is to renew the Consecration of Lebanon and the Middle East to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Groups from Lebanon but also from all the Middle East are present to renew, precisely this year, the consecration.

There are people from Iraq, Syria and Kuwait. Also many pilgrims who came from the USA who are Maronite Christians. There are approximately 3000 people.

Our people has a strong love for Our Lady, but most of all for Our Lady of Fatima. Many of these people have already been in Fatima, but wanted to come again for that love they have for Our Lady.

St. John Paul II offered an statue of Our Lady of Fatima to Lebanon, which is present in the Sanctuary of *Notre-Dame* of Lebanon, in Harissa.

**FLP – How important do you think this consecration is?**

**Béchara Raï** – In our prayer there is always a consecration to Our Lady. We, as Christians, have this consecration question in our daily prayers, the religious consecration, the group consecration, etc. When families have ill children or other difficulties, we have the habit of offering it, so that Our Lady can help them.

**FLP – But it's the first consecration...**



*Patriarch of Antioch visited Fatima for the first time*

**Béchara Raï** – When Pope Benedict XVI summoned the synod of bishops, recommended, in the end, the consecration of the Middle East countries to Our Lady. As a response to that request, and to the request of Our Lady to consecrate Russia and the world, in 2013 Lebanon and the Middle East countries were consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in union with all the churches of the Middle East, to ask for the conversion of the sinners, the end of war, for finding political solutions to the current problems which strike those countries, for peace and the end of violence, so that migrants and refugees can return to their countries and live in peace.

**FLP – What will you bring back from Fatima?**

**Béchara Raï** – Mostly each one of us will bring back something unique, because it is a national pilgrimage, but above all, it is a private and intimate meeting with God. Then, as a group, we will bring back the hope that our prayer will become a walk of peace.

Yesterday, after the procession, the pilgrims were happy, joyful. Despite the physical weariness and all the difficulties, the serenity and the joy were immense, and no one wanted to return to their bedrooms to rest. All we wanted was to be there, near Our Lady. She takes our difficulties and fills us with hope.

Usually when we pray, we ask for specific things, and we must hand it to the will of God. We also must give our heart, so that God can fill it with joy, hope and peace, and wait for God to make His will, His project. In the end, this is what this pilgrimage will mean.

# National pilgrimage of Lebanon gathered nearly 3000 pilgrims residents in the country and from the diaspora

*Christians from Lebanon entrust the country's future to Our Lady of The Rosary of Fatima*

The Shrine of Fatima welcomed in the last weekend of June the national pilgrimage of Lebanon, the first of a series of national pilgrimages that, in this Centennial year, will come to Cova da Iria.

The national pilgrimage of Lebanon, headed by the Patriarch Cardinal of Antioch and all the East, brought to Cova da Iria nearly 3000 pilgrims for the consecration of Lebanon and other Middle East countries to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

They came from Lebanon and the diaspora (USA and Australia), but also from Syria, from Kuwait and Iraq, trusting that by Our Lady's intercession, peace can be restored to the Middle East.

"We came with much faith because we know Our Lady will hear our pleas" said the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, Béchara Raï, to the journal *Voz da Fátima*.

"In our prayer there is always a consecration to Our Lady. We, as Christians, have this consecration question in our daily prayers, the religious consecration, the group consecration, etc." added the leader of the Maronite Church of the Middle East.

"When families have ill children or other difficulties, we have the habit of offering it, so that Our Lady can help them" he reminds.

The pilgrimage brought another patriarch from Syria, six bishops and 27 priests.

Arabic was one of the most heard languages in Cova da Iria. The pilgrims participated in the prayer of

the Rosary on Saturday, presided by the Maronite Patriarch Cardinal. At the time, Saint Charbel's relics, canonized 40 years ago, were given to the Shrine.

The Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was made on the Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, during a private celebration, in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity, presided by the Maronite Patriarch, four years after the first consecration of Lebanon.

In everyone's mind was a request: Peace.

"Usually when we pray, we ask for specific things, and we must hand it to the will of God. We also

must give our heart, so that God can fill it with joy, hope and peace, and wait for God to make His will, His project" said Béchara Raï.

The Maronite patriarch also spoke of the Middle East situation to underline that the Christians of this part of the globe never entered wars.

Lebanon is the country of the Middle East where there are more Christians. Although they were once a majority in the country, it is estimated that currently they represent about 40% of the population. Lebanese Christians are divided in different rites, but the majority is Maronite.



*Patriarch of Antioch and all the East makes consecration of Lebanon to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*

## *Timetable of the masses in the Shrine of Fatima*

### **MASSES OTHER LANGUAGES**

08h00	Chapel of the Apparitions   Italian   <i>from Monday to Saturday</i>
08h00	Chapel of the Angel of Peace   German   <i>Thursday</i>   German   <i>Tuesday, from July 15th to August 31st</i>
15h30	Chapel of the Apparitions   English   <i>from Monday to Friday</i>
19h15	Chapel of the Apparitions   Spanish   <i>daily</i>

## Third International Anniversary Pilgrimage of the Centennial of the Apparitions registers a record for foreign groups participation

*Pilgrims Service recorded three times more registrations than in 2016*

The number of groups registered in the Pilgrims Service of the Shrine of Fatima in the pilgrimage of July more than tripled compared to July of last year.

This year, year of the celebration of the Centennial of the Apparitions in Cova da Iria, 225 foreign groups were registered, representing 9 911 pilgrims from 27 different countries, while last year (2016) in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 69 groups were registered, a total of 2 596 pilgrims.

If we compare with the year 2007, when the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity was dedicated, and during which we noticed an increase regarding the number of visitors in the Shrine, also the number of foreign groups registered was minor, about 80 with a total of 3 936 pilgrims.

The numbers are even more overwhelming if, speaking in totals, we compare the month of July of these three years. In 2007, the Shrine registered 290 groups with a total of 14 709 pilgrims, and in 2016 262 groups in a total of 10 742 pilgrims. In July this year, 809 groups were registered with a total of 37 926 pilgrims.

Complementarily to this substantial increase in the number of groups and pilgrims, we must also register the presence of countries which usually don't come in pilgrimages to the Shrine, like Malaysia, China, Congo, South Africa, Panama, Sri Lanka, India among others, Italy, Spain, Po-

land, Brazil, United States of America, South Korea and European countries are still the countries which the presence of pilgrims is most significant.

The Third International Anniversary Pilgrimage of the Centennial also registered the presence, for the first time, of a national pilgrimage of catholic bishops of Russian language. Seven prelates, accompanied of priests and laymen from Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, travelled to Fatima to celebrate the third apparition of Our Lady to the Little Shepherds which underlines a special connection of Russia to the Message of Fatima.

According to the seers testimony, Our Lady told them that to prevent war it would be necessary the conversion of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart and the communion of reparation on the first Saturdays.

The Centennial Pilgrimage, under the theme "Virgin Mary, Mother of Consolation", was presided by the Moscow Archbishop who reminded the persecutions against Christians in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the vulnerability of a society without God.

In a statement to the bulletin *Fatima Light and Peace*, the prelate connected the centennial of the Russian revolution and the centennial of the Apparitions to affirm that «for so many martyrs, so many witnesses of faith, particularly the Catholics, Our

Lady's apparitions in Fatima, when known, were a comfort and a support to the experience of faith».

On the other hand, «the apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima helped us to understand her testimony. This testimony is primarily a conversion to Christ. A personal conversion, as we can find in some texts: the most important is the conversion to Christ. And therefore, also calling others to convert to Christ».

Monsignor Paolo Pezzi reminded the visit of the Pilgrim Statue for nine months to Russia, between 1996 and 1997, a period in which the Pilgrim Statue visited almost every catholic parishes of the country: «That was a truly significant event, because it was also a popular event. People, and not only Catholics, came to the churches and houses where the Catholics gathered with great curiosity», he said.

«At the time – he continued – I practiced my priestly ministry in Siberia. When the statue of Our Lady of Fatima arrived, I went to the city station with another priest to welcome and take Her to the Cathedral. I told this to some of my students and I recall what one of them said to me: “- I also want to go and meet my mother!”. Our Lady, just as she appeared in Fatima, is a Mother to us», concluded the Moscow Archbishop who returned to Fatima 6 years later.

*Carmo Rodeia*



*Foreign pilgrims attest to the universality of this Shrine*

*Mentioned in the message of Fatima, Russia «is an antidote against sin and evil that men commit against their fellow men»*

## Researchers, including José Miguel Sardica, speak of the relevance of Russia in the message one hundred years later

Cova da Iria and Moscow are 4500 km apart. However, throughout one century of history, «the theological message and the historical evolution of the phenomenon of Fatima were intimately connected to the international resonance of that distant Euro-Asian destination», recognizes the researcher José Miguel Sardica, lecturer at the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Catholic University of



*The presence of Russian Catholics in the Shrine has been a constant over the last years*

Portugal, in a declaration to the journal *Voz da Fátima* about the relevance of Russia in the message of Fatima, one month after the Shrine received the first national pilgrimage of the catholic bishops of Russian language.

The theme plays a central role in the second part of the so-called secret of Fatima. In the apparition of the 13<sup>th</sup> of July of 1917, and according to the testimony of the seers, the Virgin entrusted them three messages, including the invitation to the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to the conversion of Russia. The theme was later recalled by Sister Lucia, in the beginning of the 40's, in her third memoir: «You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end: but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out [...]. To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church», the seer wrote.

«Russia is indeed the disturbing element of the history of Fatima. For the believers, the incontestable faithfulness of the account of the 13<sup>th</sup> of July apparition is the proof of the prophetic content in the sense», re-

fers the researcher underlining that the theme 'Russia' must have, however, a different framing.

«Maybe 'Russia', in Fatima, needs always to be taken in a non literal sense, rather as a metaphor, allegory or parable», clarifies the author adding that «the Russia that Our Lady recommended to men for conversion was more than the country revolutionized by the soviets and where Stalin would come to make the 'Antichrist'; rather it was, in a broader sense, the incarnation of the evils of the new 20<sup>th</sup> Century – the evils of violence, of persecution, of totalitarianism or of atheism».

And he concludes: «If this is the case, even if the communist Russia has already disappeared, the 'Russia' of Fatima keeps the strength of a message of admonition and redemption, as antidote against sin and evil that men commit against their fellow men».

The journalist and researcher José Milhazes shares the same opinion. The author of the book *The Message of Fatima in Russia* affirms that «Russia is a global metaphor, wider than geography and politics».

«Russia (Soviet Union) was the symbol and the center of a regime that, for the first time in the History of Humanity, tried to end religion not only by forbidding it but also by creating a new one that they called (anti) religion: the Marxism-leninism, with its new (anti)sacred family: Marx, Engels, and Lenin as its new (anti) saints», he affirms. According to the journalist, we are talking about «one

of the two darker experiences in the History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (besides Nazism) in the field of social transformation», with the proclaimed goal of construction of the 'new man'; this was a regime that «aimed at overpowering the whole world, imposing its style of life and thought». And because it is such a metaphor, it is still relevant and pertinent.

«Fatima has already become a true 'altar of the world', a center of peace in a moment ever more sank in wars. Fatima will continue to be a center of defense of human and Christian values in an environment more and more hostile to them, a center of dialogue in a time in which that quality is ever more scarce. I do not doubt of the growing relevance of Fatima and its message», he concludes.

As for the journalist and researcher António Marujo, the references to Russia in the event of Fatima «are to be understood in the context of the time» marked by «violent persecutions already initiated against Christians of the Soviet Union, and, nearby, by the climate that would lead to the Civil War (in Spain). After the fall of the Berlin Wall – the journalist adds – Russia has lost some of its importance»; and he concludes that «the 'mistakes' and the 'conversion' of Russia express ideas that are worthy of historical research», but what matters the most is «to answer to the appeals to change of life and to prayer that are present in the message of Fatima and in Christianity».

## English priest promotes bicycle journey to mark the centennial of the apparitions

# The journey was made between June 6th and July 13th

Father Les Whittaker, aged 61, parishioner of Our Lady & St Peter's Church, East Grinstead, West Sussex, UK, cycled over 1491 miles to Fatima during this summer, in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the apparitions and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1967 *Abortion Act* in the UK.

Held between June 6<sup>th</sup> and August 13<sup>th</sup>, the journey is not the first of the kind Father Les Whittaker makes; in 2007 he cycled more than 490 miles to Belfast and back, between memorials of unborn children. In 2010 he cycled 1100 miles to Auschwitz, in memory of St Maximilian Kolbe's great act of love, and the lives lost in the holocaust. These rides allowed to raise around £17000 (around 19000€) for pro-life causes.

This was followed in 2013 by

his homage to Mother Teresa, cycling, to her birthplace, Skopje, in Macedonia, almost 2000 miles. In this case, the aim of the ride was not to raise money but to raise awareness of the Missionary of Charity charism. These pilgrimages were reported in the media and it was understood after Skopje that there would be no more, but Les has changed his mind: «The coming together of the two anniversaries struck me as something worthy of drawing attention to» says Fr. Les Whittaker: «I love the story of the Fatima apparitions, how the young seers, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, aged just 10, 9 and 7 at the time of the apparitions in 1917, opened their hearts to the message, and bravely stood up to the hostile reaction of the secular local officials and national

government, and, particularly for Lucia, disbelief within their own families».

«Fatima reinforces my belief that we are all made to be in relationship with God, through Mary, mother of the Child Jesus. It is in this relationship where our value lies; so all life is sacred. The seers, who were specially chosen because they were very young children, saw themselves in God, as Lucia put it, more clearly than we see ourselves in the best of mirrors», added the priest.

In this journey, the priest sought to raise funds for the World Apostolate of Fatima and UK pro-life causes, SPUC, Good Counsel Network, and the Gospel of Life Group (supporting Life houses in West Sussex).

*By Father Les Whittaker*

## Dutch farmer rides 3 300 kilometers in pilgrimage to Fatima

Henk Goes, 63 years old, left the farm he manages with his family in Utrecht, Netherlands, on the 4th of May, taking only his bicycle and having no plans except for his goal: to reach Fatima, riding in pilgrimage through the various Shrines of Europe.

In a little more than three weeks, he crossed Lourdes, the Pyrenees, Burgos, and Santiago de Compostela. He crossed the Portuguese borders and arrived in Fatima on the 31st of May.

For the first time in Cova da Iria, Henk Goes, in a declaration to the Fatima Shrine's Press Room, confessed that he came to Fatima "to pray and to find God".

An enthusiast for bicycles and the contact with nature, the Dutchman considers Fatima as a "beautiful" place and, therefore, it is "special" to visit the Shrine in the year of the Centennial of the Apparitions. A devotee of Our Lady and the little shepherds, the farmer did not miss the opportunity to participate in the candles procession and to pray at the feet of the Virgin Mary.



*Cátia Filipe*

*No sooner had he arrived than he visited the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary*



## Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima «is a sign of hope» to Venezuelans

*Pilgrim Statue is in Venezuela since April and it will extend its stay until November 26th*

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which is for the first time in a national pilgrimage in Venezuela, in the Maracay diocese, will extend its stay in the country until November.

The number 11 statue is, since last April 20th, in this South American country, in a visit until October 31st, but at the request of the Maracay's Seminary Rector, Fr. Luis Martinez, national coordinator of the visit, it will remain until the end of November: «the scope and interest that the presence of this statue is generating, of which many are drawn to, is a sign of hope to all of us who live in this country», refers the priest in a letter sent to the Shrine of Fatima.

«Certainly you know everything that is happening in the country: the dramatic crisis which assaulted us; the lack of guidance of a government that slavered this nation; the lack of security, of basic goods such as medication or the disrespect for the most basic rights of citizenship,

all these things make us sad and angry. Because of that, many found in the beautiful face of the statue – and in the certain that in the end the immaculate heart of Our Lady will triumph and will be the path and refuge to God – the hope and comfort to get on with life», says the priest justifying the request to extend the statue's visit. «We pray to her so that peace can reach our country», the Maracay Seminary Rector stated.

The tour in Venezuela will end on November 26th, Solemnity of Christ the King and the patroness day of this diocese, Our Lady of Bethlehem.

It is a known fact, that the tension in Venezuela has been rising, counterpointing the opposition and the population to the regime of Nicolas Maduro.

Pope Francis has already appealed to peace and reconciliation in the country, manifesting apprehension for the consequences of violence and confrontation between protestors and government: «I strongly wish for

the violence and hostility cessation as soon as possible and that all Venezuelans, beginning with the political and institutional representatives, are committed to favour national reconciliation, through mutual forgiveness and honest dialogue», Pope Francis affirmed.

Also, the Venezuelan Episcopal Conference issued a press statement in which it shows its concern before the political and social instability. The catholic bishops refuse the use of force by the security forces in some protests, and ask for the right to protest not to be used to promote violence and vandalism.

It is important to remember that practically all statues of the Pilgrim Virgin are in pilgrimage in many parts of the world. Countries like Spain, Brazil, Czech Republic and Italy, will receive during this year, the visit of several pilgrim statues of Fatima.

*Carmo Rodeia*

## Students of the School of Notre-Dame de Lourdes visit Fatima

*Pilgrimage took place between February 24th to 28th*

Pilgrimage to Fatima from the 24th to the 28th of February: we went to Fatima to do our pilgrimage. We wanted to know more about the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, to meet her through prayer in our heart, and to deepen our faith. During this pilgrimage, we prayed the rosary every night, we visited the Shrine, we participated in the Marian procession and visited the houses of the three seers. The story of the three little shepherds touched us; we will not forget it. This pilgrimage opened our eyes on the Apocalypse, Hell and the presence of the Virgin by our side. We could deepen our faith and realize that we did not pray enough; we also entrusted our intentions to the Virgin Mary (by enlightening candles). Now we know all about the history of Fatima and more about our faith, our God.



*Young Pilgrims of the Centennial came from Paris*

## Marathon of prayer around the Pilgrim Image of Fatima

The Pilgrim Image travelled Luxembourg, from the 22nd of May to the 25th of June 2017. It visited 40 parishes, prayer centers (Benedictine Abbey of Clervaux and other religious communities), places of mercy (prison of Schrasig, elderly houses...) and Churches, where the migrant communities meet: Portuguese, Cape-Verdians, Italians, Polish, French, Latin-Americans, English and Vietnamese.

In all parishes, the reception, specially by the migrants, was a surprise to the expectations of Luxembourg parish priests, less used to this kind of religious manifestations. The reception ceremonies, as well as the farewell ceremonies, were very much participated and abundantly marked by the feeling and the religiosity of Portuguese people, though not reaching the high numbers of the first visit of the Image to Luxembourg, in 1947. A Luxembourg lady revealed that, at that time, 70 years ago, even the shops closed so that everyone could receive the Image of Peace, during those suffering times after the II World War.

In general, the time the Pilgrim Image stayed in each parish was occupied by the moment of communitarian prayer, silent prayer, recitation of the Rosary, processions in street, sessions of biblical formation for the youth and adults, catechism for the children on the Message of Fatima, movie on the life of the saint little shepherds Francisco and Jacinta Marto, celebrations with the sick and elderly, night of prayer, vespers, masses and adoration, consecration, musical concerts, theatre and ludic activities for the children. It was a marathon of prayer, as mentioned by a parish priest who was happy for the new pastoral experience in his parish.

Many were the Christians who came from France, from the neighboring Belgium and from Germany, mainly when the Image visited the parishes in the frontiers of the Great-Duchy. It united margins, in Schenghen, when it travelled by boat in the Moselle river.

The program connected culture and faith, alternating moments of liturgy and prayer with moments of art



*Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima "comforts" emigrants in Luxembourg*

and chant. During the visit, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Luxembourg received the exhibition of a giant red heart, hanged from the top of the temple, a work of the artist Joana Vasconcelos. At the closing, in the crowded Cathedral, there was a magnificent concert of Fado, sang with beauty and deepness by Katia Guerreiro.

The visit facilitated the meeting and collaboration between different communities, raising the sense of belonging to the parish and the love to prayer.

For the people of Luxembourg, the farewell celebration, full of feelings, emotion, tears, singing hearts and white kerchiefs, remained as a religious signal to be interpreted and cultural rite to be slowly uncodified in intercultural dialogue. It reveals, in a simple, intense and theological way, a constitutive element of the cultural identity and of the popular religiosity of the Portuguese and Portuguese-speaking Community, the major foreign and Catholic community of the Great-Duchy.

*Rui Pedro*

## A full Cathedral of Notre-Dame to listen to music in worship of Our Lady of Fatima

*Concert by Katia Guerreiro took place during the visit of the Pilgrim Virgin*

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame, in Luxembourg, was filled to listen to Portuguese Fado singer Katia Guerreiro, who performed during the visit of the Pilgrim Image of Our Lady of Fatima. The concert was on the 24th of June, as a farewell to the Pilgrim Image, a unique and historic moment for the Portuguese culture and for the multiculturalism of Luxembourg.

Visibly moved, the Portuguese singer intoned 15 songs, out of her usual repertoire and interpreting Marian themes, in a clear evidence and homage to Our Lady of Fatima, to whom she called "mother of all mothers".

The program proposed themes like "Ave Maria", by Br. Hermano da Câmara, "Our Lady of Fado", by Júlio Vieirinha, "Ave Maria", by Fernando Pessoa, and a theme dedicated to the interpreters of Fado, "Ave Maria Fadista".

Accompanied by Joao Veiga in the classic guitar, Fernando Júdice in the acoustic bass, Eurico Machado and Pedro de Castro in the Portuguese guitar, the singer paid homage to the Portuguese identity. The public sur-

rendered to the Portuguese icons. It showed respect for Fado and for the singer, for Our Lady of Fatima and for religion, for Portuguese culture and for the values that it defends.

*Vanessa Castanheira*



*The Portuguese fado singer had sang with emotion to the Virgin*

# The act of consecration of the Church and of Poland to the Immaculate Heart of Mary



*Celebration took place in the Shrine of Zakopane-Krzepiówki*

On Tuesday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, in the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Zakopane-Krzepiówki (Poland), a very special ceremony took place. In the presence of the representatives of all civil authorities and many faithful coming from all over the country, the Polish Episcopate consecrated the Polish Church and our Homeland to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The president Andrzej Duda with his wife, the prime minister of the Polish government, Beata Szydło, and many other representatives of the government, of the parliament and of local authorities were present.

The consecration was inspired in the expectation of the Most Holy Mother that to Her Immaculate Heart would be consecrated not only the individuals but also the entire nations, and in the example of Portugal, which, thanks to a similar act and its repetition in the Thirties of the last century, was saved from the tragedy of the civil that hit the neighboring Spain and from participating in the Second World War.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1946 the Polish Episcopate, gathering in the Shrine of Jasna Góra in Częstochowa – the most important Marian shrine of the country –, under the presidency of His Eminency the then Cardinal Primate August Hlond, consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary the Polish Church, the people and the country threatened by the danger of communism. Poland, as Portugal, felt in abundance the blessed fruits of the consecration. Though the country had suffered a lot under the yoke of the communist regime, which had many negative consequences in all areas of social life, after the fall of the system the church ended up being strong and united. Poland gave the Saint Pope John Paul II to the world, here *Solidarność* was born – the first syndicate independent of the state, a fact that influenced the political situation in all Eastern Europe. Poland is the homeland of many new blessed and saints, and the message of Fatima deeply rooted in our land, where the Fatima cult is developed with enormous dynamism.

Faced with the worrying situation of the World and Europe today, faced with the serious internal problems of our country, which suffers deep social divisions, the Polish Episcopate decided to repeat the act of the year 1946, this time in the shrine of Zakopane-Krzepiówki, which is usually called “the Polish Fatima”, to implore from Mary

Immaculate Her blessing and protection for the country. We strongly believe in this act, because She has never disappointed our confidence.

The consecration of the 6<sup>th</sup> of June will be repeated in the Polish families and parishes on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, on the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the historic act of 1946.

For many years now our shrine maintains a live relationship with the Shrine of Our Lady in Fatima, Portugal. In the year 2008 the Secretariat of Fatima, which works in Zakopane-Krzepiówki, started the Great Novena of Fatima with the intention of preparing the country for the Centennial of the Apparitions. In this novena, there were faithful from 21 countries of all continents. The Golden Book of the Novena will be taken to the feet of Our Lady in Fatima by a pilgrimage of the priests involved in spreading the Fatima cult, which will visit the Shrine of Cova da Iria in November 2017. The bishops of the dioceses of Leiria-Fatima and of Coimbra, as well as the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, frequently participate in ceremonies in Zakopane, at the invitation of the rector of our shrine, who repeatedly visit the Portuguese shrine.

During the solemn mass with the consecration, one had to have an invited guest of honor from Portugal in the person of the bishop of Coimbra, the most reverend Virgílio Antunes, who made a homily that was very much quoted afterwards in the preaching of the Polish priests. The Eucharist, in which all the Polish bishops participated, was presided by the archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, the president of the Polish Episcopal Conference; among others, the apostolic nuncio in Poland, the archbishop Salvatore Pappalardo, concelebrated. Fr. Marian Mucha SAC, rector of the shrine in Krzepiówki, greeted all the guests who filled the church of the shrine, founded in thanksgiving for the salvation of the life of saint John Paul II and consecrated by him in 1997. An enormous crowd of believers from all over the country participated in the holy mass shown on big screens outside the church. The Zakopane and surrounding residents, dressed in colorful regional costumes, created a unique environment for this unforgettable festive day, which through the blessing of Our Lady of Fatima is deeply inscribed in the history of this country.

*Fr. Andrzej Gładysz SAC*



*Polish Church acts as messenger of Fatima*

*Musicians Antonio Zambujo and Miguel Araujo participate in JubJovem*

## The Shrine's initiative has the theme "The secret of peace, the path of the heart"



The Shrine of Fatima organizes the Youth Jubilee, within the context of the celebration of the Centennial of the Apparitions, on September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, challenging the youngest to celebrate the event and to discover, in the message of Fatima, a "spirituality proposal" into the present time.

With the theme "The secret of peace, the path of the heart", the *JubJovem* targets a public between 16 and 35 years old and it is developed in a partnership with the National Youth Ministry Department, involving all diocesan secretariats and catholic youth movements.

Musicians Antonio Zambujo and Miguel Araujo will be present, specifically in the Peace Festival, on the night of Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, with texts and themes inspired in Sister Lucia's writings.

"In Fatima, one hundred years ago, the Virgin Mary showed her pure heart and offered it as a place of encounter and passage to the heart of God, hurt with the suffering of

men and offended by the world's evil", the organization explains.

The *JubJovem* of the Centennial of the Apparitions proposes "an intense experience of silence and prayer" and "the celebration of gratitude".

The activity will occur between September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, in four stages: preparing peace, heart of peace, peace of the heart and peace experience.

After the welcoming, in the morning, the afternoon starts with several suggestions of preparation dedicated to the theme of peace. The official opening of the *JubJovem* is at 5.00p.m. in the Chapel of the Apparitions.

An hour later, the invitation is to "reflect on the connection between Mary and peace", with Sister Angela Coelho, vice-postulator for the cause of canonization of Sister Lucia, in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity.

Before the Peace Festival, the young are invited to pray the rosary and to participate in the candlelight

procession, at 9.00p.m., in the Chapel of the Apparitions.

The point is to be up all night, because the program continues throughout the night, with a "strong experience of silence in the path", using the Way of the Cross stations, in Valinhos, to get to the "peace of the heart", again in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity, with a reflection on "peace as a gift and compromise".

On Sunday morning, September 10<sup>th</sup>, the young will gather in the Shrine's Prayer Area at 10.00 am, to participate in the Rosary, in the Mass, in the Jubilee rite of deliver and in the farewell procession.

Registration is free, but mandatory, so that all can receive a *JubJovem* kit, and it must be made in the diocesan secretariats of the youth ministry until August 31<sup>st</sup>, or directly in the Shrine of Fatima. For more information, please contact [jovens@fatima.pt](mailto:jovens@fatima.pt), or access to the [jubjovem.fatima.pt](http://jubjovem.fatima.pt) website.

*Carmo Rodeia*

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