



FÁTIMA LUZ E PAZ

 Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

 Director: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

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Time of Grace and Mercy: to give thanks for the gift of Fatima

Pope Francis' visit to Fatima: one year later

/ Pe. Carlos Cabecinhas

One year after the most important moment of the celebration of the Centennial of the Apparitions, it is with gratitude and joy that we recall that so happy and significant hour: the presence of Pope Francis who, coming as a pilgrim, canonized the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

The pilgrimage of Pope Francis to the Shrine of Cova da Iria had the capacity to call all the attention to Fatima, whether on the days prior to the visit, during the 24 intense hours of his staying in Portugal, or in the following days. His words and positions in Fatima still sustain our reflection, guide our prayer and direct our options. We must recognize that, over the course of hundred years of history, the presence of Supreme Pontiffs was one the strongest elements for the international projection of Fatima. The six papal visits over a period of fifty years (1967-2017) gave a worldwide visibility to Fatima and were justified by the worldwide importance Fatima acquired. It is therefore a "virtuous circle" that had indeed made possible the internationalization of Fatima.

The canonization itself of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta had contributed explicitly to the consolidation of the internationalization of Fatima and its message. The canonization is a solemn act of the great importance by which the Church presents to all the Christian of the world, in an explicit way, the saints Francisco and Jacinta as intercessors and example of Christian life. While the beatification allowed only the veneration in the country of origin and, exceptionally, in churches or shrines that had required to the Holy See, the canonization means the globalization of the veneration of the two seers saints of Fatima. It was then not only the most significant formal act of the Church regarding Fatima, but also an act with great potential for the diffusion of Fatima and its message.

Therefore, one year after, it is a feeling of gratitude that accompanies the evocation of the visit of Pope Francis and the canonization of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta as well as a great sense of responsibility we have towards the continuity of the diffusion of Fatima.

Francisco and Jacinta Marto were canonised last year by Pope Francis in Fatima / Carmo Rodeia

On the next 13th of May, we will be celebrating the first anniversary of the canonisation of Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, two of the three seers of the apparitions of Fatima, who were placed upon the altars by Pope Francis during the great celebration of the Centenary. For that reason, the theme of this pilgrimage, which is also the theme of this first pastoral year following the centenary, is "Giving thanks for the gift of Fatima".

The first international anniversary pilgrimage will be presided by the Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong, John Tong, who will emphasise the importance and the universality of the Message of Fatima in the current context, and especially in a region of the globe where Christianity is expanding together with the emergence of clear signs of a wish for conversion – which is a central idea of the Message of Fatima, and of which Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta Marto are key witnesses. Their example of holiness will not be forgotten during this pilgrimage, which will also recall this important moment, their canonisation, celebrated in Cova de Iria during the Jubilee Year.

Seventeen years after Pope John Paul II beatified Francisco and Jacinta Marto, the Argentinian Pontiff took the next step in order to sanctified the two siblings and, from that day on, the worship of the two little shepherds began to be universal, according to the Catholic Church, who found in Jacinta Marto – who died at nine years of age – the youngest non-martyr Catholic saint Her brother Francisco had died from the same so-called Spanish influenza ten months before her.

"There is a clear though emerging awareness, following the canonisation, that the holiness of these two children is not only an example for the younger ones but also for all of us and through all the stages of our spiritual life," explained Sister Ângela Coelho, former Postulator of the Cause of Canonisation of Francisco and Jacinta. Ângela Coelho.

The canonisation allowed to "overcome a certain infantilization of the shepherds" who used to be considered by the adults with tenderness and affection, but always as children, the former Postulator explained, and she added that she had no doubt that today "it is different".

"People are moved by their example and, above all, by how they dedicated themselves to God," said Ângela Coelho referring to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints himself, the cardinal Angelo Amato, who always shown how deeply touched he was by this cause; without forgetting the Pope, who still makes fre-



Pope Francis prayed on the tombs on May 13, 2017

quent references to the names and lives of Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta Marto.

As a matter of fact, in September 2017, when the Bishop of the diocese of Leiria-Fatima told the Pope in the Vatican that there was an increasing number of visits to the tombs in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima since the canonisation, Francis answered that such a phenomenon was related to a quest for innocence in a unsettled world and also to the care and attention which is necessary to give to children.

"They (Francisco and Jacinta) are no longer just the children who saw Our Lady, they have their own life, their own spirituality and the lives they had make us think about our own," said Ângela Coelho. Looking to our splinted world, in which we are missing the unity and sense essential to live beyond work and the mere satisfaction of our material needs, Sister Ângela Coelho finds in the shepherds' lives the reference we need to help us "focus on what is essential."

"The shepherds teach us the sense of life, what is essential," claimed the religionist from the Alliance of Holy Mary, who is now responsible for the *Fundação Francisco e Jacinta Marto*, created to replace the Postulation – which ended with the canonisation – and whose main mission is to pursue the dissemination of the worship of the two saints.

She also underlined that the "felicitous expression" used by Pope John Paull II, who talked of the "two lamps that illuminate humanity," is "synthesizing everything they are."

"They didn't do anything special or extraordinary, yet the light emanating from them is challenging us and, at the same time, is comforting us", underlined the ex-Postulator, who, one year after the canonisation, is now multiplying the conferences, mainly overseas, in which she is putting Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta Marto on the top of the Christian World agenda.

As Examples of Holiness, Little Shepherds Awake Interest of the Clergy and the Faithful / Carmo Rodeia

One year after they were canonized, the devotion to the Little Shepherds is still increasing. Numbers speak for themselves. The growing number of requests for the relics and for conferences, coming even from the most distant ecclesiastical spheres, is a sign that Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta are more than just two children who saw the Virgin Mary in the secluded Serra d'Aire. And if this conclusion applies to Portugal, it also applies to foreign countries, indeed such acknowledgment already brought the ex-Postulator in charge of the cause of canonization, Sister Ângela Coelho, to places as different as the Patriarch of Venice, the United States of America or Brazil, as well as to several Portuguese parishes.

"When the Shrine began to commemorate the Centenary, requests started to multiply, but they were still really focused on the Message of Fatima; today there is a growing number of requests that relate to the Little Shepherds and noticeably "to their lives and examples of holiness," said the religionist of the Alliance of Holy Mary, who recently went to a retreat of the clergy in Venice, on the Patriarch's request, in order to talk about the prophetic dimension of Fatima arising from the proper lives of Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta.

"In Portugal, I observe at the same time a concern to enthrone the image of the Shepherds and I note that the number of conferences about them is not decreasing," she said, and she further underlined that, until the end of the year, she has also scheduled a number of conferences with the Portuguese diaspora.

"The interest for the lives of the Little Shepherds has gone through a great evolution. Today, several sectors are willing us to talk about their short lives, whether from a theological perspective or from a more emotional one," also said Sister Ângela Coelho.

Requests for the Relics Increased

Only between May and December 2017, the year of their canonization, more than 400 requests for the relics of Francisco and Jacinta received a positive answer. They are fragments of the original coffins of the two Shepherds beatified in 2000 by Pope John Paul II and canonized in 2017 by Pope Francis, who are now the youngest not-martyr saints of the Catholic Church.

"These are the only relics we allow. In fact, it is the relic we offered the Pope as well as the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints," said Sister Ângela Coelho.

This is also the relic that was in the Convent of Campo Mourão and in front of which the Sisters were praying and calling for the intercession of the Little Shepherds, and through which occurred the miracle that enabled the canonization.

"People frequently ask for relics. This phenomenon also is exponentially increasing, and the requests we receive come from all the parts of the world, from Australia to Eastern Europe, without mentioning Latin America," the sister said, reminding though that "really objective and clear" criteria are defined for the transfer



Tombstones of the Little Shepherds receive hundreds of visits each day

of relics. Basically, the requests must be sent by a parish or a person from a religious congregation. And the relics can be given neither to associations nor to particulars, in this context, a lot of requests "have already been declined," admitted the ex-Postulator.

Costa Rica is one of the most interesting cases that illustrate the increase of such a devotion, and more specifically the Parish of San Vicente Ferrer, in Moravia, where the Archbishop D. José Rafael Queirós authorized the relics given to the Parish by the Portuguese postulation to go out. Now, these relics accompany the Image of the Virgin of the Rosary (also offered by the Shrine of Fatima to the Parish) in her journey through all the parishes and places of the archdiocese.

"The faithful worship the relics and welcome them in a very simple yet very emotional way, not only because they were belonging to children, but also because they have to do with holy children whose testimony everyone is wishing to imitate," said Ricardo Casimiro, a devotee to Fatima and bearer of the relics to this remote place.

Besides the relics, the images of the Little Shepherds are also beginning to be enthroned in local churches. In Portugal, there are three churches consecrated to the little Shepherds and four in Poland.

"I believe that such a devotion to the Little Shepherds is bound to increase," said the ex-Postulator, drawing on an affirmation of Paul Claudel: "There are Saints that are made by the Church and welcomed by God; and there are

others that God makes and the Church tries to welcome..." recalled the religionist.

"Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus or Saint Anthony are saints that people worship without any specific effort to disseminate their history. I believe it will be the same with Francisco and Jacinta, but for the moment we will go on with our own work," she said, referring to the action of the Holy Spirit in the whole process.

Sister Ângela Coelho also reminded that: "The Church had never canonized children not-martyr before. The Holy Spirit will take care of the rest. Francisco and Jacinta are just starting to be universal saints."

The Dissemination of a Cult

Despite some resistance, mostly coming from the ecclesial sphere "which is now changing," Fatima continues to disseminate the worship of the Little Shepherds. For the most part through the devotional path created in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, where stand the tombs of Saint Francisco and Saint Jacinta Marto, and of their cousin Lúcia. The canonization process of the latter is now in Rome, waiting for the drafting and approval of the *Positio*—the text that shall be passed to posterity and in which should be confirmed the heroic virtues and sanctity of the sister of the Carmel who lived, contrary to her cousins, a really long life. The number of visitors to the tombs has increased, mostly on the commemorative dates and during the major celebrations organized in the Shrine.

The mission that consists in disseminating the worship of the Little Shepherds has now been entrusted to the *Fundação Francisco e Jacinta Marto*, a diocesan foundation created in July 2013 with strictly religious purposes.

The mission of the foundation, chaired by the ex-Postulator, Sister Ângela Coelho, is to contribute to the knowledge of the Little Shepherds of Fatima, to the dissemination of their spirituality, to the promotion of the devotion to them and to the sharing of the very Message of Fatima.

Francisco and Jacinta, from Shepherds to Saints

The two shepherds Francisco and Jacinta were granted a fame of sanctity from the beginning, mostly on behalf of the ordeals they had to endure, together with their cousin Lúcia, after having declared that they had witnessed the apparition of the Virgin Mary, all dressed in white, on the top of a holy oak in Cova da Iria where they were shepherding the cattle of the family.

Francisco Marto was born on June 11, 1908 and was baptized on the 20th of the same month, his younger sister was born on March 5, 1910 and baptized on the 19th. Both of them were born in Aljustrel and were baptized in the Parish of Fatima. They were the youngest of the seven children of Manuel Pedro Marto and Olímpia de Jesus, and cousins of Lúcia de Jesus (1907-2005).

Contrary to Lúcia, who lived cloistered until her 97th birthday, Francisco and Jacinta died in childhood. Weakened by the deprivations to which they willingly submitted themselves in order to “expiate” the sins of the world, they almost simultaneously caught the Spanish influenza, which killed more than 40 thousand people between 1918 and 1919. Francisco died at home after five months of agony, in April 1919. Jacinta was taken to the hospital, and her hospital bed became itself a place of pilgrimage, but she ended up dying the following year.

The three Shepherds witnessed several apparitions of an angel, during the spring, the autumn and the summer of 1916, in Laca do Cabeço and in the well of Lúcia’s house, who invited them to worship God. On the 13th of May 1917, they were visited, in Cova da Iria, by the Virgin Mary, who asked them to come back to that same spot on the thirteenth of each month until October.

Throughout the six encounters, the Lady of the Rosary showed the Little Shepherds the hope that God is offering to the world, affected by pain and evil, and invited them to dedicate themselves to the conversion of the human hearts, to the prayer of the Rosary, to the atoning sacrifice, and to the consecration of their own hearts and of the world to the Immaculate Heart.

The lives of Francisco and Jacinta were definitely altered in the light of this Message of Mercy. Francisco took on a life of contemplation, committed to the consolation of God, who appeared “so sad” to him. The Blessed Virgin recommended him to say many Rosaries. And Francisco said a lot, seeking the loneliness of the hill or the company of Jesus hidden in the tabernacle of his parish church, in order to “think about God”. Jacinta got impressed by the pain of the sinners and prayed and sacrificed herself for their conversion, for the peace in the world, and for the Holy Father: “I am in a lot of pain, but I offer it all for the conversion of the sinners and for the reparation of the Immaculate Heart of



The relics of the Little Shepherds worshipped in Costa Rica

Mary, and also to the Holy Father,” she confided to Lúcia when she was ill. And, shortly before her death, she said “In Heaven, I will love Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary a lot.” In Fatima, on the 13th of May of the Jubilee Year 2000, the pope John Paul II beatified them. Seventeen years later, Pope Francis canonized them.

What Pope Francis Said One Year Ago

Hope, peace and faith, that is what Pope Francis talked about in the homily of the Mass during which he canonized Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, on Saturday, May 13, 2017.

Francis said that the Blessed Virgin transmitted to the Little Shepherds a message of love and that it was the protective mantle of the mother of Jesus that protected them from all the difficulties.

We shall remember the words of Pope Francis: “[There] appeared in heaven (...) a woman clothed with the sun’. So the seer of Patmos tells us in the Book of Revelation (12:1), adding that she was ‘about to give birth to a son’. Then, in the Gospel, we hear Jesus say to his disciple, ‘Here is your mother’ (Jn 19:27). We have a Mother! ‘So beautiful a Lady’, as the seers of Fatima said to one another as they returned home on that blessed day of thirteenth of May a hundred years ago. That evening, Jacinta could not restrain herself and told the secret to her mother: ‘Today I saw Our Lady’. They had seen the Mother of Heaven. Many others sought to share that vision, but... they did not see Her. The Virgin Mother did not come here so that we could see her. We will have all eternity for that, provided, of course, that we go to Heaven.”

The Pope explained that the Virgin Mary did not appear to Jacinta, Francisco and Lúcia only to be seen by them, but to call for drastic changes of the humanity: “Our Lady foretold, and warned us about, a way of life that is goddess and indeed profanes God in his creatures. Such a life – frequently proposed and imposed – risks leading to hell. Mary came to remind us that God’s light dwells within us and protects us, for, as we heard in the first reading, ‘the child was snatched away and taken to God’ (Rev 12:5). In Lucia’s account, the three chosen children found

themselves surrounded by God’s light as it radiated from Our Lady. She enveloped them in the mantle of Light that God had given her. According to the belief and experience of many pilgrims, if not of all, Fatima is more than anything this mantle of Light that protects us, here as in almost no other place on earth. We need but take refuge under the protection of the Virgin Mary and to ask Her, as the *Salve Regina* teaches: ‘show unto us... Jesus’”.

The words of Mary in Fatima were words from a mother protecting her children and requesting conversion from the men to save them from Hell. Fatima is, for that, “a mantle of light” that covers humanity everywhere on Earth. The Pope called for the faithful to appeal to Mary to know Jesus. Francisco and Jacinta Marto, whom the Virgin Mary introduced into the immense ocean of God’s light and from where she taught them to adore Him, are examples of this hope and of this protection.

Pope Francis then explained the meaning of the protective mantle of the Virgin Mother: “In her Memoirs (III, 6), Sister Lucia quotes Jacinta who had just been granted a vision: ‘Do you not see all those streets, all those paths and fields full of people crying out for food, yet have nothing to eat? And the Holy Father in a church, praying before the Immaculate Heart of Mary? And all those people praying with him?’ Thank you, brothers and sisters, for being here with me! I could not fail to come here to venerate the Virgin Mary and to entrust to Her all her sons and daughters. Under her mantle they are not lost; from her embrace will come the hope and the peace that they require, and that I implore for all my brothers and sisters in baptism and in our human family, especially the sick and the disabled, the prisoners and the unemployed, the poor and the abandoned. Dear brothers and sisters, let us pray to God with the hope that Men will hear us; and let us speak to Men with the certainty that God will help us.”

“With Mary’s protection, may we be for our world sentinels of the dawn, contemplating the true face of Jesus the Saviour, resplendent at Easter. Thus may we rediscover the young and beautiful face of the Church, which shines forth when she is missionary, welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means and rich in love,” also said the Pope.



The body of Sister Lúcia is in Fatima since October 19, 2006

Lúcia: A Saint in the Heart of the People Waiting for Her Church

Ângela Coelho, vice-Postulator of the Cause of Canonization of Lúcia, hopes that the process related to the third seer of Fatima “who is not a shepherd” will also receive an answer in brief.

“It is not going to be easy,” she recognized, because we are talking about “someone with many dimensions, multifaceted: she is a woman, a Sister, a Carmelite and someone who disseminated the Message of Fatima.”

“Her life lasted nearly one hundred years, with a lot of levels of relationships, various kinds of relationships and relationships that dealt with problematics as important as consecration. There is a huge work to be done about a woman who, on top of all that, lived unique mystical experiences of God,” the vice-Postulator also said.

The Shrine of Fatima observed the liturgical feast of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto

F. Carlos Cabecinhas presided at the Celebration exhorting the pilgrims to pray for the Pope / Cátia Filipe

One year after the canonization of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, the Shrine of Fatima celebrated on February 20th the liturgical feast of the youngest non-martyrs saints of the Catholic Church.

The liturgical program started on February 19th with the prayer of the Rosary at the Chapel of the Apparitions in the presence of the icons of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, followed by a Vigil in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The Day of the Shepherds started with the Rosary in the Chapel of the Apparitions, followed by a procession to the Basilica of Most Holy Trinity where occur the Votive Mass of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

“Today is a day of joy and happiness”, said F. Carlos Cabecinhas, Rector of the Shrine of Fatima and president of the celebration. At the beginning, the priest reminded the pilgrims who were present that these two children “show how the Message of Fatima is the way of sanctity”.

F. Carlos Cabecinhas recalled the words of the Holy Father stated on May 13th, 2017, in Fatima, and underlined the fact that Francisco and Jacinta help us to discover “the beauty and the charm of the Christian sanctity as a vocation of all Christians”, as they show that the sanctity is a “close and possible reality”: “The Saints Francisco and Jacinta are a witness

of sanctity geographically close because they lived here where we are”.

The Rector of the Shrine invited the people present to visit the houses of the Little Shepherds, to walk the path they walked and to visit their graves so it can be possible to closer contemplate their example and understand that the sanctity “is the vocation of all Christian”.

At the end of the celebration, a group of children received a blessing.

In the afternoon, the Basilica of Most Holy Trinity welcomed 400 children from different schools of Fatima for a meeting.

After that, there was a visit to the graves of the Little Shepherds in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.



It already became a tradition for the children to give flowers to the Little Shepherds

The Shrine of Fatima Launches Major Celebrations Looking in the Direction of Asia

The Bishop emeritus of Hong Kong and the Bishop of Hiroshima will be presiding the opening and closing celebrations of the international anniversary pilgrimages in May and October / Carmo Rodeia



The Church of Portugal and of the whole world will be united in Fatima during the 2018 anniversary pilgrimages

One year after the Centenary of the Apparitions, the celebration of which culminated with Pope Francis's pilgrimage in Cova da Iria in May when he canonized Francisco and Jacinta Marto, the Shrine of Fatima is pursuing the work undertaken during seven years and which climaxed in 2017.

For this year and to preside the great international anniversary pilgrimages that commemorate the six apparitions of the Virgin Mary to the little Shepherds, the Shrine has invited several prelates, among which the Cardinal John Tong, Bishop emeritus of Hong Kong and Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama, Bishop of Hiroshima, each one to preside, respectively, the May and the October pilgrimages.

The Shrine of Fatima has been welcoming more and more pilgrims from Asia (around 40 thousand in organized groups only for the year 2017), as was recently reminded by the bishop of Leiria-Fátima, António Marto, in an allocution addressed to the representatives of the hotel sector in Fatima in the context of the 40th Encontro de Hoteleiros (meeting of hotel business representatives) annually promoted by the Institution.

"It was our duty to invite a bishop from Asia in Fatima", because "Asia is the axis towards which the Christian world is heading", said at that time the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima, underlining the

warmth and devotion shown by those pilgrims on every and each occasion he had dealt with them.

António Marto explained what was the process of selection and how he decided, intuitively, to send a letter to the secretary of the Cardinal John Tong, Bishop emeritus of Hong Kong, who answered immediately and positively, and who will be in Fatima on the next 12th and 13th of May to preside the international anniversary pilgrimage.

Later, Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama, Bishop of Hiroshima, contacted António Marto to ask for the relics of Saints Francisco and Santa Jacinta Marto, he then explained the problem of the war, and the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima took the opportunity to invite him to come to Fatima. Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama, Bishop of Hiroshima, will be peregrinating in Fatima with his diocese in October of this year and will preside the international anniversary pilgrimage which commemorates the miracle of the sun.

In June, The Shrine will welcome D. Manuel Pelino, Bishop emeritus of Santarém, who will preside the pilgrimage that commemorates the second apparition of the Blessed Virgin in Cova da Iria, which, in the Memories of Sister Lúcia, stands to remind us the mission that this Servant of God exercised regarding the devotion to

the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as a shelter and a path that should lead us to God. In July, António Augusto Azevedo, Auxiliary Bishop of Porto, will then preside the third international anniversary pilgrimage, and, in August, the Shrine will again welcome a foreign Bishop. Indeed, the international pilgrimage of August, which coincides with the Week of the Migrants who peregrinate to Fatima on the 13th of August, will be presided by the Cardinal Arlindo Gomes Furtado, Bishop of Santiago, Cape Verde. In September, it will be the turn of José Francisco Alves, Archbishop of Évora, who will preside the international anniversary pilgrimage that commemorates the fifth apparition of the Virgin Mary. The great pilgrimages will end with the presidency of the Japanese Bishop from Hiroshima, in October.

With this selection of presidents for the celebrations, the Shrine of Fatima intends, once more, to involve the Portuguese Church as well as the Church in the whole world, acknowledging thus the tendency to internationalization not only of the events and of the message, but also of the Shrine itself.

It is to be noted that these great pilgrimages will share a common theme "Give thanks to God for the gift of Fatima", making the most of this new 3-year cycle that is just starting as a "moment of Grace and Mercy".

Paschal Triduum Celebrated in an Inclusive Manner in Fatima where Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto were Evocated on Easter Vigil

The celebrations were presided by the Rector of the Shrine / Carmo Rodeia

The Paschal Triduum celebrations of the Shrine were interpreted, for the first time, in Portuguese sign language (LGP, língua gestual portuguesa) and the deaf community has been honoured by the rector of the Shrine during the Easter Vigil for their massive participation to the celebrations.

The first step of the Shrine's commitment to bring more inclusion was taken in 2013, with the implementation of interpretation services in LGP for the 3 pm Sunday Mass in the Basilica of the Holy Trinity, and it became really substantial during the year of Centenary with the whole May pilgrimage interpreted in Portuguese Sign Language, in the presence of Pope Francis, and then again for the October one.

And the novelties of this Triduum also included the Easter Vigil when, during the litany, the names of the youngest saints, not martyr, of the Universal Church, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, were invoked for the first time as such.

The celebrations were attended by a great number of Portuguese pilgrims, but also by pilgrims from Spain, Brazil, Italy, Malta and the United States of America, most of them organized in 32 groups of pilgrims which had announced their presence to the Shrine.

During the Easter Vigil, the rector of the Shrine of Fatima said that the resurrection was "the bedrock and cornerstone" of the Christian faith, hope and trust.

"The resurrection of Jesus Christ dispels the darkness of our fears and renews our trust", said Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, recalling that the words uttered by the Messenger at His tomb "are an invitation to be confident", as well as a challenge and an interpellation.

"The resurrection shows us that we shall not be afraid", the priest added underlining that, from our faith in resurrection, "sprouts our trust". "At night, the darkness and the gloominess synthesize our fears; symbolize our uncertainties and our state of doubtfulness and distress" he said, posing a challenge, like in the Scriptures: "go, bear witness and proclaim", underlining that the appeal to women is tremendously relevant today and should be addressed to all the Christians.

"Being baptized implied bringing

hope to those who live in despair" and considering Jesus Christ as the only one who saves and gives life" the Rector concluded.

The idea of a new life, built from the death and resurrection of Jesus, was ever-present in each moment of the celebration and in each word pronounced by Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas throughout the Holy Week. In the homily of the Easter Sunday Mass, the rector of the Shrine urged the pilgrims to be the witnesses of the resurrected Christ through their own lives.

Justifying the importance of Easter as "the most important Christian celebration", the priest began underlining the belief in the resurrection as "the hallmark and the cornerstone of the Christian faith".

"It is in the certainty that Jesus Christ resurrected that the Christian faith is rooted; in this certainty that, always present among us, He unites us and manifests Himself in our lives", he said, deducing from three challenges for the Christians from the Liturgy of this Sunday of festivities: "learn to 'read' the signs of the presence of the resurrected Christ in our lives; bear

witness of the encounter with the living Christ; and imitate Jesus who went about doing good".

On the cross lays the "the proof of love that gives life" he said on Good Friday highlighting that this instrument of death and ordeal became "a symbol of love, mercy and salvation".

Thus, "contemplating the cross we should not see any longer a symbol of death, but a proof of love that gives life", the priest said.

During the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper that started the celebration of the Paschal Triduum, the rector underlined that the vocation of all the Christians "is eucharistic", which means is "a vocation to serve love".

"The communion with Christ is not possible if we forget or ignore the others, our brothers. The communion with Christ is not possible without a humble attitude of service to the others" claimed the one in charge of the Shrine of Fatima.

With Easter started a new celebratory agenda in the Shrine of Fatima, which can be consulted at www.fatima.pt.



The Mass of the Lord's Supper was attended by the collaborators of the Shrine of Fatima

The Mail to Our Lady

Messages that tell the story of Fatima and of the world / Diogo Alves



Oblate Sisters collect and sort the letters that come with the prayer requests

In the Shrine of Fatima, there is a very special postal item: The Mail to Our Lady, through which pilgrims can send messages to the Blessed Virgin. The letters can be left in one of the following places: pedestal of the venerated Image, Chapel of the Apparitions, nearby the tombstones of the seers, or even in the boxes usually used for the alms. Some messages are also coming back to the Shrine with the images of the Pilgrim Mother returning from their pilgrimage all over the world. And for those who cannot dispatch their messages through one of these means, it is still possible to send them by mail, e-mail or even by phone.

Messages are coming on various supports: paper, back of a photograph or even on fabric, and through them “the believers express their joys and concerns, using different languages and idioms.”

What are these messages about? “Most of them are expressing gratitude to or calling for the intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary or of the seers of Fatima. There are also lists of sacrifices, prayers, good deeds, participations to celebrations or other acts achieved in praise to God, Our Lady or with any other intention,” says André Melícias, in charge of the coordination of the *Serviço de Arquivo e Biblioteca do Santuário* (Archives Service and Library of the Shrine), in a presentation made on this subject, during the *Jornadas de Arquivo* (Archives Days) organized last March by the *Departamento de Estudos do Santuário de Fátima* (Department of Studies of the Shrine of Fatima).

When they reach the Shrine, all the messages are transmitted to the care of the *Congregação das Irmãs Oblatas de Maria Virgem de Fátima* (Congregation of the Oblate Sisters of the Virgin Mary of Fatima). This first step includes sorting the messages by language, counting them and packing them up in bundles, which are subsequently archived in boxes. On the occasion of an interview for the bulletin *Voz da Fátima* during the year of the Centenary, the Superior of the com-

munity explained that the Sisters were not reading the messages placed directly on the pedestal, though they sort them by language. Yet, the messages arriving by standard mail or e-mail are always read, considering that some of them could contain concrete requests implying some kind of action.

Some of these letters receive answers drawn up by the Sisters themselves. At the end of each year, all the documentation is sent to the Archives of the Shrine.

In her analysis of the meanings of this dynamics, André Melícias speaks of a “necessity to perpetuate the religious experience of prayer, materializing it on a support that allows to overcome the limits of time and space.” Therefore, it is a way for pilgrims to “get over physical distance,” she underlines.

André Melícias observes that “these letters are also a handing over from the part of the believer to an entity in charge of the cult. In them, the believer opens out his joys and his fears to God, often using the form of a prayer or a praise, but also in a more direct and transparent way through a catalogue of requests, or expressing deep relieves, confessions or considerations.”

A huge potential for studies and scientific examinations

The Mail to Our Lady is a practice that “originated documentary resources kept in the Archives of the Shrine which are highly relevant in the light of the umbilical link that justifies the very existence of the Shrine: the link to the pilgrims, their faith and to the motives that bring them to the Shrine,” says the Coordinator of the Archives of the Shrine.

On the base of the analysis of some messages dating back to the middle of the last century, André Melícias concluded that they reveal different contexts, with some recurring topics, from questions linked to private matters, mainly related to health and family

dramas, to questions dealing with collective concerns: the social dramas of the period (i.e. colonial wars, with calls for intercession for the peace), social undercurrents, population movements, religious practices and pastoral dynamics.

For this very reason, the archives present a “huge potential for studies and scientific examinations,” says the Responsible. Nevertheless, she also reminds that as far as the access to and the use of the information contained herein is concerned, it is very important to take some questions into consideration like: the relevance of the contained information, its accessibility, the potential use of it, as well as the issues linked to data protection.

“If we can demand the investigator to look at the documentation with objectivity and impartiality, we can’t request the same from the believer and, moreover, if we can assume that the pilgrims who left their messages here would like the idea that, years after, these documents might be studied as testimonies of faith, we must also assume that some other pilgrims could perceive such a possibility as a violation of their privacy, and consider it as a reason not to accomplish any longer such a devotional act. Strictly speaking, what is written in the Mail to Our Lady may not always be secret, confidential or private, but is nevertheless always intimate, interior and deep, because it results from something shared between the believer and the Holy one,” she added.

The Shrine of Fatima has, through the latest decades, promoted the collection and conservation of all this documentation, without having, nonetheless, allowed the access to it, except in some really specific cases and with restrictive conditions regarding the level of incommunicability of personal data.

“It will be a challenge to find a poised solution, but it can only be through a very clear definition of the way to proceed that we can guarantee the correct use of the information, promoting at once the production of knowledge and the respect of the intimacy of the believers who are depositing their messages for Our Lady of the Rosary in Fatima,” she concluded.

350 linear metres of archives

The archiving of the documentary resources collected through the Mail to Our Lady mainly started in the fifties of the last century and now occupies around 350 linear metres of racks. Splitting them by units installed chronologically every 5 years, one can verify a strong increase of the rhythm of growth, above all between 2000 and 2010, then a slight slowdown over the five following years, in parallel with the slight decrease of the number of pilgrims experienced by the Shrine during the crisis.

Pope Paul VI (1897-1978) to be canonized in 2018

First Pope to visit Fatima on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Apparitions / Cátia Filipe

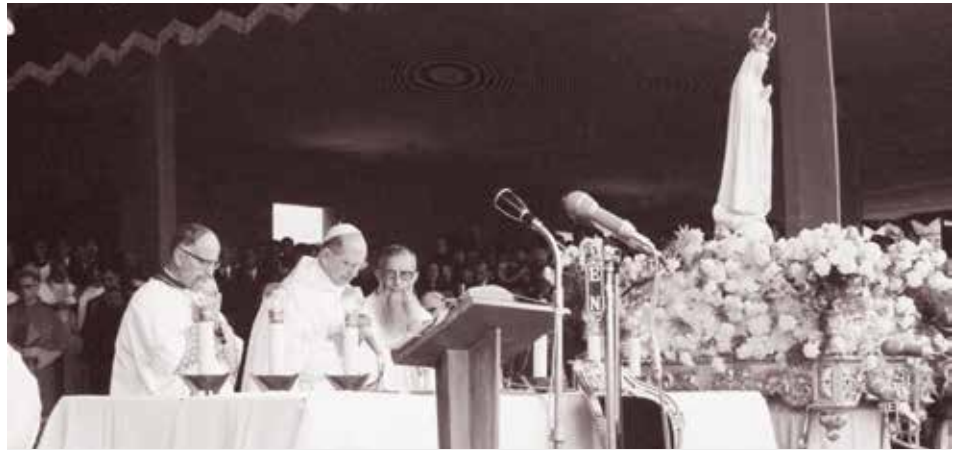
Pope Francis approved the miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Paul VI, opening the way to his canonization.

In February, Pope Francis announced during a meeting with the clergy of the diocese of Rome that Paul VI (1897-1978) is going to be canonized in 2018.

Paul VI was the first Pope to visit Fatima on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Marian apparitions in Cova da Iria. He came as a pilgrim “to honor the Most Blessed Mother and invoke Her intercession in favor of the peace of the Church and the world”.

In Fatima, Paul VI reminded that the first receivers of the Message of Fatima were the children and the poor and referred in his homily of May 13th, 1967, the atheists regime, “countries where the religious freedom is nearly suppressed and where the denial of God is promoted, as if this denial was the truth of new times and the freedom of peoples”.

The Pope came to Cova da Iria with his concern about a world in jeopardy because of the arms race and because of hunger. When it was time to leave, he asked the pilgrims to pray “humbly and fervently for the peace of



Paul VI was the first Pope to visit Fatima on May 13, 1967

the Church and the peace in the world”.

Paul VI wanted to come personally to Fatima as a pilgrim on May 13th, 1967, despite the diplomatic tension due to the Italian Pope's journey to the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay in 1964, after India had annexed Goa, Daman and Diu.

Paul VI decided that the plane that transported him from Rome was to land in Monte

Real and not in Lisbon; he was accommodated in the diocese of Leiria (today Diocese of Leiria-Fatima).

The journey was announced in the general audience of May 3rd, 1967 and presented as a “pilgrimage to honor the Most Blessed Mother and to invoke Her intercession in favor of the peace of the Church and the peace of the world”.

The Shrine of Fatima Recalled the Fifth Anniversary of Pope Francis's Pontificate

This anniversary date was recalled during Marsh monthly pilgrimage mass / Cátia Filipe

The Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity, within the Shrine of Fatima, hosted this mass as part of the Marsh monthly pilgrimage program. During the mass, which was presided by the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis's pontificate was recalled as a date that “cannot be ignored” and that is challenging us all to pray for the Holy Father.

“Praying for the Pope is a permanent objective in this place, as an integral part of the message of Fatima”, he also reminded.

During the Prayer of the Faithful, Pope Francis was recalled again in an appeal for “Our Lady to protect him in his mission”. The Prayer for the Peace was also included in the celebration and asked for “the one looking for peace and harmony to be successful in stopping the war”.

In May 2017, the Shrine of Fatima received the visit of Pope Francis who came to canonize Jacinta and Francisco Marto.

This was the seventh visit of a pope to the Shrine of Fatima. Paul VI (1967), John Paul II (1982, 1991 and 2000) and Benedict XVI (2010) were the previous pontiffs to visit Portugal.

In the speeches he gave in Fatima, Francis called for peace and harmony and recalled those who are excluded from the society as



Simplicity and proximity are the main characteristics of Pope Francis

well as all those who suffer from the consequences of the persisting conflicts in several countries of the world.

When he appeared on the 13th of May 2013 on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, as the crowd was shouting “Long live the Pope!”, Francis, the first Jesuit Pope, called for “fraternity” between the

1.2 billion Catholics, prayed together with the crowd on St Peter's Square and underlined that the Cardinals “went to the end of the world” to elect him.

Up to now, the Head of the Catholic Church's pontificate has been marked by simplicity and proximity in addressing social dramas.

The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima Welcomed the Participants of the VI International Workshop on Religious Tourism

The event took place in the Paul VI Pastoral Center in Fatima / Cátia Filipe

The Paul VI Pastoral Center in Fatima hosted during three days the VI International Workshop on Religious Tourism, an initiative promoted by the Associação Empresarial Ourém-Fátima (Business Association Ourém-Fátima) and conducted in collaboration with the municipalities of Ourém and Guarda and with the Shrine of Fatima.

This year, the event gathered approximately 700 participants from 39 countries, who shared an interest in the global topic of religious tourism and more specifically in the proposed subject: "Globalization and Religious Tourism".

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, addressed a welcome speech to all the participants and recalled that "the celebration of the Centenary of the Apparitions consolidated the internationalization of Fatima, confirming that the place was, at an international scale, the most significant destination of religious tourism in Portugal".

"The diversity of origins of the pilgrims who come to Fatima each year proves that the Shrine is internationally renowned and looked-for", he added, reminding that this



Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas recalled the key moments of the Centenary of the Apparitions

fact "was clear in the past, but became, after the celebration of the Centenary of the Apparitions, particularly obvious with the increase of pilgrims arriving from all the continents".

The main objective of the VI International Workshop on Religious Tourism is

to promote the creation of business contacts between the participants, to promote Portugal as a major destination of religious tourism and to strengthen the importance of religious tourism within the tourism sector at a global level.

The Shrine of Fatima Recalled "Those Excluded From Society" and the Children "Victims of Social Injustice" during the Evocation of the Apparitions of the Angel

The meditation on the Rosary was completed based on Benedict XVI's homilies of 2010 / Carmo Rodeia

On the last 21st of March, the Shrine of Fatima evoked the apparitions of the Angel through a procession that started from the Chapels of the Apparitions and went on to Poço do Arneiro and Loca do Anjo.

During the *Via Matris*, following the path of the little shepherds, the Rector, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, recalled "those excluded from society", as well as the necessity to "defend the life and fundamental rights of the human being" and the children "victims of social injustice, family disintegration and violence".

"Following the example of Our Lady of Sorrows, we ask You to learn how to fight to defend the life and fundamental rights of the human being against the injustice and persecution of the powerful", said the rector in one of the prayers he made in the course of the *Via Matris*.

During the 950-meter itinerary, following the path of the little shepherds towards the hill of Valinhos, the pilgrims were invited to listen to the Gospel, which was followed by a short prayer said by the rector of the Shrine and eventually by the Litany of Peace.



In Poço do Arneiro, the pilgrims recalled the requests that the Angel made to the Little Shepherds

The Shrine of Fatima Participated to the World Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace

This initiative was called for by the Holy Father, the Pope Francis / Cátia Filipe



A day of prayer was called for by Pope Francis on February 4

The Shrine of Fatima participated to the World Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace, called for by Pope Francis, on Friday the 23rd of February.

The recitation of the Rosary, at noon, in the Chapel of the Apparitions, was attended by all the collaborators of the Shrine. The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, called for the peace in the world, with a special attention given to the Democratic Republic of Congo and to South Soudan, where situations of con-

flict are persisting; and also to Syria, where the number of war victims has multiplied, many of them being children.

“In Fatima, the Rosary, which is the greatest prayer for peace, helps us not to become indifferent in front of so much suffering, to respect the memory of so many innocent victims, and is a means not to let our heart become callous in front of the evil that took away from us so many of our brothers”, he recalled.

The Pope called for this special day on

the 4th of February, referring notably to the victims of the on-going conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Soudan.

“Faced with the tragic prolonging of conflicts in various parts of the world, I invite all the faithful to join me in a Special Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace on the 23rd of February, the Friday of the First week of Lent”, he announced from the window of the papal apartment, after having recited the prayer of the *Angelus*

East Timor Tourism Minister Visited the Shrine of Fatima

Manuel Vong was welcomed by Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas / Cátia Filipe

The East Timor Tourism Minister visited the Shrine of Fatima, where he was welcomed by the Rector, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas.

In the course of an informal conversation, Manuel Vong highlighted the expression of the Marian devotion among the Timorese, and especially their devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, whom the Timorese Catholics are praying, asking Her for peace in their country.



Manuel Vong received the official rosary of the Shrine of Fatima

The Parish of San Sebastián Mártir, Toledo, Welcomed the Image of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima

The visit took place from the 13th to the 25th of February in a festive and worshipping atmosphere / P. Juan Carlos López



An intense program of prayer had been prepared to receive the Pilgrim Virgin

It is a pleasure for us to bear witness of the tender and sublime impression that the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima left after she came to our lovely village.

For Her arrival, we had prepared a daily programme to allow Her to visit all the places that had requested it and those that most needed Her magnificent presence. In each of these places a daily Eucharist has been celebrated to praise Her, attended by more people than we expected, and, after the mass, the prayer of the Holy Rosary has been said with a deep faith and devotion that brought together all our brothers and fellow countrymen.

She was also received in both of our schools where She has been honoured and praised by the children, who said they felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to kiss the Pilgrim Virgin's feet.

As well, the children of all ages attending catechism classes (for the holy communion and the confirmation) gathered in the parish to pray the rosary and, once they had finished, they kissed Her feet, and so were brought together the Holy Mother and the youth in a devotional act that brought them peace and maternal love.

Inside our hearts the light and fire of this motherly love shined, this kind of love that only a mother can arouse in the hearts of her children, to see them united in the fraternity of a true family.

In our village, as in other places of the world, we miss a real and cohesive faith

which bears the fecund fruits of solidarity with our neighbour and of true charity. Nevertheless, this is not a reason to diminish. Nevertheless our efforts, we felt that our Holy Mother, with her humble and stunning presence, wanted to assist this small Spanish village and she gave us that impulse, enlivening the fire of our faith and of our love, as well as the strength of the Holy Spirit, which she knows how to apportion perfectly, with the grace of God the Father, so that we can continue fighting to keep the faith of our brothers and to disseminate it.

Tender mother, listening, covering our needs with her mantle, giving us peace in

our tribulations, supporting our faith and increasing it, healing our hearts, grateful for our prayers, mistress in the knowledge of her Son Jesus Christ, pious and worthy of devotion, such is our Blessed Mother of Fatima, who brings us so many blessings and so much love, and who managed that day to bring together people who simply needed a caress from their mother, so that, among tears of emotion, white tissues and the singing of Her anthem, we could say goodbye to her with pain but also in the hope that she will travel the world, raising the hearts, and that she will come back soon to see us so we could praise her.



The devotion to the Virgin of Fatima was almost palpable throughout Her visit

The City of Rapone Was Consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

During the year of the Centenary of the Apparitions in Fatima, the Movement of the Message of Fatima took more than one initiative / Vita De Luca - MMF Basilicata

In October 2016, the parish community of Rapone, in Italy, welcomed the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, who was accompanied by a representative of the Movement of the Message of Fatima.

During the year of the Centenary of the Apparitions in Fatima, the Movement of the Message of Fatima (M.M.F.) took many initiatives related to the messengers of Rapone.

In the parish of the Bishop of Saint Nicholas, the practice of the First Saturdays of the month has been implemented as requested by Our Lady when she appeared to the Little Shepherds. Besides, during the pastoral care of the sick of the M.M.F., every Friday the messengers and the parish priest, Pe. Giovanni De Palma, visit a sick person, reciting the Holy Rosary and disseminating the message of the Blessed Lady dressed in white.

The MMF of Basilicata received, the year that preceded the postulation of Fatima, the relics of Saints Francisco and Jacinta, and organized a group in the parish: the children of the Little Shepherds of Fatima "Saints Francisco and Jacinta", in which children are taught to pray the Rosary and learn the spirituality of the Holy Little Shepherds.

This region established a "spiritual bridge" with the Portuguese Shrine, and, on the 12th of each month, a vigil of prayers is organized, during which they recite the rosary and meditate as a preparation for the 13th, day on which the apparition of the Blessed Virgin is recalled.

At the end of the Jubilee Year (Centenary), on the 8th of December, day of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the messengers together with the parish priest, Pe. Giovanni De Palma, required the Mayor of the municipality, Felicetta Lorenzo, that the city be consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The municipality chose a small square just at the entrance of the city and gave it the name of "Oasis of Our Lady of Fatima", and on the same square was enthroned the image brought from the Shrine of Fatima and blessed in the Chapel of the Apparitions.



The region maintains a very strong link to the Message of Fatima

The image represents the second apparition of the 13th of June 1917 and designates the Immaculate Heart of Mary as a shelter.

On the 8th of December, Felicetta Lorenzo also transmitted the keys of the city of Rapone reciting the Act of Consecration as a sign of allegiance to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The City of Rapone Organized its First Celebration of the Holy Little Shepherds of Fatima, Saints Francisco and Jacinta

The celebrations started on the 13th of February, the commemoration day of the death of Sister Lucia / Vita De Luca - MMF Basilicata

Rapone in Italy and Fatima are getting increasingly closer. What relates these two cities, apparently so remote, are the relics of Saints Francisco and Jacinta, the brother and sister who witnessed the Marian apparitions in Fatima, together with their cousin Lucia.

The celebrations started on the 13th of February, the anniversary day of the death of Sister Lucia, with a Eucharistic hour consecrated to this third shepherdess who lived until 2005.

On the 17th of February, a convention was organized about the spirituality of the Holy Shepherds: "Saints Francisco and Jacinta: an adult faith".

Pe. Valter Maria Arrigoni Monaco, Felicetta Lorenzo, Mayor of the municipality, Vita De Luca, representative of the M.M.F. of Basilicata and Pe. Giovanni De Palma, the priest of the parish, participated to the event.

On the 20th of February, a sound machine started diffusing the music of the Marian Canticles early in the morning in order to give a festive touch to the day, then a solemn mass took place in the main church celebrated by Mons. Ciro Fanelli, Pe. Giuseppe



February the 20th was lived through with a deep devotion

Vivilecchia, parish priest and representative of the M.M.F. of Castelgrande, Pe. Angelico, missionary, and Pe. Giovanni De Palma, in the presence of all the children of the school of Rapone, of Felicetta Lorenzo, Mayor of the city, and of all the inhabitants. During the holy mass, the bishop blessed the relics and individually blessed all the children

that were present. At night, the children of Rapone, together with the children of Castelgrande, recited the Holy Rosary with Alessandra, representative of the M.M.F. Italy. It all ended with a kiss given to the relics, and all the children that were present also praised the relics chanting the anthem of the Little Shepherds.

VIII Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Fatima – Association of the devotees of the Virgin of Fatima (Getafe, Spain)

The pilgrimage took place between the 12th and the 15th of April / Antonio Huerta Bustos - Association of the Devotees of Virgin of Fatima



The Sunday Eucharist was celebrated in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary

For the eighth consecutive year, from the 12th to the 15th of April, the Association of the Devotees of the Virgin of Fatima organised their annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Fatima. 136 pilgrims were taking part to it, part of them had already come in the previous years, but there were also a lot of pilgrims who were

going to visit our Heavenly Mother, the Lady of Fatima, for the first time.

We were accompanied by D. José Ramón, priest for the parish of Santa Teresa de Jesús, by D. Orlando, priest for the parish of Santa Catalina de Alejandria, by D. Manuel, vicar of Ntra. Sra. de Buenavista, and, once again, by a

religionist from the *Fundación Inmaculada*.

We went through several solemn moments during these four days, among which we wish to highlight the daily prayer of the Holy Rosary, as requested by the Lady of Fatima to the three Little Shepherds; but also the celebration of the Eucharist in the Chapel of Apparitions, celebrated on Thursday by the Pe. Manuel, and concelebrated on Friday and Saturday by the other priests who were accompanying us and celebrated by the Bishop of Cádiz, D. Rafael, who some of us had the opportunity to greet later on.

We celebrated the Holy Hour in the Chapel of the Resurrection of Jesus; the Way of the Cross on Friday afternoon. Four of our pilgrims also enjoyed the privilege of carrying Our Lady's stand during the candlelight procession, which took place on Saturday, and as a corollary, on Sunday at 6H30, we celebrated the Eucharist in the Basilica of Our Lady of Rosary. And we could not miss to organize a cultural moment, with the visit of the village of Nazaré on Saturday morning.

On Sunday morning, 88 pilgrims went to the Sanctuary's Rectory to visit the exhibition "Fátima Light and Peace" in the Museum.

On our way back home, the testimonies of the pilgrims who had joined us revealed that all of them were full of love for the Blessed Virgin, filled with spiritual grace and that they were all expecting to return to Fatima in the years to come, should God and Our Lady allow it.



The Via Sacra was a subject of meditation on the Path of the Little Shepherds

13th Anniversary of the Death of Sister Lúcia de Jesus Recalled in Fatima

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas recalled the life of the little shepherdess during February monthly pilgrimage mass / Cátia Filipe



Sister Lúcia met John Paul II when he visited Portugal

The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, presided the February monthly pilgrimage mass in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity during which he recalled the 13th anniversary of the death of Sister Lúcia de Jesus, one of the seers of the apparitions of 1917.

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas recalled the life of the little shepherdess, in relation to whom the diocesan phase of the canonization pro-

cess has been passed to the direct competency of the Holy See and the Pope since February 2017.

Born in Aljustrel, like her cousins Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, Lúcia de Jesus witnessed, in Cova da Iria on the 13th of May 1917, the apparition of the Virgin Mary, and reported it in her testimony, which was recognized by the Catholic Church.

Together with her cousins, the blessed

Francisco and Jacinta Marto, she received three times the visit of an Angel (1916) and six times the visit of the Blessed Virgin (1917), who asked them to pray and do penance in reparation for and for the conversion of the sinners.

Her special assignment consisted in propagating the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the core of the Message of Fatima. In virtue of the mission entrusted to her, she afterward received more visits from the Virgin Mary, as well as great mystical graces that helped her pursue her journey with faithfulness.

She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Dorothy in Spain in 1925, where the apparitions of Tuy and Pontevedra took place, apparitions of the Holy Trinity, of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus.

As she was longing for a more contemplative life in order to meet the expectations expressed in the message entrusted by the Virgin Mary, she entered the Carmelite convent of Coimbra in 1948, where she dedicated herself more deeply to prayer and sacrifice. There, she took the name of Maria Lúcia of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart.

Sister Lúcia held meetings with Popes, Heads of States or Governments, filmmakers and simple people; she answered thousands of postcards and prayer requests a correspondence that was analyzed and studied in the context of the diocesan phase of the Cause of Canonization that ended on the 13th of February 2017.

The process implied the analysis of thousands of postcards and texts, besides the listening of 61 witnesses, which resulted in more than 15 thousand pages of documentation sent at that time to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (Holy See).

Sister Lúcia died on the 13th of February 2005.

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Please help us spread the Message of Our Lady through 'Fatima Light and Peace'!

Zakopane-Krzeptówki in Poland will be consecrated as National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima

The ceremony will take place on the 13th of May of this year / P. Marian Mucha SAC

It is a great joy for the Pallottines fathers of Zakopane-Krzeptówki to announce that, by decision of the Polish Episcopal Conference taken on March 14, 2018, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima has been instituted in Zakopane-Krzeptówki.

The decree of the Polish Episcopal Conference was handed over by His Excellency the Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, president of the Polish Episcopal Conference, to the provincial superior of the Pallottines, P. Zenon Hanas SAC, and to the caretaker of the Shrine in Zakopane, P. Marian Mucha SAC, at the seat of the Secretariat of the Polish Episcopal Conference in Warsaw on March 28, 2018.

The decision of the Polish Episcopal Conference is the final outcome that crowns and binds together the following successive developments:

1950: With the consent of the then Metropolitan Archbishop of Krakow, His Excellency Eugeniusz Baziak, the Pallottines fathers of the Province of Christ the King, established their seat in Zakopane-Krzeptówki, which was to be the future centre of worship of Fatima.

1961: The Bishop of the diocese of Leiria offered the Cardinal Primate His Excellency Stefan Wyszyński an image of Our Lady of Fatima. According to the intention of the donator, the image was supposed to peregrinate across this part of Europe that stood on the other side of the "iron curtain", where, because Russia was textually mentioned in the Message of Fatima, Our Lady of Fatima was not allowed. The Cardinal Wyszyński, known in Poland as Primate of the Millennium, offered this precious image to the Pallottines of Krzeptówki and convinced them to carry the Image of Our lady of Fatima—as well as the Message She had transmitted—around their Motherland. The image, consecrated by the bishop His Excellency Karol Wojtyła, then auxiliary bishop of the archdiocese of Krakow, began its peregrinations across the Polish parishes which lasted for 25 years, always and in each places with the so-called "retreats of Fatima" preached by the Pallottines fathers of Krzeptówki.

May 13, 1981: On the anniversary date of the first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, on Saint Peter's Square in Rome, took place an attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II. On the same day, at the altar of the Image of the Virgin of Fatima in Zakopane-Krzeptówki, on the very beginning of the fervent prayers to save the life of the Holy Father, father Mirosław Drozdek SAC had sworn: "if God saves the life of John Paul II, we will build here a temple as a thanksgiving for



The decision was communicated on March 28, 2018

saving the life of the Supreme Pastor of the Church."

October 21, 1987: In a solemn act that took place in Rome, John Paul II crowned the image of our Lady of Fatima in Zakopane-Krzeptówki. According to the words of the Holy Father, the crown of the Blessed Virgin "must remind us everything She is doing for her people."

April 22, 1992: The Apostolic Penitentiary granted to the shrine of Zakopane-Krzeptówki the privilege of plenary indulgence under the usual conditions for the pilgrims who participate piously to the liturgical ceremonies or at least who pray the Lord's Prayer or the Creed:

- 1) In the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and of the Assumption into Heaven of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as well as on each May 13,
- 2) Once a year on a day freely chosen by the faithful,
- 3) Every time when the pilgrims arrive in group to the shrine.

June 7, 1997: This day came to the altar of Our Lady in Zakopane-Krzeptówki a very special pilgrim: The Holy Father John Paul II. In the act of consecration of our church he pronounced the words that, confirming his papal charisma, bear a very special meaning for the shrine of Fatima in Zakopane: "Dear brothers and sisters! Your shrine in Zakopane-Krzeptówki is particularly near and dear to me. (...) The history of this shrine is also linked with the event which took place in Saint Peter's Square on the 13th of May 1981. (...) I know that you gathered in your parish churches and in the Chapel of Our Lady of Fatima in Krzeptówki to recite the rosary to obtain for me a recovery of health and strength. At that time plans were first made to build here, at the

foot of Mount Giewont, a shrine to Our Lady of Fatima as a votive offering of thanksgiving for my life having been spared. I know that this shrine, which today I am able to consecrate, was built by many hands and many hearts united by hard work, sacrifice and love for the Pope. It is hard for me to speak of this without being moved. (...) I have come among you to thank you for your goodness, your thoughts and your continuing prayer. (...) You have always helped me. You were with me and you understood my concerns. I felt this. It was a great support for me. Today I thank you from my heart for this attitude of faith and devotion to the Church. (...) *Totus tuus...* I thank you all for this church. It is filled with your love for the Church and for the Pope. In some sense it is the continu-

ation of my gratitude to God and to his Mother. Together with you I rejoice greatly in this gift."

June 6, 2017: 20 years after this act of consecration of our church by John Paul II, many pilgrims came to the altar of Our Lady in the shrine of Zakopane-Krzeptówki to celebrate in the "polish Fatima" the centenary of the Apparitions in Cova da Iria in 1917. The key moment of these celebrations was the renewal of the "Act of Consecration of the Motherland and of the Church in Poland to the Immaculate Heart of Mary," celebrated by the president of the Polish Episcopal Conference, His Excellency the Metropolitan Archbishop of Poznan, Stanisław Gądecki. The Archbishop of Poznan pronounced the words of entrusting and consecration in the presence of all the Polish bishops and the representatives of the Supreme Authorities of the State: the president, Andrzej Duda and his wife, the then first minister of the Polish government, Beata Szydło, and a lot of other representatives of the government, of the parliament and of the local authorities.

We understand the decision of the Polish Episcopal Conference regarding the institution in Zakopane-Krzeptówki of a National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima as an ecclesial mandate and a compromise imposed by the Church to the "Pallottine family" in order to vehemently serve the ideas of Fatima so as to deserve the honourable and demanding name of "Polish Fatima".

The solemn designation of Zakopane-Krzeptówki as a National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima will take place on the 13th of May together with the beginning of the anniversary celebrations of the Apparitions in Fatima. This act will be celebrated by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Krakow, His excellency Marek Jędraszewski.

Theologico-Pastoral Symposium to Reflect on the Meaning of Fatima in the Contemporaneous World

The initiative will take place from the 22nd to the 24th of June / Diogo Carvalho Alves

From the 22nd to the 24th of June, the Shrine of Fatima will organize in the auditorium Bom Pastor of the Centro Pastoral de Paulo VI, the Theologico-Pastoral Symposium "Fatima today: what does it mean?". This seminar was proposed as a distinctive contribution to the analysis and understanding of the theme suggested by the Shrine for this pastoral year: "Give Thanks for the Gift of Fatima", which is included in the three-year period 2017-2020 whose global theme is "Time of Grace and Mercy".

"One hundred years later and after the period of necessary celebrations meant to evoke this fundamental event, it seems utterly relevant that, looking at the human activities and reactions about the events that took place in Cova da Iria, we assume different ways of thinking and question the meaning that Fatima will keep having, once the page of the year 2017 has been turned," wrote the president of the commission organizing the symposium, Marco Daniel Duarte, in the brochure that disclosed his proposal.

The three-day program is focused on the Message of Fatima, with a stimulating roadmap based on verbs of action: "receive and live" on the first day, "live and proclaim" for the second, and "bethink" as a conclusion. Researchers from various colleges, national and international, will think about the human existence adopting the perspective of the events and of the protagonists of Fatima in order to present "a vision of the complex and manifold contemporaneous world."

"The first hundred years of Fatima can be considered as having contributed to enhance the reflection on humanity, and this new century, taking advantage of the first, will undoubtedly bring other key perspectives that will clearly be related to the transversal problematics of the questioning of the human being who is living the beginning of this new century of Fatima," wrote Marco Daniel Duarte.

The researchers who will participate to the Symposium, through various prisms of approach (theological, philosophical, historical), will scrutinize the current position of the humanity in front of the theme of the presence of God, "theme that underlies the historical context of the beginning of Fatima and that will continue to be blatantly actual in the context of the first decades of the new century of Fatima," in a program which, besides the conferences, includes moments of prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist.

The first day will underline the importance of the Message of Fatima for the contemporaneous world and will culminate with a cultural moment: a concert in the Basilica of Our lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The second day will enhance the importance of the Shrine of Fatima in the contemporaneous times, in the perspective of "whether it be the Message or the Shrine it-

1.º ANO DO CICLO PASTORAL TEMPO DE GRAÇA E MISERICÓRDIA

SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
ANO PASTORAL • 2017-2018

SIMPÓSIO TEOLÓGICO-PASTORAL
**FÁTIMA HOJE:
QUE SENTIDO?**

de 22 a 24 de junho de 2018
Centro Pastoral de Paulo VI

DAR
GRAÇAS
PELO DOM
DE FÁTIMA

self, where are going those who want to experience the Message, both are a gift." The guest of this day will be His Excellency Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation – organization that supervises the Shrines – who will contemplate the Shrine as a "field hospital".

The third day will be dedicated to considerations about Fatima, in an attempt to theorize some of its aspects, contemplating it as a place that "presents a hermeneutical potential tuned in with the deepest concerns of the Church, and even of the human thought about the cosmos in the current times."

"The expectation regarding the outcome of this symposium is to find new ways to talk about Fatima, scrutinizing the abundance of potential themes, and to outline new keys to read it that will be meaningful for the humanity of the 21st century, which is, undoubtedly, the humanity of the new century of Fatima," declared the president of the commission organizing the symposium.

The participation to the Theologico-Pastoral Symposium is submitted to previous registration, which can be done by mailing the registration form to the Shrine of Fatima, Simpósio de 2018, Apartado 31, 2496-908 Fátima, or by filling an online form.