



# FÁTIMA LUZ EPAZ

Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

Director: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

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*Time of grace and mercy:  
giving thanks for our pilgrimage as Church*

## The welcome of migrants is a Christian duty

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

The International Anniversary Pilgrimage of August 12 and 13 to the Shrine of Fatima always pays special attention to migrants and refugees. Today, the question of refugee and migrant hosting is still on the agenda throughout the world, and what we see are many disturbing signs.

It's a cause for concern that we got used to daily news on refugees and migrants in such a way that we have become indifferent to this tragedy. And to this "dictatorship of indifference" we risk adding prejudice and negative judgments regarding those who are arriving.

It's a cause for concern that some of the arguments levelled against refugee and migrant hosting are put forward as if the purpose was to preserve the Christian identity. Denying the Gospel while supposedly defending a culture that claims to be Christian is an absurd. The only response coherent with the Gospel is hospitality and protection of those more frail and vulnerable, towards their promotion and integration.

Not questioning the right of the States to determine their own policy on the reception of refugees, the criminalisation of aid for migrants – who would otherwise die – that we are now seeing in some places is worrisome.

Fatima, especially by the testimony of the Little Shepherds, always attentive to the needs of those around them, with whom they lived and contacted, provides us with antidote for these warning signs. The powerful experience of God, to which both the Angel and Our Lady invited them, did not distract the Little Shepherds from giving concrete attention to others. On the contrary, the centrality of God in the life of the Little Shepherds has as a consequence a true concern for others, in terms of both a charity spiritually expressed – prayer and sacrifices – and a charity expressed in concrete actions to help the poorest. The awareness of solidarity and communion with others is constitutive of the message of Fatima.

Therefore, Fatima is indeed a "school of charity and service to brothers" (Pope Benedict XVI), which defies us to concrete attitudes. And the brothers in need of help are also the migrants and refugees.

## Pope insists on proposing a Marian theme for the preparation of WYD in Lisbon

Shrine of Fatima is pleased "with the good news"

Carmo Rodeia



Pilgrim Statue No. 1 visited Panama for the WYD 2019

Pope Francis announced the theme of World Youth Day (WYD) 2022 to be held in Lisbon: "Mary arose and went with haste", a passage from the Gospel of St. Luke.

"The next international edition of World Youth Day will be held in Lisbon, in 2022. For this stage of intercontinental pilgrimage of the young people I chose as theme 'Mary arose and went with haste'", stated Jorge Bergoglio, at the Vatican.

The choice of a Marian theme is for the Rector of the Shrine "good news" and "a big challenge".

"The announcement of this theme not only makes us particularly happy and joyful, for being Marian, but it also makes us responsible and commits us not only to the WYD but also to all its preparation" Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas told the Press conference.

The priest recalled that already in the last Synod on Young People, Faith and the Church, Mary had appeared not only as the intercessor but as a model and now She is presented again as a model for young people, as someone who gets out of Herself and goes toward the other. So, he said, "it's good news and a big challenge".

The Rector of the Shrine also reminds that the Young People will be the great pas-

toral challenge of the Shrine in the next triennium, up to the World Youth Day.

"Before we even knew of this decision, the Shrine Pastoral Council (which was held last June 13) and the National Council (which was held on June 17) had confirmed this priority for the Shrine's youth pastoral, already having in mind this time frame, consubstantiating the importance of Mary as a role model for young people", Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas said.

The rector also reiterated the willingness of the Shrine to work together with the organizing committee of the WYD either directly taking part in the pre-WYD, in the WYD itself, or in the drawing up of a programme of activities at the Shrine.

"Whatever the circumstances, Fatima will always have a prominent place and will welcome all those who wish to come here", he said.

The Marian themes will once again be in focus during the World Youth Day.

At the end of the World Youth Day 2019, held from 22 to 27 January in Panama City, the city of Lisbon was announced as the next world capital of the catholic youth in 2022.

The World Youth Day (WYD) is considered to be the greatest event organised by the Catholic Church.



## During the Children's Pilgrimage the youngest were invited to "build a chapel in their homes"

The celebration was presided over by the Auxiliary Bishop of Porto, Armando Esteves Domingues / Cátia Filipe



The Children's Pilgrimage has been happening for more than four decades and every year it gathers thousands of pilgrims

About 25 thousand children filled with colour the prayer area of the Shrine of Fatima, during the Children's Pilgrimage, on June 10. The Eucharist was presided over by the Auxiliary Bishop of Porto, Armando Esteves Domingues.

In the year of the centenary of the construction of the Little Chapel of the Apparitions, the theme of the pilgrimage was the request Our Lady addressed to the Little Shepherds in the October 1917 apparition: "a chapel is to be built here", to awaken in the children, from that which is considered the core of the Shrine, the sense of gratitude for the gift to go on pilgrimage in Church.

"When we reach this precinct, instinctively, we don't stop at the entrance of the Basilica... Our steps take us to the Little Chapel, that place of enchantment, the place of the Mother, the place of a lap that embraces us with care, where the map of life becomes more colourful, where the tenderness of a mother gives meaning to our steps, even the hardest and painful ones", the prelate said.

Bishop Armando reminded the pilgrims that one of the aims of the Little Chapel of the Apparitions was to "make saints like the Little Shepherds, who continued living this friendship at home, by wishing the world to be without sins, wars or divisions".

"Let's hope we can also leave this place as builders", because, in order to "be pilgrims all our life, we'll always need a special place such as this Little Chapel to pray at home", he urged, inviting the pilgrims present to "make the prayer nook in their home more beautiful, as if it were a little chapel, just like Our Lady asked".

For this "stones are not needed, nor roof tiles, nor iron. Just the four fundamentals: learning, being friends and sharing, regularly attending the communion of bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, and praying. Easy fundamentals for that prayer nook, making it

always a reminder of your beautiful pilgrimage, 100 years after the request to build this chapel", he concluded.

At the end of the celebration, the children received the rosary "Holm Oak Shrine of Fatima" and in addition to the daily prayer they were invited to share a picture in the Instagram social network.

At the end of the celebration, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima, António Marto, addressed a special greeting to each one of the children present, stating that on this day the Shrine of Fatima became a "sight of beauty", reflected in the assorted colours of the caps and T-shirts and in the "filial and fraternal love for Our Lady".

"You've brought a lot of wonder, beauty and joy, that only you can bring", the Cardinal stated to every child present there, asking them

to "pray for peace in the world, in the families and among all peoples". "Pray for the sick, for all those who suffer most, for the people with disabilities, for those who live alone and abandoned, for those imprisoned, for the refugees", he reminded.

Twenty-five thousand children took part in this pilgrimage, coming from most of Portugal's dioceses, as well as 150 thousand pilgrims and 102 priests.

The celebrations of the 10th were translated into Portuguese sign language, and the third mystery of the daily morning Rosary was recited simultaneously by a deaf child and a non-deaf child.

The Children's Pilgrimage has been happening for more than four decades and every year it gathers thousands of children in the Shrine of Fatima.



The performance at the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity involved students of the Colégio de S. Miguel



# Cardinal Antonio Tagle described The Shrine of Fatima as a place of peace and interreligious encounter

In Rome, at St Peter's Square, Pope Francis recalled the first apparition of the Virgin Mary to the Little Shepherds / Carmo Rodeia / Diogo Carvalho Alves



Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle presented Mary as the "role model" who teaches us to find the way

The International Anniversary Pilgrimage of May was presided over by Cardinal Antonio Tagle, the Archbishop of Manila, who is also the president of Caritas Internationalis. Cardinal Antonio Tagle left a message of encounter and peace in Fatima.

The Archbishop of Manila said in a press conference: "Fatima, as one of the centres of international pilgrimage, which is also visited by non-Christians, is a place of universal peace and can be one of the centres for interreligious and intercultural dialogue"; then specifying two levels in which this dialogue can happen: a more informal one, in a devoted welcome to non-Christians, in order to awaken the desire to know the Christian religion through the Fatima event; another, more formal, by providing a place where those who feel called may clarify doubts and deepen knowledge on the Christian faith.

When questioned about the intentions he brings to Fatima, Cardinal Tagle revealed with emotion that, along with several personal intentions, he also brings to Cova da Iria an intention of "universal conversion to humanity, which allows us to look at people as human beings, not objects". While referring to this more global intention, the president of Caritas Internationalis wished to express his consternation over the fact that, in some countries in conflict, "the entry of humanitarian aid is being restricted or prevented, whereas weapons are allowed".

During the mass after the candlelight procession, the Philippine prelate invited the pilgrims to let themselves feel "attracted" again by Jesus: "We place our trust in the shepherds of the world, in their protection, but many of these shepherds desert us when their personal interests and their lives are threatened", he continued. "He guides us towards eternal life, not to a place, not to a lifestyle, but to the relationship with the Father. The only way to the Father is the Good Shepherd. Let us listen to Jesus, look at Him, love Him and follow Him.



The Philippine Prelate challenged the pilgrims to let themselves feel attracted by Jesus

On the morning of May 13, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle presented Mary as the "role model who teaches us to find the way of the real blessing" and alerted the pilgrims to the danger of the realities that, in today's world, convey the wrong idea of a 'blessed' life: money, fashion, influence and material goods, while also appealing to parents and the older ones to "seriously assume the responsibility of fostering faith in their children".

At the conclusion, Cardinal Antonio Tagle reinforced the invitation to the pilgrims to listen to the "call of God" as real blessing, by listening to His Word and fulfilling His will.

It fell to the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima to have the final say in this International Anniversary Pilgrimage. Cardinal António Marto began by congratulating the "joyful testimony of faith" of the pilgrims present, then he underlined the words of his Philippine counterpart, whom he thanked for his presence and his message. "Even though coming from different latitudes, here we experience being a single people who, with Mary, a pilgrim in the journey of hope and peace, and Mary shows us that this blessing is every one of us, as individual persons and also as a people, that we are blessed by God with the gift of His love, His tenderness, His mercy, His light, His comfort and His strength, to regenerate our faith", stated the prelate.

In Rome, Pope Francis joined the celebration of May 13, after reciting the Easter prayer 'Regina Coeli', recalling Our Lady of Fatima, before thousands of pilgrims present at St Peter's Square.

## Bishop of Viseu challenged pilgrims to take care of those closest in order to the construction of a new humankind

Bishop António Luciano dos Santos Costa presided for the first time over an International Anniversary Pilgrimage at Cova da Iria / Carmo Rodeia / Diogo Carvalho Alves



The Blessing of the Sick is one of the main celebratory moments of International Pilgrimages

As part of the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of June, the Bishop of Viseu, António Luciano dos Santos Costa, challenged the pilgrims at Fatima to drink from the “school” of Mary, just like the little shepherds have done, and to learn from Her to take care of those closest in order to the construction of a new humankind.

“Looking at our world torn apart by so many divisions, by so many people who keep fleeing their countries, making long journeys to escape persecution, hunger, war and lack of living conditions, we wish to perceive them as our brothers, asking the Virgin Mary, the Lady of the praying hands, to take care of them with the love of a caring Mother who knows how to care for us in this valley of tears”, the prelate stated.

During the homily at the vigil Mass of the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of June, in which 65 groups that have registered their presence in the Shrine of Fatima take part, coming from 19 countries, Bishop António Luciano dos Santos Costa enhanced the importance of the message “of love, hope and peace” left by Our Lady in Fatima one hundred years ago, challenging the little shepherds, and this message should be “for us a motif for an enduring quest”.

The Bishop of Viseu, who for the first time presided over an International Anniversary Pilgrimage at Cova da Iria, also reminded that “only by imitating the life and virtues of Mary” can we be builders of a new humankind.

At the Mass of the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of June, Bishop António Luciano dos Santos Costa focused on the example of Our Lady and on the message of

conversion that She left at Fatima, to exhort pilgrims to assume their pilgrim and evangelical mission, towards the renewal of the Church.

From Mary’s example and indicating Fatima as “the presence of the light of the Risen Christ through Mary”, the President of the Pilgrimage defined the mission of evangelization as the “big challenge” for the renewal of the Church’s life. In this sense, he recalled the path shown to us by Our Lady in Fatima, for a “new life for all humankind”.

The Bishop of Viseu then defined pilgrimage as a “challenge for us to be more Christian in today’s world”, throughout a “new culture of listening, of welcoming, of willingness, of

relationship and of surrender to the will of God; (...) the renewal and coherence of freedom, responsibility and authenticity should be the missionary commitment of closeness to the poor, the sick, the victims of injustice and the most vulnerable in society”.

In the conclusion, the President of the Pilgrimage highlighted the ecclesial dimension of the message of Fatima, alerting to the fact that the conversion and change of life inspired by the grace of God “is both personal as well as communal”, since it “also involves the nations and the entire humankind, in a fundamental shift from evil to good”.

At the end, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima left a greeting in different languages.



Bishop António Luciano dos Santos Costa focused on the example of Our Lady



# “Tragedy of the persecuted Christians” reminded in the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of July

Bishop Daniel Batalha Henriques called to unity in prayer for Christians persecuted for their faith / Carmo Rodeia / Cátia Filipe



Bishop Daniel Batalha Henriques considered himself a pilgrim among pilgrims

Cardinal António Marto, Bishop of the Diocese of Leiria-Fátima, in the traditional opening of the International Anniversary Pilgrimage of July, considered that “a pilgrimage is much more than tourism, playing sports or living an adventure! It’s a journey which is undertaken, and whoever takes the way, following an inner path, undertakes more than a physical voyage into the deepest parts of each one of us, into the bottom of our own heart, where each and every one of us meets the mystery of God that is love”, warned the Prelate, who presented the pilgrimaging as a powerful “spiritual experience” and a “search for light and truth, purity of heart and reconciliation”.

Daniel Batalha Henriques, Auxiliary Bishop of Lisbon, president of the International Anniver-

sary Pilgrimage of July, considered himself a pilgrim among pilgrims, celebrating the anniversary of the third apparition of Our Lady to the three Little Shepherds.

“Arriving in Fátima is uniting in prayer, as a large family, and makes us exclaim: ‘how great it is to be here’”, said the Auxiliary Bishop of Lisbon, thanking the Virgin Mary for the long way travelled in safety by many of the pilgrims who were there.

On the night of July 12, during the homily of the International Anniversary Mass of July, Bishop Daniel Batalha Henriques challenged the faithful present there to interpret the third part of the secret of Fátima in light of the religious persecutions against many Christians. Defining prayer as a place of openness to one’s neighbour,

the Auxiliary Bishop of Lisbon called to unity in prayer for the persecuted Christians, warning against the danger of silence and disengagement in western societies facing this tragedy.

Recalling the intentions that everyone there brought to Cova da Iria, Bishop Daniel Batalha Henriques started presenting fraternity and prayer as the spirit that should guide those who come to Fátima.

“The consolations of God don’t dissipate in ourselves. It’s the consolation of God that, through us, should illuminate and comfort the heart of those who are troubled”, Bishop Daniel Henriques stated at the homily of the International Anniversary Mass before the ending of July’s pilgrimage, recalling the third apparition, in which, according to the seer Lucia, Our Lady addressed the little shepherds an insistent request for prayer, penance and conversion in order to world Peace, offering them Her Immaculate Heart as a refuge and a path to God.

“Who hasn’t already experienced the dark hours of tribulation and anguish?! Who hasn’t already felt his hearth enclosed in sadness and distress? This is our human condition: if we are living moments of tranquillity and serenity, we remember that we were not always like this, and we know that a pitch-black dark curtain may suddenly fall on our lives and the lives of those we love most”, he added.

72 groups of pilgrims, coming from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Poland, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Malta, Brazil, Colombia, Unites States of America, Lebanon, Ivory Coast, Mauritius, South Korea and the Philippines, took part in the celebrations in Fátima, this July. Furthermore, there was also a group of about 100 crew members of the ship Amerigo Vespucci of the Italian Navy, accompanied by the Chaplain of the ship, Pietro Folino Gallo. 110 priests and 7 Bishops concelebrated the Eucharist.



72 groups of pilgrims took part in the celebrations in Fátima, this July



# Our Lady of Fatima in Wiltz, Luxembourg

Guilherme Lima, Paulo Santos and Sara Amaral (CNE)

Pictures by Domingos Oliveira (RTL) Paulo Santos (CNE) and Paula Martins (AESAs)



"Mary, always present, was a prayer on top of the mountain, in thankfulness for the meal"

*"Je vous salue, Marie pleine de grâce,  
le Seigneur est avec toi,  
Tu es bénie entre toutes les femmes et,  
Jésus.  
Le fruit de tes entrailles, est béni*

*Heilige Maria, Mutter Gottes,  
bitte für uns Sünder  
jetzt und in der Stunde unseres Todes.  
Amen*

Praying to Mary is universal and here, naturally, it's done in French, German or Luxembourgish.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Wiltz, Luxembourg, was built after a promise made 74 years ago by Marie-Josée and Antonia Thill. The vow to build a shrine of Fatima in that place in Northern Luxembourg was made on 13 January 1945, during the Battle of the Bulge, on the Second World War.

Wiltz, which would become known as "martyr town" because of the hundreds of victims during the German occupation, is 20 kilometres away from Bastogne, in Belgium, the epicentre of the bloody battle which opposed the Germans and the Allies. The evacuation of the town was imminent. A dozen Luxembourgers sheltered in the presbytery basement then decided to make a promise in order to build a shrine dedicated to Fatima, if the town were spared the destruction.

Today, the Hail Mary is prayed in Portuguese by more than 20 thousand pilgrims in unison, every year on May 30. Since 1968 this pilgrimage became Portuguese, but gathering pilgrims from all latitudes.

This year, with the presence of the Bishop of Coimbra Virgílio do Nascimento Antunes, the procession had four different pilgrims. From Portugal, four scouts from the Corpo Nacional de Escutas came on pilgrimage to Wiltz, on foot since Ettelbruck, and carrying the light of the Peace of Bethlehem, celebrating the Centennial of the older scouts, the *caminheiros*, and uniting everybody, including two groups from Switzerland and the Agrupamento de Escuteiros de Santo Afonso, totally Portuguese, but from Luxembourg.

And they've done it with the biggest possible impact. Just like in Fatima and by Fatima they

were fraternal, they were at the service of the washing of the feet, they were a support in the procession and carried the national standard and the bier of Our Lady.

The journey to Wiltz was made with a purpose, a purpose of peace, and not only spiritual peace. For our hard and difficult journey we began with a joyful walk, with breathtaking landscapes which transmitted tranquillity and colour.

Mary, always present, was a prayer on top of the mountain, in thankfulness for the meal.

In the middle of our journey, we found the forest of the Ardennes, dark and dense, the stage of one of the major battles of the Second World War, probably the place and the excuse to think about ourselves, our actions, our day, and be thankful for having had the chance to enjoy the tranquillity before entering the forest.

With Fatima, we crossed the dense forest, and when we arrived to Wiltz, we knew that the colour, the tranquillity and the peace would be back, because the Shrine, erected with that purpose, is a place of peace.

This time it wasn't only a mere path, trail or raid, it was more than that, it was walking along Our Lady of Fatima, with the weight and impor-

ance of Portugal, the weight, importance and faith of "our" May 13.

The prayer day culminates with the procession.

Twenty thousand pilgrims in the procession and around it, with rosaries in their hands, and Fatima on their souls.

Individual and collective prayers and a feeling of greater union.

Due to distance and to the feeling of longing, the tears at the arrival of Our Lady are as many as during her Farewell.

Leading the procession there are two images of Francisco and Jacinta, the Bethlehem Light of Peace candle, brought by the CNE scouts, as well as an immeasurable pride to be and feel Portuguese.

And the tears fall on the scouts uniforms while listening to...

**"Oh Virgin of the Rosary, Lady of Fatima,  
Queen of Portugal, protector of men.  
Oh Virgin of the Rosary, Lady of Fatima,  
From Your Shrine I must leave.**

**One last prayer before leaving You, Mother of God  
Let this immortal cry always live in my soul:  
Oh Fatima, farewell! Virgin Mother, farewell!"**



"Due to distance and to the feeling of longing, the tears at the arrival of Our Lady are as many as during her Farewell"



# Fr. Francisco Pereira visited the Shrine of Champion, USA

The Priest held a conference on the ecclesial dimension of Shrines / Francisco Pereira



Fr. Francisco Pereira presided over the Mass of the Good Shepherd Sunday

On 11 May 2019, invited by Bishop David Ricken, from the Diocese of Green Bay, in the United States of America, Fr. Francisco Pereira, Chaplain of the Shrine of Fatima, visited the Shrine of Our Lady of the Good Help in Champion, that belongs to the same diocese, on the occasion of the 160 years of Our Lady's apparitions to Adele Brise, in October 1859, in the State of Wisconsin, at the time newly populated by emigrants coming from the Centre of Europe, especially from Belgium, Luxembourg and The Netherlands, mostly farmers and cow breeders who produced milk and cheese.

These apparitions were approved by the Bishop of Green Bay on 8 December 2010, after an enquiry made by the ecclesiastical authorities, becoming the only Marian apparition recognised by the Church of the United States. With this reconnaissance by the Church, the Shrine of Champion started drawing more and more pilgrims every day, leading to the study of the experience of the Shrine of Fatima, for the pastoral development of the Shrine of Champion.

Given the coincidence of the 100 year anniversary of the construction of the Little Chapel, Fr. Francisco held a conference on the ecclesial dimension of Shrines, from the content of the apparitions of Our Lady in Champion, where She asked the seer to gather the children who lived in that region of pioneers in order to teach them the Sign of the Cross, the Sunday School and the Sacraments, and from the message of Fatima, with the vision of the Church in the third part of the secret and the request

of Our Lady to build a chapel in Cova da Iria.

Right at the beginning of the conference, Fr. Francisco mentions that: "The Lord's request, through Mary, to Adele Brise (the seer of Champion) and to the three little shepherds of Fatima is the same request He made the apostles and now He makes us: the establishment of a community of believers who, gathered to listen to the word and celebrate the sacraments, presided over by a Bishop or a Presbyter, becomes a sign of God and a Sacrament of salvation in and for the world."

He introduced the person of Lucia de Jesus,

the Servant of God, as an example of the life in Church, and of fidelity to the Bishops of Her life and to the Popes with whom she corresponded so often, as faithful messenger of the requests from Heaven.

At the end, Fr. Francisco recalled the testimony of Pope Benedict XVI in May 2010, when he said that in the shrines, big or small, the experience of being Church is constantly shared: "This is the typical experience at the great Marian Shrines of Lourdes, Guadalupe, Pompeii, Loreto – or even at the smaller ones: wherever Christians gather in prayer with Mary, the Lord grants his Spirit."

The next day, May 12, Fr. Francisco presided over the Mass of the Good Shepherd Sunday, at the Shrine, and in the context of Mother's Day, celebrated on that same Sunday in USA, he referred the role of Our Lady as a mother who protects and defends Her children, made clear when, at the time of the Peshtigo Great Fire, which destroyed 5000 square kilometres and caused the death of 2000 people, in October 1871, precisely 12 years after the Apparitions of Our Lady, the Shrine of Champion served as a refuge to the inhabitants of that region who were saved because the fire miraculously stopped at the limits of the Shrine. Today there are different dangers, but the shrines are still special places of hospitality where, under the motherly protection of Mary, everyone can find the inner peace that later makes them, in everyday life, to be a sign of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

The following day Fr. Francisco took part in the celebrations of May 13 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Washington, NJ – where the World Apostolate of Fatima in the USA is based –, in the current year presided over by the Archbishop of Philadelphia Charles Chaput, OFM, in the presence of thousands of people who, in spite of the cold and the rain, wanted to celebrate the 102nd anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady.



The priest spoke of the ecclesial dimension of Shrines



## Brazil was consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the Palácio do Planalto

The decree of consecration was signed by the Bishop Emeritus of Brasília, João Evangelista Terra / António Borges

Last May 21 an Act of Consecration of Brazil to Jesus through Mary's Heart was held at the Palácio do Planalto, in the presence of the President of Brazil, Jair Messias Bolsonaro.

The Act of Consecration took place in the East Room of the Palácio do Planalto around 2:00 p.m. and was attended by Fr. João Henrique, Fr. Custódio and Fr. Leandro Rasera, as well as by some members of the Aliança de Misericórdia congregation.

The statue of the Immaculate Heart, which since 2005 was in the House of Formation of the Aliança de Misericórdia congregation, was donated to the presidency.

Fr. Oscar commenced the act with the Sign of the Cross and a Hail Mary and then recalled the promises of Our Lady in Fatima on the importance of consecrating the world to her Immaculate Heart.

Soon after, the Deacon Nelsinho Corrêa, of the Canção Nova Community, lead the praying of a decade of the rosary, followed by a song sung by Sr. Kelly Patrícia, one of the founders of the Hesus Institute, with the verses "My mother and my queen, I am yours and you are mine".

The decree of consecration was signed by João



The Act of Consecration took place on May 21

Evangelista Terra, Bishop Emeritus of Brasília, Bishop Fernando Guimarães and the Secretary

General of the Presidency, Minister Floriano Peixoto Neto.

## Pilgrim Statue No. 4 was in several dioceses of Italy

Marian day began on April 27 / Don Luigi DE ANGELIS Enzo SORRENTINO – Mons. Paolo GILARDI



The Marian devotion was a constant in every Parish

Pilgrim Statue No. 4 is in Italy for a Marian itinerary. The Virgin Pilgrim statue was welcomed and later venerated by a large number of faithful. The organization was surprised by the commitment of the Christian people during the days that the image is

going through the parish communities and participating actively in the proposed activities.

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, on behalf of Pope Francis, sent an Apostolic blessing for the good course of

this Marian Day. Thus praying for the Holy Father and his intentions has been common.

The Statue travelled to Rome, Verona, Cagliari, Palermo, Napoli, Caserta, Palestrina, among other places.



Pilgrim Statue No. 4 visited more than ten Dioceses



# Panama celebrated the anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima

Initiatives were carried out in parishes and communities that wish to learn more and more about Our Lady through Her Message / AMF Panama



In the community of Chorrillo, the Statue was received with great devotion

Following the Marian Pentecost that was celebrated since the visit of one of the statues of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima to Panama in 2017, and since the visit of the First Pilgrim Statue, coming from Portugal, in a special and unique journey to WYD 2019, different activities took place in the Archdiocese of Panama, with the support of the Archbishop of Panama, José Domingo Ulloa.

A pastoral visit to the country's dioceses began, with the purpose of making the authentic message of Fatima known to the faithful in Panama, insisting on the daily and meditated prayer of the rosary for world peace, the consecration to Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the practice of the Reparation of the First Saturdays of the month to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

There was a pilgrimage with a replica of the Statue of the Pilgrim Virgin at the Archdiocese of the City of Panama, celebrating the 102nd anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima, between May 11 and 13. The replica was present in the Eucharist Adoration, the Eucharist and the Candlelight Procession at the Parish of Saint Matthew, in the capital.

The Sunday Eucharist was held at the Seminário Maior São José of Panama, and then at the Metropolitan Cathedral (recently consecrated by the Holy Father, Pope Francis), both presided over by the Archbishop of Panama, in the day of the Good Shepherd, and as a prelude to the celebration of the an-



The World Apostolate of Fatima in Panama organized different activities with the support of the Archbishop José Ulloa

iversary of the first apparition of Our Lady in Fatima. The Statue was then carried in Her bier to the Church of Fatima in the community of Chorrillo, where She was received with great devotion, songs and prayers, staying there until the anniversary of the apparition to the little shepherds. On May 13, Our Lady was honoured with several moments

of veneration, finishing with the Meditated Rosary, the Solemn Mass and the Candlelight Procession with the Statue along the streets of this populated neighbourhood on the periphery of the city. Several initiatives were carried out in parishes and communities that wish to learn more and more about Our Lady through Her Message.

On the third weekend of May, the World Apostolate of Fatima in Panama organised a seminar with marriage movements, Marian groups and faithful people in general at the Saint John the Baptist Cathedral, in the Diocese of Chitré.

On the fourth week of the month there was a Mass and a procession with the Statue of Our Lady in the community of Emberá Purú, whose members are for the most part indigenous and of very low socioeconomic status, on the periphery of the capital city, supported by the Sisters of Charity of Mother Theresa of Calcuta.

FETV, the national catholic TV channel, is also producing a series of programs entitled "A New Marian Pentecost", where

every message left by the Angel of Peace and by Our Lady in Her apparitions to the Little Shepherds is broadcasted. This way it's intended to make known in all the country the teachings that Our Lady taught us through Her message.

Hail Mary



## “The Virgin Mary can be a bridge towards reconciliation and collaboration between Muslims and Christians,” says the Director-General of the Catholic Centre for Studies in Amman / Fr. Vítor Coutinho/Carmo

Rodeia



“The refugees in Jordan put all their anguishes and those of their countries at the feet of Our Lady”

**T**he Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima visited Jordan from May 30 to June 3. The Statue toured several churches and places in Jordan, from north to south of the country, of Muslim majority. The visit of the Statue followed a request of the Catholic Centre for Studies in Amman, which coordinated the whole pilgrimage, in conjunction with the Patriarchate and the Catholic Bishops of Jordan.

For Father Rifat Bader, director of the Centre, this was a return of the statue of the Virgin to “Mary’s homeland”. In fact, the theme of the visit was “Fatima in the land of baptism”.

*The Pilgrim Virgin was on a pilgrimage in Jordan. How was this visit organized?*

We wanted to be blessed by the Virgin Mary, because we are the homeland of Mary, the homeland of Jesus, the homeland of John the Baptist and according to tradition Mary crossed Jordan and was always with her son Jesus. But we also wanted to be blessed by the Shrine of Fatima, for many people have already been to Fatima, were blessed there and prayed in the Shrine, but many others dream of it, but they can’t go for economic reasons. Therefore, we thought, if they can’t go to the shrine, to be with the Mother, why not bring Our Lady to them? Moreover, I would like to emphasize that the refugees in Jordan put all their anguishes and those of their countries at the feet of Our Lady.

*Is devotion to the Virgin of Fatima also manifested in the religious daily life of the community or the parish?*

Yes, there are churches in Palestine, and also in Jordan, with the name of Our Lady of Fatima. In addition, many people have read about the apparitions of Fatima, which are in fact one of the most important apparitions in

the history of Church. Many people have read about these six apparitions, and that is why they think and ask about them, mainly about the secret of Fatima and about this message conveyed by the Virgin to three humble children.

*Being this devotion to the Virgin Mary a Fatimid evocation, and therefore having some relevance in the Arab world, could it have an additional and special meaning?*

When we spoke with the official authorities to communicate the visit, and we mentioned the name “Fatima”, people were surprised. How could we speak of the Virgin Mary with the name of Fatima? And they

***“It’s a great opportunity to bring Muslim thought and Christian thought closer together. And, above all, it was an opportunity for our Christians to deepen their faith in a purified way”***

asked us about it. Many Christians also asked why the name “Fatima” and we told the story of Fatima before the apparitions, differentiating the story of the apparitions of Fatima from the history of the origin of the locus of Fatima, which according to the legend is the name of one of the daughters of the prophet. Fatima is, in fact, a much cherished name for us Arabs, and is also a common name for Muslims.

Note that Mary is blessed both in the Qur’an and in the Gospel, especially in the Old Testament; there are even prophecies about her. After Lebanon, Jordan also began to celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation to show people that the Blessed Virgin Mary is blessed in the Qur’an as well as in the Gospel. Therefore, the Virgin Mary can be a bridge towards reconciliation and collaboration between Muslims and Christians.

*You lead a centre that has also done much for interreligious dialogue. Can the coming of the Pilgrim Statue contribute to strengthen the links?*

No doubt! All the authorities that are helping us, from political to military authorities, are aware of this veneration of the Virgin. I believe that when they see the photographs of



Christians, they will understand that we are not pagans who worship stones, but living stones who worship the Mother, Mary.

*Can we say that this pilgrimage helped clarify some questions in that dialogue?*

It is, in fact, a great opportunity to bring Muslim thought and Christian thought closer together. And, above all, it was an opportunity for our Christians to deepen their faith in a purified way. Behind this Image of the Virgin Mary there is not only the message of Fatima, but the message of Our Lady in the Bible, in which She appeals to people for unity and to being always close.

*How do you see the role of a shrine, such as the Shrine of Fatima, for example, in this world marked by violence, war and terrorism?*

When Our Lady appeared in the early twentieth century, the situation wasn't much different from the one we're living today. And I will explain: today we see blood, violence and the sons of God fighting each other. When She appeared to the little shepherds, She asked them to pray for peace and reconciliation. Today She has to continue to do so because men continue to have a propensity for violence.

***“We must educate our generations on the spirit of freedom. Freedom is not doing whatever we wish, alone and without God”***

Therefore, humankind of this century, just like one hundred years ago, needs to renew this message. Perhaps Our Lady will appear elsewhere, in another time, but what we want is to renew the message of Mary that calls us to pray and through prayer to achieve peace and justice. But She also asks us to repent for our sins, so that the people of God may be reconciled. I believe that after this visit the message of Our Lady may still be taken more seriously by all of us here in Jordan.

*Jordan is a country that lives in peace in the Middle East. Is there religious freedom for Christians and how is the relationship between Christians and Muslims?*



The visit of the pilgrim statue was “a great opportunity for dialogue between Muslims and Christians”

The Jordanians are very respectful of the freedom of worship of Christians. And this is visible when we get together to celebrate something, from Christmas to Easter, and this time with the celebrations of the visit of the Pilgrim Statue, whose theme is “Fatima in the land of Baptism” which is Jordan. All the authorities, political, security, civil, all without exception, showed a lot of respect for the celebrations that we have made. There were no restrictions, we were free to choose places for worship, in some cases we could celebrate outdoors, just as we did in Nahur and we had a motorcycle to guide the Statue of the Pilgrim Virgin. Therefore this visit also emphasizes this freedom of veneration which is much esteemed and respected in Jordanian society.

*In Jordan, are Christians a cultural elite?*

Yes, we're an elite, but we're also doing our best for the good of society; we don't work only for the good of Christians. We do what we can for the good of the future not only for Christians, but for Muslims as well. When we open a school, it's always for the whole society. I think this is also why Christians are highly respected here in their beloved country under the wise leadership of the King, which is another aspect of which we are very proud.

*In Europe, Christians are persecuted by atheism, here in the Middle East, Christians are persecuted by Islamic fundamentalism. Does this parallelism seem appropriate?*

Yes, but when we speak of persecution we must keep in mind that it's not only against Christians: we are not persecuted for being Christians. Most of the time, fundamentalism strikes society as a whole, whether Christians or Muslims. There have been martyrs on both sides, so when we speak of persecution, we speak of the war of terrorism and fanaticism against humankind. It is not only against Christians, and if we say it that way

***“If humankind unites, it will feel stronger against these diseases of this century, which are persecution and terrorism against humankind”***



The Virgin is seen as a “bridge towards reconciliation”

we'll feel weak and marginalized by our society, which is not the case. This is a challenge for all humankind and therefore we must be united with all religions like Jews, Muslims, and others who suffer with terrorism. Therefore, if humankind unites, it will feel stronger against these “diseases of this century”, which are persecution and terrorism against humankind.

*The fight of fundamentalisms is a fight against humankind, against everything belonging to the human being, is that what you're saying?*

Of course. Atheism in particular, and fundamentalisms in general, are a challenge and a great danger. In the case of atheism, it appears under the umbrella of freedom. We must educate our generations on the spirit of freedom. Freedom is not doing whatever we wish, alone and without God. Freedom is God's sons' freedom. When we explain that this freedom without God is not good, I think that no one will choose atheism, because no one can build a future without God.

*How do you see, from the Middle East, the efforts of Pope Francis towards this intercultural and interreligious dialogue?*

A few days ago we celebrated the five years of Pope Francis's visit to Jordan, and just to recall, Jordan was already visited as part of the Holy Land by four Popes. Pope Francis is giving hope back to the world. Sometimes it is difficult to think of the results and the fruits of what he is doing, showing, planting in our land, but I think that in the future we'll see that Pope Francis is not only a person but a new era of the Church today, a new meaning of humility, collaboration between religions and also in relation to the environment, because the Earth is the common home of all. I think that in the future we'll see that the Pope's teachings are a new style, a new way of communicating the Church to humankind.



# Pilgrim Virgin continues Marian journey in Argentina

The Statue will visit 37 dioceses during almost two years / Mission Fatima Argentina

Since April 2 2019, the Pilgrim Statue No. 10 is travelling for several regions and Dioceses of Argentina.

Ten Dioceses have already wholeheartedly welcomed Her and there are still 27 Dioceses waiting to be visited by Her. We are organising the visit of the Pilgrim Statue in 2010 to the Dioceses that weren't visited this year.

During the visit to this country, the Virgin of Fatima has already been to hospitals, old-age homes, prisons, seminaries, convents and parishes. The welcoming in all the places She's been to was always made with lots of joy, songs and acts of devotion, this way manifesting the love of the people of Argentina for Mary.

During the Holy Week, She was present in candlelight processions, acts of consecration to Her Immaculate Heart, cantatas, car caravans, praying of the Rosary, Ways of the Cross and Eucharists.

We specifically remember the fact that She spent the night of 14 April at the Apostolic Nunciature in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she was received with great affection by the Nuncio, Monsignor León Kalenga Badikebele. In his words of welcome, he highlighted that, with the strength of prayer, we can change the destiny of the world, and that where there is Mary there is life.

In the middle of May we received the news that Monsignor Kalenga was having serious health problems and had underwent

a surgery in Rome. Later we were informed through news coming from the Vatican that the Nuncio has passed away on June 12 at Casa di Cura Pio XI, in Rome.

Certain of his presence at the home of the Father, today we ask him to be the guardian angel of this Mission Fatima Argentina.

Returning to the steps of Mary through our country, we always saw Her surrounded by prayer that flourished from the hearts of the faithful, from children to old people, in good health or not in good health, thanking or asking, but all of them with an open heart and willing to receive the love of God through Mary.

#### TESTIMONY OF:

#### **Silvia, a pilgrim of Máximo Paz:**

*"We are waiting with much love for Our Lady – I feel a great emotion these days – praying, arranging for our heart to be ready to receive Her presence and everything she brings with Her in this visit to us. Let's hope she pours out her blessings upon the children, our community, the Sunday School and all our Argentina. Let us be blessed, let us have a gentle, humble and meek heart, like Her Son's, and that our gaze always moves towards the eyes of Jesus. And that She takes us by the hand so that we can follow the steps of Jesus. Let Her always be our guide, our consolation, in the troubles as well as in the battles that we have to undergo in all our days."*



Candlelight Processions are intense moments



"We always saw Her surrounded by prayer that flourished from the hearts of the faithful"



# KEY PROTAGONISTS OF FATIMA

António Silva (Mr. António of the Little Chapel) / Diogo Carvalho Alves



António Silva started working at the Shrine of Fatima at 12

***Little more than a decade separates the 1917 Apparitions from the year this Fatima's protagonist was born. He came to serve at the Shrine at the age of 12, while the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary was still under construction.***

***During his 53 years in Cova da Iria, he spent 36 in the Little Chapel of the Apparitions as a guardian, next to the statue of Our Lady. During those years he became known as Mr. António of the Little Chapel.***

We went to Fontainhas da Serra, just a few kilometres from Cova da Iria, to hear about this half century of life dedicated to the Shrine of Fatima, in the house where António Silva and his wife raised six children, and where he still lives.

The walls of the living room where he welcomes us tell a story full of life and self-giving: the portraits of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; a panel framing days of work into memories, decorations and even an Apostolic Blessing from Pope John Paul II; and a picture of himself at the feet of the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, in the Little Chapel of the Apparitions, which by itself is significant of all these years. António lost his mother when he was a child and he eventually spent his life next to Our Lady, the Mother for whom he fostered a life of devotion.

"I was born in the same year the works on the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary began, and by the age of 12, I was already assisting the stonemasons in the closing of the cupola. At that time the shrine had three yoke of oxen that carried the massive stones from Moimento, about 2 kilometres from there, and transported the cement from

Maceira-liz. I started picking up the gravel which remained from the shapes carved in the stones by the stonemasons, and then was used as rubble to fill the holes of Cova da Iria", he begins by telling.

He was still a boy when he began handling the meals for the workers who arrived from different parts of the country to work at the construction of the Basilica. It was from the kitchen, where he prepared the meals, that he was able to take a peek at the nearby bellfounding of the tower of the Basilica.

With the large turnout of pilgrims coming for the retreats, he was given a new task: carry the wood to burn in the stoves that heated the houses of the Shrine.

While he had this task, he helped a group of seminarians who came on pilgrimage, during the coronation of the Statue of Our Lady, in 1946. After this he was invited to enter the Seminar of Leiria, where he spent two years, after which he went to the army.

After he completed the military service, he returned to Fatima, to work on the construction of the Shrine, assisting the carpenters who were

building the Retreat House of Our Lady of Sorrows.

A few years later, in 1956, after having been called upon to be a guardian at the Shrine, he was chosen for the task that he accomplished for the longest time at Cova da Iria: to watch over the Statue of Our Lady, also acting as acolyte at the Little Chapel of the Apparitions and receiving the pilgrims that arrived there.

"I've worked there for 36 years, in the love of that Mother, whom I love deeply in my heart, because, besides having lost my mother when I was a child, I always had Her support", he says, moved.

During the 54 years he worked at the service of the Shrine, he was a kitchen-gardener, he took care of the animals, he carried wood, he gave assistance... He undertook almost every task and in the end he received, without asking, the reward to serve in the heart of the Shrine.

In his heart live the memories of these years at the service of Our Lady, in the Little Chapel, the Mother that embraced him and the house that gave him a new name.



## Pilgrimage is a “parable of the human existence”, Cardinal António Marto states

Pastoral Theological Symposium discussed “pathways” to Fatima in the 21st century, with the contribution of Portuguese and foreign researchers / Carmo Rodeia / Cátia Filipe

Cardinal António Marto argued in the Symposium *Fatima, Today: Which Pathways?*, held at Paulo VI Pastoral Centre, in Fatima, between June 21 and 23, that the Pilgrimage is a “parable of human existence”, because a human being is “someone who follows the path”. “Pilgrimage tells us something important about humans, our existence, and our life: we are the way and we are on the way”, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima sustained.

Cardinal António Marto, who opened and closed the Symposium for this Pastoral Year – focused on pilgrimage – began by mentioning a “deep yearning” which is found in the human heart and in the “inner places” that are revealed and traversed in pilgrimage. “Nowadays there is an intense quest for spirituality, which may be declined in several different interpretive codes”, Cardinal António Marto admitted, alluding to a kind of “bricolage” of the beliefs, a degree of “cloudiness” that expresses a spiritual need, but doesn’t always find the “way” to the “centre inhabited by the divine presence”. However, the pilgrimage can be that “beautiful and amazing experience of God”, stated the Cardinal, for whom the places of pilgrimage are “places of grace” where one experiences the different dimensions of such pilgrimaging.

The Prelate underlined that Fatima has some “singularities” entrusted by the “mystical and prophetic dimensions” of its message and by “distinctive” symbolic features such as the pilgrim statue, which covered 645 thousand kilometres in the

five continents.

“Fatima opens paths for those who arrive and opens paths for those who leave”, Cardinal António Marto noted, underlining in particular the enhancement of the “mystical dimension”, in face of a certain “cultural eclipse” of God, in the West, and the “prophetic dimension”, that aims for peace by the “culture of dialogue” and of a Church “departing” towards the peripheries of humankind.

The pilgrimage “accompanies humankind and belongs to the Church’s identity”, assuming a specific characteristic in Fatima.

“The soul of the pilgrim and the soul of the pilgrim Church must always be receptive to God’s call through Mary, to go on pilgrimage with Mary, and open to God’s surprises”, the Cardinal explained.

The pilgrimage puts its people on the way to a “more beautiful” and “more hopeful” Church, Cardinal António Marto concluded.

### The ways of seeing the “pilgrim condition” and the pilgrimage

Researchers from different academies, national and foreign, were invited to look at the “pilgrim humankind”, with the intention of analysing the challenges inherent to the condition of pilgrim, as well as the act of pilgrimaging to Fatima and the act of pilgrimaging in Church.

At first, the three day program reflected “on the pilgrim condition”, with Paulo

Rangel, Lídia Jorge, José Rui Teixeira, Helena Vilaça and José Paulo Abreu as speakers. On the second day, the attendants were invited to reflect “on the pilgrimage to Fatima” and António Martins, Marco Daniel Duarte, Adrian Attard, José Manuel Pereira de Almeida, Ana Luísa Castro and Carlos Cabecinhas, rector of the Shrine of Fatima, took the floor. On the last day of the Symposium, Benito Méndez Fernández and Nunzio Capizzi were the speakers, both theologians, Spanish and Italian, respectively.

“More than a commandment, hosting migrants is an obligation for Christians and for the Church. The Church has to stand with the migrants, because it has a theological foundation for that. It is not just a straightforward consequence of the commandment to love your neighbour; there are specific grounds, literal and textual, in order to make of the refugee-hosting an obligation for those who are Christian, for those who have faith”, said Paulo Rangel, Member of the European Parliament, at the first conference of the Pastoral Theological Symposium.

“Nowadays, the *homo viator* is still seeking to move and keeping the sense of pilgrimage, but tends to do it amid the noise, in a quick flight between overpopulated airports, between fixed timetables that change every moment, between parallel solicitations of any nature, overlapping obligations, demands and threats of technological failure of any kind. The *homo viator* of today walks carrying in the

## WAF organised Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and Procession of Reparation

The veneration of the Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco was one of the highlights of the celebration / Jerry Rivera



Missionaries Sisters of Charity prepare the celebration





The event was attended by about 250 participants

backpack the myths that will serve to him to do whatever he wants with them, in his future” said the writer Lídia Jorge, during the second conference of the Symposium.

“The pilgrim is someone in a process of defencelessness, who relinquishes the time and space lags, who relinquishes comfort, both letting himself be met and finding himself”. A Church that “does not bear its pilgrim condition” will eventually fall into “oblivion and vanity, trapped on the lesser evils”, and the worst that could happen is “the Church become a lesser evil”, stated José Rui Teixeira, Chairholder in Poetry and Transcendence at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Porto.

The religious “pluralization” is the “main novelty” of Fatima on the 21<sup>st</sup> cen-

tury, stated Helena Vilaça, Professor of Sociology in the Faculdade de Letras at Universidade do Porto. In a national context, Fatima is a “place of reconciliation between the political and the religious spheres, where everything fits – politics, society, economy, tourism – which leads to a kind of metamorphosis that forces us to think about its reconfiguration”.

Hospitality at the shrines, as places of arrival, is a point of honour, a *cocktail* of bonhomie, good manners, friendliness, understanding and generosity. Those who don’t have good temper shouldn’t be in charge of or at the service of a shrine”, stated Fr. José Paulo Teixeira, Moderator of the Curia of the Archdiocese of Braga, on the role of the shrines in a context of the grow-

ing importance of Religious Tourism.

Marco Daniel Duarte, Chairman of the Scientific Advisory and Organising Committee of the Symposium, on his conclusions considered that this three-day symposium led the 250 attendees to “look at the pilgrim condition, according to the concerns with the humankind that is moving, often for political and religious reasons”.

“Among the truths that Fatima has proclaimed over a century is the one that human beings still exercise their condition of pilgrims; moreover: among these truths is the one that, from Cova da Iria, it is stressed that the condition of pilgrims is probably the most clairvoyant metaphor of human life.”

The World Apostolate of Fatima in England & Wales (WAF) marked on 29 June 2019 the celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Procession of Reparation, through its Dioceses of Westminster and Southwark members. The day began with sung Holy Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St Simon Stock church, in Kensington Church Street.

During the afternoon, Fr. Richard Nesbitt, WAF Westminster Spiritual Director, spoke of the powerful experience of being enfolded and immersed in the Sacred Heart of Jesus

and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The Missionaries of Charity, the order founded by St Teresa of Calcutta, looked after the Statue of the Immaculate Heart, which they carried during the Procession of Reparation along High Street Kensington to Our Lady of Victories church. The National Pilgrim Virgin Statue (NPVS) was carried by the Knights of St Columba. These are two different statues representing different aspects of the Fatima Message.

The Procession of Reparation along the High Street was an act of reparation for the sins and offences committed against the Immaculate Heart of Our

Lady. The sorrowful mysteries of the Holy Rosary were recited and hymns to Our Lady were sung along the 30-minute route.

Monsignor Jim Curry welcomed the congregation to Our Lady of Victories. Veneration of the Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco followed, accompanied by the recitation of the litanies to the two saints and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as well as the prayers taught by the Angel of Peace and Our Lady over a century ago. The event ended with the singing of *Salve Regina*, the angelic salutation, and a final blessing from Monsignor Jim.

# Timor looks at Fatima as an example of religious tourism destination

/ Pedro Valinho Gomes

Last May 17, the Shrine of Fatima was invited to deliver a lecture in the second International Conference on Emerging Tourist Destinations, with the theme *Tourism of Peace, Harmony and Fraternity: Development of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, which was held in Dili, East Timor. Pedro Valinho Gomes and Madalena de Jesus, from the Department for the Welcome of Pilgrims, gave a presentation on pilgrimage management at the Shrine of Fatima, in which they presented the main features of the experience of the pilgrim in Fatima and the way the Shrine has tried, over the years and throughout the site's development, to remain creatively faithful to the specific core of the pilgrimage to Fatima.

The International Conference in Dili, organised by the Government of Timor in partnership with the Dili Institute of Technology (DIT) and USAID "Tourism for All" Project, was considered by many an innovative event in the history of tourism in the Asia Pacific region. This event was one of several strategic actions aiming to boost national tourism through the conception of a unique proposal for touristic promotion based on the traditions of faith, so strongly present in the people of that country. On the first conference of this kind ever organised in Dili, the spiritual leaders of different religious confessions in the country were summoned – Timor is of Catholic majority but other Christian groups, Muslims, Hindus and Confucians are also present – and have committed to support this truly innovative tourism project in this region, with a potential for economic development and poverty reduction.

Fatima has been called upon to portray its reality as a case study, for it has become in the last 100 years a tourism destination of religious motivation unique in all the world. The devotion to Our Lady of Fatima is indeed a distinctive feature of Catholicism in Timor, as can be seen from the



The International Conference was considered an important event for Asian tourism

presence of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in most of the churches in the island.

After the conference, the attendees were invited to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Aitara, in Soibada, about 120 km from Dili, accompanied by Dr. Manuel Vong, Rector of Dili Institute of Technology, former Minister of Tourism and one of the conference organisers. Several stops along the journey confirm the potential of East Timor for tourism, particularly for the creation of itineraries for religious tourists' motivation travels, similar to the devotion to Fatima. The Shrine of Our Lady

of Aitara, located in the mountains, in a place that keeps the memory of the national resistance to the invader, and that opens before an indescribable scenery, is already a destination for great national pilgrimages.

Fatima is seen as an example in structuring a service of welcoming pilgrims that makes them wish to come back. Timor, where the devotion to Fatima is truly cherished, is trying to follow that example and that same devotion to think of religious tourism as a development driver of the island.

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