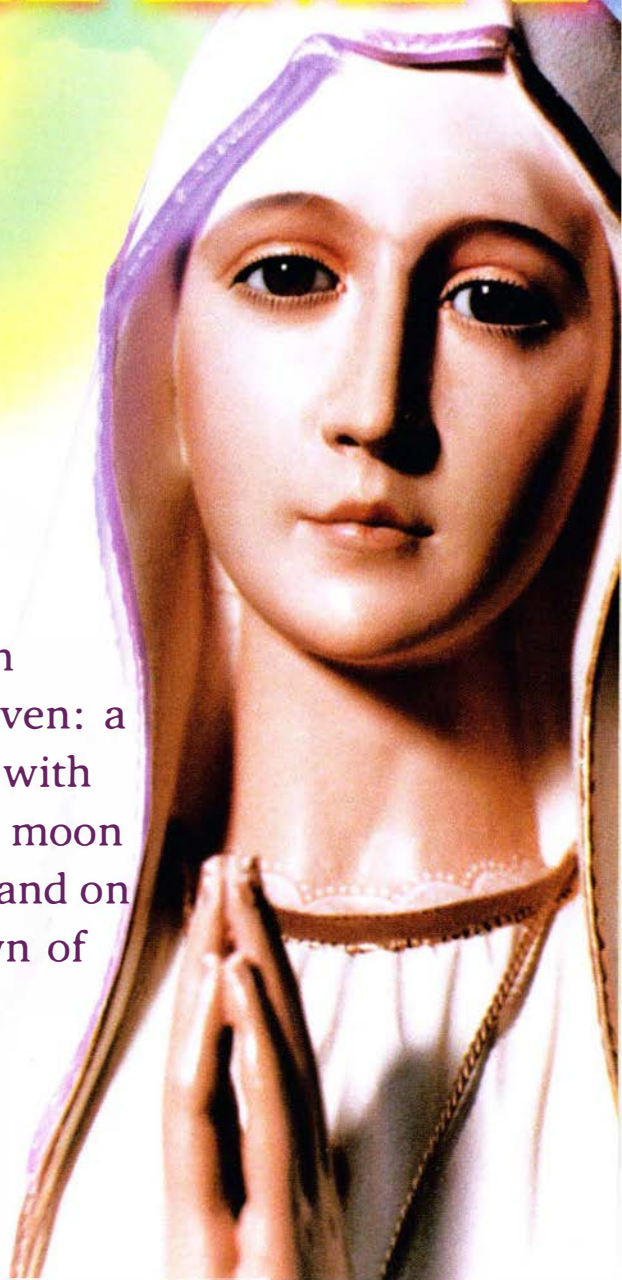


# GOD'S Endorsement of FATIMA

"And a great sign  
appeared in Heaven: a  
Woman clothed with  
the sun, and the moon  
under Her feet, and on  
Her head a crown of  
twelve stars."

*Apoc. 12:1*





December 10, 1925.

**Promise of  
Salvation for  
the Five First  
Saturdays**

Vision of Our Lady  
and the Child Jesus  
where Jesus asked  
for compassion on  
the Heart of His  
Most Holy Mother,  
surrounded with  
thorns.

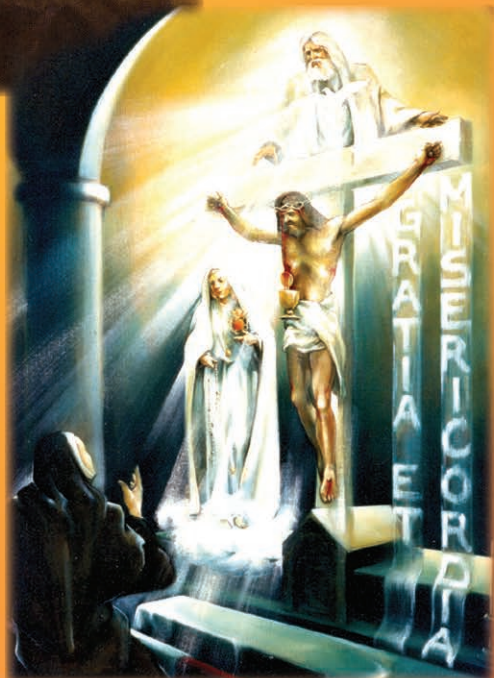
See page 21

June 13, 1929.

**Promise of  
World Peace**

The Vision of the  
Most Holy Trinity  
and Our Lady of  
Fatima at Tuy,  
Spain, where Our  
Lady announced,  
“The moment has  
come ...” For a  
complete  
description of this  
Vision and its  
significance.

see page 23



<b>I</b>	<b>WHO SAW THE VISIONS? . . . . .</b>	<b>4</b>
	Lucy dos Santos . . . . .	4
	Lucy's First Mystical Graces . . . . .	4
	Francisco Marto . . . . .	5
	Jacinta Marto . . . . .	6
	Jacinta and Francisco's Beatification . . . . .	8
	Initial Secrecy . . . . .	8
	Sister Lucy's Memoirs . . . . .	8
<b>II</b>	<b>VISITS OF THE ANGEL . . . . .</b>	<b>9</b>
	The First Appearance - Spring, 1916 . . . . .	9
	The Second Appearance - Summer, 1916 . . . . .	9
	The Third Appearance - Autumn, 1916 . . . . .	9
<b>III</b>	<b>THE APPEARANCES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN . . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
	"I am of Heaven" - May 13, 1917 . . . . .	11
	"My Immaculate Heart will be your Refuge" - June 13, 1917 . . . . .	12
	The Announcement of the Great Miracle, the Secret, the Promise of Peace - July 13, 1917 . . . . .	13
	A Secret Withheld . . . . .	14
	The Three Seers are Kidnapped - August 13, 1917 . . . . .	16
	Our Lady Repeats Her Promises - August 19, 1917 . . . . .	17
	30,000 Pilgrims see Extraordinary Signs in the Heavens - Sept. 13, 1917 . . . . .	17
	The Divine Seal: The Miracle of the Sun, Our Lady offers Her Scapular - Oct. 13, 1917 . . . . .	19
<b>IV</b>	<b>OUR LADY RETURNS AS SHE PROMISED . . . . .</b>	<b>21</b>
	The Apparition at Pontevedra - December 10, 1925 . . . . .	21
	Sister Lucy Meets a Child . . . . .	22
	The Child Returns . . . . .	22
	The Tuy Apparition - "The Moment Has Come" - June 13, 1929 . . . . .	23
	Five Offenses Against the Immaculate Heart - May 29, 1930 . . . . .	24
	Rianjo, Spain - "Make it Known to My Ministers", Aug. 1931 . . . . .	25
<b>V</b>	<b>WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? . . . . .</b>	<b>27</b>
	Traditional Doctrines . . . . .	27
	Validated Prophecies . . . . .	28
	Fatima Endorsed by Six Popes . . . . .	28
	The Third Secret . . . . .	29
	The Importance of the Consecration of Russia . . . . .	29
	We are Bound to Believe and Obey . . . . .	30
	The Importance of the Fatima Devotions . . . . .	31
	Fatima and the World . . . . .	Back Cover

# Who Saw the Visions?

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In the summer of 1917, while “the war to end all wars” raged across northern Europe, a series of events occurred in rural Portugal that would ultimately eclipse in importance even the greatest of global conflicts.

Those events were the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to three peasant children in a field called the Cova da Iria, near Fatima, a small village in central Portugal, about 90 miles from Lisbon. Our Lady conveyed to the children messages from Heaven of vital importance, indeed an Apocalyptic urgent message not only to the Catholic Church but to the entire world!

## Lucy dos Santos

Of the three shepherd children who witnessed the Fatima apparitions, only the eldest, Lucy dos Santos, survives today. She has spent most of her adult life as a cloistered nun, and currently lives in a convent in Coimbra, Portugal, not far from her birthplace. Now over 94 years old, Sister Lucy was barely 10 when Our Lady’s apparitions first occurred to her.

During the six apparitions, Lucy was the only one of the three children to actually speak to the Blessed Virgin, both asking questions and answering them. Lucy was also the only one of the three to write down her own description of her conversations, including a text with the Blessed

Virgin’s words.

Father Formigao, Sister Lucy’s first spiritual director, after interrogating her, said “My child, you must love Our Lord very much, in return for so many graces and favors He is granting you.”

## Lucy’s First Mystical Graces

The youngest of six children, Lucy had already shown signs of exceptional piety and devotion well before the apparitions.

At a time when, in spite of the recent decrees of Pope Saint Pius X, great strictness on the age for First Communion still remained, Lucy obtained the signal favor of being able to go to Holy Communion at the age of six.

Sister Lucy recalls:

“When the priest came to distribute the Bread of Angels my heart beat so hard that I thought it was going to come out of my chest. But as soon as he placed the Divine Host on my lips, I felt a serenity and unalterable peace. I felt swallowed up by an atmosphere so supernatural that the presence of our good God became to me as perceptible as if I were seeing Him and hearing Him with my bodily senses.”

Sister Lucy then addressed these supplications to Our Lord:

“Lord, make a Saint out of me, preserve my heart always pure for You alone!” It seemed to me then that the Good God spoke to me in the depth of my heart these very clear words: “The grace

which is given you today will remain living in your soul, and will produce there fruits of eternal life.' I felt, in this way, transformed in God."

In 1919, Sister Lucy's mother, Maria Rosa fell gravely ill, not far from death. Lucy's elder sister, Maria dos Anjos, seeing that there was no longer any hope, pleaded:

"Lucy, if it is true that you saw Our Lady, go now to Cova da Iria, ask Her to cure our mother. Promise Her what you wish, we will do it, and then we will believe."

It was winter and it was raining hard. Lucy went through paths which cut across fields, reciting her Rosary.

"I made my request to the Most Holy Virgin. Giving free rein to grief, I poured out abundant tears and I returned to the house comforted, in the hope that my dearest Heavenly Mother would grant health to my mother on earth.

"When I entered the house, my mother already felt a little better, and three days later, she could do the housework. I had promised the Most Holy Virgin, if She would grant what I asked Her, to go nine days in succession, accompanied by my sisters, to recite the Rosary at the Cova da Iria, and to walk on our knees from the top of the road to the foot of the holm-oak; and on the last day, to take with us nine poor children and afterwards give them a meal ..." Maria dos Anjos testifies that "the crisis disap-

peared on the spot."

To this day, pious pilgrims to Fatima can be seen tracing Lucy's path on their knees, young mothers with their robust babies strapped to their back, people on crutches, grandfathers and grandmothers, making their way toward the holm-oak tree, reciting the Rosary the entire way. This prayer path where pilgrims walk on their knees to the place Our Lady appeared has been the cause for many recorded miracles of cures and conversions.

### **Francisco Marto**

The other two children, first cousins to Lucy, also demonstrated deep religious devotion from an early age. The elder of the two, Francisco Marto, was exceptionally devoted to what he called "the Hidden Jesus" in the most Holy Eucharist, and spent many hours in prayer before the Tabernacle in order to console Him. His devotion intensified after the Fatima experiences, in which he saw the visions, but did not hear the Virgin speak.

What impressed Francisco during the apparitions Lucy reports, "was God, the Most Blessed Trinity, in that immense light which penetrated us in the depths of our soul.

"We were burning in that light which is God and we were not consumed. What is God? We could never put it into words! Yes, truly, no one will ever be able to express it! What a pity it is. He is so sad! If only we could console Him!"

On August 19, then again on October 13, the Most Holy Virgin also showed Herself very much afflicted and, in that contemplation, Francisco found his own vocation, the goal of his whole life; to console Our Lady and Our Lord.

Francisco was 10 years old when he died on April 4, 1919, just a year and a half after the last apparition at Cova da Iria, the field near Fatima where Our Lady had come to appear six times.

But, showered with graces at each one of the apparitions of Our Lady, sanctified by the numberless Rosaries that he had recited, by his solitary prayers in the country and the long hours spent near the Tabernacle, all absorbed in consoling the hidden Jesus, purified finally by the suffering of his illness, he was already prepared for Heaven and the Virgin Mary came to get him.

We cannot help ourselves from thinking that in thus granting the grace of such a precocious sanctity to Francisco of Fatima, the Most Holy Virgin wants us to know that She is indeed the Mediatrix of all Graces.

### **Jacinta Marto**

The third seer was Francisco's younger sister, Jacinta. Only seven at the time of the apparitions, Jacinta both saw and heard the Virgin, but did not speak to Her during the 1917 apparitions. She was also reluctant to talk about the visions, though she was the first to bring them to the at-

tention of her parents.

Jacinta is the one to whom the Blessed Virgin had granted, with a greater abundance of graces, a better knowledge of God and of virtue. In fact, although she was the youngest of the three seers, she is the one who seems first of all to have benefitted from the greatest intimacy with the Most Holy Virgin.

Among the short prayers taught them, Jacinta had chosen: "Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation!" Sometimes, after saying that, she would add with that simplicity so natural to her:

"I love so much the Immaculate Heart of Mary! It is the Heart of our little Mama of Heaven! Do you not love to repeat often: Sweet Heart of Mary, Immaculate Heart of Mary? Me, I love that so much, so much!"

Sometimes, she would gather flowers from the fields, and at the same time sing to a tune that she had made up: "Sweet Heart of Mary, convert sinners. Save souls from hell!"

Our Lady asked Jacinta if she were willing to suffer much to save sinners from hell. Jacinta agreed. Some weeks later, shortly after Francisco had died, Jacinta was sent to Saint Augustine hospital at Vila Nova de Ourem, about 10 miles from Fatima. During her two-month stay at the hospital, Jacinta suffered tremendously, and more than everything else, from her painful solitude.

Lucy asked her then if she was suffering a great deal.



**Reproduction of an original photograph of Jacinta, Lucy and Francisco at the time Our Lady appeared to them.**

“I suffer, yes. But I offer everything for sinners and in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”

Then she spoke enthusiastically of Our Lord and Our Lady, and said:

“I love so much to suffer for Their love and to make Them happy! They love very much those who suffer for the conversion of sinners.”

Jacinta could not be cured in Ourem and was sent home. In an effort to save her life, her parents were persuaded to send her to Lisbon. Her mother accompanied her but had to return to Fatima. She left her in the care of the sisters at an orphanage.

On February 2, 1920, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus, Jacinta left Our Lady of the Miracles Orphanage for the Lisbon hospital Dona Estefania.

Dr. Castro Freire who received her at the hospital diagnosed “purulent pleurisy of the large left cavity, with fistula; osteitis of the seventh and eighth ribs of the same side.”

On February 10, Jacinta was operated on. She had much to suffer, for they could not give her a general anesthetic, because of her extreme weakness, and they had to be content with a local anesthetic, a method which was still imperfect at the time. They withdrew two ribs from her left side; the wound was as large as a hand; she suffered greatly from it, and the pain was revived each time it was necessary to bandage the wound.

The doctor in Lisbon who operated on Jacinta considered her a saint because although the local anesthetic did not work, Jacinta never complained. The

doctor heard her say to Our Lord: “Now Jesus You can save many souls because I suffer very much.”

On February 20, 1920, Jacinta died alone, with no one to assist her in her last moments.

### **Jacinta and Francisco’s Beatification**

The Church has given witness to the heroic sanctity of the Fatima children whom Our Lady promised to take to Heaven. In May 1989, the Holy Father proclaimed them venerable. They were beatified by the same Pope on May 13, 2000, to the great joy of the faithful, who now pray earnestly for their canonization.

### **Initial Secrecy**

Immediately after the first apparition of Our Lady on May 13, 1917, all three of the children agreed to tell no one about seeing Our Lady and what She said.

Nevertheless, seven-year-old Jacinta, moved by a special grace and her youthful enthusiasm, was unable to contain herself and spoke to her mother about the first apparition that evening, thus the events came to public attention.

Though Jacinta did not elaborate, what little she said was enough to cause rumors to be spread through the vicinity, and there were both devout and simply curious onlookers at all subsequent apparitions.

The historical account of what happened during the apparitions took many years to unfold, be-

cause the Blessed Virgin Herself desired the full account to be given at a later date when, because of certain events, the Church would be able to understand it.

During the third apparition, Our Lady specifically requested that they keep part of the message secret until that time.

Despite this growing attention, as well as intensive interrogations by parents, priests, bishops and government officials, the three children kept their secret.

### **Sister Lucy’s Memoirs**

The best source of information about what happened during the apparitions is therefore Sister Lucy, who still had much to disclose when she entered a convent at the age of 18. There, she continued to maintain the silence Our Lady had requested, for many more years. Then, in a series of six “memoirs” written at the request of bishops and spiritual advisers between the mid 1930’s and the early 1990’s, Sister Lucy provided various accounts of what happened during the six apparitions of 1917.

The most detailed accounts are in the fourth memoir, which was written in 1941, some 24 years after the events took place. (Passages quoted here are from an English language edition of the original Portuguese documents published under the title *Fatima in Lucy’s Own Words* by Postulation Center, published in 1976 in Fatima, Portugal.)



# Visits of the Angel

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In 1916, as if in preparation for the Visits of Our Lady, the three children were graced with three visits by an Angel.

## The First Appearance - Spring, 1916

The children were tending their sheep on the east side of the Cabeço, (a small hill about 5 minutes' walk from their village called Aljustrel, which is a hamlet of Fatima), when a strong wind began to shake the trees. A figure appeared above the olive trees and as it came closer Lucy describes:

"It was a young man, about fourteen ... whiter than snow, transparent as crystal when the sun shines through it, and of great beauty."

The young man spoke:

**"Do not be afraid! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me."**

Kneeling on the ground, he bowed down until his forehead reached the ground. The children did the same. Then he led them in this prayer three times:

**"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I ask pardon of Thee for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee!"**

He rose and said:

**"Pray thus. The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications."**

Then he disappeared.

They were so impressed by

the Angel's presence and message that they prayed this prayer over and over again all day long, lying prostrate on the ground.

They continued to pray like that for many days but gradually their fervor lessened.

## The Second Appearance - Summer, 1916

At the height of summer, the Angel appeared a second time as the children, having returned their sheep to their barn during the hot midday sun, were playing near the well. He said to them:

**"What are you doing? Pray, pray very much! The Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of mercy on you. Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High ... The Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplication.**

**"Make of everything you can a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and in supplication for the conversion of sinners. You will thus draw down peace upon your country. I am its Angel Guardian, the Angel of Portugal. Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering which the Lord will send you."**

## The Third Appearance - Autumn, 1916

The third and final apparition of the Angel took place in

the autumn while the children were tending their flock in the small olive grove. They knelt down with their foreheads touching the ground and were reciting the prayer of the Angel when an extraordinary light shone upon them.

**“We beheld the Angel, holding a chalice in his left hand with the Host suspended above it, from which some drops of blood fell into the chalice.**

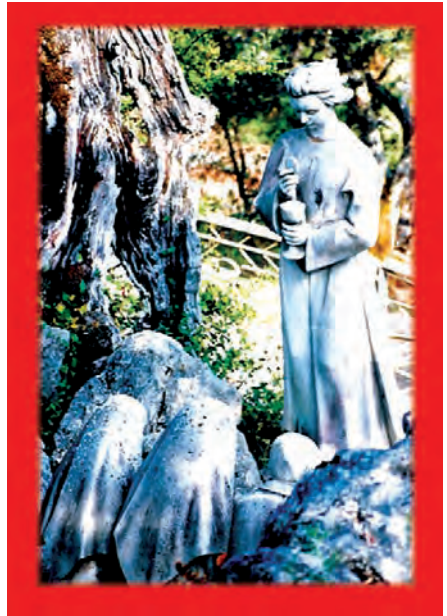
“Leaving the (Host and) chalice suspended in the air, the Angel lay prostrate on the ground beside us and made us repeat three times:

***“Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of the same Son, Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for all the sacrileges, outrages and indifference by which He Himself is offended. And through the infinite merits of His most Sacred Heart, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of Thee the conversion of poor sinners.”***

Lucy continues, “Then rising, he took the chalice and the Host in his hands. He gave the Sacred Host to me, and shared the Blood from the Chalice between Jacinta and Francisco, saying as he did so:

***“Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men! Make reparation for their crimes and console your God.’***

“Once again, he prostrated



on the ground and repeated with us, three times more, the same prayer and then disappeared.”

The brief words of the Angel present as a synthesis the unique message of Fatima which constitutes for our century a glimpse of the Gospel perfectly adapted to our time.

Who is this Angel of Peace that came to Fatima as a precursor of Our Lady? Portuguese historians recognize St. Michael the Archangel as their patron and protector, who had always been venerated as the Guardian Angel of their country.

In addition, in the Roman Breviary as well as in the litanies, the Archangel Michael is also invoked under the titles Author of Peace and Michael, the Angel of Peace.

# The Appearances of the Blessed Virgin

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**“I Am of Heaven”**

**The First Visit, May 13, 1917**

**T**he flash of light that commenced the first apparition looked like lightning to Lucy. She told her younger companions, Francisco and Jacinta, that they should hurry home and take with them the flock of sheep they were tending, before a thunderstorm began.

A second flash of light soon followed, and this time, the children suddenly saw a Woman standing on a small holm-oak, only a few feet away. She seemed to Lucy to be about 18 to 20 years old, wearing a white gown embroidered with gold. She radiated brilliant clusters of light, and Her face was supernaturally beautiful.

Sister Lucy’s fourth memoir gives this account of the opening dialogue with Our Lady:

**“Do not be afraid. I will do you no harm.”**

“Where is Your Grace from?”

**“I am of Heaven.”**

Sister Lucy asked what was wanted from her.

**“I have come to ask you to come here for six months in succession, on the 13th day, at this same hour.**

**“Later on, I will tell you who I am and what I want.**

**“Afterwards, I will return here yet a seventh time.”**

On the subject of Heaven, Sister Lucy then asked:

“Shall I go to Heaven too?”

**“Yes, you will.”**

“And Jacinta?”

**“She will go also.”**

“And Francisco?”

**“He will go there too, but he will have to say many Rosaries.”**

The Virgin then gave a glimpse of Her purposes when She asked the children:

**“Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the conversion of sinners?”**

When they indicated their willingness, the Virgin told the children:

**“Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort.”**

The memoir then describes the extraordinary effect as Our Lady opened Her hands, radiating “a light so intense ... its rays penetrated our hearts and the innermost depths of our souls, making us see ourselves in God ... more clearly than we see ourselves in the best of mirrors.”

Then, moved by an interior impulse which was communicated to them, they fell on their knees and said together:

“O Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee. My God, my God, I

love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament.” The first moments passed, and Our Lady added:

**“Recite the Rosary every day in order to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war.”**

Lucy asked whether the war would still last a long time, or if it would soon end.

**“I cannot tell you yet, as I have not yet told you all that I want.”**

At the end of their conversation Our Lady began to rise serenely, going up towards the east until She disappeared in the immensity of the sky. The light which surrounded Her seemed to open a path for Her among the stars, and for this reason the children said sometimes that they had seen Heaven opening.

**“My Immaculate Heart  
will be your Refuge”**

**The Second Visit,  
June 13, 1917**

When they returned to the same place a month later, the children were accompanied by a small group of followers who had heard reports of the first apparition. The group said the Rosary together, and the same lightning-like flash appeared, followed by the Blessed Virgin’s appearance standing on a cloud resting on the holm-oak. All could see the tree bending a little, as if someone were standing on it. Our Lady was visible only to the three children.

Lucy asked Our Lady “Your

Grace what do You want of me?”

**“I wish you to come here on the 13<sup>th</sup> of next month, to pray the Rosary every day, and to learn how to read.**

**“Later I will tell you what I want.”**

This time, Lucy asked the Virgin to take her and her companions to Heaven, and she received this reply:

**“I will take Jacinta and Francisco soon, but you, Lucy, are to stay here some time longer. Jesus wishes to make use of you in order to make Me known and loved. He wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. To whoever embraces this devotion, I promise salvation; those souls will be cherished by God, as flowers placed by Me to adorn His Throne.”**

“Am I to stay here alone?”

Lucy asked painfully.

**“No, My daughter. Are you suffering a great deal? Do not lose heart, I will never forsake you! My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.”**

Lucy, in her Memoir writes:

“It was at the moment when She pronounced those last words that She opened Her hands and communicated to us, for the second time, the reflection of that immense light. In it we saw ourselves as submerged in God.

“Jacinta and Francisco appeared to be in the part of that light which elevated itself to Heaven, and I in the part which spread itself on earth.

“In the palm of the right hand

of Our Lady there was a Heart surrounded by thorns which seemed to pierce it. We understood that it was the Immaculate Heart of Mary, outraged by the sins of humanity, which pleaded for reparation.”

**The Announcement of the Great Miracle, the Secret, the Promise of Peace**

**The Third Visit, July 13, 1917**

By mid-summer, word of the apparitions had spread widely, and the three children, as they said their Rosary in preparation for Our Lady’s visit, were surrounded by about 5,000 onlookers. The children saw the usual flash of light and then saw Our Lady on the holm-oak

Again Lucy asked, “What does Your Grace want of me?”

***“I want you to come here on the 13<sup>th</sup> of next month and to continue praying the Rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary, in order to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war, because only She can help you.”***

Here Our Lady referred to Herself in the third person. Lucy asked Her to tell them who She was, and to work a miracle so that everyone would believe that She was appearing to them.

***“Continue to come here every month.***

***“In October I will tell you who I am and what I want and I will perform a miracle for all to see and believe.”***

Lucy made some requests to which Our Lady replied that it was necessary to pray the Rosary

in order to obtain these graces throughout the year. And She continued:

***“Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, and say many times, especially when you make some sacrifice: O my Jesus, it is for love of Thee, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”***

As Our Lady spoke these words, She opened Her hands once more, as She had done during the two previous months.

This time the light did not fall on the children but on the ground between them and Our Lady. In this light the children could see below the face of the earth. They saw the fires of hell.

Lucy describes this vision of hell:

“The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened yet like burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in huge fires, without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. (It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me.) The demons could be

distinguished by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black and transparent like burning coals.”

Here, in her Third Memoir, Lucy added:

“That vision lasted only a moment, thanks to our Good Mother of Heaven, Who, at the first apparition, promised to bring us to Heaven. Without that, I think we would have died of terror and fear.

“Terrified and as if to plead for succor, we looked up at Our Lady, Who said to us, so kindly and so sadly:”

**“You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.**

**“The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the reign of Pius XI.**

**“When you see a night illuminated by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father.**

**“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.**

**“If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and**

**persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.**

**“In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world. In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved; etc... Do not tell this to anybody. Francisco, yes, you may tell him.**

**“When you pray the Rosary, say after each mystery: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need.”**

The horrifying vision of hell followed by the promise of peace through Her Immaculate Heart constitute the first two parts of a three-part secret which Our Lady communicated to the children that day.

### **A Secret Withheld**

The words of the Virgin quoted above were set down by Sister Lucy in several of her memoirs. Sister Lucy, with the approval of her bishop, revealed the first two parts of the Secret in 1941. By a letter written in mid-October 1943, His Excellency Don José the Bishop of Fatima, gave the formal written order to Sister Lucy to write down the third part of the Secret. Sister Lucy, from October to the end of December, experienced unspeakable anguish and was not able to bring herself to write

this part of the Secret down. Each time she took up her pen to do so she found herself incapable of writing. This mysterious impediment, Lucy explained, “was not due to natural causes.”

On January 2, 1944, Our Lady appeared to Sister Lucy in the infirmary at Tuy to tell her to write down the Secret ... in conformity with what had been asked of her.

On January 9, 1944, Sister Lucy wrote to Bishop da Silva: “I have written what you asked me; God willed to try me a little, but finally, this was indeed His will: (the text) is sealed in an envelope and it is in the notebooks ...”

Sister Lucy feared so much for the safety of this envelope that she would not entrust it to the post office nor any ordinary messenger. It was not until June 17, 1944, when Archbishop Manuel Ferreira da Silva came on behalf of Bishop José Correia da Silva, she discreetly handed him the notebook and the envelope, which contained her writings concerning the Third Secret.

On December 8, 1945, Bishop José placed the envelope sealed by Sister Lucy in a larger envelope, also sealed with wax, on which he wrote in his own hand: “This envelope with its contents is to be given to His Eminence Don Manuel, Patriarch of Lisbon, after my death.”



Our Lady asked that this third part of the Secret be made known to the faithful at the latest by 1960. Like the first two parts of the Secret, it is clear, and easy to understand. Like the second part of the Secret, it is prophetic. We know that from Cardinal Ottaviani who tells us he read it and it is a prophecy of the future. Many Fatima experts believe that we are now living through the Third Secret.

On June 26, 2000, Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Bertone published photographically *four* handwritten pages, 62 lines long, written by Sister Lucy, and taken from her notebooks. These four pages described a vi-

sion Sister Lucy had. However, this June 26 document did not include the letter Sister Lucy wrote to the bishop, which contained the actual words of Our Lady in the Third Secret. Neither does the interpretation of that vision given by Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Bertone refer to the line “In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved, etc.”, which Sister Lucy has clearly indicated is part of the Third Secret.

Furthermore, Father Alonso, the first official Fatima archivist, and the second Bishop of Fatima assures us that the Third Secret itself is only a single sheet of paper. The actual text is about 25 lines long.

### **The Three Seers are Kidnapped** **August 13, 1917**

The scheduled rendezvous with Our Lady did not occur on the appointed 13th day of August because the children had been kidnapped on that morning by the hostile civil authorities in an attempt to frighten the children into denying the appearances of Our Lady. For several days they were imprisoned with common criminals. The angry officials even threatened the children with death by being boiled in oil. The threat proved useless against the three children, confident of the Heavenly reward promised them. Two days later, they were released unharmed.

Meanwhile on August 13, at

the Cova, 15,000 onlookers had gathered. Let us listen to one of the witnesses at the Cova:

“Around the holm-oak, we prayed, we sang hymns of the Church. But the little ones were late in coming, and everyone began to get impatient. Thereupon, someone came from Fatima saying that the Administrator had take the children away.

“There arose then a disturbance, and I do not know what would have happened if, suddenly, a clap of thunder had not made itself heard. The clap of thunder was more or less similar to that of the preceding time.

“At the clap of thunder there followed lightning, and at once we began to notice a small cloud, very pretty, white in color, very light, which hovered some moments over the holm-oak, then rose towards the sky, and disappeared in the atmosphere.

“While looking around us, we observed a strange thing, which we had already seen the previous time, and which we were going to see again in the future. The faces of the people had all the colors of the rainbow: pink, red, blue ... The trees did not appear to have branches and leaves but only flowers; everything seemed laden with flowers, and every leaf appeared to be a flower. The ground was covered with squares of different colors. Clothes were also of every color of the rainbow. The two lan-



terns attached to the arch appeared to be made of gold.”

Briefly, everything had happened outwardly as if the apparition had taken place. Our Lady, it was obvious, had not missed the rendezvous. And She had manifested Her presence by imposing signs, witnessed by most of the pilgrims present that day.

Manuel Goncalves, from the hamlet of Montelo, testified to Canon Formigao on October 11: “There were many extraordinary signs ... almost all those who were there saw them.”

### **Our Lady Repeats Her Promises**

#### **The Fourth Visit, Aug. 19, 1917**

Sister Lucy relates the unexpected apparition which came to shower them with an immense joy:

“I felt that something supernatural was approaching and enveloping us. Suspecting that Our Lady was going to appear to us, and feeling sorry that Jacinta would not be there to see Her, we asked her brother John to go and get her. An instant after Jacinta arrived, Our Lady appeared.

“What does Your Grace want from me?”

**“I want you to continue going to the Cova da Iria on the 13th, that you continue praying the Rosary every day. On the last month, I will perform a miracle so that all may believe. If they had not taken you to the city, the miracle would have been greater. Saint Joseph will come**

**with the Child Jesus, to give peace to the world. Our Lord will come to bless the people. Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Sorrows will come also.”**

Looking very sad, Our Lady also said:

**“Pray, pray very much and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls go to hell because they have no one to make sacrifices and pray for them.”**

And then, as usual, She began to ascend towards the east.

### **30,000 Pilgrims see Extraordinary Signs in the Heavens**

#### **The Fifth Visit, Sept. 13, 1917**

By September, accounts of the visions had raised such widespread interest, the children had to make their way through a large throng to reach the apparition site. Many voices joined their recitation of the Rosary before the Virgin appeared. As before, She stood over the holm-oak, visible only to the children.

Father John Quaresma, who later became Vicar General of Leiria, describes the apparition:

“Once again at midday there was complete silence. One only heard the murmur of prayers. Suddenly there were sounds of jubilation and voices praising the Blessed Virgin. Arms were raised pointing to something in the sky. ‘Look, don’t you see?’ ‘Yes, yes, I do ...!’ There was much satisfaction on the part of those who did.

“There had not been a cloud in the deep blue sky and I too

raised my eyes and scrutinized it in case I should be able to distinguish what the others, more fortunate than I, had already claimed to have seen. With great astonishment I saw, clearly and distinctly, a luminous globe, which moved from the east to the west, gliding slowly and majestically through space.

“The globe then began to approach the holm-oak of the apparition. Then the sun’s brightness diminished, the atmosphere became golden yellow, like the other times. Some people even reported being able to distinguish the stars in the sky.”

Lucy again asked Our Lady, “What does Your Grace want of me?”

**“Continue to say the Rosary to obtain the end of the war. In October Our Lord will come, as well as Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Carmel. Saint Joseph will appear with the Child Jesus to bless the world.”**

The Blessed Virgin also added:

**“In October I will perform a miracle so that all may believe.”**

Witnesses at the Cova described what they saw:

“During the time of the appa-



**“St. Joseph will appear with the Child Jesus to bless the world.”**

rition the majority of the pilgrims had enjoyed a marvelous spectacle. They saw falling from Heaven a shower of white petals, or round, shining snowflakes which slowly descended and disappeared as they approached the ground. It was an unheard of phenomenon, which the witnesses had difficulty describing. Some described them as stars, and others as a rain of white roses which vanished as

they approached the ground.”

The Blessed Virgin wished to give the crowd gathered around the holm-oak where She was appearing, another sign of Her presence:

“A pleasant-looking cloud formed around the rustic arch which dominated the little tree stump. Rising up from the ground, it grew thicker and went up into the air until it was five or six meters high; then it disappeared like smoke that vanishes before the wind.

“A few moments later, similar curls of smoke were formed and disappeared in the same manner, and then a third time. Everything happened as though some invisible thurifers were incensing the Vision liturgically. The three ‘incensations’ together lasted the whole time of the apparition, that is from ten to fifteen minutes.”

The Bishop of Leiria, in his letter approving devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, declared this phenomena “humanly speaking inexplicable.”

**The Divine Seal:  
The Miracle of the Sun,  
Our Lady offers  
Her Scapular**

**The Sixth Visit, Oct. 13, 1917**

The expectation of a miracle attracted a crowd of over 70,000 to the apparition site on October 13.

Lucy relates:

“We left home quite early, expecting that we would be delayed along the way. Masses of people

thronged the roads. The rain fell in torrents ... Once we arrived at the Cova da Iria, near the holm-oak, about 1:00 p.m., moved by an inner impulse, I asked the people to shut their umbrellas and say the Rosary.”

Up on the road, sheltered in their automobiles, all those who did not have the courage to venture into the claylike mire of the Cova witnessed a stupefying spectacle. At a given moment, this confused and compact mass of people shut their umbrellas, uncovering themselves in a gesture of humility and respect, while the rain continued to soak them and flooded everything.

At about 1:30 p.m., local time (noon, solar time), Our Lady appeared over the holm-oak, placing Her feet over the silk ribbons and flowers piously laid there the night before. This time Lucy seemed to fall into an ecstasy, her face becoming more and more beautiful and taking on a rosy tint.

Lucy again asked, “What does Your Grace want of me?”

***“I want a chapel to be built here in My honor. I am the Lady of the Rosary. Continue to say the Rosary every day. The war will end soon and the soldiers will return to their homes.”***

The Blessed Virgin continued, looking very sad:

***“People must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins. They must not offend Our Lord any more for He is already too much offended.”***

Just as on September 13, the crowd could see the same cloud forming around the holm-oak, going up in the air before it disappeared.

As Our Lady ascended up into the sky, Lucy shouted: “She’s going! She’s going! ... Look at the sun!”

It was at this precise moment that the crowd witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of the “dance of the sun”. The rain had suddenly stopped, the clouds were quickly dispersed and the sky was clear.

Here is Ti Marto’s account of the event:

“We looked easily at the sun, which did not blind us. It seemed to flicker on and off, first one way and then another. It shot rays in different directions and painted everything in different colors — the trees, the people, the sky and the ground. What was most extraordinary was that the sun did not hurt our eyes at all. Everything was still and quiet; everyone was looking upwards. At a certain moment the sun seemed to stop and then began to move and to dance until it seemed that it was being detached from the sky and was falling on us.”

While the crowd witnessed this amazing miracle, the three seers witnessed the fulfillment of Our Lady’s promises of August 19 and September 13.

Sister Lucy describes what they saw:

“After Our Lady had disappeared into the immense distance of the firmament, we beheld St. Joseph with the Child Jesus and Our Lady robed in white with a blue mantle, beside the sun. St. Joseph and the Child Jesus appeared to bless the world, for they traced the Sign of the Cross with their hands.

“When, a little later, this apparition disappeared, I saw Our Lord and Our Lady; it seemed to me that it was Our Lady of Sorrows. Our Lord appeared to bless the world in the same manner as St. Joseph had done.

“This vision also vanished, and I saw Our Lady once more, this time as Our Lady of Carmel.”

To everyone’s astonishment, when the apparition was over, all these people, who were soaked by the rain and kneeling in a mire of mud, found themselves and their clothing to be dry and clean within moments of the Miracle of the Sun. Likewise the mud on the ground had dried instantly and completely.

God Himself had surely placed His Divine Seal of authenticity on the Message of Our Lady of Fatima. Virtually everyone who witnessed these events regarded them as miraculous, including those who described themselves as “non-believers” and atheists.

# Our Lady Returns as She Promised

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## The Apparition at Pontevedra December 10, 1925

**E**ight years after the Fatima events, when Sister Lucy was living in a convent in Pontevedra, Spain, she experienced another apparition of Our Lady (see picture on page 2). On this occasion, the Virgin returned as She had promised at Fatima to relate the specific requirements for the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.

Lucy, writing in the third person, gives the account of the December 10, 1925, visit of Our Lady and the Child Jesus:

“The Most Holy Virgin appeared to her (Sister Lucy), and by Her side, elevated on a luminous cloud, was the Child Jesus. The Most Holy Virgin rested Her hand on her (Sister Lucy’s) shoulder and as She did so, She showed her (Sister Lucy) a heart encircled by thorns, which She was holding in Her other hand. At the same time, the Child said:

**“Have compassion on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce It at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation to remove them.”**

Then the Most Holy Virgin said to Sister Lucy:

**“Look, My daughter at My**

**Heart surrounded by thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console Me and announce in My Name that I promise to assist at the moment of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep Me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary with the intention of making reparation to Me.”**

What a charming dialogue in which the Child Jesus and His Mother take turns speaking — He, to plead Her cause, while She makes Her requests ... to lead us back to Him.

The devotion of the Communion of Reparation on the Five First Saturdays, mentioned by the Virgin at Fatima on July 13, 1917, and then confirmed at Pontevedra as described above, forms an essential part of the Message of Fatima.

The most astonishing thing at Pontevedra is the incomparable promise made by Our Lady.

The Most Holy Virgin grants there, with unmeasurable generosity, the grace of final perseverance, which not even a holy life of prayer and sacrifice will

necessarily merit, for it is always a gratuitous gift of the Divine Mercy. The promise is without any restrictions.

The disproportion between the little devotion requested, and the grace which is attached to it, reveals to us the almost infinite power of intercession conceded to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the salvation of souls.

Let us keep to the letter the promise of Our Lady that whoever will have fulfilled all the wanted conditions, can be sure of obtaining, at least at the moment of death, and even after miserable relapses into a state of grave sin, the graces necessary for salvation in order to obtain God's pardon and be preserved from eternal punishment.

In calling for the Five First Saturdays, Our Lady was, in a way, reiterating the First Saturday devotions previously approved by the Church.

On July 1, 1905, St. Pius X approved and granted indulgences for the practice of the first Saturdays of twelve consecutive months in honor of the Immaculate Conception. On June 13, 1912, finally, he granted new indulgences to the practice of the first Saturday of each month. This practice greatly resembled the request of Pontevedra.

In order to promote the piety of the faithful towards Mary Immaculate, Mother of God, and in order to repair the outrages made against Her holy name and

against Her privileges by wicked men, Pius X has granted, for the first Saturday of each month, a plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in Purgatory.

Later on we will see the special reasons why Our Lady asks for the Five First Saturdays of Reparation.

### **Sister Lucy Meets a Child**

In late autumn, 1925, Sister Lucy, busy with her duties at the convent, was emptying her garbage can outside the garden.

She recounts: "I had met a child, whom I asked if he knew the Hail Mary. He answered, 'Yes', and I asked him to say it to me to hear him say it. But as he would not say it alone, I recited it three times with him.

"At the end of the three Hail Mary's, I asked him to say it alone. As he remained silent and did not appear capable of saying it alone, I asked him if he knew the church of Saint Mary. He answered, 'Yes'. I then told him to go there every day and to pray thus: 'O my Heavenly Mother, give me Your Child Jesus!' I taught him that prayer and I went away."

### **The Child Returns**

"Then on February 15, while returning as usual (to empty a garbage can outside the garden), I found there a child who seemed to be the same one as before, and I asked him: 'Did you ask Our Heavenly Mother for the Child Jesus?'"

"The child turned to me and

said:

***“And you, have you revealed to the world what the Heavenly Mother asked you?”***

“And having said that, He transformed Himself into a resplendent Child.

“Recognizing then that it was Jesus, I said to Him: ‘My Jesus! You know what my confessor said to me in the letter I read to You. He said that this vision had to be repeated, there had to be facts permitting us to believe it, and that the Mother Superior alone could not spread this devotion.’”

Jesus replied:

***“It is true that the Mother Superior alone can do nothing, but with My grace, she can do anything. ...”***

Sister Lucy responded that her confessor said that this devotion already existed in the world because many souls received Him every first Saturday of the month, in honor of Our Lady and the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary.

Jesus answered:

***“It is true, My daughter, that many souls begin, but few persevere to the very end, and those who persevere do it to receive the graces promised. The souls who make the Five First Saturdays with fervor and to make reparation to the Heart of your Heavenly Mother, please Me more than those who make fifteen, but are lukewarm and indifferent.”***

### **The Tui Apparition**

### **“The Moment Has Come”**

**June 13, 1929**

In this Tui apparition (see picture on page 2), the Blessed Virgin fulfilled the promise She made on July 13, 1917 at Fatima to come back later to ask for the consecration of Russia.

Sister Lucy writes:

“I had requested and obtained permission from my superiors and confessor to make the Holy Hour from 11:00 p.m. until midnight from Thursday to Friday. Being alone one night, I knelt down before the communion rail in the middle of the chapel to say the prayers of the Angel, lying prostrate. Feeling tired, I got up and knelt and continued to say them with my arms in the form of a cross. The only light came from the sanctuary lamp.

“Suddenly a supernatural light illuminated the whole chapel and on the altar appeared a cross of light which reached to the ceiling. In a brighter part could be seen, on the upper part of the cross, the face of a man and His body to the waist; On His breast was an equally luminous dove. And nailed to the cross, the body of another man. A little below the waist, suspended in mid-air, was to be seen a Chalice and a large Host onto which fell some drops of Blood from the face of the Crucified and from a wound in His breast. These drops ran down over the Host and fell into the Chalice.

“Under the right arm of the

cross was Our Lady with Her Immaculate Heart in Her hand ... (It was Our Lady of Fatima with Her Immaculate Heart ... in Her left hand ... without a sword or roses, but with a crown of thorns and flames ...)

“Under the left arm (of the cross), some big letters as it were of crystal clear water running down over the Altar, formed these words: ‘Grace and Mercy’. I understood that it was the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity that was shown to me, and I received lights about this mystery which I am not permitted to reveal.

“Then Our Lady said to me:

**“The moment has come when God asks the Holy Father to make, in union with all the bishops of the world, the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means. So numerous are the souls which the justice of God condemns for the sins committed against Me, that I come to ask you for reparation. Sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray.”**

“Later on, by means of an interior communication, Our Lord said to me, complaining:

**“They did not want to heed My request! ... Like the King of France they will repent and do it, but it will be late. Russia will have already spread its errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecution against the Church: the Holy Father will have much to suffer.”**

Let us point out right away that in 1930, in two letters to Father Goncalves, Sister Lucy was

to express in a slightly different manner the requests of Heaven, closely associating the devotion of reparation on the five first Saturdays of the month with the consecration of Russia:

“The good Lord promises to end the persecution in Russia if the Holy Father will himself make a solemn act of reparation and consecration of Russia to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, as well as ordering all the bishops of the Catholic world to do the same. The Holy Father must then promise that upon the ending of this persecution he will approve and recommend the practice of the reparatory devotion already described.”

### **Five Offenses Against the Immaculate Heart May 29, 1930**

On May 29, 1930, in the Chapel at Tuy, Sister Lucy felt herself more intimately possessed by the Divine Presence. On behalf of her confessor, she asked Our Lord “Why five Saturdays and not 9, or 7, in honor of the Sorrows of Our Lady?”

Jesus replied:

**“My daughter, the reason is simple. There are five kinds of offenses and blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary:**

- 1) Blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception.**
- 2) Blasphemies against Her perpetual Virginity.**
- 3) Blasphemies against Her divine Maternity, while refusing at the same time to recognize Her as the Mother of men.**



**4) The blasphemies of those who seek publicly to sow in the hearts of children indifference or scorn, or even hatred towards this Immaculate Mother.**

**5) The offenses of those who outrage Her directly in Her holy Images.**

***“There, My daughter, is the reason why the Immaculate Heart of Mary inspired Me to request this small act of reparation, and in consideration of it, to move My mercy to forgive souls who have had the misfortune to offend Her. As for you, seek unceasingly, through your prayers and sacrifices, to move My mercy with regard to these poor souls.”***

We have there one of the most important ideas in the Message of Fatima. God has decided to manifest His plan of love, which is to grant His graces to men through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin. It seems that their refusal to submit with docility to that Divine Will is a sin which particularly wounds His Heart.

As far as Our Savior is concerned, there is not any crime less forgivable than to scorn His Most Holy Mother and to outrage Her Immaculate Heart which is the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost.

**Rianjo, Spain - “Make It Known to My Ministers”  
August 1931**

In August of 1931, because she was not well and in need of rest, Sister Lucy was sent incognito by her superiors to the small maritime city of Rianjo. Even the people in the house where she

was staying did not, at the time, know who she was. It was there in the chapel in Rianjo, which was dedicated to Our Lady, that Our Lord spoke to Sister Lucy as she was praying for the conversion of Spain, Portugal, Europe, Russia and the world.

Jesus spoke to her and said:

***“You please me very much by praying for the conversion of those countries. Ask this grace also of My Mother.”***

Then He dictated two prayers to her and asked that they be prayed often:

***“Sweet Heart of Mary, be the salvation of Russia, Spain, Portugal, Europe and the whole world.***

***“By Thy pure and Immaculate Conception, O Mary, obtain for me the conversion of Russia, Spain, Portugal, Europe and the whole world.”***

He went on to say:

***“Make it known to My ministers, given that they follow the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My command, like him, they will follow him into misfortune. It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.”***

He refers to the King of France who had been commanded by Jesus through Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque on June 17, 1689 to consecrate France to His Sacred Heart.

For one hundred years the kings had refused to do this and on June 17, 1789, one hundred years to the day, the King of France was stripped of his power by the Third Estate and four

years later publicly executed under the blade of the guillotine.

These are terrifying words. Our Lord would not predict such a dire chastisement for the Pope and the bishops if it were not a serious matter, if they were not obliged to obey.

On January 21, 1935, Sister Lucy wrote to her confessor, Father Goncalves in answer to his questions:

“Regarding the matter of Russia, I think that it would please Our Lord very much if you worked to make the Holy Father comply with His wishes.

“About three years ago, Our Lord was very displeased because His request had not been attended to and I made this fact known to the bishop in a letter. Up to the present, Our Lord has asked nothing more of me, except for prayers and sacrifices. When I am speaking intimately with Him, it seems to me that He is ready to show His mercy toward Russia, as He promised 5 years ago, and which He wishes so much to save.

“... if I think that you should insist with the Bishop? I think that it would please Our Lord very much.

“If you should modify anything? I think that it should be exactly as Our Lord asked it ...”

Then on July 29 Sister Lucy addressed Father Aparicio:

“I hope that Your Reverence will not have given up on the



### **The Message at Rianjo, Spain, “Make it Known ...”**

subject of Russia and the reparatory devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for Our Lord has entrusted this enterprise especially to Your Reverence.”

Father Goncalves, alarmed at seeing the prophecy “Russia will spread her errors” being fulfilled to the letter, wrote to Sister Lucy in 1936 to ask her whether it would not be opportune to insist that the Pope perform the Consecration. On May 18, 1936, Sister Lucy replied by letter as follows:

“About the other questions, will it be convenient to insist in order to obtain the consecration of Russia? I answer in almost the same way as I answered at other times. I am sorry that it

has not been done yet, but the same God who asked for it has permitted it (the delay in doing the consecration).”

Sister Lucy exhibits here a certain reticence about the question of whether one ought to insist that the Pope perform the consecration, and this can be attributed to that extreme deference toward authority one would expect in a cloistered nun. Yet the remainder of her letter leaves no doubt that, with all due respect, the Pope’s subjects can and ought to insist on what Our Lord Himself expects from His Vicar:

“I have spoken with Our Lord about the subject, and not too long ago I asked Him why He would not convert Russia without the Holy Father making that consecration. Jesus answered,

***‘Because I want My whole Church to acknowledge that consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary so that it may extend its cult later on and put the devotion to this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart.’***”

In the same letter Sister Lucy recounts that she responded to Our Lord’s statement by exclaiming: “But, my God, the Holy Father probably will not believe me unless You Yourself move him with a special inspiration”, whereupon Our Lord said to her:

***“The Holy Father! Pray very much for the Holy Father. He will do it [the consecration] but it will be late. Nevertheless, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will save Russia. It has been entrusted to Her.”***

## What Does It All Mean?

**A**re the Fatima apparitions authentic? Did the Blessed Virgin really bring us a message from Heaven through Sister Lucy and her young companions? There are compelling reasons to answer these questions in the affirmative.

### Traditional Doctrines

The content of the Message of Fatima fits seamlessly into the doctrine of the Catholic faith. It addresses central issues of sin and reparation and puts its stamp of approval on the traditional devotion to the Immaculate Heart of

Mary. God, in His wisdom and love for us all, has sent His Own Mother, as He sent His Own Son, for the salvation of mankind.

Significantly, everything in the Message of Fatima, even the details of the apparitions described by Sister Lucy, is fully consistent with the most hallowed traditions of the Church. If Fatima is controversial today, it is not because it contradicts orthodoxy in any way, but rather because it affirms Tradition in the face of modernist innovations imposed upon the faithful in the

so-called “spirit of Vatican II.”

The clear and unambiguous focus of Fatima on traditional Catholic doctrine is the surest sign of its authenticity. However, there are additional reasons to regard the Fatima apparitions as authentic.

### **Validated Prophecies**

Sister Lucy’s memoirs indicate that Our Lady made a number of predictions which were subsequently borne out by real events. These include:

- \* ***The end of World War I***
- \* ***The start of World War II***
- \* ***The rise of atheistic communism in Russia***
- \* ***Communist expansionism and persecution of the Church***
- \* ***The spread of communist-inspired errors such as abortion on demand — which was first legalized in communist Russia in the first decade after the 1917 revolution.***

Perhaps the most convincing prediction of all, however, is the one Our Lady made twice about performing a miracle in October “so that all may believe.”

The Miracle of the Sun, an absolutely unique event in the modern history of the Church, certainly had that desired effect on those who witnessed it, even with atheists and non-believers.

When God certifies a message as being true, we can be absolutely certain that it is, in fact, the truth because He is all-Holy and, therefore, incapable of lying. God cannot be mistaken in His information because He

knows everything.

Thus when God, Who knows everything, Who is incapable of lying, tells us something explicitly, then we know absolutely that what we are being told is completely true. We would be guilty of a sin against the Holy Ghost if we rejected known truth which He revealed to us.

At Fatima, on October 13<sup>th</sup> God gave us His indisputable Miracle of the Sun. He would not cause such a stupendous miracle to take place in witness of an unimportant message. Nor would God, for such a tremendous message, allow it to be lost or corrupted in any significant detail by choosing a messenger lacking the necessary virtue or ability to report Our Lady’s message faithfully and accurately.

Thus, in our time, if we are not to be guilty of a sin against the Holy Ghost, we must accept the Fatima Message as being true and very important.

### **Fatima Endorsed by Six Popes**

In 1930, the Church officials who exhaustively investigated the Fatima events for a dozen years ended by formally pronouncing them “worthy of belief.” Such formal declarations about miraculous events are extremely rare.

There followed a period during which the Church actively encouraged devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, and growing numbers of Catholic clergy and

laity took to heart the messages Our Lady had conveyed through the three children.

Six successive Popes have also proclaimed their belief in Fatima. The present Pope, John Paul II, has gone much further, crediting Our Lady of Fatima with saving him from an assassin's bullet, and openly declaring that the Message of Fatima imposes an obligation on the Church. He has gone there on pilgrimage three times, each time on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, first in 1982, again in 1991, and just recently in 2000.

### **The Third Secret**

Added to these prophecies which have already occurred, many would add the current troubles within the Church, which are widely believed to be the subject of the Third Secret. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, already, on November 11, 1984, in a published interview, which he read and approved before it was published, stated in Rome that the Third Secret document concerns:

“A radical call to conversion, the absolute gravity of history, the dangers threatening the Faith and the life of the Christian, and therefore the world. And also the importance of the last times.”

Regarding the reasons for withholding the Third Secret, the Cardinal explains that “if it is not published at least for the time be-

ing, it is to avoid confusing religious prophecy with sensationalism. But the things contained in the Third Secret correspond to what has been announced in Scripture.”

The steep decline in attendance at Mass in recent decades, and the current state of doctrinal dissent and confusion within the Church, are entirely consistent with the interpretation of the Third Secret given above. As we begin this millennium, Our Lady's requests have gone unheeded, and the misfortunes She predicted are now unfolding at an accelerated rate.

At a Vatican press conference on June 26, 2000, Cardinal Ratzinger and Monsignor Bertone expressed the view that the Third Secret of Fatima pertains entirely to events in the past and has no reference to the future. However, Cardinal Ratzinger conceded that Catholics are not bound to accept this interpretation of the Secret.

In light of the masterful scholarship that has been done on the Third Secret<sup>1</sup>, as well as Cardinal Ratzinger's 1984 comments, it seems more likely that the Third Secret is a prediction of the present-day crisis of Faith.

### **The Importance of the Consecration of Russia**

The Message of Fatima gives central importance to the consecration of Russia. Heeding this request, we are told, is essential to achieving peace in the world,

and saving millions of souls. Failing to heed it means the opposite — violent death, continuing war, famine, misery, chaos in the Church, and the certain eternal damnation of millions of people.

The dreadful record of the 20th Century, which has seen more wars and apostasy than any other in human history, will continue in this millennium. With so much at stake, it is no wonder that those who truly know the full implication of Fatima are ardent advocates of having the consecration performed exactly as Our Lady requested.

This requires the Pope, acting in concert with all the Catholic bishops of the world, to solemnly and publicly consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in a formal ceremony on the same day at the same hour. This ceremony could be done by all the bishops and the Pope in one place — say for example St. Peter's Square in Rome, or it could be done by each bishop simultaneously, in union with the Pope, doing this solemn public ceremony in his own cathedral.

### **We are Bound to Believe and Obey**

The Catholic Faith tells us that there are two certain ways of knowing that a revelation comes from God.

First-class miracles are acts of power that only God can do. When God performs a miracle as

a testament to the truth of a certain message then it is God Himself Who is certifying the truth of that message.

Our Lord condemned the cities of Bethsaida and Corozain for one reason, because they refused to believe in Him after the miracles He worked in their presence. “Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee, Bethsaida. For if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they would have done penance long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

“But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgement, than for you.” (*Luke 10: 13-14*)

Obviously, if God expected those cities to believe in Him after He worked those miracles then God expects the people of the 20th Century, also to believe the Fatima Message.

Not all the people of Bethsaida and Corozain saw Jesus' miracles but everyone at least knew someone who had witnessed them and the facts were widely known in those two cities. Everyone had the opportunity to verify Our Lord's miracles in the two cities, so that the refusal of the people to believe in the miracles justified condemning those who refused to believe and to obey.

If that was true for the people of Corozain and Bethsaida, then it is also true of the people of the present day, regarding the mira-

cle of Fatima. There were 70,000 witnesses to the Miracle of the Sun, believers and unbelievers alike. The testimony of 70,000 witnesses cannot be denied by any person of good will who inquires into the matter. The refusal to accept such a prodigious and indisputable miracle would, objectively speaking, be culpable and worthy of condemnation by Our Lord Himself. Indeed, the very purpose of miracles, such as the Miracle of the Sun, is to leave no room for legitimate doubt that God has spoken.

Another reason we must believe is because of the clear prophecies from Fatima that have come true. Only God knows the future with certainty. At Fatima, He told us the future, much of which has already come to pass, which verifies the truth of the Fatima Message. Specifically we have at Fatima the prophecy of the Miracle of the Sun taking place at the time, date and place specified, the name of the Pope (Pius XI) predicted before he was elected, the beginning of WWII predicted and the rise of Russia, just to mention a few of the prophecies that have been fulfilled.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Importance of the Fatima Devotions**

Beyond the consecration of Russia, the Message of Fatima also requests particular Marian devotions, including the daily



**“And you, have you revealed to the world what the Heavenly Mother asked you?”**

*... Jesus to Sister Lucy*

Rosary, the Five First Saturdays, and the wearing of the Brown Scapular, which Our Lady held in Her hand when She came as Our Lady of Carmel in the sixth apparition. These devotions are the special means Heaven has provided for individuals to contribute to the saving of many souls and bringing peace to the world.

1. *The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume III, The Third Secret* by Frère Michel (900 pages) available from the Fatima Center.
2. For a more complete explanation of the obligation to believe and obey Our Lady's request, see pages 83 - 157 of the book *World Enslavement or Peace*, available from the Fatima Center.