



Special Introductory
Issue

The Fatima Crusader

What is Fatima?

Heaven's Intervention to Save Us from Persecution, War, Annihilation, Enslavement and Hell

Fatima is a visit by Our Heavenly Mother Mary in our time for our time. It is a message of concern, a practical plan for world peace, a promise of Heaven.

It is Heaven's interventions to save us from persecution, martyrdom, war, enslavement or annihilation. Above all it's a way to save our souls from Hell. It is meant for you.

Today Our Lady, by Divine Providence, invites you to learn *The Whole Truth About Fatima* by giving you this opportunity to know Her beautiful message of Fatima.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared six times to three shepherd children, Lucy, Francisco and Jacinta, between May 13 and October 13, 1917. She came to the little village of Fatima which had remained faithful to the Catholic

Church during the recent persecutions by the government.

Our Lady's Message

She came with a message from God to every man, woman and child of our century. Our Lady of Fatima promised that the whole world would be in peace, and that many souls would go to Heaven if Her requests were listened to and obeyed.

She told us that war is a punishment for sin; that God would punish the world for its sins in our time by means of war, hunger, persecution of the Church and persecution of the Holy Father, the Pope, unless we listened to and obeyed the command of God.

Our Lady's Triumph

At Fatima, Pope John Paul II said on May 13, "the message of Fatima is more relevant and more urgent" than

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Pope John Paul II surrounded by millions of pilgrims on one of his visits to Fatima, Portugal. The photo on the front cover shows more of the millions of pilgrims who came to Fatima to honor Our Lady on the occasion of a Pope John Paul II pilgrimage.

The Six Apparitions of Our Lady

(MAY 13 - OCTOBER 13, 1917)¹

Sunday, May 13, 1917:

«I AM OF HEAVEN»

On Sunday, May 13, 1917, the three little shepherds had gone to the chapel of Boleiros to assist at the first Mass, “the Mass of the souls,” as they used to say then, for it was a Mass celebrated for the souls in Purgatory, which was a treasured devotion in the piety of the Portuguese. After returning home early in the morning, they left at once to feed their flocks. As a place of pasture, Lucy writes, «we had chosen that day, by chance, or rather according to a plan of Divine Providence, the property belonging to my parents, called Cova da Iria² ... For that, we had to pass through an uncultivated terrain, which doubled the length of our long road.»

After eating their meal and praying the Rosary, the children were at the point of building a wall around a bush. «Suddenly, Sister Lucy relates in her fourth Memoir, we saw a kind of lightning. “It is better to return home”, I said to my cousins, “for there is lightning, and there could come a storm.” - “Oh yes!”

«Arriving more or less half-way down the slope, at the level of the top of a large holm-oak which was situated there, after walking a few more steps we saw another flash of light. On a small holm-oak there stood a Lady, all dressed in white, more brilliant than the sun, radiating a light clearer and more intense than a crystal glass filled with clear water pierced by the most burning rays of the sun. We stopped, surprised by this Apparition. We were so close that we found ourselves in the light which surrounded Her, or rather which emanated from Her, perhaps a meter and a half away, more or less.

«Then Our Lady said to us:

- Do not be afraid. I will do you no harm.

- Where is Your Grace from? I asked Her.

- I am of Heaven.

- What does Your Grace want of me?

- 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.

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IMPRIMATUR January 24, 1997,

Most Reverend Benedict To Varpin, Archbishop of Madang

- *Shall I go to Heaven too?*

- **Yes, you will.**

- *And Jacinta?*

- **Also.**

- *And Francisco?*

- **Also, but he will have to say many Rosaries.³**

«I remembered then to ask about two girls who had died recently. They were friends of mine and they used to come to my home to learn weaving with my eldest sister.

- *Is Maria das Neves⁴ already in Heaven?*

- **Yes, she is.**

«It seems to me that she was about sixteen years old.

- *And Amelia?⁵*

- **She will be in Purgatory until the end of the world.**

«It seems to me that she must have been between eighteen and twenty years old.

[⁶- Are you willing to offer yourselves to God to bear all the sufferings He wants to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and for the conversion of sinners?⁷

- *Yes, we are willing.*

- **You are then going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort.**

«It was in pronouncing those last words (the grace of God, etc.) that Our Lady opened Her hands for the first time, and communicated to us, as by a reflection which emanated from them, a light so intense that, penetrating our heart and even to the depths of our soul, it made us see ourselves in God, Who was this light, more clearly than we see ourselves in the best mirrors.

«Then, moved by an interior impulse which was communicated to us, we fell on our knees and we repeated: “O Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee. My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Holy 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.**

- *Can You tell me whether the war will still last a long time, or if it will soon end?⁸*

- **I cannot tell you yet, as I have not yet told you what I want.**

«Then She 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 we said sometimes that we had seen Heaven opening.»⁹

«The Lady of the Apparition, Lucy affirmed, seemed not to be more than eighteen years of age. Her dress was of a very pure snow-whiteness.

«Her veil which covered Her head and most of Her body was embroidered with gold. Her face, with an incomparable nobility, had something of the supernatural and Divine; She seemed serene and grave, and was shaded in sorrow. From Her hands, joined at the height of the chest, was hanging a beautiful Rosary

with beads like white ermine resembling pearls and terminating with a crucifix. Her whole person, surrounded by a splendor more brilliant than the sun, radiated clusters of light, and especially Her face is of a beauty impossible to describe and incomparably superior to any human beauty.»¹⁰

Wednesday, June 13, 1917:

THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY PIERCED WITH THORNS

Let us now listen to Lucy relate the Apparition in her fourth Memoir.¹¹

«June 13, 1917. After reciting the Rosary with Jacinta, Francisco and other people present, we again saw the reflection of the light which was approaching (what we would call lightning) and then we saw Our Lady, on the holm-oak, just as in the month of May.

- *What does Your Grace want of me? I asked.*

- I wish you to come here on the 13th of next month, to pray the Rosary every day, and to learn how to read. Later I will tell you what I want.

- *I asked for the cure of a sick person.*

- If he is converted, he will be cured within the year.

[¹² - *I would like to ask You to take us to Heaven.*

- Yes, 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.¹³ To whoever embraces this devotion, I promise salvation, those souls will be cherished by God, as flowers placed by Me to adorn His Throne.¹⁴

- *Am I to stay here alone? I 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.

«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 the earth.

«In the palm of the right hand of Our Lady there was a Heart, surrounded by thorns which seemed to pierce it.¹⁵ We understood that it was the Immaculate Heart of Mary, outraged by the sins of humanity, which demanded reparation.»]

Friday, July 13:

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GREAT MIRACLE AND THE SECRET

Let us now listen to the messenger of Heaven relate this apparition.¹⁶

«July 13, 1917. Some moments after our arrival at the Cova da Iria, near the holm-oak, in the midst of a great crowd of people, while we were reciting the Rosary, we saw the flash of the usual light and then saw Our Lady on the holm-oak.

- *What does Your Grace want of me? I asked.*

- I want you to come here on the 13th of next month, to continue reciting

the Rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary, in order to obtain peace in the world and the end of the war, because only She can help you.

- I should like to ask You to tell us who You are, and to work a miracle so that everyone will believe that Your Grace is appearing to us.

- Continue to come here every month. In October, I will say who I am and what I want, and I will perform a miracle so that all might see in order to believe.

«Here I made some requests which I do not remember.¹⁷ What I do remember, is that Our Lady said it was necessary to say the Rosary in order to obtain these graces throughout the year. And she continued:

- Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, and say often to Jesus, especially whenever you make a sacrifice: “O 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.”¹⁸

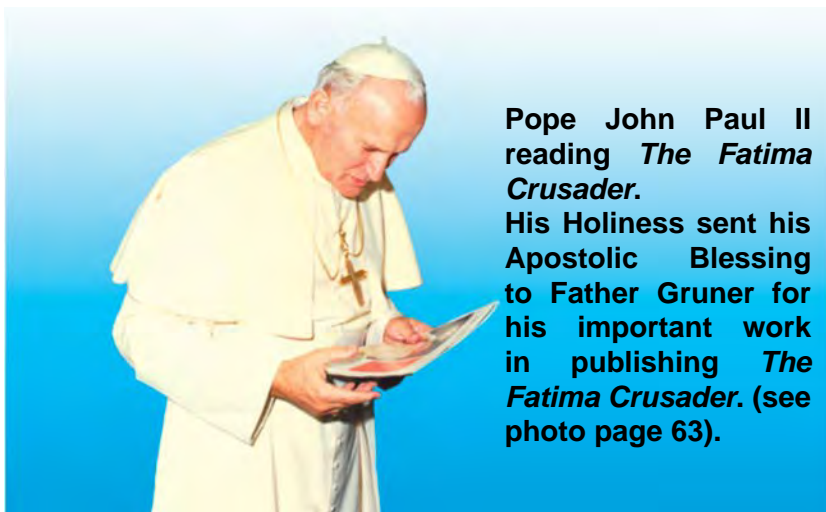
«As Our Lady spoke these last words, She opened Her hands once more, as She had done during the two previous months. The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or 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.»¹⁹

«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 illumined by an unknown light²⁰, 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, and 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.²¹ If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace;²² if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing



**Pope John Paul II
reading *The Fatima
Crusader*.**

**His Holiness sent his
Apostolic Blessing
to Father Gruner for
his important work
in publishing *The
Fatima Crusader*. (see
photo page 63).**

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, save us from the fire of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are most in need.

«After this, there was a moment of silence, and then I asked:

- *Is there anything more that You want of me?*

- No, I do not want anything more of you today.

«Then, as before, Our Lady began to ascend towards the east, until She finally disappeared in the immense distance of the firmament.»

Monday, August 13:

CERTAINLY OUR LADY HAS COME

On the 13th of August, the day chosen by Our Lady to appear at the Cova da Iria, the district Administrator went to Aljustrel, and while pretending to give the children a ride to the Cova where Our Lady was waiting for them, he took them in the opposite direction, he kidnapped them and took them to Vila Nova de Ourem. There they were detained in the town hall, then at the home of the Administrator and finally in the prison. He spared neither promises nor threats to extract the Secret from them, even to the point of threatening to boil them in oil.

Seeing he was getting nowhere with his promises and threats the Administrator released the three little children on the 15th of August back in Fatima.

Meanwhile on August 13th let us listen to one of the witnesses:

«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 taken 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.²³

«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 lanterns attached to the arch appeared to be made of gold.»²⁴

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 Gonçalves, from the hamlet of Montelo, would be able to testify to Canon Formigao on October 11: «There were many extraordinary signs. In August, almost all those who were there saw them.»²⁵

Sunday, August 19:

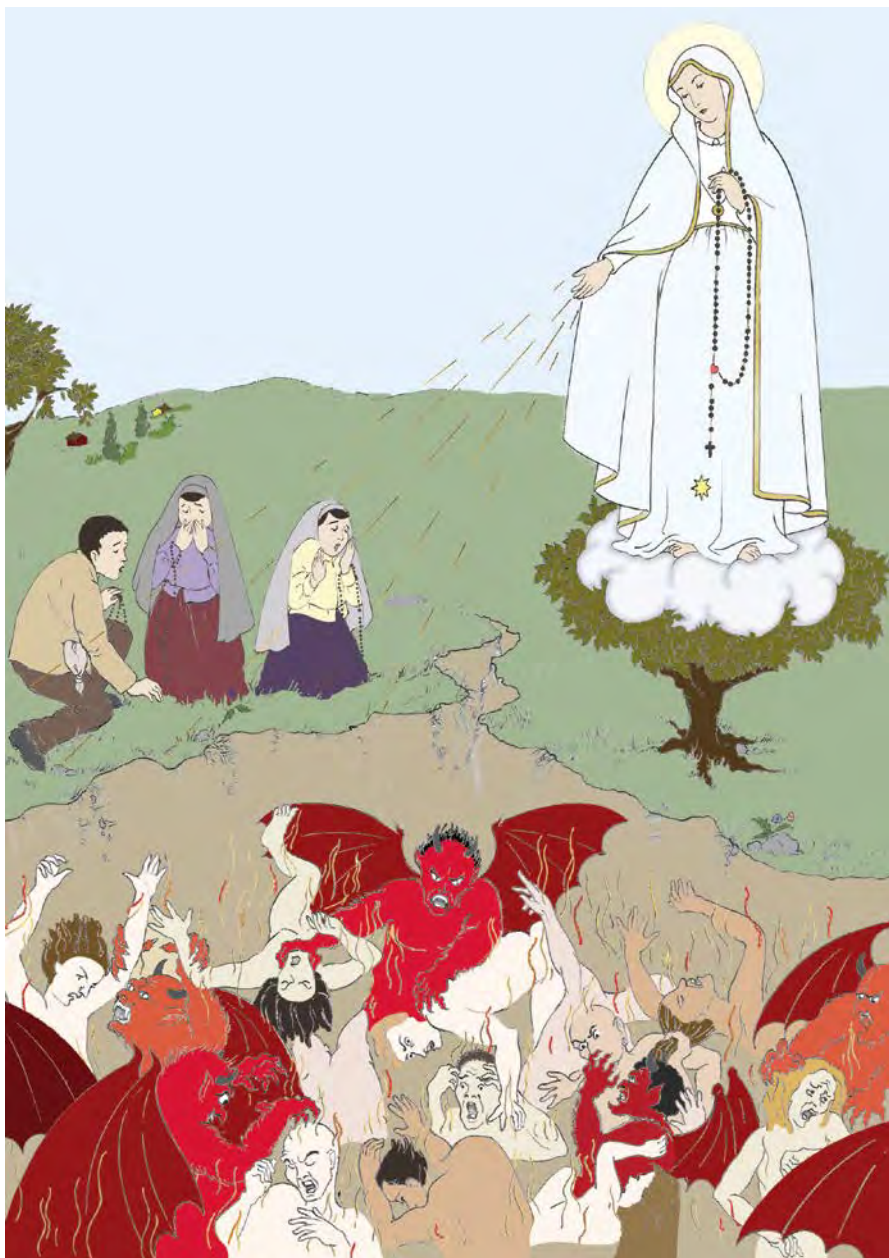
THE APPARITION AT “VALINHOS”

On Sunday, August 19, after assisting at the parish Mass, the three little shepherds, accompanied by several persons, left for the Cova da Iria in order to say the Rosary there. In the afternoon, Lucy and Francisco, with John, his brother a little older, took the road of Valinhos (the small valleys), to feed their flocks. It was the closest, most grassy pasture, at mid-elevation between Aljustrel and the top of the Cabeço. Let us listen to Sister Lucy relate the unexpected apparition which came to shower them with an immense joy:

«I felt that something supernatural was approaching and enveloping us.²⁶ 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.²⁷ But John wanted to stay, to see Our Lady as well!» Then Lucy, who had with her two coins, had an idea: “I will give you two nickels if you bring back Jacinta to me! Here is one now, and I will give you the other when you return!” He left with all haste while Francisco shouted to him: “Tell her to come running!”²⁸ It was about 4 o’clock in the afternoon.

«In the meantime, Lucy continues, I saw with Francisco the flash of light, what we called lightning. Jacinta having arrived, an instant later, we saw Our Lady upon a holm-oak²⁹:

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An artist's depiction of the "Vision of Hell" shown by Our Lady to the three shepherd children of Fatima. For more information about this Vision see pages 6-7. Also see pages 45-49 of this issue.



Father Gruner, founder of the International Fatima Rosary Crusade (see page 62) near Valinhos explaining the appearance of the Angel to Fatima pilgrims.

The Six Apparitions

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- *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 city³⁰, 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.³¹**

- *What do You want them to do with the money³² the people leave at the Cova da Iria?³³*

- **Have two litters made. You will carry one with Jacinta and two other girls dressed in white; the other one Francisco is to carry, with three boys, like him, dressed in white. It will be for the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. What is left over will help towards the construction of a chapel that is to be built.³⁴**

- *I should like to ask You to cure some sick persons.*

- **Yes, I will cure some of them during the year.**

«Then, looking more sad, Our Lady 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 as usual, She began to ascend towards the east.»³⁵

Thursday, September 13:

A MARVELLOUS APPARITION

It was Lucy who recited the Rosary in a loud voice, while the people answered. Only the murmur of prayers could be heard. Suddenly, shouts of joy rang out ...

some arms were raised, and showed something in the sky. "Look! ... You don't see it?" - "Yes, I see it!" ... A luminous globe, travelling from the east to the west, gliding slowly and majestically in space ...

... It floated in fact towards the holm-oak of the apparition. Then, the light of the sun dimmed, the atmosphere became a yellow-gold, like the previous times. The day so darkened that some reported having seen the stars in the sky. It was then that Lucy questioned the Immaculate Virgin:³⁶

«- What does Your Grace want of me?

- Continue to pray the Rosary in order to obtain the end of the war. In October, Our Lord will come as well as Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Saint Joseph will appear with the Child Jesus in order to bless the world.³⁷

God is satisfied with your sacrifices, but He does not want you to sleep with the rope. Wear it only during the day.³⁸

- There is a little girl here who is a deaf-mute. Would not Your Grace wish to cure her?

«Our Lady replied that a year from now, she would be better.

- I have many other requests, some for conversion, others for a cure.

- I shall cure some, but others no, because Our Lord does not trust them.

- The people would indeed like to have a chapel here.

- With half of the money received so far, they should make litters and carry them on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary; the other half can be used to build the chapel.

«Lucy then said that she offered Her two letters and a small flask of water with a fragrance which had been given her by a man of the parish of Olival. In offering them to Our Lady, she said to Her:

- They gave me that. Does Your Grace want it?

- That is not suitable for Heaven, Our Lady replied.³⁹

The Fourth Memoir adds:

- In October I will perform the miracle, so that all may believe.

And She began to ascend, disappearing as usual.»⁴⁰

Saturday, October 13:

“I AM THE LADY OF THE ROSARY”

On October 13, at noon, solar time, when the apparition of the miracle was to occur, at the Cova da Iria there were from 50-70,000 persons.

Suddenly, «Lucy looked towards the east and said to Jacinta: ‘Oh, Jacinta! Kneel down, Our Lady is arriving! I have already seen the lightning!’»⁴¹ Our Lady was appearing above the holm-oak. And Lucy, that time, fell as into an ecstasy: «Jacinta then gave Lucy a nudge with her elbow, and said to her: “Speak, Lucy, Our Lady is already there!” Then Lucy came to herself, breathed twice deeply, as someone who had no more breath, and began her conversation with Our Lady.⁴²

- What does Your Grace want of me?

- I want to tell you that a chapel is to be built here in My honor. I am The

Lady of the Rosary. May you continue always to pray the Rosary every day. The war is going to end⁴³ and the soldiers will soon return to their homes.

- I have many things to ask You: to cure some sick people, to convert some sinners, etc.

- Some yes, others no. They must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins.

And taking on a more sorrowful air:

- Do not offend the Lord Our God any more, for He is already too much offended!»⁴⁴

FOOTNOTES:

1) This chapter is a summary of “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume I”, Part I, Chapters 4-9, pages 109-322. 2) Probably shortly after the apparitions of 1917, the newspaper “O Mensageiro” gave this description of the Cova da Iria: “The place called Cova da Iria is horrible ... rather dry, without water, the mountain of Fatima or of Reguengo has nothing admirable: oak trees, piling up of rocks, pine-groves, and here and there, a cultivated patch. It is a basin without a horizon when one passes by the road which goes from Fatima to Ourem. There is a highland vegetation.” (Quoted by A. de Matos, “8 dias com as videntes da Cova da Iria em 1917,” page 85) 3) The Virgin of Fatima, always measured in Her demands, did not ask Francisco to “recite many 15 Decade Rosaries,” as some authors say. Sister Lucy, having lived for a long time in Spain, often used the language of the country, and then she spoke of ‘Rosary’, which designates at the same time, in Spanish, -5 decades of the Rosary, ‘the Beads’, and the Rosary, properly called, of the 15 decades. “If I addressed a Spaniard, Lucy explained, it is possible that, in place of ‘the Beads’ I wrote ‘Rosary’, because in that country, ‘the Beads’ is called ‘the Rosary’.” (“A Vidente de Fatima dialoga”, page 40). From there the confusion comes. When Lucy was asked if Our Lady carried on Her arm a full Rosary or just ‘the Beads’, she replied simply: “What do you want? I did not count the decades!” (Barthas, Fat. 1917-1968, page 69, “Beads or Rosary?”). Even if, as Canon Barthas remarks, the primitive interrogators carry simply the words: “He too must say his Beads,” the definitive formula of Sister Lucy: “He will have to say many ‘Beads’”, corresponds better to the manner in which the three seers understood the request of Our Lady. 4) Maria das Neves died on Feb. 26, 1917. See Fernando Leite, “Les Apparitions de Fatima”, Tequi, 1987, page 8. 5) Amelia died March 28, 1917. See Leite, op. cit. 6) We indicate between brackets the parts of the message kept secret by the seers at the moment of the apparitions and revealed only later by Lucy. 7) “... and to make amends for the blasphemies and for all the offenses made to the Immaculate Heart of Mary,” added Father da Fonseca in his version of the message. Father Alonso, completely regretting that unwarranted interpolation, thinks nevertheless that “from the first apparition, there has been a veritable manifestation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary”. He supports that among other factors, from the fact that Sister Lucy has never asked Father da Fonseca the suppression of that phrase added by him in the text of the Memoirs (cf. “Fatima et le Coeur Immaculé de Marie” in “Marie sous le symbole du Coeur.” [MSC], Téqui, 1973, pages 30-33). 8) That last question and her reply are not quoted in the Memoirs of Lucy. But they are found in the interrogation of the seers effected by the Curé of Fatima at the end of May, 1917. Their authenticity is therefore certain. 9) Fourth Memoir, pages 156-160. The Fourth Memoir presents the account of the apparitions of Our Lady in more detailed fashion. For the historical critique of the sources, see “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume I”, pages 111 and 278-283. 10) Report of the canonical commission, quoted in “Francisco de Fatima”, page 48. In May, 1946, at Fatima, Canon Galamba who accompanied Lucy on the places of the apparitions, heard her “describe again the past events.” “In answering some somewhat crafty questions, he reports, Lucy emphasized the objective reality of those apparitions, denying the possibility of dream or illusion: ‘No, I was wide awake and I saw as I now see Your Reverence’, she said.” (Fatima Altar do Mundo, II, page 133). page 177. 11) Fourth Memoir, pages 160-161. 12) We indicate between brackets the parts of the message kept secret by the seers at the moment of the apparitions and revealed only later by Lucy. 13) Here the text of the Memoir is incomplete. In an anterior account, written at the end of 1927 for her confessor, Father Aparicio, Sister Lucy added the sentence following, of primary importance. 14) Fourth Memoir, Appendix I, page 195. 15) Sister Lucy has stipulated, elsewhere, that “the Immaculate Heart of Mary was surrounded as by a stalk of wild furze” (See “A Vidente de Fatima dialoga”, page 60). 16) Sister Lucy wrote it on two occasions, in her Third and Fourth Memoirs. We fused those two accounts into

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The Scapular

The Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

On September 13, 1917, the Virgin of Fatima had announced to three little children the coming of Our Lady of Mount Carmel the next month. On October 13, during the closing of the cycle of apparitions, when the conversation of Lucy with Our Lady of the Rosary was finished, while the crowd contemplated the grandiose cosmic miracle, the three shepherds enjoyed several visions. They were given to admire in the sky three successive pictures, the last of which was Our Lady of Mount Carmel¹ calling to mind the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. That same evening Lucy would relate her vision to Canon Formigao: At the end, the Virgin Who appeared to me «seemed to me to be Our Lady of Mount Carmel.²»

At the end of the 40s, while conversing with three Carmelite priests, Father Donald O'Callaghan, Father Albert Ward and Father Luis Gonzaga de Oliveira, Sister Maria-Lucia of the Immaculate Heart (known as Sister Lucy) recalled that the Blessed Virgin Mary wished that the devotion of the holy Scapular³ be propagated. If Our Lady, during Her last public apparition, had held it in Her hands, it was to urge us to wear it, quite like in the preceding apparitions, the presence of Her rosary had clearly manifested the wishes of Her Heart.

The messenger of Heaven also explained it to Father Howard Rafferty when the priest questioned her in the



name of the Father General of the Carmelites, on October 15, 1950: «Our Lady, Lucy told him, held the Scapular in Her hands because She wants us all to wear it.»

The Brown Scapular is part of a religious habit belonging in its own right to the Carmelite order. Devotion for the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was born in the 13th Century when, after having been chased from Palestine by the Saracens, the Carmelite brothers encountered great difficulties in getting established in Europe and maintaining themselves there. In fact, it was in those tragic circumstances that Saint Simon Stock, elected Prior General of the Order in 1247, had, a few years later an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary presenting the Scapular to him as a sign of salvation for his brothers. ■

FOOTNOTES:

1) Cf. chapter 2. Under the small heading: **The Vision of Our Lady of Mount Carmel just before A Pressing Appeal to Conversion.** 2) "Novos Documentos," page 39. 3) Cf. Barthas, page 226; Father Alonso, "Historia da literatura sobre Fatima" [HLF], page 59.

What is Fatima?

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when Our Lady first appeared. The message is an anguished appeal of Our Heavenly Mother, Who sees us in great danger and Who comes to offer Her help and advice. Her message is also a prophecy, a clear indication of what was about to transpire in the 20th Century, and what is still going to happen infallibly in the near future, depending on our response to Her requests.

THE CHURCH Approves Fatima

The Catholic Church has endorsed the Fatima message since 1930. Five successive Popes have publicly indicated their approval of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima and Her message. Two Popes went to Fatima on Pilgrimage. Pope John Paul II went there twice, once in 1982 and again in May 1991.

GOD HIMSELF Endorses Fatima

As a great sign of this whole message truly coming from God, a marvellous miracle was worked in the sky above Fatima before 70,000 witnesses on October 13, 1917 at the time, date and place that Lucy and the other two children had prophesied in the name of Our Lady of Fatima.

As also prophesied, Francisco and Jacinta died in the odor of sanctity in 1919 and 1920. Lucy became a Carmelite Sister.

Our Lady of Fatima continues to work miracles today through Fatima water which is sent from Fatima around the world. This Fatima water sprang up in Fatima at the spot the Bishop told people to dig, very near where Our

Lady appeared at the Cova da Iria (the Cove of Peace) in Fatima. Still other people are cured when they go on pilgrimage to Fatima, which is about 90 miles north of Lisbon, Portugal.

When he went to Fatima, Pope John Paul II said: "The message of Fatima is addressed to every human being."

A Message of Warning and Hope

If we do not heed Her soon, then Our Lady's horrible prophecy may well be realized in the near future even in our own back yards.

She told us that God had chosen to use Russia as the instrument of chastisement to punish the whole world if we did not, by our obedience, prayers and sacrifices, obtain the conversion of Russia to the Catholic faith.

She promised us, "If My requests are granted Russia will be converted and there will be peace."

But She also warned us, "If My requests are not granted, Russia will spread her errors throughout the world raising up wars and persecutions against the Church, the good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated."

She has told us that the whole world (the part surviving) will be enslaved by the atheistic tyrants of Russia.

For World Peace

In order to prevent these chastisements from befalling us She told us that special reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary was necessary, particularly the Communions of Reparation on the First Saturday of five consecutive months and the public and solemn Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of

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**“What have you done to spread devotion
to My Mother’s Immaculate Heart?” ... Jesus to Sister Lucy**

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“It is addressed to every human being.” ...Pope John Paul II

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The Six Apparitions of Our Lady

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asked for several cures, some conversions. Our Lady promised that She would cure some, but not others. “As for the crippled son of Maria Carreira, She would not cure him, and he would remain poor. But he must recite the Rosary every day with his family, and he will be able to earn his livelihood. One of those who had recommended themselves to Our Lady, a sick person from Atougua, had asked to soon go to Heaven. ‘Let him not be in too much of a hurry, replied Our Lady, I know very well when I should come to get him’.” (Father John DeMarchi, page 114) **18**) That prayer, which Lucy would reveal in a writing dated May 13, 1936 (Documentos, page 461), then in 1937, in her Second Memoir (page 70), is not part of the great Secret. **19**) “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume III”, page 154. Questioned by the Bishop of Viseu, dom. J.P. da Silva, Lucy gives the following details: “Did the vision of Hell last a long time?” - “I could not make an exact calculation; it seemed short.” - “Did you hear the cries or did you rather guess by their faces that they were shouting?” - “I heard the shrieks.” - “Did you see Hell from very far or very close?” - “It seemed to me that it was quite close.” (Quoted in “Francisco de Fatima”, page 68) **20**) Lucy always maintains having heard “a Rusia.” In 1917, she did not yet know the meaning of that word. Canon Barthas pointed out that significant fact in his works (See Fatima 1917-1968, page 94). Father Alonso is also formal: “In 1917, not only was Lucy ignorant of the geographical and political reality of Russia, but she did not even know the name.” Our expert adds that “when she was questioned by her director, Father Gonçalves, to find out how it came about that she knew Russia or that she remembered the name of Russia..., Lucy replied: ‘I had only heard about the Galicians and Spaniards; and I did not know the name of any other nation. But what we perceived in the

one single one (“The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume III”, pages 154-155; Fourth Memoir, pages 161-166). **17**) We find echo of these requests in the Ferreira report and with other witnesses. Lucy

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The Miracle of the Sun

October 13, 1917¹

Here are briefly the facts; starting from the day after the events, by a reporter who cannot possibly be accused of partiality in this matter and for a good reason! We refer to Avelino de Almeida, the chief editor of “O Seculo,” the large “liberal” anticlerical and masonic daily of Lisbon. He writes:

«From the road, where the carriages were crowded together and where hundreds of persons had stayed for want of sufficient courage to advance across the muddy ground, we saw the huge crowd turn towards the sun which appeared at its zenith, clear of the clouds. It resembled a flat plate of silver, and it was possible to stare at it without the least discomfort. It did not burn the eyes. It did not blind. We would say that it produced an eclipse. Then a tremendous cry rang out, and the crowd nearest us were heard to shout: “Miracle! Miracle! ... Marvel! ... Marvel!” Before the dazzled eyes of the people, whose attitude transported us to biblical times, and who, dumb-founded, heads uncovered, contemplated the blue of the sky, the sun trembled, it made strange and abrupt movements, outside of all cosmic laws, “the sun danced”, according to the typical expression of the peasants ...»²

Attacked violently by all the anticlerical press, Avelino de Almeida

renewed his testimony, fifteen days later, in his review, l’“Ilustração Portuguesa.” This time he illustrated his account with a dozen photographs of the huge ecstatic crowd, and repeated as a refrain throughout his article: «I saw...I saw...I saw.» And he concluded fortuitously: «Miracle, as the people shouted? Natural phenomenon, as the experts say? For the moment, that does not concern me, I am only saying what I saw ... The rest is a matter for Science and the Church.»³

Saturday, October 13, begins for the pilgrims, as a walk of penance because it had rained the whole preceding night. Now, this «almost sudden change of weather, with the dusty roads transformed into muddy quagmires by a pelting rain, causing to replace abruptly, for a day, the sweetness of autumn with the biting rigors of winter, did not succeed in moving them, to make them give up or despair.»⁴

«From dawn, our reporter relates, visibly impressed by that calm courage, groups looming up again, intrepid individuals who pass through, without stopping for a moment, the small town, whose silence is broken by the chant of hymns intoned by feminine voices in harmony which contrasts with the roughness of the men ... The sun rises, but the aspect of the sky is threatening. Some black clouds accumulate, precisely from the Fatima side. Nothing however holds back the pilgrims who, from all roads and by all means of locomotion, flock



The Miracle of the Sun depicted in a stained glass window.

in that direction ... Some small bells on a chain tinkle; we see here and there a cart decorated with palms. However, the festive atmosphere is discreet; the general manner is grave, the order perfect ... Towards ten o'clock, the sky is covered completely and a heavy rain

begins to fall. The downpour, whipped by a bitter wind, beating against the face, inundates the gravel roads, and pierces to the bone those who did not take the precaution of carrying an umbrella or some other means of protection from the bad weather. But

no one becomes impatient nor gives up following the road ...

The Great Number of Pilgrims and Their Testimony

How many were assembled at the Cova da Iria?

The maximum estimate was from Dr. Almeida Garrett, and was proposed some months after the event. It estimates the spectators at more than one hundred thousand. In “O Seculo” of October 15, Avelino de Almeida wrote: «The crowd, by the unprejudiced calculations of cultivated persons very new to mystical influences, was estimated at thirty or forty thousand people.» In his article of October 29, he corrected his first estimate: «On October 13, according to the calculations established by people free from every prejudice, some 50,000 people were gathered on the moor of Fatima.» A neutral newspaper, the “Primeiro de Janeiro”, also estimated the crowd at 50,000 individuals. We can therefore say, with a quasi-certainty, that this figure is a minimum; that is why the majority of historians propose as probable the presence of a crowd of seventy thousand witnesses.

In comparing the numerous accounts of witnesses, we can distinguish the diverse aspects and the result of the astounding phenomena established by all. For each one of them, it would be possible to line up some ten pages of witnesses which would constitute in themselves an impressive book.

Here is the first marvellous fact described by Dr. Almeida Garrett:

«It must have been 1:30 p.m. when there arose at the exact spot where the children were, a column of smoke, thin, fine and bluish, which extended up to perhaps two meters above their heads, and evaporated at that height. This phenomenon, perfectly visible to the naked eye, lasted for a few seconds. Not having noted how long it had lasted, I cannot say whether it was more or less than a minute. The smoke dissipated abruptly, and after some time, it came back to occur a second time, then a third time ...»

The Sudden Stoppage of the Rain

Whereas «the low and heavy sky had a very dark color, laden with moisture, released an abundant and long lasting rain,» during the time of the apparition, the rain stopped totally. Abruptly the sky cleared: «The sun triumphantly pierced the thick bed of clouds hiding it until then, and shone intensely.» (Dr. Almeida Garrett).

This abrupt change of weather took all the eyewitnesses by surprise: «It was a day of heavy and continuous rain. But a few minutes before the miracle, it stopped raining.» (Alfredo da Silva Santos)

The Vision of the Sun Without Burning the Retina

«Suddenly I heard the uproar of thousands of voices, and I saw the whole multitude spread out in that vast space at my feet ... turn their backs to that spot where, until then, all their expectations focused, and look at the sun on the other side ... I turned around, too, toward the point

commanding their gazes, and I could see the sun, like a very clear disc, with its sharp edge, which gleamed without hurting the sight ... It could not be confused with the sun seen through a fog (there was no fog at that moment), for it was neither veiled, nor dim. At Fatima, it kept its light and heat, and stood out clearly in the sky, with a sharp edge, like a large gaming table. The most astonishing thing was to be able to stare at the solar disc for a long time, brilliant with light and heat, without hurting the eyes, or damaging the retina.» (Dr. Almeida Garrett).

«And then we witnessed a unique spectacle, the reporter of “O Seculo” remarked in similar vein, an incredible spectacle, unbelievable if you did not witness it. From above the road ... We see the immense crowd turn towards the sun, which appeared at its zenith, clear of the clouds. It looked like a plate of dull silver, and it was possible to stare at it without the least discomfort. It did not burn the eyes. It did not blind. One might say that an eclipse had occurred.» (Article of October 15, 1917) «The people could look at the sun as we look at the moon.» (Maria do Carmo)

Suddenly, the heavenly body began to tremble, to shake with abrupt movements, and finally to turn on itself at a dizzying speed while throwing out rays of light, all colors of the rainbow: «The sun turned like a fire wheel, taking on all the colors of the rainbow.» (Maria do Carmo) «It appeared like a globe of snow turning on itself.» (Father Lourenço) «The pearl-like disc had a giddy motion. This was not the twinkling of a star

in all its brilliance. It turned on itself with impetuous speed.» (Dr. Almeida Garrett) «At a certain moment, the sun stopped and then began again to dance, to spin; it stopped again, and began again to dance.» (Ti Marto) It is indeed therefore a triple “dance of the sun” which thousands of witnesses affirm, having contemplated it for several minutes.

«The sun took on all the colors of the rainbow. Everything assumed those same colors: our faces, our clothes, the earth itself.» (Maria do Carmo) «A light, whose colors changed from one moment to the next, was reflected on the people and on things,» notes Dr. Pereira Gens.

«We suddenly heard a clamor, relates Almeida Garrett, like a cry of anguish of that entire crowd. The sun, in fact, keeping its rapid movement of rotation, seemed to free itself from the firmament and blood-red, to plunge towards the earth, threatening to crush us with its fiery mass. Those were some terrifying seconds.» «I saw the sun turn and it seemed to descend. It was like a bicycle wheel.» (John Carreira) «The sun began to dance and, at a certain moment, it appeared to detach itself from the firmament and to rush forward on us, like a fire wheel.» (Alfredo da Silva Santos) «I saw it perfectly descending as if it came to crash on the earth. It seemed to detach itself from the sky and rush toward us. It maintained itself at a short distance above our heads; but that sort of attack was of very short duration ... It seemed very near the people and it continued to turn in the opposite direction.» (Maria do Carmo)

«From those thousands of mouths, relates the engineer Mario Godinho, I heard shouts of joy and love to the Most Holy Virgin. And then I believed. I had the certainty of not having been the victim of a suggestion. I had seen the sun as I would never see it again.»

Everyone Had Dry Clothes

A last astonishing fact: all those people, who were for the most part soaked to the bone, verified with joy and amazement that they were dry. The fact is attested to in the canonical process.

The Vision of the Solar Prodigy at a Distance

A marvellous thing, the phenomenon could be admired from beyond Fatima. And even some perfectly credible witnesses, who were very far away from the Cova da Iria, related having seen the unprecedented spectacle of the dance of the sun, exactly like the thousands of pilgrims gathered around the holm-oak.

In the small village of Alburitel, situated eighteen or nineteen kilometers from Fatima, the whole town was able to enjoy the vision of the solar prodigy. The testimony frequently quoted is that of Father Inacio Lourenço, because it is the most detailed. But what he relates having seen, all the good villagers, questioned by the investigators, confirmed seeing it in exactly the same way.

«In October, I will perform a miracle,» Our Lady had sovereignly declared on July 13. And on October 13, it was at Her efficacious gesture that the marvellous “dance of the sun”

began: «Then, opening Her hands, She made them reflect on the sun, and as She rose, the reflection of Her own light continued to be projected on the sun itself.»

Thus, the magnificent miracle, it is She Who promised it, Who announced it three months in advance, and at Her gesture the miracle was fulfilled. That is the reply of the Queen of Heaven to the instant supplication of Her shepherd: «I would like to ask You to tell us Who You are, and to perform a miracle so that all may believe that You are appearing to us.» A response surpassing all expectations and one of such magnitude, of such splendor, that no one would dare to dream it possible.

The witnesses of the event were indeed innumerable, their testimonies agree and we are flooded with the documents they have left us.

In the first place, the numerous accounts conveyed appeared at once in the Portuguese press. It is noteworthy that the first to provide testimony were the anticlerical reporters. The three articles of Avelino de Almeida, the one of October 13, immediately before the event, the other of October 15, edited at Vila Nova de Ourem on the evening of the 13th, and a third article of October 29, merit a special mention. In spite of the jeering tone and Voltairian irony which inspire in part the first article, in spite of the expected anticlerical tones which still appear in the article of the 15th. These texts from a reporter of talent, one who, besides, is honest and conscientious, are historical documents of prime importance.⁵ But



A photograph of part of the 70,000 witnesses as they are actually observing the Miracle of the Sun at Fatima on October 13, 1917.

he was not the only one to relate the facts, for other reporters were present at the Cova da Iria.

Next there were the official investigations. In November, 1917, at the request of Bishop de Lima Vidal, who was then directing the diocese of Lisbon, the Parish Priest of Fatima led his investigation and questioned several witnesses of the parish. Unfortunately, he transcribed only... four depositions!

The investigations of the historians fortunately compensated for those negligences of the official investigators. Since Father Formigao, who obtained from Dr. José Maria de Almeida Garrett, professor at the Faculty of Sciences of Coimbra, a very thorough account, the most scientific report in our possession⁶, all the top historians went to question the witnesses. Father da Fonseca, in order to verify the points disputed by Father Dhanis; Father De Marchi,

Canon Barthas, Father Dias Coelho and Father Richard.

In 1977, to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the last apparition, it was still possible to assemble in Fatima more than thirty persons who had been present at the solar prodigy and who could reveal their memories.

Thanks to those numerous testimonies, it is possible to reconstruct a precise running commentary, allowing us to relive, hour by hour and minute by minute, this decisive day, assuredly one of the most important in the history of the world. ■

FOOTNOTES:

- 1) This chapter is an abridgment of "The Whole Truth About Fatima", Volume II, introduction, pages 5-10 (English edition)
- 2) "O Seculo" of October 15, 1917.
- 3) Article of October 29, 1917.
- 4) "Ilustração portuguesa", October 29, 1917.
- 5) We find the photographic reproduction of those three articles in "Fatima 50" of October 13, 1967, pages 6-10; 14-15.
- 6) "Novos Documentos de Fatima", Loyola editions, Sao Paulo, 1984, pages 60-63.

The Three Children of Fatima

LUCY: *Her Infancy*

«Nursed to the sound of hymns, Lucy relates in her second Memoir, the first thing that I learned was the Ave Maria because my mother was accustomed to take me in her arms whenever she was teaching my sister Caroline, who was five years older than I.»¹

Extraordinarily precocious, young Lucy, led by her big sisters, took part in all the festivities of the village where she was cherished by all.

In the family, Maria Rosa excelled in having good Christian joy always prevail. In the evening, she knew how to coax her children from music and singing to prayer and holy readings.

«As my sisters, writes Lucy, at certain times of the year had to work in the fields during the day, in the evening they weaved and sewed. After supper, prayer followed. Prayer was started by my father, then we began to work.² Everyone was busy. My sister Maria looked after the loom, my father would fill the spools. Theresa and Gloria did the sewing. My mother would spin. After organizing the kitchen, Caroline and I were employed in pulling out the thread, sewing the buttons, etc.

«In order to avert drowsiness, my brother played the accordion, to the sound of which we sang various songs. Neighbors came rather often to keep us company, and they were used to saying that, although we

prevented them from sleeping, they felt joyful and lost their bad humor while hearing the festivity we were making. I heard several women say to my mother: “How fortunate you are! What good children Our Lord has given you!”...

«My mother would teach catechism to her children at siesta time during the summer. In winter, our lesson took place in the evening, near the fire-place, while we had roasted chestnuts and sweet acorns, which we ate.»³

«Every evening, especially in winter, Maria dos Anjos relates, our mother would read to us something from the Old Testament or from the Gospel, or a story concerning Our Lady of Nazaré or Our Lady of Lourdes ... During Lent we knew that the readings were always on the Passion of Our Lord. Lucy retained everything by heart immediately, and then related it to the children.»⁴

Lucy's Father

Lucy already manifested uncommon qualities: attentive and reflective, of a profound piety, and she was also very exuberant. Antonio, her father, cherished her, and Lucy, who was very much attached to him, was impressed indelibly by his deep faith and his truly religious soul:

«When the bells of the parish Church rang the Angelus,» she relates, «my father ceased work. His head uncovered, he would say three Hail Marys and come back to the house. [While he was waiting for

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The Rosary

**Sister Lucy of Fatima
and the Rosary**

In 1970, some progressive theologians having led a campaign in Portugal against the Rosary, Sister Lucy wrote to a friend, Mother Maria José Martins, the following lines:

«As for what you are telling me concerning the recitation of the Rosary, it is a great pity! Because the prayers of the Rosary (15 decades) and “The Beads” (5 decades) are, after the Sacred Liturgy of the Eucharist, what unites us the most to God through the richness of the prayers which compose it, all coming from Heaven, dictated by the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Gloria which we recite with all the mysteries, was dictated by the Father to the Angels when He sent them to sing near His Word Who had just been born, and it is a hymn to the Most Holy

Trinity. The “Our Father” was dictated to us by the Son, and it is a prayer directed towards the Father. The “Hail Mary” in its entirety is impregnated with a Trinitarian and Eucharistic meaning: the first words were dictated by the Father to the Angel when He sent him to announce the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee.” Thou art full of grace because in Thee resides the Fountain of that same grace. It is through Thy union with the Most Holy Trinity that Thou art full of grace.»

«Moved by the Holy Ghost, St. Elizabeth said: “Blessed art Thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of Thy Womb.” If Thou art blessed, it is because Jesus, the fruit of Thy Womb, is blessed. Moved by the Holy Ghost, the Church also has added: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.”» ■

The Three Children of Fatima

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meal time, if the weather was good, he would sit on a stone bench which was in the courtyard, leaning against the wall of the kitchen, or else near the fireplace; with me on his knees, he would be busy telling me stories, teaching me regional songs, some fados^{5*}, and some small verses. My mother would go by there, wholly engaged in her task.] From time to

time, when she was very near us, she would say: "What are you teaching the little one? If only you would teach her catechism!" Then my father would say: "We are going to do your mother's will." He would take my little hand in his hand to teach me how to trace the Sign of the Cross on my forehead, my mouth, and my chest. Then he would teach me to say the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Credo, the Confiteor, the Act of Contrition, and the Commandments of God.

«Sometimes my father brought

*Translator's Note: A "fado" is a plaintive Portuguese folk song.

me outside; he would sit on one of the seats there to take in the fresh air. He pointed towards the sky, and said:

"Look up there, it is Our Lady and the little Angels; the moon is the



Sister Lucy of Fatima photographed in 1967.

lamp of Our Lady, the stars those of the Angels, they and Our Lady light and place those lamps in the windows of Heaven in order to light up our way at night. The sun you see rise every day, over there, behind the mountain, is the lamp of Our Lord, which He lights up every day to

warm us and let us work.»⁶ That is why I told the other children that the moon was the lamp of Our Lady, the stars those of the angels, and the sun the lamp of Our Lord.

«Papa was accustomed to tell me when it thundered, that the Heavenly Father was angry because men committed sins. One day, he was working near the well. I was running around him, enjoying myself. Suddenly the weather darkened, and it began to thunder and rain. Papa grabbed his hoe and took me on his shoulders and ran into the house. Upon arrival, I asked him: "The

Heavenly Father is angry. Who has sinned? You, papa, or other men?" My father replied: "I and the others. We are going to pray to Saint Barbara to protect us from the thunder and lightning." He knelt down with mama and my eldest sisters who were there, before a Crucifix which he had on the wall of the room outside, to recite some Our Fathers and Hail Marys.»⁷

Danger to Lucy's Soul

Ti Marto had accurately discerned the richness of Lucy's character:

«She was very exuberant, he reported, very frank and very refined, very affectionate, even with her father; my father this! my father that! Ah, My Jesus! What a daughter, that one! I was "foreseeing" it already: "You will be either very good or very bad."»⁸

Such a character and so many overindulgences from all sides to the youngest, could have without a doubt, in the long run, harmed her soul. Has Lucy herself not disclosed: «Thus, surrounded by tenderness and affection, I then reached my sixth year. And, all in all, the world began to smile at me, and above all the passion for dancing was sinking deep roots in my poor heart. I avow that, if the Good God had not exercised His special Mercy towards me, the demon would have ruined me.»⁹

But thanks to the tireless zeal of her mother and her father, who had already succeeded in teaching her all the catechism when she was only six years old, the beautiful truths of the faith, the love of Jesus, and the ardent hope of receiving Him soon in

her soul, had cast into her heart roots even deeper than the first attractions of the world. The entirely gratuitous predilection of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary was going to accomplish all the rest.

Lucy's First Mystical Graces

At a time when, in spite of the recent decrees of 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 from the age of six. Father Péna, the Pastor, had at first refused this grace to the poor child. And it was good Father Cruz, that Priest who undoubtedly will be raised to the altar, who took upon himself the responsibility of granting this favor to our future seer, after questioning her himself.¹⁰ What a privilege! It was to this Saint that Lucy made her First Confession, which was followed by the "smile of Our Lady." Here is the admirable account which Lucy relates - with what natural and charming candor! - that first mystical grace which impressed itself deeply on her whole life.

«This good Priest, after hearing me, spoke some words to me: "My daughter, your soul is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Keep it always pure so that He can continue His Divine action in it." On hearing these words, I felt imbued with self respect, and I asked the good confessor how I should do it. "On your knees, there, at the feet of Our Lady, ask Her with full confidence to take care of your heart, that She may prepare it to receive

worthily Her Beloved Son tomorrow, and may She preserve it for Him only.”

«There was more than one image of Our Lady in the church, but as my sisters were preparing the altar of Our Lady of the Rosary, I then had the habit of praying before Her statue. In addition, it was there that I proceeded to ask Her with all possible enthusiasm, to preserve my poor heart for God alone. Having several times repeated this humble supplication, my eyes fixed on the statue, I had the impression that She was smiling, and that, with a look

and gesture, She said yes to me. I remained so filled with joy, that I could scarcely articulate a word.»

The next morning, «already clothed in my white dress, my sister Maria led me to the kitchen so that I could ask pardon of my parents, kiss their hands and ask for their blessing. That ritual over, my mother gave me her final recommendations. She told me what she wanted me to ask Our Lord when I had received Him in my heart, and she left me with these words: “Above all, ask Our Lord to make you a Saint!” These words engraved themselves indelibly in my heart, and were the first that I spoke to



Venerable Jacinta of Fatima

Our Lord as soon as I had received Him. Today still, I think I hear the echo of my mother’s voice which repeats them to me ...

«The High Mass began and, as the moment of Communion approached, my heart was beating faster and faster in the expectation of the visit of the great God Who was about to descend from Heaven to unite with my poor soul. The Priest came down to distribute the Bread of Angels. I had the good fortune to be the first. When the Priest came down the altar steps, my heart beat so hard that I thought it was going to come out of my chest. But as soon as he

had put the Divine Host on my lips, I felt a serenity and an 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. I then addressed my supplications to Him: “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. When the religious ceremony ended, it was almost one o’clock in the afternoon because the priests who had come from outside had arrived late, and because of the length of the sermon, and of the renewal of the baptismal promises. My mother came to get me, very worried, believing that I had fainted. I felt so satiated from the Bread of Angels that it was impossible to take any food. I lost, since then, the taste and attraction that I had begun to feel for the things of the world, and I only felt at ease in a solitary place where I could then recall the delights of my First Communion.»¹¹

Lucy’s Heavy Trials

Beginning with 1919, death struck repeated blows in the entourage of Lucy, sinking more and more into her sorrowful solitude ... On April 4, Francisco flew to Heaven. Then, on July 31, it was the death of her own father. «My sorrow was such, Lucy

would confide, that I thought I would die also. My father was the only one who continued to show me affection, and in the discussions which arose in the family against me, he was the only one who defended me.»¹²

In that same year 1919, Maria Rosa fell ill, and so gravely «that one day, Lucy writes, we thought her to be dying.»

Maria dos Anjos relates: «She had crises of suffocation, and the doctor said that they were heart attacks. We all wept, because we had already lost our father...»¹³

«We, her children, Lucy continues, gathered around her bed in order to receive her last blessing and kiss the hand of our dying mother. As I was the youngest, I was the last one in line. My poor mother, seeing me, revived a little, and putting her arms around my neck, she sighed, exclaiming: “My poor daughter! What will become of you without your mother? I am going to die, my heart is torn on your account.” And sobbing bitterly, she squeezed me in her arms more and more tightly. My eldest sister snatched me forcefully from her arms, and leading me into the kitchen, forbade me to return to the sick room. In concluding, she said to me: “Our mother is dying in pain, because of the sorrows you have caused her.” I knelt down, inclining my head on a bench, and I felt a deep bitterness which I had never experienced previously. I offered to our good God my sacrifice.

«A little later, my two eldest sisters, seeing that there was no longer any hope, came back to me, saying:

“Lucy, if it is true that you saw Our Lady, go now to the Cova da Iria, ask Her to cure our mother. Promise Her what you wish, we will do it, and then we will believe.” Without losing a moment, I was on my way.» Maria dos Anjos remembers that it was winter and that it was raining hard. «So as not to be seen, Lucy continues, I went through paths which cut across fields, reciting my Rosary. I made my request to the Most Holy Virgin. Giving free rein to my 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 ...»¹⁴

Maria dos Anjos testifies that «the crisis disappeared on the spot. She (Maria Rosa) had no more suffocation. She breathed well. Her heart was working better, and soon she was able to get up. She was not completely cured and did not recover all her strength. But afterwards she could still work a great deal, so well that she did not appear a woman of her age.»¹⁵

JACINTA:

«The Good God had endowed Jacinta with a gentle and tender character which made her lovable and attractive ...»¹⁶ Obviously she was the favorite of her father, who declared to Father De Marchi: «She was always so gentle! On this point, she was truly astonishing. Even nursing at her mother’s breast she was already like that. Nothing made her angry. We have not brought up another one like her! It was a natural gift for her.»¹⁷ That will not prevent her, while growing up, when playing her games, from being at times capricious and sulky, for she was lively, alert and easily moved in everything. But «her touchy character» was the other side of a rich and enthusiastic temperament.

Jacinta had a heart of gold, and she was capable of great affection. Also, her heart was surprisingly pure, wholly submissive to baptismal grace. Among the savory recollections related by Lucy in her first Memoir, let us mention to begin with, the «three kisses to Jesus». The children often played at forfeits, a game in which the winner has the right to order anything he wishes of the loser:

Her Sensitive Resolute Heart

«One day we were about to play that game in the house of my parents, and it was my turn to give her a forfeit. My brother was also seated near a table for writing. I sent her then to give him a hug and a kiss, but she replied: “That, no! Command me

to do something else. Why do you not have me hug Our Lord Who is there (it was a Crucifix hanging on the wall)?”

“Yes,” I replied. “Get up on a chair, bring it here, and on your knees, give Him three hugs and three kisses, one for Francisco, another for me, and another for you.” - “To Our Lord I will give as many as you wish.” She ran to get the Crucifix, hugging it and clenching it with such devotion that I shall never forget that action.

«After looking at Our Lord attentively, she asked: “Why is Our Lord nailed like that to a Cross?” - “Because He died for us.” - “Tell me how it happened.” And Lucy continued artlessly: “As I only had to hear stories once to repeat them in all their details, I then began to tell in detail to my companions, the story of Our Lord ... On hearing the account of His suffering, the little one was moved and wept. Several times after, she asked me to repeat it. She wept, deeply pained, and said: ‘Our poor Lord! I should never commit any sin. I don’t want Our Lord to suffer any more.’”»¹⁸

What a loving, sensitive and resolute heart this childish reflection reveals to us! And the end of the same incident¹⁹ shows us Jacinta, the frank and loyal one, preferring to be accused rather than see her cousin scolded unjustly. Love of truth was so deeply anchored in her soul, that the slightest lie scandalized her.

In order to perceive with what seriousness and realism little Jacinta regarded matters of faith, let us cite

another passage of that first Memoir of Lucy, dedicated entirely to the biography of her cousin.

For Corpus Christi, Caroline, one of Lucy’s sisters, undertook to dress some “little angels” who, during the procession, were strewing flowers in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Lucy was always chosen, and her cousin asked to join her:

«Both of us went to make the request. My sister accepted, she tried a dress on her as well, and during the rehearsals she told us how we were to toss the flowers to the Baby Jesus. Jacinta asked: “Are we going to see Him?” “Yes,” my sister replied. “The Priest will carry Him.” Jacinta jumped for joy and kept on asking how much time remained for the feast to begin. The desired day finally arrived, and the little one was frantic with joy. They placed the two of us there beside the altar, and in the procession beside the dais, each with her basket of flowers. At the spots marked by my sister, I tossed my flowers to Jesus. But in spite of all the signs I was making to Jacinta, I did not succeed in having her toss a single flower. She kept on watching the Priest and nothing else. When the ceremony ended, my sister led us outside the church and asked: “Jacinta, why didn’t you toss the flowers to Jesus?” - “Because I didn’t see Him.”

«Then Jacinta asked: “Then, you saw the Baby Jesus?” - “No, but don’t you know that we don’t see the Baby Jesus of the Host? He is hidden, it is He Whom we receive in Holy Communion.” - “And when you



Our Lady of Fatima said the Pope would have much to suffer if Her requests were not obeyed. The Pope was shot May 13, 1981. He says Our Lady of Fatima saved his life.

receive Holy Communion, do you talk to Him?" - "I talk to Him." - "But why don't you see Him?" - "Because He is hidden." - "I'm going to ask my mother if she will allow me also to go to Communion." - "The Priest won't give you Holy Communion before the age of ten." - "But you aren't ten yet, and you've already received Communion." - "Because I knew the whole catechism and you don't know it."

«Then Jacinta and Francisco asked me to teach them catechism. I therefore became catechist of my two companions who learned with unique enthusiasm.»²⁰

This charming anecdote shows that we could not have made our little peasant believe just anything. «To see

Jesus, she stared, and said rightly that she didn't see Him. When later she will maintain against all comers that she saw the beautiful Lady, that means that she must have indeed seen Her!»²¹

Jacinta Sacrifices for Sinners

«Jacinta, Lucy writes, took sacrifices for the conversion of sinners so much to heart that she did not let any opportunity pass her by. There were some children, sons of two families of Moita who went from door to door begging. We met them one day, when we were going out with our flock. Seeing them, Jacinta said to us: "Let us give our meal to those poor children for the conversion of sinners!" She ran

continued on page 33

J.M.J.

First Saturday of the month
Dedicated to the Immaculate Heart

Dear Friend of Our Lady,

This special edition of The Fatima Crusader is being sent to you through the prayers and generous sacrifices of many thousands of faithful Catholics across the U.S. and Canada.

Perhaps you heard about Fatima when you were going to school and, like myself, thought you knew all about it.

It was only after my 12 years in university and after my ordination to the priesthood I discovered that I really didn't know, as I ought to, the marvellous message of love, of warning, of hope and triumph that Fatima is.

With surveys showing that only three per cent of all Catholics really know the Fatima Message, I feel very blessed today to send you this small magazine in which you will find the story of Fatima told in all its beautiful simplicity.

Through Fatima we experience the love of our Heavenly Mother. It is a rich message and a profound prophecy for our time. And the Holy Spirit in the Holy Bible tells us not to despise prophecy. (I Thess.5:19)

That is why I have spent the last 16 years of my priestly life working full time, all year long to bring the full Message of Fatima to everyone.

Pope John Paul II says, "The message of Fatima is addressed to every human being." "The message of Fatima is more relevant and more urgent than 65 years ago."

Our world is troubled by the moral degradation spewed out of our TV sets and on the movie screens. Many things in our society more and more promote sin. As a result we are threatened by pornography, drugs, abortion, crime, violence, hatred, divorce, etc.

Many solutions have been offered by government agencies, social welfare groups and educators. Often they become part of the problem by funding programs and ideas that Our Lady of Fatima warns us only lead to wars, sin, death and hell.

As you will read, Our Lady told us at Fatima that "Only I can help you." In the struggle to protect our children, our families and our souls, this promise from Heaven is more vital and precious than ever!

Today, all need to read, learn, understand and

appreciate Our dear Mother Mary's simple yet profound message for our time. It is a message of hope, joy and peace.

I have made this special issue in order to reintroduce you to Fatima. Even if you have heard of it before, please read this issue with a fresh look.

You will discover in the authentic Fatima message a strength, support, solace and guide in these difficult times.

As you read, I pray that Our Lady will touch your heart as She did mine and make you want to help Her save so many lost souls.

Through spreading Her Fatima Message to others and coming to know it and live it better yourself, you will make your own salvation more and more secure. In fact, Our Lady promises you eternal salvation just for fulfilling Her Five First Saturday request. See pg.51.

Help reach out to others, as others have helped us reach out to you. Help by your financial support (if you can) and by your prayers and sacrifices.

If these things are not possible now, perhaps you can send us the names and addresses of other Catholics who would profit by this 'Special Issue'. Please do what you can.

St. James in Sacred Scripture says, "He who can do good and does not do it, does evil." (James 4:17)

May we all meet in Heaven. Let us be diligent in praying the Rosary every day - as Our Lady of Fatima so frequently asked us to do.

I urge you to share the story of Our Lady's promise of peace and protection with your own family and friends. Additional copies of this magazine are available and FREE upon request.

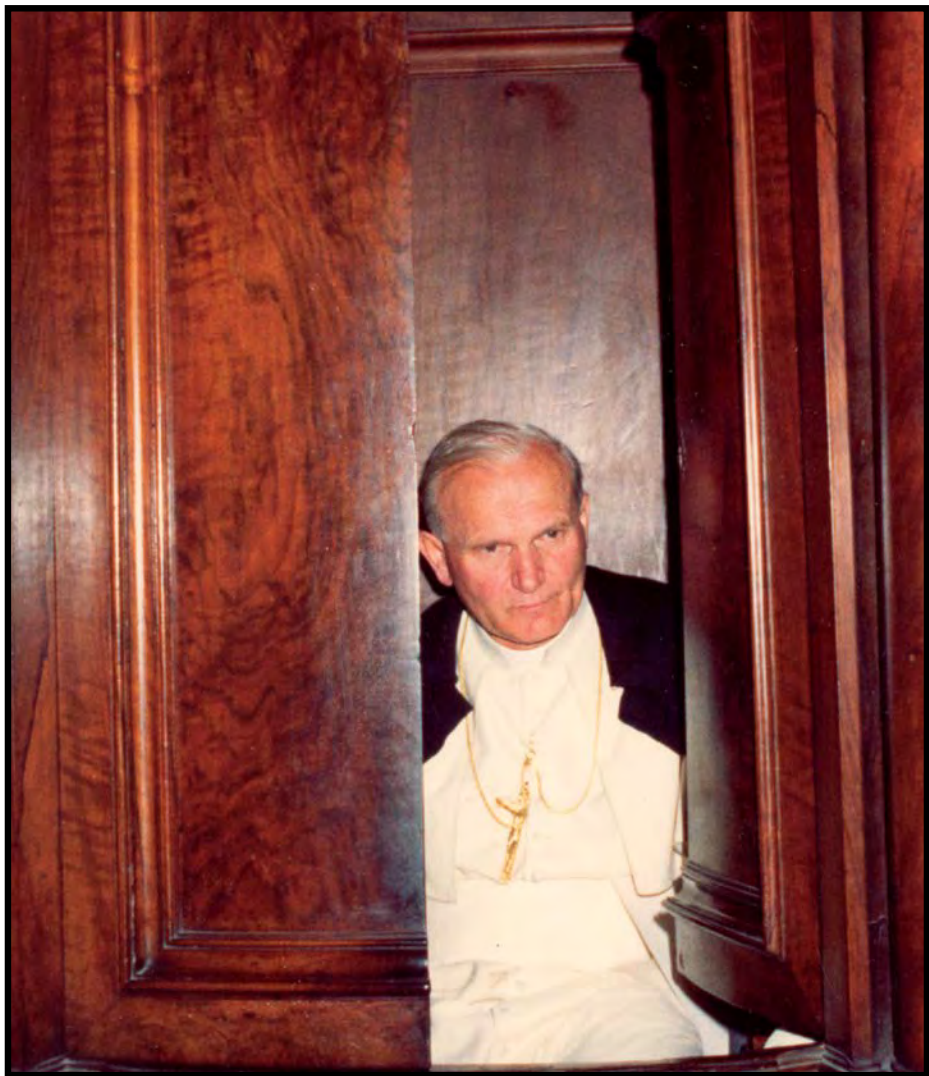
God bless you and your loved ones and may Our Lady bring you ever closer to Her Divine Son, Jesus.

Yours in Jesus, Mary and Joseph,



Father Nicholas Gruner

P.S. SPECIAL FREE OFFER. Please send the attached reply form for more free information, a free subscription to Our Lady's Fatima Magazine, a free Brown Scapular, and a free vial of miraculous Fatima water drawn from Our Lady's own well in Portugal.



Like Our Lady of Fatima, Pope John Paul II underlines the crucial importance of personal confession of sins to a Catholic priest. Here the Pope takes his turn as a confessor in Saint Peter's in Vatican City.

The Three Children of Fatima

continued from page 30

to bring it to them.

«Jacinta seemed tireless in the practice of sacrifice. One day, ... on

the road, we met our dear poor little ones, and Jacinta ran to give them the alms. It was a very beautiful day and the sun was very hot. In that arid and dry moor, everything seemed to want to catch fire. Thirst made itself

felt and we did not have a drop of water to drink. At the beginning, we offered that sacrifice generously, for the conversion of sinners, but with the arrival of noon, we could not resist any longer. I then proposed to my companions going to a nearby place to ask for a little water. They accepted the proposal and I knocked at the door of an old woman who, in giving me a pitcher of water, gave me also a little bread, which I accepted gratefully. I ran to share it with my companions. Then I gave the pitcher to Francisco and I told him to drink. "I don't want to drink", he replied. "Why?" - "I want to suffer for the conversion of sinners." - "You, Jacinta, drink." - "I want to offer this sacrifice for sinners too." I then poured that water into the hollow of a rock so that our sheep could drink it and I went to bring back the pitcher to its owner. The heat became more and more intense. The cicadas and the crickets joined their singing with that of the frogs of the neighboring pond and made an unbearable noise. Jacinta, weakened by hunger and thirst, said to me, with a simplicity which was natural to her: "Tell the crickets and the frogs not to sing any more, I have such a headache!" Then Francisco asked:

"Don't you want to suffer that for sinners?" The poor child, holding her head between her two little hands, replied: "Yes, I want to, let them sing."»²²

Jacinta always had that thought, which had become habitual to her, of suffering for sinners, in making reparation in their place, while

substituting herself for them in order to obtain for them pardon and the grace of conversion.

«When, through mortification, she did not want to eat, I would say to her, "Jacinta, let's go eat now." - "No, I offer this sacrifice for sinners who eat too much." When she was already ill, she would go to Mass one day a week, I would say to her, "Jacinta, don't come; you do not have the strength; it is not Sunday today." - "It matters little, I am going there for sinners who do not even go on Sundays." If it happened that she heard one of those too liberal words that some people glory in pronouncing, she would cover herself with her hands saying: "My Goodness! Do these people not know in saying these things, they risk going to Hell? Forgive them, my Jesus, and convert them. Certainly they do not know that such things offend God. What a pity, my Jesus! I pray for them." And she would repeat then the prayer taught by Our Lady: "O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fire of Hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need."»²³

«Jacinta frequently repeated those sacrifices, but I cannot continue to relate all of them, Sister Lucy concludes, otherwise I will never finish!»²⁴

Our Lady Visits Jacinta Three Extra Times

«In my opinion, Lucy remarks, 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.»²⁵ In fact, although she was the youngest

of the three seers, she is the one who seems first of all to have benefited from the greatest intimacy with the Most Holy Virgin. The cycle of the six public apparitions being closed, Jacinta continued up to her death to receive extraordinary supernatural favors. Through the official report which Father Ferreira drew up on the events of Fatima, we know that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her at least three times, in the short lapse of time between October 13, 1917 and August 6, 1918.

Jacinta, this report tells us, affirms that Our Lady appeared to her three more times.

To renew their fervor, Our Lady had come, at the end of the year 1918 or at the beginning of January 1919, to visit Jacinta and Francisco: «One day, Lucy relates, she (Jacinta) had me called so that I might go to her quickly. I went there running:

“Our Lady came to see us, Jacinta said. She said that She would come soon to get Francisco to take him to Heaven. She asked me if I wanted to convert still more sinners. I said yes to Her. She told me that I would go to the hospital and that there, I would suffer a great deal; that I am to suffer for the conversion of sinners, in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and for love of Jesus. I asked if you would come with me. She answered no. That is what is going to be the most difficult for me. She said that my mother would take me to the hospital and that then I would stay there all alone.”»²⁶

Another day, Jacinta was more precise in confiding to her cousin: «Our Lady wants me to go to two hospitals, but it is not to be cured, it is to suffer still further for love of Our Lord and for sinners.»²⁷

For a long time Jacinta knew, as a certain and absolute truth, that the more she suffered, the more numerous would be the souls she would snatch from the eternal flames. Instructed by the infused grace which accompanied the words of the Angel, she had understood «the value of sacrifice, how pleasing it is to God and how much out of consideration for it, God converts sinners.»²⁸ And she gave her generous “yes” to the hard sacrifice which was asked of her, the one she had doubtlessly not even imagined: to suffer and die alone, far from her father, far from her mother, and what is more, far from Lucy, her only confidante, her intimate friend, whose presence was a solid comfort to her and the one great consolation which remained to her.

In December 1919, «again, Lucy relates, the Most Holy Virgin deigned to visit Jacinta to announce to her new crosses and new sacrifices. She informed me of the news and said to me: *“She told me that I will go to Lisbon into another hospital; that I will never see you again, nor my parents either; that after suffering a great deal, I will die all alone; but that I should not be afraid, because She will come to get me in order to go to Heaven.”*

At Lisbon, Jacinta was immediately allowed to stay at the orphanage

of Our Lady of the Miracles, thus named because it contained the chapel consecrated under that title.

«From Lisbon, Lucy writes, Jacinta had told me that Our Lady had already come to see her, that She had told her the hour and the day of her death, and that She recommended me to be very good.»²⁹

On February 2, 1920, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus, Jacinta left Our Lady of the Miracles for the hospital Dona Estefania. It was for her a new painful separation, especially because her mother had to return to Fatima on February 5. It was then that she left her poor child forever.

«Purulent pleurisy of the large left cavity, with fistula; osteitis of the seventh and eighth ribs of the same side.» Such was the diagnosis of Dr. Castro Freire who received her at the hospital.

«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 whose method was still very imperfect at that time.»³⁰

Furthermore, she suffered still even much more humiliation of seeing herself entirely unclothed.

The nurses had observed that Jacinta forced herself to hide her sufferings. Sister D. Leonor Assunção de Almeida testifies: «She was a very peaceful child, never did she complain! ... The small one spoke little and was very self-contained. But she prayed a great deal and invoked Our Lady in her suffering.»³¹ «That

child, declares another nurse, was very different from the others. Very patient ... a little Saint! Never did she cry out, never was she angry.» The nurses who had seen her enter the hospital «like any urchin» had soon perceived that she «was different from the others in everything.»³¹

February 20, 1920: She Died Alone

As a good Mother, the Virgin Mary had pity on Her child and soon came to soften her trial ... She appeared to her at the foot of her bed: «Our Lady told me that She would come to get me soon and that I will not suffer any longer.»³² In fact, since that day, Jacinta no longer manifested any suffering. She knew the day and the hour of her death.³³

«On the evening of February 20, towards six o'clock, Dr. Lisboa specifies, the little one said that she felt worse and wished to receive the last sacraments. They called the pastor of the Parish of the Angels, Father Pereira dos Reis, who heard her confession about eight o'clock in the evening. I was told that the little one had insisted that they bring her Holy Viaticum. But Father Pereira dos Reis, seeing her apparently well, did not want to do it, and only promised to bring her Our Lord the next day.»³⁴

«Again, the little one insisted in order to receive Communion, saying that she was soon going to die. In fact, about 10:30 that evening, she passed away peacefully, but without having received Holy Communion.»³⁵

All was accomplished. The

prophecy of the Blessed Virgin Mary had been fulfilled: Jacinta died alone, without parents or friends, without anyone to assist her in her last moments. And the sweet Presence of Jesus in the Host, Whom she desired so ardently for that supreme moment, had just been refused her. But Our Lady surely kept Her promise; we can be certain of that. She came to get Her child, to finally introduce her into the infinite beatitude of Heaven!

FRANCISCO:

«Lucy relates that “Francisco does not seem to be Jacinta’s brother except for facial traits and the practice of virtue. Unlike her, he was not capricious or lively. On the contrary, he was of a peaceful and humble nature ... The eyes manifested a rather lively spirit, but few children liked to play with him because he almost always lost ... And when he did win, if someone sought to deprive him of his rights, he would give in without resistance, limiting himself to say: ‘You think you won? Very well, that doesn’t matter to me at all.’ I admit myself that I had little sympathy for him, because his peaceful character sometimes excited the nerves of my too lively nature.”»³⁶

Like his father, he was meek and humble. Of a perpetually joyful expression, he was kind and accommodating with everyone, even at the price of enormous sacrifices: «If other children insisted on taking from him something that belonged to him, he would say: “Keep it, it’s all the same to me!”»³⁷

We must not think on that account that he lacked energy or was weak-willed. If his big cousin was impressed by him, at home his virtue was not without fault. We should take into consideration the testimony of his father, as it completes Lucy’s declarations. A robust boy, full of vitality, «he was more difficult and more bustling than his little sister. He was not so patient. He would balk at a trifle ... We would have said a little calf!» Mischievous, he loved to play tricks on his brothers and sisters, and without the firm hand of Manuel Pedro, who knew how to make himself obeyed, he too would have been capricious.³⁸

If he showed himself calm and peaceful most of the time, it was certainly not through sluggishness or apathy. Far from being a coward, on the contrary he displayed boldness and courage. «He was not fearful at all, Lucy relates. At night, he would go alone to any obscure place without any problem. He would play with the lizards and snakes he found; he would make them curl around a stick; he would pour goat’s milk into the hollows of the rocks to have them drink. He would creep into caves looking for holes of foxes, rabbits, genets, etc.»³⁹

«He was very deft with his hands, his mother Olimpia related. The little things I gave him to make, he made them in a way that amazed me.»⁴⁰

Like his father who, when he was alone, seemed always absorbed in deep reflection, Francisco was a meditative soul. He had little taste for the noisy

games and the shouting of his two companions: «He did not display, like Jacinta, any passion for dancing. He preferred to play the flute, while the others danced ... What he preferred to do when we went on the hills, Lucy writes, was to sit down on the highest rock and to play his flute or sing. If his little sister came down with me to run a little, he would remain there, busy with his music and his songs ...»⁴¹ Along with his love of nature and of the animals of the open country, music was his dominant passion. The word is not excessive, for it caused him to commit the gravest fault of his short life: the theft of his father's tostao [a coin] (that made up a tiny amount!) in order to buy himself a harmonica which he coveted too much.

Francisco's Great Message

Since May 13 and the first "vision in God" with which Our Lady had favored Her three privileged ones, Francisco, who had a contemplative soul and tender heart, remained occupied by one single thought, dominated by one single sentiment: The Virgin Mary and God Himself are infinitely sad, it is up to us to console them!

The life of little Francisco was profoundly impressed by that astounding revelation, that unveiling of the Heart of God, of that sadness which is the supreme, indisputable sign of His love for us. And this is the great message which Francisco bequeaths to us.

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. Then, he said: "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 that He is so sad! If only I could console Him!"»⁴²

In order to pray, Francisco sought solitude: «He spoke little, Lucy relates, and to pray and offer sacrifices, he loved to hide himself, even from Jacinta and me ... From time to time, he would distance himself from us without our realizing it ... When we noticed his absence, we would begin to look for him while calling him. He would answer us from behind a small wall, a shrub or a bush ... He had withdrawn there, on his knees, to pray and think about Our Lord, so sad because of so many sins, as he said ... If I asked him: "Francisco, why did you not tell me to pray with you and also with Jacinta?" - "I prefer to pray alone, in order to think, and to console Our Lord Who is so sad!"»⁴³

«One day, Lucy reports again, we were going to my home, passing in front of my baptismal godmother's house. She had just made some mead and called us to give us a glass. We went in and Francisco was the first to whom she gave the glass to drink. He took the glass without drinking it, passed it on to Jacinta so that she might drink some, and I also. In the meantime, he made a half-turn and disappeared. "Where is Francisco?" my godmother asked. "I don't know! I don't know!

He was there a moment ago.” He did not reappear. Jacinta and I, after having said thank you, went to find him again, not doubting for a moment that he was sitting at the side of the well of which I have so often spoken. “Francisco, you didn’t drink the mead! Godmother called you several times, but you didn’t answer.” - “When I took the glass I suddenly remembered to make that sacrifice to console Our Lord, and while you were drinking, I fled here.”»⁴⁴

«One day, Ti Marto relates, two ladies were conversing with Francisco and they asked him about the career he would like to follow when he grew up: “You want to be a carpenter?” asked one of them. “No, Madam”, the child replied. The other asked: “Do you want to be a soldier?” - “No, Madam.” - “You would not wish to be a doctor?” - “Not that either.” - “I know what you would like to be ... a priest! To say the Mass ... confess, preach ... is it not true?” - “No, Madam, I do not want to be a priest.” - “Then, what do you want to be?” - “I don’t want to be anything ... I want to die and go to Heaven.”»

Ti Marto comments: «That, there,



Venerable Francisco of Fatima

was a true decision!» Francisco did not think primarily of himself, nor of his own joy, but above all he thought of the joy of Jesus. «Soon Jesus is going to come to take me to Heaven with Him, and then I will always see Him and console Him. What happiness!»⁴⁵

Francisco and the Hidden Jesus

Meanwhile, he wanted to be as much as possible at His feet, near the Tabernacle. «When he was going to school, Sister Lucy relates again, sometimes when entering the village of Fatima itself, he would say to me:

“Listen, you go to school. As for me, I will stay here in the Church, near the hidden Jesus. It is not worthwhile for me to learn how to read. Soon I am going to Heaven. When you come back, come and look for me here.” The Blessed Sacrament was then near the entrance of the church, on the left side. He placed himself between the baptismal font and the altar, and I found him there when I returned (the Blessed Sacrament was there because of the repairs going on in the church).»⁴⁶

Sometimes, in order to intercede at length on behalf of those who had entreated him, Francisco would spend the morning at the foot of the Tabernacle:

«One day when I was going out of the house, Lucy relates, I met my sister Theresa, recently married at Lomba. She came, at the request of a woman from a neighboring hamlet, whose son had been arrested because they had accused him of I don't know what crime. If his innocence was not demonstrated, he would be condemned to deportation, or, at least, to a great many years in prison. She asked me insistently, in the name of the poor woman to whom she wanted to give happiness, to obtain for her that grace from Our Lady. The message received, I left for school and on the way, I told my cousins what had happened. Arriving at Fatima, Francisco said to me: “Listen, while you go to school, I will stay with the hidden Jesus and there, I will ask Him that.” And going out of school I went to call him and I asked him: “Did you ask Our Lord for

that grace?” - “Yes, I asked for it. Tell your sister Theresa that in a few days he will come back home.” In actual fact, a few days after, the poor boy was home, and on the 13th he was with all his family to thank Our Lady for the grace received.»⁴⁷

How had Francisco known that his prayer had been heard? We do not know. In any case, on that day he had the assurance which the Saints show when they prophesy or perform miracles ... And we can thus guess what was his intimacy with God.

Francisco Struck by the Flu

Our shepherds had never been ill⁴⁸ until October 1918 when Jacinta, who was only eight years old, and Francisco, who was only ten, were struck almost at the same time by the terrible Spanish flu. Once it left Spain, the epidemic ravaged many countries in Europe, and was particularly deadly in Portugal. Very often the illness evolved rapidly into bronchial-pneumonia, as was the case with Jacinta and Francisco.

«During his sickness, Lucy relates, he suffered with an heroic patience, without ever letting escape a groan or the mildest complaint.»

For her part, his mother Olimpia was able to declare to Father De Marchi: «The little one accepted all the remedies he was given. He did not fuss. I could never know what pleased him ... Poor little one! Even the bitter medicines, he drank them without making a face. We also thought that he would overcome the illness. But what? He kept repeating that it was all

useless, that Our Lady was going to come to take him to Heaven.»⁴⁹

He wished to offer up all his prayers and his sufferings to console Our Lord and Our Lady:

«One day, Lucy reports, when, with Jacinta, we entered his bedroom, he said to us: “Today, speak little! I have a bad headache.” - “Don’t forget to make the offering for sinners”, Jacinta said to him. “Yes, but first I offer it up to console Our Lord and Our Lady, and then I offer it for sinners and for the Holy Father.” Another day, in arriving, I found him very happy. “You are better?” - “No, he said, I feel much worse. Only a little time remains to me before going to Heaven. There above, I am going to console Our Lord and Our Lady a great deal; Jacinta is going to pray a great deal for sinners, for the Holy Father and for you. You are going to stay here because Our Lady wishes it. Listen, do everything She tells you.”»⁵⁰

His Most Bitter Regret

His most bitter regret was to no longer be able to spend long hours, as he had before, at the foot of the Tabernacle to console the hidden Jesus ... Lucy explains.

«After he fell ill, he sometimes said to me when I passed by his home on my way to school: “Listen, go to the church and present to the hidden Jesus all my salutations! What I regret the most, is not being able to spend time there with Him.” One day upon arriving near his house, and after I had taken leave of a group of children from the school who came with me, I went inside to visit with him and his

sister. As he had heard some noise, he asked me: “You came with all of them?” - “Yes.” - “Don’t go with them! You could learn to commit sins. When you leave the school, go and spend a moment near the hidden Jesus and then come back all alone.”»⁵¹

Within six months, the terrible illness had broken the robust health of Francisco. Whereas previously he would recite up to seven or eight rosaries daily, as Olimpia affirmed, now he was so weak that evening would arrive before he had recited a single one, which afflicted him greatly. No longer being able to pray and feeling that he was near the end, he disclosed to his father that he wanted to go to Holy Communion. On April 2, 1919, the Parish Priest of Fatima, Father Manuel Marques Ferreira,⁵² finally allowed himself to be moved. He went without delay to the little sick one. On that very day, early in the morning, Francisco had sent his sister Theresa to fetch Lucy.

«“Come quick! Francisco is feeling very bad and he says that he wants to tell you something!” I hastily got dressed and I went. He asked his mother and his brothers to leave the bedroom, for it was a secret which he wished to tell me. They went out and he said to me: “I want to confess before going to Communion and then die. I should like you to tell me if you have seen me commit some sins, and to go and ask Jacinta if she has seen me commit any.” - “You have disobeyed your mother sometimes, I answered him, when she told you to stay home and you escaped to come to me or to

go and hide yourself.” - “That is true, I did commit that one. Now go and ask Jacinta if she remembers anything else.” I went and after thinking it over, Jacinta answered me: “Listen, tell him that just before the apparitions of Our Lady, he stole a coin (tostao) from our father to buy the harmonica of José Marto de Casa Velha, and that when the boys of Aljustrel threw stones at the boys from Boleiros, he threw some too.” When I informed him of his sister’s message, he replied to me: “Those, I have already confessed, but I am going to confess them again. Perhaps it is because of those sins I have committed that Our Lord is so sad! But even if I were not dying, never more would I begin again to commit them. Now I am sorry for them.” And joining his hands, he then said the prayer: “O my Jesus, forgive us, save us from the fire of Hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need”...

His Great Joy

«That evening, he was radiant with joy: he had gone to confession and the Parish Priest had promised to bring him Holy Communion the next day.»⁵³

He rejoiced. The moment so ardently desired was coming at long last. For the first time since his miraculous Communion at the Cabeço, he was going to receive his “hidden Jesus,” at Whose feet he had spent so many silent hours. Given his sickness, he could have been dispensed from fasting. But no! He wanted to offer that ultimate sacrifice. «He obtained the promise from his mother that she

would not give him anything after midnight, so that he could receive Communion fasting, like everyone else.»⁵⁴

Father De Marchi relates the recollections of the Marto parents: «The dawn of April 3 finally came. It was a beautiful spring day ... When Francisco heard the tinkling of the bell which announced the approach of the King of Heaven, he wanted to seat himself on his bed; but his strength was lacking, and he fell back on his pillow. “You can remain lying down to receive Our Lord,” said his godmother Theresa. She had come specially to assist at the first and last Communion of her godson ... Kneeling near the bed, the two little ones wept with sadness, but also with a holy jealousy. Jesus was coming to take away their companion, to take him to Heaven. After receiving the Host on his parched tongue, Francisco closed his eyes, and remained motionless for a long time ... The first words which he spoke were to say to his mother: “Will the Parish Priest not bring the hidden Jesus to me another time?”⁵⁵ - “I do not know,” she replied, having a presentiment no doubt that this first Communion would also be for him Viaticum. But he, still filled with joy, said to his little sister: “Today I am happier than you, because I have the hidden Jesus in my heart. I am going to Heaven, and there I am going to pray a great deal to Our Lord and Our Lady that They will very quickly take both of you also.”⁵⁶

«The eve of his death, Lucy writes, he said to me: “Listen, I am very ill, I have only a little time left before going

to Heaven ...” - “Then, I replied, do not forget up there to pray for sinners, for the Holy Father, for me and for Jacinta.” - “Yes, I want to indeed, but listen, those things, ask rather Jacinta, for I am afraid of forgetting when I see Our Lord! Before everything, I want to console Him!”»⁵⁷

Goodbye Until We Meet in Heaven

That Thursday, April 3, during the day, Francisco’s condition worsened alarmingly. «He was thirsty, but already he was no longer able to tolerate milk, not even the teaspoons of water that his mother and godmother offered him from time to time. If his mother or godmother asked him how he felt, he would reply: “I feel well. I no longer suffer at all.”»⁵⁸

«It was night when I took leave of him, Lucy relates: “Good-bye, Francisco! If you go to Heaven tonight, do not forget me up there, you understand?” - “No, I shall not forget you, be sure of that.” And taking me by the right hand, he held it tightly for a long time, looking at me with tears in his eyes. “Do you want anything more?” I asked him, with tears running down my cheeks too. “No”, he answered me in a faint voice. As the scene became too moving, my aunt made me go out of the bedroom. “Good-bye then, Francisco! Until we meet in Heaven!” - “Good-bye, until Heaven!”»⁵⁹

He Died Smiling

The next day, April 4, on that first Friday of the month, everything indicated that his end was near. He

still had the strength to ask pardon of his godmother for the few vexations that he had been able to cause her during his life and to ask for her blessing. When night had fallen completely, he called his mother, and asked her: «Oh! Mama, see! ... What a beautiful light, there, near the door!» And after a few minutes: «Now, I no longer see it ...»⁶⁰ Towards 10 o’clock in the evening,⁶¹ his face shone with an angelic smile and, without any sign of suffering, without agony, without groans, he died calmly. «He flew away to Heaven in the arms of our Heavenly Mother,»⁶² Lucy writes. Jacinta was near her brother’s bed when he died. And as she saw everyone weeping, she exclaimed: «Why do you weep, since he is happy?»⁶³ During the church investigation, his mother was able to make this statement: «He appeared to be smiling, and stopped breathing.» As for his father, he declared: «He died smiling.»⁶⁴

Francisco was not yet eleven years old, and since the last apparition at the Cova da Iria only a year and a half had elapsed. 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 sufferings of his illness, he was already prepared for Heaven and the Virgin Mary was able to come to get him.

On April 5, first Saturday of the month, a modest procession brought his body to the cemetery of Fatima. ■

FOOTNOTES:

1) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, page 53. 2) On Sunday, reports Lucy in her Fifth Memoir (Portuguese), they said the Rosary in the evening "for it was not a working day" (page 202). 3) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, pages 60, 55. 4) Father John De Marchi, page 53. 5) That is popular, very melancholic songs. 6) At the end of this account, Sister Lucy notes: "I know indeed that all that is childish, but it taught us to lift up our eyes towards Heaven where we know God our Father is situated, the Blessed Mother Whom He gave us to watch over us, the Angels whom He created and destined to guide us and lead us on the roads of life." (page 207). 7) Sister Lucy's Fifth Memoir (Portuguese), pages 204-205. 8) Father John De Marchi, page 52. 9) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, page 55. 10) In 1947, Father Cruz confirmed to Canon Barthas the exactness of all the facts regarding himself reported by Sister Lucy in her Memoirs. 11) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, pages 55-59. 12) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, pages 91-92. 13) Father John De Marchi, page 249. 14) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, pages 89-90. 15) Maria Rosa died on July 16, 1942, aged seventy-three, from a cardiac lesion. See Martins dos Reis, "A vidente de Fatima dialoga," page 45. 16) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, page 22. 17) Father John De Marchi, page 64. 18) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, pages 23-24. 19) Ibid., pages 24-25. 20) Ibid., pages 26-27. 21) Dom Jean-Nesmy, *La Vérité de Fatima*, SOS éditions, 1980, page 47. 22) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, page 32. 23) Sister Lucy's Third Memoir, page 107. 24) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, page 41. 25) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, page 33. 26) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, page 42. 27) Sister Lucy's Second Memoir, page 97. 28) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 152. 29) Sister Lucy's First Memoir, page 46. 30) When he operated on Jacinta, Doctor Castro Freire still was not aware that she was the seer of Fatima. Later, in 1980, that doctor gave the following testimony: "Jacinta impressed me as a very courageous child, for in order to open a fistula, the local anaesthesia is far from suppressing all the pain ... The only words I heard her pronounce during the operation were these: 'Ouch! Jesus! Ouch! My God!'" (Cf. "The Seers of Fatima", Jan.-April 1982; *Voz da Fatima*, Feb. 13, 1988). 31) Quoted by A.M. Martins, *Fatima et le Corps mystique*, ed. Téqui, 1989, pages 58-60. 32) Formigao, *Les grandes merveilles*, page 112. 33) If she was happy in repeating to her entourage that Our Lady would come to get her soon, her surprising attitude on the evening of Feb. 20, proves that she knew precisely both the day and the hour of her departure for Heaven, just as she had informed Lucy who reports it to us in her Memoirs. Cf. chapter 5 under heading "The Sorrowful Passion." 34) "While withdrawing, Father Pereira dos Reis gave her a last blessing and, deeply impressed, exclaimed: 'It is our misfortune if that one does not go to Heaven!'" (Fernando Leite, "A morte de Jacinta", *Voz da Fatima*, Feb. 13, 1988). (The

Death of Jacinta). 35) Report of Dr. Lisboa, quoted by Father John De Marchi, page 286. 36) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 124. 37) Ibid., page 125. 38) Father John De Marchi, pages 59-61. 39) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 145. 40) Father John De Marchi, page 61. 41) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, pages 124, 126. 42) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 127. 43) Ibid., pages 129 and 136. 44) Ibid., page 129. 45) Father John De Marchi, pages 241-242. 46) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 136. In 1946, when on a trip to Fatima, Lucy went to the parish church. After a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, she headed towards the entrance of the church and advanced into the chapel where the baptismal font is situated. "Our Lord was there, she said, during the last years I spent in Fatima: it is here where I came to call Francisco when I got out of school." (cf. Martins dos Reis, *A vidente de Fatima dialoga e responde pelas Aparições*, page 126). 47) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 138. 48) Cf. Ch. Formigao, "Estudo psicologico dos videntes", *Novos Documentos*, page 78. "Psychological Study of the Seers". 49) Ibid, page 252. 50) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 137. 51) Ibid., page 137. 52) It indeed has to do with the Curé of Fatima, Father Manuel Marques Ferreira, and not Father Moreira, as Father De Marchi has erroneously affirmed (Cf. "The Whole Truth About Fatima, volume II," page 520). 53) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 143-145. 54) Father John De Marchi, page 257. 55) Father John De Marchi, page 257. 56) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 145. 57) Ibid., page 143. 58) Father John De Marchi, page 258. 59) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 145. 60) Father John De Marchi, page 258. 61) We are saying 10 o'clock in the evening, and not 10 in the morning, in spite of what Father Fernando Leite affirms (See "Francisco de Fatima," page 154), for the rectification which Father Kondor has made concerning the exact hour of Francisco's death appears decisive to us. (cf. "The Whole Truth About Fatima, volume II", pages 104 and 813). 62) Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 145. 63) Cf. "The Seers of Fatima," Jan.-April 1986. 64) In the parochial investigation on the extraordinary phenomena of the Cova da Iria, concluded on April 18, 1919, Father Manuel Marques Ferreira, Parish Priest of Fatima from 1914-1919, mentioned Francisco's death: "On time [which meant "in the meantime"], Francisco, the seer, died at 10 o'clock in the evening, this present April 4 ... having received the sacraments with much lucidity and piety, confirmed having seen a Lady at the Cova da Iria and at Valinhos." ("The Seers of Fatima," January-April 1986).

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Hell and the Secret

It is the terrifying vision of Hell which opens the Secret of Fatima. Through it, Our Lady leads us at the outset to the essential, to the only thing that counts, our eternity. That first part of the Secret is of prime importance. Much more yet than the announcement of famines, wars and persecutions, that gripping, agonizing reminder, of the eternal Hell which threatens us, is one of the most essential points of the message of Our Lady. It is one of the major truths of our Catholic Faith that the Virgin Mary of Fatima wishes to recall to our apostate, naturalistic and materialistic century, blindly walled in by its earthly horizons.

The Horrible and Very Real Vision

Let us once more listen to the terrible and realistic account that Sister Lucy traces for us in her Memoirs¹:

«As She spoke these last words, She opened Her hands once more, as She had done the two previous months. The rays [of light] appeared to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire.

«Plunged in this fire we saw the demons and the souls [the damned]. The latter were like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, having human forms. They were floating about in that conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves, together with great clouds of smoke. Now they fell 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 fright. (It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me).

«The demons were distinguished [from the souls of the damned] by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black and transparent like burning coals.

«That vision only lasted for a moment, thanks to our good Heavenly Mother, Who at the first apparition, had promised to take us to Heaven. Without that, I think that we would have died of terror and fear.»

There it is. It is frightening! Before everything, the Blessed Virgin Mary wants us to consider the most serious characteristic of our short life which must result in our going to either Heaven or Hell for all eternity. It is in the brief years of our mortal life that our definitive fate is irrevocably played out ...

“Come, blessed of My Father²...”

If by grace, we go to Heaven as a full member of the family of God, transformed, divinized and joyous in His Glory, we will be happy forever, in an unspeakable ecstasy. Faith already allows us to glimpse that promised happiness. In Heaven we shall forever enjoy the contemplation full of joy at the beauties and glories of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of Her maternal embrace and of Her smile.

Such is our Catholic Faith, the

Divine bliss reserved for the elect.

“Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!³...”

If, freely, through our fault, we merit eternal chastisement, what a frightening contrast! It is an eternity of frightful misfortune that would open up for us. There is found only the torment of the terrible «pain of the damned», and that fire of the wrath of the «jealous God», scorned in His Infinite Love. Hell is that eternal curse of the angry Face of the thrice-Holy God, and that «rage of a fire which shall consume His adversaries»⁴ who are forever rejected far from Him in the abyss. The «pain of sense» torments the damned and adds, among other horrible sufferings, the tortures of a sensible and mysterious fire, without doubt different from what we know here below, but nevertheless real and most terrible. Hell consists of spiritual and physical fire, both exterior and interior. It tortures the soul and the body with atrocious sufferings throughout the whole being, and at every moment, without any respite, and forever. There is no hope of it ever ending. The damned human soul is eternally cursed, cast far from God, deprived forever of His Presence, of all peace, of all joy, and is always in the blackest despair ...

This outline forcefully draws to mind in a very striking and incomparable manner, though in a very sober way, the description of Sister Lucy. If we fully accept her vision of Hell exactly as she described it, then it will deeply engrave in our

souls that fear of Hell, so salutary, so Catholic.

The modernist theologians have managed to persuade many people in our times into giving no importance to the dogma and reality of Hell, upon which depends all the rest of our religion.

An Authentic Vision, Fully Truthful

In such a context of creeping apostasy, the vision of Hell granted to the three children of Fatima takes on a prophetic aspect. Our Lady, by recalling the existence and atrocity of the torments of Hell, wanted to fortify us against that blindness. This is the most terrible blindness there is because it leads right to the abyss of Hell that person who endeavors in vain to ignore it. And, let us note well, at the end of the horrible vision, Our Lady did not say to the three shepherds: “You have seen a symbol, an image of eternal damnation which is different, since it is of a purely spiritual order.” No, She simply said to them: «You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go.»

When Our Lord, dozens of times in His Gospel, declares to us that Hell is «the fire of Gehenna»⁵, «everlasting fire»⁶, «the Hell of fire, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished»⁷, «the outer darkness», «the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth»⁸, it is God the Word, the Creator Who speaks to us, the Eternal Wisdom by Whom everything has been made and through Whom everything subsists.

If, putting aside vague and abstract formulas, He deliberately chose to speak to us in such concrete language, it is because He is most truthful. Those terrifying realities were made by Him in creation precisely because they help us understand here below the mystery of eternal Hell.

Far from leaving us in ignorance about the nature of Hell, God, in His immense Goodness, willed certain of His creatures to foreshadow the whole truth of it for us.

Thus the existence of devouring fire, of putrid atmospheres, of filthy pestilences, of nauseating stench. Thus He created ferocious beasts, monstrous or filthy, which arouse in us an instinctive fright. The Creator has given us this horror to serve as a sampling, a warning.

Thus it seems clear that the images Jesus in His Gospel and His Holy Mother at Fatima wanted to give us of Hell, far from being distant approximations or vague echoes of reality are, on the contrary, its most exact expression. We can say in all truth: «That is Hell! It is at least that!»

«Jacinta was very much impressed by certain things revealed in the Secret. It was really like this. The vision of Hell had horrified her to such a degree that all the penances and mortifications seemed to her insufficient to achieve saving some souls from Hell ... Some



The Immaculate Heart of Mary

people, even pious ones, Lucy notes again, do not like to speak about Hell to their children so as not to frighten them. But God did not hesitate to show it to three children, one of whom was barely seven years old, and He was well aware, I dare say, that she would be horrified by it, to the point of being consumed with fright.»⁹

The Revelation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary The Last Refuge of Souls

«That vision, Lucy writes, lasted only for a moment ... Were it not for that I believe that we would have died of terror and fear. Frightened, and as to ask for help, we lifted our eyes towards Our Lady Who said to us with goodness and sadness: “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.”»

Such are the words Our Lady wished to give us. By these words, She wants us to draw a most important lesson from the vision of Hell. Soft and soothing words, full of a warm hope, by which the Virgin of Fatima opens wide for us the way to Her Immaculate Heart.

One who has never felt a profound and true fear of everlasting Hell, especially and first of all for himself, will never be able to penetrate the real meaning and the consequences of the Secret. It is not by chance that it began with the vision of Hell.

Never does God reveal to us the danger of our eternal damnation without immediately opening up to us the arms of His Mercy and without indicating to us a way of salvation which is both accessible and very appealing! To the spectacle of the infernal demons, succeeds the “blessed vision of peace” of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, Queen and Gate of Heaven. «The vision of Hell, writes Father Alonso, has as a goal to inspire the little seers with recourse to the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and Her powerful intercession for the salvation of sinners.»¹⁰

The Blessed Virgin Mary, «Mother of Mercy»

Facing the absolute evil which threatens us, God proposes the only remedy which can preserve us: The Immaculate Heart of His Mother,

Refuge of sinners. Sister Lucy explains to Father Fuentes while pointing out to him the means of our salvation: «Finally devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our Most Holy Mother, in considering Her as the seat of clemency, of goodness and of pardon, and as the sure gate for entering Heaven.»¹¹ In this we are in the purest Catholic tradition which, from time immemorial, venerates the Blessed Virgin Mary as the «Mother of mercy and pardon», «the Patroness of the most desperate cases», the ultimate recourse after the greatest sins, as in the most terrible temptations.

«God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.» This last sentence, Our Lady pronounced on July 13 for the second time, She had already said it on June 13, before manifesting Her Heart to the children. Here is “the secret of the Secret”, the essential and most important part of the message of Fatima.

Thus the revelation of Fatima comes to complete that of Paray-le-Monial, and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be joined to the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, commanded three centuries ago. Indeed, most certainly, these two devotions, as the two Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, are inseparable and could not ever proceed one without the other. Such is the great design of our Heavenly Father for «the last centuries of history»: the reign and universal triumph of Their two Hearts united.

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart

of Mary is henceforth the certain gage of salvation. To the children who, on June 13, 1917, asked Her to take them at once to Heaven, Our Lady replied as a sovereign:

«Yes, Jacinta and Francisco, I shall take them soon.» Lucy alone will stay. «Jesus wants to make use of you, Lucy, to make Me known and loved... My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.» Thus Our Lady Herself promised to lead Her three privileged ones to Heaven.

And through an incredible mercy, the marvellous promise is immediately opened to all. For Our Lady continues:

«Jesus wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. Whosoever embraces this devotion, I promise salvation; those souls will be cherished by God, like flowers placed by Me to decorate His throne.»

What astounding words! An unbelievable facility is offered to us in order to be saved: it suffices for us to adopt the predilection of the Heart of Jesus for the Immaculate Virgin, and to prove it to Him by accomplishing His simple requests.

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, an Exalting Call to Holiness

The last recourse of the greatest sinners who are on the edge of perdition is devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The message of Fatima also tells us that it is the surest and the quickest road which leads to holiness.

«During the July 13 apparition,

Our Lady had told us in the Secret that God wanted to establish in the world devotion to Her Immaculate Heart and that, in order to prevent the future war, She would come to ask for the consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart as well as the reparatory Communion of the first Saturdays.»

In another letter, Sister Lucy reports to us the confidences of Our Lord Himself. «I very ardently desire the propagation of the cult and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because that Heart is the magnet which attracts souls to Me, the Heart which radiates on the earth the rays of My light and of My love, the inexhaustible source which causes to pour over the earth the living waters of My Mercy.»¹²

That is the whole essence of the Secret, and it was also the most profound inspiration of the lives of our three seers. Their souls were so profoundly marked by the great Secret of Our Lady, that the account of their life is the best commentary on it. ■

FOOTNOTES:

- 1) Sister Lucy's Third Memoir, page 108; Sister Lucy's Fourth Memoir, page 172, English edition.
- 2) St. Matthew, chapter 25, verse 34. 3) Ibid., chapter 25, verse 41. 4) Hebrews, chapter 10, verse 27. 5) Saint Matthew, chapter 18, verse 9. 6) Ibid., chapter 18, verse 8. 7) Saint Mark, chapter 9, verse 48. 8) Saint Matthew, chapter 13, verse 42; Saint Matthew, chapter 22, verse 13. 9) Sister Lucy's Third Memoir, pages 105-107. 10) [MSC] "Fatima et le Coeur Immaculé de Marie" (Fatima and the Immaculate Heart of Mary), page 36. 11) [VSF] "La Verdad sobre el Secreto de Fatima" (The Truth About the Secret of Fatima), page 106. 12) Letter of May 27, 1943, [FCM] "Fatima e o Coração de Maria" (Fatima and the Heart of Mary), pages 62-63.



Our Lady returned to Sister Lucy at Pontevedra on December 10, 1925 as She promised at Fatima that She would. She came to ask for the Communion of Reparation on the Five First Saturdays. She promised eternal salvation for Catholics who fulfill Her Five First Saturday requests. See page 51 for details.

The Apparitions of Pontevedra

In the evening of Thursday, December 10, 1925, after supper, Lucy received the visit of the Child Jesus and the Virgin Mary in her cell.¹ Let us listen to her testimony:

«On December 10, 1925, the Most Holy Virgin Herself appeared, and beside Her, borne by a luminous cloud, the Child Jesus. The Most Holy Virgin put Her hand on her shoulder and showed her, at the same time, a Heart surrounded by thorns which She held in the other hand. At that same moment, the Child said to her²:

“Have compassion on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Her at every moment, without there being anyone to make an act of reparation in order to take them away.”

«Then the Most Holy Virgin said to her:

‘Look My daughter, at My Heart, surrounded with 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.’

Charged with this new mission, the young postulant - Lucy was then eighteen years old - did everything possible to make known the requests of Our Lady.³ She opened up at once to her superior, Mother Magalhaes, who had been won over to the cause of Fatima and was ready, as far as she was concerned, to conform to the desires of Heaven.⁴

Lucy also shared this with the confessor of the house, Father Lino Garcia: «He, she relates, ordered me to write down everything which concerned [that revelation] and to keep the writings which we might need.» But then he waited. Lucy then wrote the account of the event to her confessor of the Asilo de Vilar, Bishop Pereira Lopes, who expressed some reserve and advised waiting. A few days after February 15, Lucy answered the bishop while revealing to him in detail the sequence of events. Fortunately, this letter has been preserved for us.

Here are some abundant extracts from it.

«My most Reverend Father, I come respectfully to thank you for your gracious letter which you kindly wrote me. When I received it and saw that I was still unable to comply to the wishes of the Holy Virgin, I felt a little sad. But I realized at once that the wishes of the Most Holy Virgin were for me to obey you. I became

calm and the next day, when I received Jesus in Communion, I read Him your letter and said to Him: "O my Jesus! I, with Thy grace, prayer, mortification and confidence, will do everything obedience permits me, and what Thou inspire me; the rest is up to Thee ..."

«On the 15th, I was very busy with my chores, and I scarcely thought of it [the apparition of the preceding December 10]. I was about to empty the garbage can outside the garden. At the same place, several months previously, I had met a child whom I had asked if he knew the Hail Mary. He had replied yes, and I had asked him to say it for me, in order to hear him. But as he would not say it alone, I had 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.⁵ 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 departed.⁶ Then on February 15, while returning as usual [to empty a garbage can outside of the garden], I found there a child who appeared to me to be the same (as previously), and I then asked him: "Have you asked Our Heavenly Mother for the Child Jesus?" The Child turned to me and said: "And have you revealed to the world what the Heavenly Mother has asked you?" And saying that, He transformed Himself into a resplendent Child. Recognizing then

that it was Jesus, I said to Him:

«*"My Jesus! You know very well 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.*

- It is true that the Mother Superior, alone, can do nothing, but with My grace, she can do anything. It is enough that your confessor gives you permission, and that your Superior announce this for it to be believed by the people, even if they do not know who it was revealed to.

- But my confessor said in his letter that this devotion already exists in the world, because many souls receive Thee every first Saturday of the month, in honor of Our Lady and the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary.

- 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.

- My Jesus! Many souls find it difficult to confess on Saturday. Will You allow a confession within eight days to be valid?

- Yes. It can even be made later on, provided that the souls are in the state of grace when they receive Me on the first Saturday, and that they had the intention of making

reparation to the Sacred Heart of Mary.

- My Jesus! And those who forget to form this intention?

- They can form it at the next confession, taking advantage of their first opportunity to go to confession."

«Right after that He disappeared, without me finding out anything more about Heaven's desires, up to the present. And as for myself, she continued, it is a flame of Divine Love which is lit in souls so that, sustained in that love, they truly console the Holy Heart of Mary. I at least have the desire to console my dear Heavenly Mother a great deal, while suffering a great deal for Her love.»⁷

Sister Lucy's Exhortations to Practice the Reparatory Devotion of the First Saturdays

Sister Lucy is so attached to this «agreeable devotion» that she comes back to it unceasingly in her correspondence. Let us quote some of her letters, drafted shortly after the revelation of Pontevedra.

On July 24, 1927, she wrote to her mother, Maria Rosa:

«My mother, I would like also for you to give me the consolation of adopting a devotion I know is so pleasing to God and which our dear Heavenly Mother has requested. As soon as I became aware of it, I wanted to adopt it and see the whole world practice it. As a result, I hope, mother, that you will answer me, saying that you are going to practice it and seek to have everyone over there practice it. You could not give me a greater

consolation. It consists only in doing what is written on that little image. The confession can be made on a day other than Saturday. The fifteen minutes [of meditation], is what can, it seems to me, give you difficulty; but it is quite easy. Who after all cannot contemplate the mysteries of the Rosary? Of the Annunciation of the Angel to Mary, and of the humility of our dear Mother who, in seeing Herself exalted in such a manner, called Herself the handmaid [of the Lord]; of the Passion of Jesus Who suffered so much for our love, and of our Most Holy Mother near Jesus on Calvary? Who cannot spend fifteen minutes in these holy thoughts, near the most tender of mothers?

«Good-bye, my dear mother. Console thus your Heavenly Mother, and seek to have many others console Her the same way. Thus you will also give me an unimaginable joy.

«Your entirely devoted daughter, who kisses your hand.»⁸

On November 1, 1927, she wrote to her confirmation godmother, D. Maria Filomena Morais de Miranda:

«I do not know if you have already become aware of the reparatory devotion of the Five First Saturdays to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As it is still recent, I should like to inspire you with it, for it is requested by our dear Heavenly Mother, and Jesus has manifested His wish that it be practiced. Also, it seems to me that you will be happy, dear godmother, not only in knowing it, and giving Jesus the consolation of practicing it, but also of making it known and

embraced by many other people ...

«It seems to me, my good godmother, that we are fortunate in being able to give our dear Heavenly Mother this proof of our love, for we know that She wants our devotion offered to Her. As for me, I confess that I never feel as happy as when the First Saturday comes. Is it not true that our greatest happiness is to belong entirely to Jesus and Mary and to love Them, Them alone, without reserve? We see that so clearly in the lives of the Saints... They were happy because they loved, and we, my good godmother, we should strive to love like them, not only to enjoy Jesus here below, which is the least important, - for if we do not enjoy Him here below, we will enjoy Him in Heaven - but to give Jesus and Mary the consolation of being loved... and thus in exchange for that love they can save many souls. Good-bye, my dear godmother, I embrace you in the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.»⁹

On November 4, 1928, after the first steps to obtain the official approval by Bishop da Silva, she wrote to Father Aparicio:

«I hope therefore that our good God will deign to inspire His Most Reverend Excellency with a favorable response, so that among so many thorns, while still on this earth, I will be able to pick that flower of seeing the maternal Heart of the Most Holy Virgin loved and honored. That is now my wish because it is also the Will of the Good God. The greatest joy I feel is to see the Immaculate Heart of our

so tender Mother known, loved and consoled by means of this devotion.»¹⁰

On March 31, 1929, concerning Canon Formigao and Father Rodrigues, who wanted to preach the reparatory devotion, Sister Lucy wrote Father Aparicio:

«I hope that Jesus, according to my desire for the spreading of this amiable devotion, will make them two ardent apostles of the reparatory devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Your Reverence cannot imagine how great is my joy in thinking about the consolation through this amiable devotion, that the Holy Hearts of Jesus [and of Mary] are going to receive, and of the great number of souls who are going to be saved by means of this amiable devotion. I am saying who will be saved, because in the little time that remains to them, our Good God, in His Infinite Mercy, has asked me to seek through my prayers and sacrifices to make reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to implore pardon and mercy for souls who blaspheme against Her, because the Divine Mercy will not pardon those souls without reparation.»¹¹

In a letter which Father Martins quotes,¹² Sister Lucy writes:

«Here is my way of making the meditations on the mysteries of the Rosary on the First Saturdays: The First Mystery, the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to Our Lady. First preamble: to imagine I, myself, see and hear the Angel greet Our Lady with these words: “Hail Mary, full of grace.” Second preamble: I ask Our

Lady to infuse into my soul a profound sentiment of humility. First point: I will meditate on the manner in which Heaven proclaims that the Most Holy Virgin is full of grace, blessed among all women and destined to be the Mother of God. Second point: The humility of Our Lady, recognizing and calling Herself the handmaid of the Lord. Third point: How I should imitate Our Lady in Her humility, what are the faults of

pride and haughtiness by which I have the habit of displeasing Our Lord, and what are the means I should use in order to avoid them, etc.»

«The second month, I meditate on the second Joyful Mystery. The third, on the third and so forth, while following the same method for meditating. When I have finished those five First Saturdays, I begin five more and I meditate on the Sorrowful Mysteries, then the Glorious and when I have finished them, I begin again the Joyful.»¹³

Sister Lucy thus reveals to us, far from contenting herself with the five First Saturdays, she practices

each month «the reparatory amiable devotion» indicated by Our Lady.

Why not follow her example and renew often this pious practice? More especially we will be able then to ask this good Mother, with the firm hope of being heard, that She would be willing to grant, to such and such a soul that we entrust to Her,¹⁴ the special assistance promised at the hour of death «with all the graces necessary for salvation», in

consideration of that «small devotion» accomplished through love and in a spirit of reparation. ■



When Saint Philomena (above) was martyred over 1,000 years ago, she was about the same age as Jacinta of Fatima when she died.

FOOTNOTES:

1) In 1972, at the suggestion of Father Alonso, the Spanish "Ejercito Azul" bought the convent of the Dorothean Sisters of Pontevedra, which was falling into ruins. (cf. "Fatima, apostolat mundial," pages 191-196). Sister Lucy's cell being very narrow, in order to transform it into a chapel, it was necessary to bring down a partition and use an adjacent room. Thereafter, people could go there on pilgrimages. 2) Documentos, page 401. That text was drawn up by Sister Lucy at the end of 1927, at the request of her confessor, Father Aparicio, S.J. «Through humility, he explains, Sister Lucy shows her repugnance to write in the first person, to which I replied that she write in the third person; which is what she did.» (Letter to Father da Fonseca of Jan. 10, 1938, quoted by

O my Jesus, Forgive Us Our Sins



*Save us from the Fires of Hell.
Lead all Souls to Heaven,
especially those most in need.*

Mariologicae, 1973, page 577. “Fatima e o Coração de Maria” [FCM], pages 27-28. **12)** Unfortunately, Father Martins does not indicate the date of this letter. **13)** Letters, pages 19-20. **14)** Although that promise does not figure explicitly in the writings of the seer, numerous texts guarantee us that it is indeed in the spirit of Our Lady. Sister Lucy, for example, writes on May 27, 1943, concerning devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: «The Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary love and desire this devotion, because they use it to attract souls to Them, and there is found all their wishes: Save souls, many souls, all souls, *Salvar almas, muitas almas, todas as almas.*» (“Fatima e o Coração de Maria” [FCM], pages 62-63).

Father Alonso, “Ephemerides Mariologicae” 1973, page 25). **3)** In the great plan of God, the reparatory devotion and the consecration of Russia are so intimately connected with one another, that in our next chapters (cf. chapters 10-16), we will relate at the same time how Lucy, tirelessly, made known to the hierarchical authorities of the Church those two demands of Our Lady. Up to this year 1991, in which we are writing, the Popes, disobedient to the voice of Our Lady, have refused to accomplish Her commands. **4)** In addressing her wishes to Bishop da Silva, in a letter drafted scarcely three weeks after the apparition, Mother Magalhaes provides some news of her protégée, Maria das Dores, (Sister Lucy) and already makes an allusion to that revelation: «Maria das Dores has already told me that she had received here a great grace from the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I do not doubt it, because the little one has virtue and simplicity in such great abundance that she must charm the Most Holy Virgin! For those matters, I am the most incredulous person there could be in this world, but about her, I do not doubt at all, I do not know what that can mean! I have never spoken to her about this topic, and I do nothing more than just listen to what she has just told me spontaneously because she judged it her duty to tell me. For all the difficulties she has, I send her to her spiritual director, Dom Pereira Lopes, so that he may resolve them, since for those things, I am worse than a mole.» (Letter of Dec. 25, 1925, quoted by Father Alonso, “Ephemerides Mariologicae”, 1973, pages 30-31.) **5)** The Basilica St. Mary Major is quite close to the house of the Dorothean Sisters, on the street called Passage Isabelle II. **6)** Let us admire the marvellous soul of Lucy. Near the portal of the garden, she meets a child and at once, the idea comes to her to speak about the Blessed Virgin Mary. The little prayer which she teaches the child was surely her own in that 1925 Advent. **7)** Quoted by Father Martins dos Reis in “Uma Vida,” pages 337-357; cf. Documentos, pages 477-481. **8)** Documentos, page 403. **9)** Quoted by Father Alonso (Ephemerides Mariologicae, 1973, pages 41-42) and by Father A. M. Martins (Novos Documentos, pages 118-119; and “Fatima e o Coração de Maria” [FCM], pages 22-23). **10)** Ephemerides Mariologicae, 1973, page 54. Cf. in the same sense, the letter of Dec. 20, 1928; cf. “Fatima e o Coração de Maria” [FCM], pages 25-27. **11)** Ephemerides

Salvation and Peace Through Reparation

When Sister Lucy was situated at Tuy, her confessor, Father Gonçalves, had given her in writing a series of questions. We have already mentioned some of them. Let us retain here only the fourth question: «Why five Saturdays and not nine or seven, in honor of the Sorrows of Our Lady?»¹ That same evening, the seer implored Our Lord to inspire her with the answer to those questions. A few days later, she transmitted to her confessor the answer:²

«As I was in the chapel with Our Lord part of the night of May 29-30, 1930 [we know that it was her habit to make a holy hour from eleven o'clock to midnight, especially on Thursday evenings, according to the requests of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial], and speaking to Our Lord about questions four and five, I suddenly found myself more intimately possessed by the Divine Presence, and if I am not mistaken,³ here is what was revealed to me

«My daughter, the reason is simple. There are five kinds of offenses and blasphemies uttered 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 Mother of men.

4. - The blasphemies of those who publicly seek to place 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.»⁴

We have there one of the most important ideas in the message of Fatima: Since God 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 and for which He no longer finds in Himself any inclination to forgive. That sin appears unpardonable, for there is not, as far as Our Savior is concerned,

any crime more unpardonable than to scorn His Most Holy Mother and to outrage Her Immaculate Heart which is the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost.

That is to commit «blasphemy against the Spirit which will not be remitted in this world or in the next» (Matt. 12, 31-32). Sister Lucy herself suggests this comparison in her conversation with Father Fuentes.⁵

In 1929, when Our Lady appeared at Tuy at the great Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity, She concluded this most important apparition with these impressive words: «Souls are so numerous whom the justice of God condemns for sins committed against Me that I come to request reparation. Sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray.» Words so strong that several translators have allowed themselves to mitigate them!⁶ Now, there is absolutely no doubt about the text, Our Lady affirms it with sadness, many souls are lost because of their scorn, their blasphemies towards Her... Then, giving the example of love of enemies, it is She Herself Who



The Vision of Tuy, June 13, 1929

intervenes as “Mother of mercy and Mother of forgiveness,” as is sung in the *Salve Mater*.

She intercedes to Her Son for them. May the Communions of the Five First Saturdays, offered to console Her outraged Heart, be accepted by Him in reparation for the crimes of sinners. That, taking into account «that small reparation» to Her Immaculate Heart, He deign to forgive the ungrateful and the blasphemers, all the poor wretches who have had the audacity to offend Her, His Most Holy Mother! And Our Lord accedes to Her wish. He thus makes the

reparatory devotion a sure and easy means for converting souls who are in danger of being lost eternally. The mystery of the Communion of Saints is exalted and terrible. It makes the salvation of souls really depend on our own generosity because the Blessed Virgin Mary, constituted by Her Son as universal Mediatrix and Mother of Divine Grace, cannot act alone. She needs us, our consoling love, and our reparatory “small devotions” in order to save souls from Hell. The salvation of souls is definitively therefore, one of the great purposes for the practice of the First Saturdays of the month, as this motive was already one Our Lady indicated on August 19, 1917, inviting the three shepherds instantly to prayer and sacrifice.⁷

From this we can understand the urgent insistence of Our Lady, Her ardent wish that this reparatory devotion be practiced everywhere as much as possible. This practice is so dear to Her, because it is perfect and therefore so effective for the salvation of souls.

«It seems to me, Sister Lucy wrote Father Gonçalves in May 1930, that the Good God, in the depths of my heart, insists with me that I ask the Holy Father to approve the reparatory devotion, which God Himself and the Most Holy Virgin deigned to request in 1925. In consideration for that small devotion, They will to give the grace of forgiveness to souls who have had the misfortune of offending the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Most Holy Virgin promises to assist at the hour of death with all the graces

necessary for their salvation those souls who make reparation to Her in this way.⁸»

It is because She desires at all cost to enlist us into this practice that Our Lady has attached such marvellous promises. In fact, over and above our own eternal salvation and the conversion of sinners, She wanted to add to the reparatory Communion another magnificent promise, that of the gift of peace. On March 19, 1939, Sister Lucy was able to write: «On the practice of this devotion together with the consecration (of Russia) to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, depend peace or war for the world. That is why I have so much wanted its propagation; and then above all, because such is the Will of our Good God and our so dear Heavenly Mother.⁹» ■

FOOTNOTES:

1) Documentos, page 407, quoted in “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume II”, page 509 (English edition). 2) On that letter which is not dated, Father Gonçalves wrote: June 12, 1930. Documentos, pages 409-410, quoted in “The Whole Truth About Fatima, volume II”, pages 509-511. (English edition) 3) As in the writings of St. Margaret-Mary, it would be an error to see in that restrictive formula the expression of an uncertainty or of a real doubt. It is a formula of humility and obedience by which the seer acknowledges in advance of her reliance on the judgment of her director. 4) Documentos, page 409. 5) Cf. chapter 13, “Fatima Joie Intime”. 6) Documentos, page 465. Cf. “The Whole Truth About Fatima, volume II”, page 245. 7) We find in “The Whole Truth About Fatima, volume I” (pages 214-216 - English edition) a commentary on the words of Our Lady: «Pray, pray a great deal and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls go to Hell because they have no one to pray and make sacrifices for them.» 8) Letter of May 29, 1930, Documentos, page 405. 9) Letter to Father Aparicio, Documentos, page 483.

The Six Apparitions of Our Lady

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Lady spoke expressly about Russia in July 1917.” (Father Alonso, *Fatima Ante la Esfinge* [FAE], page 92; that letter is elsewhere presented in the unedited work of Father Alonso, on page 50, see Father Fernandez, “La consagración de Rusia”..., in “Estudios Marianos”, Volume LI, 1986, page 293). Lucy is sure also of having heard «no reinado de Pio XI.” “We did not know then, she would confide to Father Jongen in 1946, what was a Pope or a King. But the Most Holy Virgin spoke of Pius XI” (*Médiatrice et Reine*, May 1946, page 11). Lucy, reporting what she had heard, wrote in her Memoirs: “Piu” (see infra, page 62, manuscript of the Fourth Memoir), for in Portuguese *pío* and *piu* are pronounced the same way: *piou*. **21)** At this point in the words of Our Lady is located the Third Part of the Secret, written by Lucy in 1944 and which has not yet been divulged. **22)** In the Third and Fourth Memoirs, the texts of the prophecy of the secret are word for word identical. With that difference, nevertheless, that in the Fourth Memoir, Sister Lucy added the last sentence: “In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved,” which is logically situated just before the conclusion: “In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph.” **23)** Other witnesses affirm more precisely that the cloud remained visible for about ten minutes, as on July 13. About that cloud, read also the testimony of Manuel Gonçalves: “There was not the least bit of dust in the air. That cloud darkened the air which seemed hazy.” (Father John DeMarchi, pages 176-177). **24)** Father John DeMarchi, page 136. **25)** *Ibid.*, page 176. **26)** She had also remarked on the habitual phenomena which preceded the arrival of Our Lady: the light lowered, and already a first “lightning” had been seen. **27)** Fourth Memoir, page 166. **28)** Father John DeMarchi, page 150; Fourth Memoir, page 166. **29)** The account of the Fourth Memoir (page 174) and of the Father Ferreira interrogation, (Documentos, pages 500-501) complete each other fortunately. The dialogue which we quote is entirely borrowed from these two sources. **30)** Reference to the imprisonment of Vila Nova de Ourem. **31)** The Father Ferreira report carries this: “Our Lady of the Rosary will come with a little Angel on each side. Our Lady of Sorrows will also come with an arch of flowers all around Her.” That announcement could also be understood under a conditional form: “Saint Joseph would have come...,” etc. **32)** On Aug. 13, in the enthusiasm of the extraordinary signs which they had just contemplated, the pilgrims deposited offerings near the flowers which Maria Carreira had placed on a small table quite near the place of apparitions. But no one wanted to take charge of that money. When they had come to tell Lucy’s father that he should pick it up and keep it as compensation for the loss of his terrain, he had replied: “May God keep me from preserving this money. It does not belong to me. It belongs to Our Lady. I do not want anyone from my home to keep even just five pennies. As for the loss of the terrain, it is Our Lady Who ought to pay me for it, and She will help us.” (See Fifth Memoir, Portuguese, page 212). In addition, was Maria Carreira constrained to keep that money, which was very repugnant to her, and made her extremely uneasy. On Sunday, Aug. 19, on going out from the Mass, she had charged Lucy to ask Our Lady what She wants done with it. It was then in her name that Lucy asked that question. **33)** The Father Ferreira interrogation carries in a more direct and charming manner: “That money that You have, what do You wish us to do with it?” **34)** It is probable that Sister Lucy attributes here to Our Lady a word which She would pronounce only on Sept. 13. **35)** Fourth Memoir, page 166. **36)** The dialogue which follows is entirely borrowed from the two text-sources of the Fourth Memoir (pages 167-168) and of the Father Ferreira report. **37)** Father Ferreira report: “For the last day, Saint Joseph will come with the Child Jesus to give peace to the world, and Our Lord to give His Blessing to the people. **38)** “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume II, pages 124-125; Fourth Memoir, page 168. **39)** Father Ferreira report. **40)** Fourth Memoir, page 168. **41)** Father John DeMarchi, page 192. **42)** We will follow the account of the Fourth Memoir (pages 168-170) which corresponds sufficiently to that of the Father Ferreira report, although the words of Our Lady are not cited in the same order. **43)** We do not know whether Our Lady said: “The war will finish today” or “The war is going to finish.” That question has been dealt with thoroughly in *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Volume I, pages 307-319. We simply present the conclusion of that study. A whole series of sure witnesses permit thinking that Our Lady has rather declared: “The war is going to finish.” However, it is not impossible as well that Our Lady had pronounced that disputed phrase, “The war will finish today,” but in a context such as it would stipulate the exact meaning. The Most Holy Virgin would have said: “That men convert, and the war will finish today.” The two propositions are tied to each other, the word of Our Lady was not an arresting prophecy of the sudden ceasing of hostilities, but a conditional promise to grant peace as soon as men conform to Her wishes. **44)** “The Whole Truth About Fatima, Volume II”, page 128.

course of those apparitions of Our Lady stayed so engraved in us, that we could never forget it. For that reason I know very well, and with certainty, that Our

What is Fatima?

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Mary by all the Catholic bishops of the world, together with the Pope on the same day at the same hour.

Finally Her message is a promise of the eventual triumph of Her Immaculate Heart over evil. She promised that no matter how black it might get in the future (and it seems that is the path chosen by most of humanity today) that in the end She will triumph and there will be world peace.

What You Must Do

It is up to each of us to listen, to read, to learn and to apply this Heavenly message in our own lives, particularly by praying the daily Rosary. To the extent we can, we must also do all we can to see to it that this final warning from Our Heavenly Mother is spread and that its significance is related to everyone before it is too late.

We must not be complacent in this promise because Her eventual triumph is still dependent on our co-operation with God's grace and His plan outlined at Fatima.

Help Us Spread the Full Fatima Message

Help us get the word out about Fatima. The devil knows that through this message Our Lady will destroy his empire on earth. So he tries to stop this message from being fully known. Up to now he has been somewhat successful in obstructing Fatima.

Despite all these miracles and signs and official Catholic Church approval and recognition given to Our Lady of Fatima by hundreds of millions of pilgrims who go to Fatima, there is still much opposition to Our Lady of Fatima and Her message.

This prophetic message goes against certain people's views and short term vested interests. This opposition comes not only in the form of open hostility such as was manifested in the early days when the 3 children were kidnapped and threatened with death in 1917 for repeating Our Lady's message; and bombing, in 1922, the first Chapel built there, but this opposition is also in many more subtle forms.

Discernment and information are necessary. That is why, besides *The Fatima Crusader*, we offer a great number of books on Fatima, published in various languages. That is also why we offer ample footnotes and documentation to our articles. As well as print material we also spread the full Fatima message through our daily and weekly Radio and TV programs.

She is relying on all of us to do our part. At least all of us can pray the Rosary. All of us can tell a friend or pass on a magazine to a neighbor. All of us have some special need or intention to ask Our Lady's powerful intercession. Pray to Our Lady of Fatima and She will help you. She will also richly reward you for all you do to make known and understood Her maternal message of love and warning given at Fatima.

For Fatima Water and More Information

For more free information about Fatima, as well as a free book catalogue listing a number of books about Fatima, for free Fatima water, free subscription to *The Fatima Crusader*, for a free brochure of our pilgrimages to Fatima, as well as a free Rosary and Scapular of Our Lady, call *The Fatima Crusader* Apostolate at 1-800-263-8160. ■

The International Fatima Rosary Crusade

The International Fatima Rosary Crusade (IFRC) is a Roman Catholic Apostolate formed in 1978 in response to the urgent Message of Our Lady of Fatima. It is a grass-roots association of Catholic priests and laypeople of the type specifically sanctioned by the New Code of Canon Law. The founder and International Director is Father Nicholas Gruner, who for two decades has dedicated his life to promoting interest & devotion to Her urgent Fatima message.

Shortly following the formation of Our Lady's Apostolate, Father Gruner began publishing *The Fatima Crusader* magazine. In 1980, Pope John Paul II directly encouraged Father Gruner in his Fatima work and the periodical has grown to an estimated readership today of more than 1,000,000. It is by far the largest and most influential publication on Fatima in the world. As well, IFRC has published more than two-dozen books including over 100,000 copies of Father Gruner's *World Enslavement or Peace* in various languages.

In response to Pope John Paul II's statement that "the message of Fatima is addressed to every human being," the IFRC began *Heaven's Peace Plan*, a worldwide radio program featuring Father Gruner and guests in the spring of 1987. In 1988 it further expanded to reach more than 190 nations overseas.

Also in 1988, the IFRC expanded its outreach even further through various television and film projects including an hour-long Fatima documentary video, hosted by noted actor Ricardo Montalban and featuring Father Gruner. In September, 1989, *Fatima: "The Moment has Come,"* Our Lady of Fatima's weekly nationwide television series was launched, featuring prominent guests from around the world. In 1992, it expanded to daily broadcasts in some areas.

In October 1992, in Fatima, Portugal, over 100 Bishops from around the world accepted the invitation of the IFRC and *The Fatima Crusader* to attend a five-day Fatima Peace Conference. Two years later, in Mexico City, a second Bishops Conference was held and attracted prelates from five continents. At the Mexico City Conference, a series of 14 Resolutions were unanimously adopted which have since been published both in Rome and across the United States and Canada.

In June 1995, in response to continuing efforts by radical modernist forces within the Vatican bureaucracy to restrict its work and pastoral outreach, the IFRC published *An Open Letter to the Pope* in Rome's largest newspaper, *Il Messaggero*. This two-page letter carefully chronicled a long history of harassment and persecution by a small clique of liberal bureaucrats determined to suppress the Fatima Message, and forcefully appealed to the Pope for his protection and help. The Open Letter has been read by an estimated 5,000,000 souls worldwide and has elicited thousands of letters and calls of support.

In the summer of 1996, the Apostolate once more invited the world's bishops to gather to discuss and celebrate Our Lady's Fatima Message of peace and hope, but this time also extended the invitation to priests, religious and lay people around the world. "Fatima 2000" the third international Fatima Congress took place in Rome between November 18-24, 1996 and brought together nearly

200 international delegates, including leading members of the Catholic episcopacy. The Congress received front-page attention in the Italian press and, like its 1994 predecessor, resulted in the adoption of new Resolutions which were promptly given to the Holy Father during his regular public audience.

Despite the efforts of some within the Vatican bureaucracy to relegate Fatima to a mere footnote in Catholic history, the

Apostolate has been successful in putting the Queen of Heaven's Message at the top of the Church's agenda. To date, over 400 Catholic bishops have signed and sent in their written agreement to the IFRC indicating their willingness to fully comply with Our Lady of Fatima's request for the Consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart as a condition for world peace. The IFRC and Father Gruner continue to keep in contact with all the bishops of the world several times a year by sending letters and current books on Fatima, as well as via phone calls and personal contact. This, like all of the Apostolate's activities, is part of its effort to help bring about the promised triumph of Our Lady of Fatima.

On Feb. 1, 1993 His Holiness Pope John Paul II sent his blessing (see picture above) to Father Nicholas Gruner "for his sixteen years' priestly service and for his very important apostolic work with *The Fatima Crusader*."

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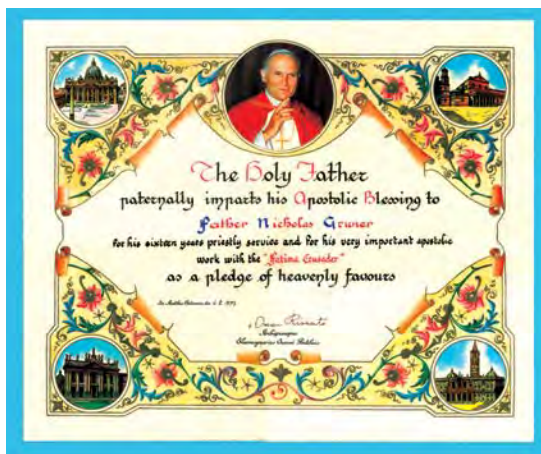
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Photos on front cover, pages 7, 30 & 33 by Arturo Mari of L'Osservatore Romano, Vatican City.





In response to Pope John Paul II's avowal that the "Message of Fatima is more relevant and more urgent today than ever," Father Gruner and other priests of the Apostolate continue to preach in cathedrals, churches and chapels throughout the world (at the invitation of bishops and priests). Father Gruner often travels with the beautiful Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima (pictured above), blessed by Pope Paul VI at Fatima in 1967, bringing Her Message of peace and hope to all Catholics and others of good will everywhere.

There are many ways that you too can help Our Lady and this great Crusade for Her Fatima Message. No help is insignificant, you can help by one or more of the following ways: your prayers, your reading, your conversations, your volunteer help and your contributions.

See inside back cover for addresses and phone numbers to contact us for more information about Our Lady of Fatima and Her urgent message, as well as for your free schedule of our daily radio programs around the world, our TV programs in North America and for your free copy of *The Fatima Crusader* magazine.