

FATIMA: THE FACTS

This pamphlet is in response to many requests to clarify the facts of the Fatima message. It is intended to be given to those not able to read the books available, or do not have the financial ability to obtain them, but who desire the facts. After writing many books on Fatima, hundreds of articles on Fatima, and also editing a magazine, *Immaculate Heart Messenger*, for the *Fatima Family Apostolate International*, I accept this challenge. Keep in mind this is but a summary. The depth of its message and developments tell much more.

The Mother of God appeared to three little shepherd children of Fatima six times in 1917, on the 13th of the month, beginning May 13, through October 13, 1917. Lucia, age 10 and her cousins (brother and sister) Francisco, 9 and Jacinta 7. In 1916, they had three apparitions of the Angel of Peace. Two of them were located in the Loca do Cabeco, as they herded sheep, and one was at the well behind Lucia's house. The Angel prepared them for the coming of Mary a year later with a message for the world.

Angel's First Apparition

The first apparition of the Angel was in the spring of 1916. He came as a light, whiter than snow, in the form of a young man, fifteen or sixteen years of age, transparent, brighter than crystal pierced by the rays of the sun. Kneeling on the ground, the Angel bowed his forehead to the earth. The children by a supernatural impulse did the same, repeating the words of the Angel, "*My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee!*"

The Angel repeated these words three times, rose and said: "Pray thus. The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications." Then he disappeared. For a long time the children remained in the same posture, repeating the words, intensely aware of the presence of God. The next day they were still immersed in this spiritual atmosphere which only gradually left them.

Angel's Second Apparition

The second apparition of the Angel was at the height of hot summer days. At the well, suddenly the Angel appeared again: "What are you doing? Pray! Pray very much! The Hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of mercy on you. Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High. Make everything you do a sacrifice, and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and in supplication for the conversion of sinners. You will thus draw down peace upon your country. Accept and bear with submission, the suffering which the Lord will send you."

The words of the Angel were like a light which made them understand who God is, how He loves us and desires to be loved, the value of sacrifice, how pleasing it is to Him and how, on account of it, He grants the grace of conversion to sinners.

Angel's Third Apparition

The third apparition of the Angel was in the fall, again at the Loka do Cabeco. This time the Angel held a chalice, with a Host above it dripping some drops of Blood into the chalice. These he left in mid-air and prostrated himself on the ground repeating three times: *"Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference by which He is offended and by the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart, and through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg the conversion of poor sinners."*

Then rising, he gave the Host to Lucia and the contents of the chalice to Jacinta and Francisco saying: "Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Repair their crimes and console your God." Once more he prostrated himself on the ground and repeated three times more: "Most Holy Trinity . . ." and then disappeared.

When I [Fr.Fox], asked Sister Lucia, through her priest nephew, Father Jose dos Santos Valinho, "What do you consider the most important part of the Fatima message?" Sr. Lucia answered that it was at the beginning, at the Cabeco where the Angel appeared, and drew them to God, to the Real Presence in the Eucharist.

Our Lady's First Apparition

The first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima was May 13, 1917. They were herding sheep in the Cova da Iria. A sudden flash of lightning drew their attention. Then on a small holm oak tree they beheld a Lady all dressed in white. She was more brilliant than a crystal glass filled with sparkling water, when the rays of the burning sun shine through it. The children were so close, just a few feet from her, so that they were bathed in the light which radiated from her.

The Lady said, "I am from heaven." Lucia asked as she did every time Our Lady appeared, "What do you 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. ..."

The beautiful Lady from heaven told the children that they would all go to heaven. She asked them, "Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?"

Lucia answered: "Yes, we are willing." "Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort." Then our Lady communicated to them a light so intense. As it streamed from her hands, its rays penetrated their hearts and the innermost depth of their souls, making them see themselves in God, Who was that light, more clearly than they could see themselves in the best of mirrors. They then fell to their knees, repeating in their hearts, **"O most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the most Blessed Sacrament!"** After a few moments, Our Lady spoke again: "Pray the Rosary every day, in order to obtain peace for the world, and the end of the war."

Every time Our Lady appeared she told the children, " pray the Rosary every day."

Later she appeared to Jacinta in the Fatima church, showing pictures of the Mysteries of the Rosary, teaching her how to meditate on the Mysteries while praying the decades.

Our Lady's Second Apparition

In the second apparition of Our Lady, June 13, 1917, Our Lady told the children that she would take Jacinta and Francisco to heaven soon, but Lucia must remain some time longer. "Jesus wishes to make use of you to make me known and loved. He wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. I promise salvation to those who embrace it, and those souls will be loved by God like flowers placed by me to adorn His throne." [Lucia remained on earth as a Carmelite nun until she was almost 98 years old]. Lucia was told, "*Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.*"

Our Lady's Third Apparition

The third apparition of Our Lady was on July 13, 1917, when she said, "In October, I will tell you who I am and what I want, and I will perform a miracle for all to see and believe." Also, "**Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, and say many times, especially whenever you make some 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.***"

Saying the above words Our Lady opened her hands and showed the children the most terrible vision of hell. "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 . . ." Then our Lady foretold punishments to the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and the Holy Father.

Our Lady of Fatima, July 13, 1917, said, "**I shall come to ask for the Consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays. If my wishes are fulfilled, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. ...**"

Our Lady's Fourth Apparition

The fourth apparition of Our Lady took place on August 19, 1917, some days later than the 13th, for the Masonic Administrator of Ourem had taken the children away, placed them in jail on the 13th. The July apparition took place in a place called Valinhos, near Aljustrel, home village of the three children. As always Lucia asked, "*What do you want of me?*" Our Lady told them to keep going to the Cova da Iria on the 13th, to pray the Rosary every day, and again she promised for October: "I will perform a miracle so that all may believe." She concluded: "Pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners; for many souls go to hell, because there are none to sacrifice themselves and to pray for them."

Our Lady's Fifth Apparition

The fifth apparition, September 13, 1917, was a turning point for conviction of many that Our Lady really was appearing. Since June the number present had been growing each month so that by September many thousands were present. During the time of the noon apparition multiple signs were witnessed; falling flowers which dissipated as people tried to catch them; a star or globe that moved and settled over the little holm oak, clap of thunder...

As before, only the children saw Our Lady. **"Continue to pray the Rosary ... In October Our Lord will come, as well as Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Carmel. Saint Joseph will appear with the Child Jesus to bless the world. God is pleased with your sacrifices... In October I will perform a miracle so that all may believe."** As usual Our Lady began to rise, go toward the east from which she came and disappeared in the distance.

October 13, 1917 - Sixth Apparition

Dark heavy clouds were over Fatima. It had rained heavily from the evening before, all night and until exactly 12 Noon. At exactly 12 Noon, true sun time, the miracle foretold months in advance happened. In moments the rain ceased, the clouds rolled back, the sun appeared in the clear sky. Then for about 10 minutes there was the spinning and descent of the sun like a giant Catherine wheel giving off all kinds of colors; it came close to their heads; people screamed, thinking it the end of the world; some called out their sins, begging forgiveness. This swirling of the sun occurred for about 10 minutes. The sun descended and ascended three times before resuming its normal course. During the sun miracle the children did not notice it. They were engaged in the apparition.

"What do you 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. Continue always to pray the Rosary every day..."** **"Do not offend the Lord our God any more, because He is already so much offended."**

Then, opening her hands, she made them reflect on the sun, and as she ascended, the reflection of her own light continued to be projected on the sun itself. . . .

The children beheld St. Joseph with the Child Jesus and Our Lady robed in white with a blue mantle, beside the sun. St. Joseph and the Child Jesus appeared to bless the world, for they traced the Sign of the Cross with their hands. When, a little later, this apparition disappeared, they saw Our Lord and Our Lady of Sorrows; Our Lord then appeared to bless the world in the same manner as St. Joseph had done. This apparition vanished and Our Lady once more appeared as Our Lady of Carmel with the Scapular, held down to the world inviting all to wear it.

Both Jacinta and Francisco were dead within two years. Later Lucia was sent by the Bishop to the north, in Spain, to be with the Dorothean nuns. She joined them as a postulant October 25, 1925. In March 1948, Holy Thursday, Sr. Lucia transferred to the Carmelites in Coimbra, Portugal where she remained until her death Feb. 13, 2005.

First Saturdays

On December 10, 1925, at Pontevedra, Spain Our Lady gave Sr. Lucia this message: **"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 say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with 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 mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me."**

On June 13, 1929, at night when Sr. Lucia was in the Dorothean Convent Chapel, Tuy, Spain and adoring Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament, suddenly the whole chapel was illumined by a supernatural light and she had a vision involving the Most Holy Trinity. Our Lady then said to Sr. Lucia, **"The moment has come when God asks the Holy Father, in union with the Bishops of the world, to make the Consecration of Russia to my Heart, promising to save it by this means."**

Collegial Consecration is Accomplished

The Bishop and Fatima authorities of the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima and its Fatima Shrine in Portugal and the Holy See itself state and have publicized that this Consecration took place March 25, 1984. After the Consecration things began to change in Russia; religious freedoms soon came. My *Fatima Family Apostolate* built the first Shrine in all Russia in honor of Our Lady of Fatima.

The Rector of the Fatima Shrine in Portugal works closely with the Pope, its bishop and the Magisterium.

The Church which approved of Fatima as worthy of our human faith is the official interpreter of its message.

Entire Fatima Secret Revealed

On May 13, 2000, at the end of the Mass at Fatima, presided over by Pope John Paul II, at which Jacinta and Francisco were beatified, His Holiness directed Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State, to give a summary of the third part of the Fatima secret. It was given in his presence, also in the presence of Sister Lucia and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims in the Cova, and televisions cameras. Sodano said it concerns above all the war waged by atheistic systems against the Church and Christians, it describes the suffering by the witnesses of the faith in the 20th century. He spoke of "the Bishop clothed in white" as the Pope; he makes his way with difficulty toward the Cross amidst the corpses of those who were martyred, and he too falls to the ground, apparently dead, under a hail of gunfire. He said "after the assassination attempt of May 13, 1981, it appeared evident that it was `a mother's hand that guided the bullet's path,' enabling `the Pope in his throes' to halt `at the threshold of death'. He spoke of the successive events of 1989, leading to the fall of the Communist regimes which promoted atheism. He ended saying, "The Pope has charged the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith with making public the third part of the `secret,' after the preparation of an appropriate commentary."(Pg. 31)

Sister Lucia wrote me personally that the Collegial Consecration by Pope and Bishops as requested by Our Lady was accomplished. She also wrote to me that the entire three parts of the Fatima Secret were as given by the Vatican, June 26, 2000.

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone met with Sr. Lucia before the third part of the secret was revealed. In a book-length interview of his conversations with Sr. Lucia, entitled *The Last Fatima Visionary*, issued 2007, Pope Benedict wrote the introduction. Of theories suggesting the "third secret" involves an apocalyptic prophecy the Vatican does not wish to disclose, the Cardinal called "pure fantasy".

Pope John Paul II appointed Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to draw up the interpretation of Fatima and the Secret.

On June 26, 2000, at a press conference Joseph Card. Ratzinger, (now Pope Benedict XVI) made available a forty-three page small book on the Secret published by the Vatican Press (Libreria Editrice Vaticana), titled: *The Message of Fatima*. The Document deals with all three parts of the Fatima Secret as well as the Collegial Consecration of March 25, 1984, "in spiritual union with the Bishops of the world." On page 8 the same document states: "Sister Lucia personally confirmed that this solemn and universal act of consecration corresponded to what Our Lady wished (*"Sim, esta feita, tal como Nossa Senhora a pediu, desde o dia 25 de Marco de 1984"*): **"Yes it has been done just as Our Lady asked, on 25 March 1984", Letter of 8 November 1989**). Hence any further discussion or request is without basis. **Have things not changed religious wise in Russia since the Collegial Consecration?**

On the website for the Shrine of Fatima in Portugal, as this pamphlet is prepared, is this underlined heading: **Catholic Church in Russia is going to mark the 90th Anniversary of the Apparitions of Fatima**. It continues: "Interview of the Press Center of the Shrine of Fatima to Mons. Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, Archbishop of Moscow: October 2007 — Pilgrimage to Fatima. **The special intention is to thank Our Mother, the Blessed Virgin, for the gift of religious freedom.**"

On the website of the *Fatima Family Apostolate International* of which I am director www.fatimafamily.org you can click into the Fatima Shrine in Russia to learn about Russia's first Shrine to Our Lady of Fatima which this Apostolate built as requested by Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz. I was in St. Petersburg, Russia (Oct. 1998) for the dedication after years of raising the funds. Pope John Paul II sent his blessing on the occasion. At our website you can read the Archbishop's first sermon at Russia's Fatima Shrine in which he says, **"For the conversion of Russia, Our Lady demanded consecration to her Immaculate Heart. This was done by Pope John Paul II in union with all bishops throughout the world on March 25, 1984. The subsequent developments in the territories of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe showed us that this consecration was a key turning point with political, social, and — most of all — religious implications."**

When I was in Russia and interviewed Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz of Moscow at their Catholic seminary in St. Petersburg in 1998, he told me that to take down statues of Lenin and the like can happen quickly. But after many decades of official atheistic

government and the lack of religious freedom, it takes time to bring the hearts of millions back to God. But it is happening.

Sister Lucia began speaking out in 1989 before any Communist government of any country under the hammer and sickle gave up control. ***She said that God had accepted the Collegial Consecration by Pope and Bishops of March 25, 1984, and the Lord would keep His word.*** One country after another in the eastern bloc of Russia's Soviet Union gave up Communist control; the USSR dissolved in 1991.

As I was preparing this pamphlet on a Sunday evening, EWTN, *Sunday Night Live*, Fr. Groeschel interviewed the Dominican priest, Fr. Dan Maurer, stationed for years in Siberia, on the subject: The Church in Russia. "While recognizing the problems that still exist and that in some areas where there are still some former hardliners Communist agents who make it difficult, yet," Fr. Maurer said "whereas before in Russia only 10% were baptized, now the average is that 60% are baptized." He too acknowledged that the Collegial Consecration mentioned above was the beginning of religious changes in Russia. He stated that after so many decades of official atheism, at least where he works, young people seem more open to God and bring their parents to Church.