



S S P X



# The Angelus

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

Fatima

The Message for Our Times

Centenary Pilgrimage

The Miracle of the Sun



Once again, why this apparition of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary? It was so that our souls may be saved, it was so that our souls may go to join her one day in heaven. In a few extraordinary pictures, She manifested to these children of Fatima the whole reality of our faith. Indeed, the children admired Her and admired Her in such a way that they were as if in ecstasy, rapt, carried away, not knowing how to express the beauty of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. However much anyone might have tried to provide them with comparisons, no comparison could be made in the sight of the beauty of the Virgin Mary whom they had seen.—Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, sermon (1987)







# Letter from the Publisher

Dear readers,

The word "Fatima" evokes many different images in the various classes of men you might meet. Some will conjure up a Muslim woman. Others will think of an exotic place in southern Europe in the midst of cork trees. To another, a better informed set, it will suggest the Blessed Virgin's apparitions, and may even recall the name of at least one of the three fortunate seers, Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta.

For scientists, "Fatima" will bring up memories of the occurrence of "the miracle of the sun" of October 13, 1917, duly recorded by the newspapers. Historians see in "Fatima" an interesting social counter-movement: Portugal, a country heavily corrupted by the hands of freemasonry, suddenly found stability and prosperity with the reunification of Church and State. These social and political conversions came about after the spectacular spiritual recovery at the feet of Our Lady of Fatima.

Few countries could claim to have experienced such a change of spirit through Our Lady. One, of course, is that of 16th century Mexico. Thanks to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, virtually the entire native population embraced the Faith, simply by looking at the picture she left on Juan Diego's tilma and meditating on her maternal words. On a lesser scale, we can also say that the France of the Second Empire, virulently anti-Catholic, had its piety reinvigorated by the apparitions of Lourdes in mid-19th century.

What is perhaps proper to Fatima is that Our Lady requested the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart, without which Russia would spread its errors throughout the world. This divine petition was uttered a few months before the communist uprising in St. Petersburg. Heaven's remedy came even prior to the malady. One important condition for this consecration was that it be made by the Pope himself, in union with all the bishops of the world.

How has the world and the Church answered these maternal demands? The course of the 20th century very much resembles the history of Israel in the Old Testament: God offered Israel the way of peace and prosperity; Israel made beautiful promises and fulfilled nothing; God punished, and Israel, repentant, returned to God begging forgiveness until again it forgot the Lord. Even on geopolitical matters, Fatima teaches us invaluable lessons. The fate of nations is very much the work of human choices. Yet, even though men reject God, He will achieve His final aims, but not without pain. All problems are ultimately spiritual. The combat against the devil is not to be fought on his own murky ground: the solution to social and political troubles can only be a return to God, through the fidelity of Church leaders and prayers to Mary.

Fr. Jürgen Wegner  
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## Contents

Letter from the Publisher 4

### Theme: Fatima

- Mary as Mediatrix in Dante's *Divine Comedy* 6
- Fatima, The Message for Our Times 10
- The Miracle of the Sun 15
- Mary's Mission Tour 22
- Personal Reflections on a First Trip to Fatima 26

### Faith and Morals

- The Autumn Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary 29
- Three Articles On Pius XII and Fatima 33

### Spirituality

- The Secret of Fatima 40
- The Prayer of Children 48
- Centenary Pilgrimage to Fatima 51

### Christian Culture

- Notre Dame Cathedral 58
- School Days For Educators All on the Same Page 63
- Questions and Answers 66

# The Angelus

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### News from Tradition

- Church and World 71
- Christian Education Renewed 76
- The Last Word 87



# Mary as Mediatrix

in Dante's *Divine Comedy*

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by Andrew J. Clarendon

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, 1974) 211.

<sup>2</sup> Ott 212.

<sup>3</sup> Ott 213.

<sup>4</sup> Ott 213.

<sup>5</sup> Pope Benedict XV, *In praeclara summorum*, §11.

Although not yet infallibly defined, the doctrine that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces enjoys a long pedigree in the history of the Church. In the fourth century St. Ephrem wrote that “After the Mediator thou art the mediatrix of the whole world.”<sup>1</sup> From the other Fathers, through medieval theologians such as St. Bernard, and into the modern era, Mary’s prerogatives have been examined and extolled. In our own time, various encyclicals by 19th and 20th-century Popes have affirmed the long-standing tradition that Mary is not only “the Mediatrix of all graces by her co-operation in the Incarnation,”<sup>2</sup> but also that she is the “Mediatrix of all graces by her intercession in Heaven”<sup>3</sup>; many theologians assert that “according to God’s positive ordinance . . . no grace accrues to me66n without the intercession of Mary.”<sup>4</sup> In trying to understand and celebrate Our Lady, the Catholic artists of the ages have been inspired to celebrate her in paint, stone, and stained glass, in the rich stream of musical forms, and in literary works. It is not surprising that Dante, the “most eloquent singer of the Christian idea,”<sup>5</sup> features the Blessed Mother in his *Divine Comedy*; but what is sometimes overlooked in focusing on the larger action of the poem is how Marian it is, that in his epic of conversion, Dante forcefully affirms the doctrine of Mary as Mediatrix.





## The Start of the Action

<sup>6</sup> Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003). *Inferno* I.2.

<sup>7</sup> *Inf.* II.94, 96.

<sup>8</sup> *Inf.* XX.127-129.

<sup>9</sup> *The Holy Bible*, Douay-Rheims Version (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, 1989) *Canticle of Canticles* 6:9.

Although the opening lines of the poem famously feature the Pilgrim—Dante himself—waking up in “a dark wood,”<sup>6</sup> in the next canto Virgil reveals that the action actually starts in Heaven. While answering the Pilgrim’s question about why he has come to help him, Virgil says that “A gracious lady sits in Heaven grieving /.../ and her compassion breaks Heaven’s stern decree.”<sup>7</sup> Even before Dante realizes that he is in mortal trouble, while he is still spiritually asleep in the dark wood of sin and error, the Blessed Mother intercedes for him and starts the sequence of events that will lead to his conversion. Later, in the pit of the fraudulent soothsayers, Virgil comments that while the Pilgrim was struggling in the dark wood “the moon...already was at full / and you should well remember that at times / when you were lost...she helped you.”<sup>8</sup> This added detail is an echo of the famous verses in *Canticle of Canticles* that are applied to the Blessed Mother in the liturgy: “Who is she that cometh forth...fair as the moon.”<sup>9</sup> In seeing the damned and being moved to amend his own life, the Pilgrim also discovers that the only ones who cannot be helped by the Blessed Mother are those who have put >

<sup>10</sup> *Purg.* X.110-111.

<sup>11</sup> *Purg.* XXII.142-144.

<sup>12</sup> *Purg.* V.101.

<sup>13</sup> *Purg.* V.104.

<sup>14</sup> *Purg.* V.106-107.

<sup>15</sup> *Para.* XXIII.73-74.

<sup>16</sup> *Para.* XXIII.88-90.

<sup>17</sup> *Para.* XXIII.128-129.

themselves beyond all hope, obstinately rejecting her and her Son.

The Holy Souls in Purgatory are, of course, in a much different situation, for their salvation is sure and “at worst / [their purgation] cannot last beyond the Final Day.”<sup>10</sup> Here love, light, hope and music—all of which are denied in *Inferno*—are present. The second song in the whole poem is the *Salve Regina*; these exiles beg the “mother of mercy” to end their banishment by turning to them and showing to them the “fruit of her womb.” Dante imagines the main part of Purgatory as a huge seven-terraced mountain, with each level corresponding to the seven capital sins, from pride to lust. Each of these rounds has various depictions of both the vice being purged and the opposing virtue. In each case, the first example of the virtue is drawn from the life of the Blessed Mother. While most of the examples are taken from the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, the exempla for the gluttonous particularly speaks to her intercession: “Mary was more intent / on gracing the wedding feast with plenitude / than on her own mouth, which now pleads for you!”<sup>11</sup>

In this way Dante clearly teaches that the Blessed Mother has a lasting concern for not only the Church Militant but also the Church Suffering. The clearest reference to Mary as Mediatrix, however, is related in one of the lower levels of Purgatory, a place of additional waiting for those who died excommunicated, achieved salvation at the moment of death, or the like. Among these is Buonconte da Montefeltro who, while dying on the battlefield, with his last breath “murmur[s] Mary’s name.”<sup>12</sup> Buonconte relates that as “God’s angel [takes him] up”<sup>13</sup> an exasperated demon cries out: “You may be getting his immortal part— / and won it for a measly tear, at that.”<sup>14</sup> Such is the powerful intercession of the Blessed Mother that there is hope even in the last moments of one’s earthly life for those who implore her help.

## Dante’s Most Detailed Presentation

In Paradise, the saints have the added consolation of seeing the Blessed Mother herself, body and soul, and so it is in his canticle that Dante gives his most detailed presentation of Mary as Mediatrix. Instead of immediately ascending to Paradise itself, Dante has the Pilgrim, guided by his beloved Beatrice, travel through the celestial spheres of the universe where various saints are met at each level. The Blest project themselves, so to speak, in a hierarchical order that both mirrors the Celestial Court beyond and allows the Pilgrim a period of development since the vision of Heaven can only be received in stages. Having moved through the Spheres of the Moon and the Sun and the other known planets, the Pilgrim reaches the Sphere of the Fixed Stars—everything in the universe past Saturn. Here the Pilgrim is granted a vision of the Church Triumphant: first Christ Himself brightly blazing and then, after He ascends, His Mother: “the Rose in which the Word of God / took on the flesh.”<sup>15</sup> As the Pilgrim looks on the Blessed Mother, body and soul, he comments that “the sound of [Mary’s] name, the one / I pray to night and day, drew all my soul / into the vision of that flame of flames.”<sup>16</sup> After she ascends to join her Son, the rest of the Church Triumphant stay and sing “*Regina celi*” in tones so sweet, / the joy of it will never leave my mind.”<sup>17</sup>

Finally, the Pilgrim comes to the last stage of his journey: he goes beyond





<sup>18</sup> Para. XXXI.116-117.

<sup>19</sup> Para. XXXI.137-138.

<sup>20</sup> Para. XXXII.145-148.

<sup>21</sup> Para. XXXIII.1-2,11-12,  
16-18.

<sup>22</sup> Para. XXXIII.42.

<sup>23</sup> Para. XXXIII.145.

<sup>24</sup> Mark Fellows, *Sister Lucia Apostle of Mary's Immaculate Heart* (Buffalo, NY: Immaculate Heart Publications, 2007) 160-161.

<sup>25</sup> Fellows 124.

space and time, past the outer edge of the spherical universe, into the Empyrean, where he is granted a final vision of the angels, saints, the Blessed Mother, and the Trinity Itself all organized into a massive white rose. When the Pilgrim turns to Beatrice with questions about the Rose, he finds that St. Bernard has taken her place as guide. The symbolism is clear: the ultimate vision of Paradise requires not only theological knowledge but also to be steeped in mystical contemplation and profoundly devoted to the Blessed Mother. St. Bernard directs the Pilgrim's gaze to "the Queen / who holds as subject this devoted realm,"<sup>18</sup> but Dante is a wise and humble enough poet to "not dare / describe the least part of such beauty's bliss."<sup>19</sup> The great Doctor then affirms the necessity of Mary's intercession for the final vision:

But lest you fall backwards beating your own wings,  
believing to ascend on your own power,  
we must offer a prayer requesting grace,  
grace from the one who has power to help you.<sup>20</sup>

The author of the *Memorare* offers a glorious thirty-nine-line prayer that opens the final canto of the poem and causes it to come full circle. Mary is the

Virgin Mother, daughter of your son  
most humble, most exalted...  
...down on earth, for men,  
the living spring of their eternal hope.  
...Not only does your loving kindness rush  
to those who ask for it, but often times  
it flows spontaneously before the plea.<sup>21</sup>

The Pilgrim looks into the Blessed Mother's eyes, which make clear "how precious true devotion is to her,"<sup>22</sup> and in response she does as she always does: directs his gaze to the Trinity, "the Love that moves the sun and the other stars."<sup>23</sup>

## Celebrating the Glories of Mary

Now nearly 700 years after Dante's death—and amid the centenary of the apparitions at Fatima—the faithful continue to celebrate the glories of Mary and beg her intercession. Adding to the insights of theology and the various apparitions of the Blessed Mother, the great artistic works of past and present provide a connatural knowledge of her, leading to the devotion that has always been a mark of the true Catholic. In these troubled times, the faithful need Our Lady more than ever. Sister Lucy of Fatima told Father Augustine Fuentes in 1957 that "the devil is about to wage a decisive battle against the Blessed Virgin...[and] that God is giving two last remedies to the world: the Holy Rosary and devotion to the Immaculate Heart."<sup>24</sup> Echoing the great saints and his fellow artists, in his glorious poem Dante affirms that "it will never be too late to have recourse to...Mary,"<sup>25</sup> the Immaculata, Mediatrix of all graces.

# Fatima, The Message for Our Times

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Interview with Fr. Bertrand Labouche, SSPX

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**Angelus Press:** There have been many books published on the “facts” of Fatima. Why did it seem useful to you to write another one?

**Fr. Labouche:** The answer to your question is in the title of the book: *Fatima, the Message for Our Times*. I did my best to tell the story of Fatima, yes, but also to show that the effective remedy for the great evils of our times lies in a generous response to Our Lady of Fatima’s requests. I also did my best to take a look at the situation one hundred years after her apparitions.

I lived in Portugal for 10 years. My contact with the families of the seers (especially Joao Marto, Francisco and Jacinta’s older brother), the facts I observed, the places I visited, and my various researches, all persuaded me to transmit these imperishable memories.

Lastly, I hope that by referring to the major

works on Fatima and the major works of Mariology I will have offered readers a humble synthesis for this centenary of the Apparitions of *God’s Masterpiece*, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, who is also the Mother of our souls in this 21st century.

**Angelus Press:** First of all, what is the origin of the name Fatima?

**Fr. Labouche:** The name comes from a Muslim princess named “Fatima” who converted to Christianity in 1158 and married a gallant knight, Gonçalo Herminguês. She died shortly afterwards, and her heartbroken husband consecrated himself to God in the Cistercian abbey of Alcobaça. The abbey founded a little monastery in the neighboring mountains and sent Brother Gonçalo to it. He had his wife’s remains



transferred to the chapel of this monastery which, after many transformations, became... the parish church that stands in Fatima today.

**Angelus Press:** Can you give us an idea of the historical context in Portugal in the beginning of the century?

**Fr. Labouche:** With the action of the Freemasons and the growing influence of the ideas of the French Revolution, Portugal had become the most secularized country in the world. The law of the separation of Church and State, promulgated in 1911, was so disastrous that the very same year, during a congress of free-thinkers, Afonso Costa did not hesitate to proclaim “that within two generations, Catholicism would be completely eliminated from Portugal.”

The years that followed were among the darkest in Portuguese history. Anarchy and ungodliness contended in every way with the Catholic religion and sought its destruction. Only

a miracle could save *la terra de Santa Maria*.

But in 1901, Catholics began to react, especially the students of Coimbra; they came together to study and diffuse the teachings of the social encyclicals of the popes. One of these students was a certain Antonio Oliveira Salazar.

The students united prayer, study, and action, and turned to the woman who had been named Queen of Portugal on October 20, 1646: the Virgin Mary. In 1915, they launched a Rosary Crusade that was so successful that the churches of Lisbon were full throughout the entire month of Mary. Many officers in uniform were even seen!

Two years later, the Virgin Mary Herself, under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary, came to Fatima to repeat six times the Crusade’s byword: “Recite the rosary every day!” The state of affairs of the Church in Portugal improved so quickly that as early as April 29, 1918, Pope Benedict XV spoke of the “extraordinary help,” the “singular *quoddam auxilium*,” of the Mother of God. >





# Theme Fatima

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**Angelus Press:** Why did these three shepherd children receive this privilege?

**Fr. Labouche:** Why these children and not others? That is God's secret. But it is certain that the excellent Christian education they received, and their beautiful natural qualities provided good ground for the great graces they received at the Cova da Iria and to which they would be faithful to the point of heroic virtue.

**Angelus Press:** You consecrated a chapter to the "Precursor Angel" who appeared to the children in 1915. What was his purpose?

**Fr. Labouche:** To prepare Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta to accept generously the mission that was to be theirs: *to console God*, to make reparation for the offenses made against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and to save many poor sinners through their prayers and sacrifices. Later, through her writings, Lucia would spend eighty years making known to the world the messages of Our Lady of Fatima.

The Portuguese clergy had been asking for the Angel of Portugal to come for centuries on the liturgical feast of the Guardian Angel of the kingdom, instituted in 1504 by Pope Leo X.

**Angelus Press:** And then came the "big day," May 13, 1917. What happened?

**Fr. Labouche:** A little before noon, Lucia suddenly saw a flash of lightning in the sky; although there were no clouds, Lucia told Francisco and Jacinta that it would be wiser to go home when suddenly, above a little holm oak, a Beautiful Lady appeared to them, "all of light." She came from the heavens, from the direction of the sun, and she wore a white dress, adorned with gold, and a white veil on her head. She was "more brilliant than the sun. We were so close to her that we were surrounded by the light that came from her."

Then the vision said she was from Heaven and recalled the last ends of all men. The three shepherd children had the joy of hearing from her lips that they would go to Heaven. She then spoke the following grave words: "Do you wish to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the conversion of sinners?" "Yes, we do," answered

Lucia. "Then you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort. Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and the end of the war."

Our Lady would repeat this request at every single one of her apparitions.

**Angelus Press:** And then the Blessed Virgin's visits were repeated on the 13th of each month until October 13, except for the month of August, when she came on the 19th. Why was this?

**Fr. Labouche:** The apparition on June 13 was very important: it was the revelation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, asking for reparation for the offenses made against it. Fatima is to this Holy Heart what Paray-le-Monial is to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The one on July 13 was the most impressive for the children, for they saw hell as it is, with so many poor souls falling into it. This vision, along with that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, greatly contributed to the sanctification of the shepherd children.

Then the Blessed Virgin told them that God wishes her Immaculate Heart to be honored and consoled, especially through the devotion of the Five First Saturdays. She also said that she would come to request the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart: she did so on June 13, 1929, in Tuy.

In August, the children saw Our Lady on the 19th, because on the 13 they were imprisoned by the mayor of Vila-Nova de Ourem, Arturo de Oliveira Santos. He even threatened to fry them in boiling oil if they continued to say that the Virgin Mary was appearing to them and speaking to them in Fatima. They heroically held their ground.

On August 19, not far from Aljustrel, their native village, the Beautiful Lady invited the three children to work effectively for the salvation of sinners: "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." This little "because" tells us that a causal relation exists between the lack of prayer and sacrifice and the eternal loss of thousands of souls, and it invites us to be fervent and generous so that many souls in danger of being lost forever may be saved!



**Angelus Press:** For the chapter on the last apparition on October 13, you chose the title “The Sign from God.”

**Fr. Labouche:** The expression “the finger of God” that is used by Our Lord in the Gospel means the same thing. It is something that only the divine power can accomplish: a miracle, that Our Lady of Fatima had promised twice.

On October 13, in the presence of 70,000 people, the sun suddenly took on the form of an immense silver disk. It shone intensely but did not blind. “Suddenly, the sun began to tremble, to make quick movements and finally to spin at a dizzying pace, “like a wheel of fire, taking on all the colors of the rainbow” (Maria do Carmo).

Then “a clamor was suddenly heard,” tells Dr. Almeida Garret, “like a cry of anguish from the whole crowd. Still spinning rapidly, the sun seemed to detach itself from the firmament and advance, blood red, towards the earth, threatening to crush us with its fiery mass. Those were terrifying seconds!”

Finally, after ten minutes, the sun returned to its spot. When everyone was sure the danger had passed, there was an explosion of joy. Everyone broke out in shouts of thanksgiving: Miracle! Miracle! Blessed be Our Lady!”

In August 1990, I was personally able to speak with a very elderly couple who had witnessed the miracle of the sun 73 years earlier; everything they told me is in my book.

Sister Lucia’s *Memoirs* and the many testimonies of those who saw the miracle of the sun are very clear: it was an apocalyptic scene, a sort of “practice run for the end of time” (Fr. Calmel).

Never had Our Lady used such means (the revelation of her Immaculate Heart, the vision of hell, the miracle of the sun, an exceptionally large aurora borealis) to get men to take her requests seriously. Are they taken seriously today? The times are serious.

**Angelus Press:** In the conclusion of this chapter, you wrote: “2016... Under the sun of Fatima, thousands of visitors meander, mostly careless pilgrims or simple tourists. Its rays are silent.” What were you insinuating?

**Fr. Labouche:** I believe we are heading towards a chastisement. It may be a war, or worse yet, the loss of the Faith, the apostasy of the nations that were once Christian, a bloody persecution of the Church.

**Angelus Press:** After that day, what happened?

**Fr. Labouche:** First there was the mysterious aurora borealis on March 25, 1938, that had been foretold by Our Lady on July 13, 1917; then came World War II. The regions of the world where the glow was seen correspond remarkably with the zone of Christianity that was about to be lit on fire by the war.

Sister Lucia immediately interpreted it as the sign of “God’s justice, ready to fall heavily upon guilty nations. 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,” Our Lady of Fatima had said in July of 1917.

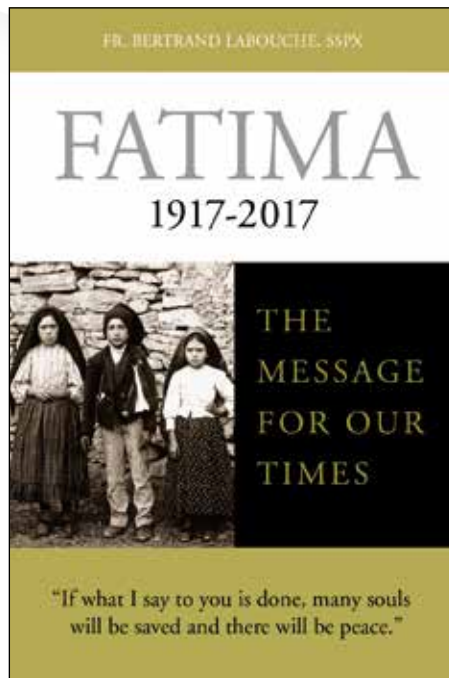
A month and a half later, German troops took Vienna. The Anschluss was established. On September 1, 1939, Poland was invaded. It was the beginning of the second world war, which would be worse than the first, leaving in its wake 40 to 50 million dead, 70 million gravely wounded, entire cities destroyed.

**Angelus Press:** About 70 years before Fatima, Our Lady appeared in France, in La Salette. Are there any similarities or connections between the contents of the two messages?

**Fr. Labouche:** Indeed, at La Salette, just like at Fatima, Our Lady gave the world a serious warning. But at Fatima, precise and powerful remedies were also given to us by Heaven: the daily recitation of the rosary, the devotion of the five First Saturdays, the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the sanctification of our souls by accomplishing our duty of state as Christians. We must do what it is in our power to do while there is still time! Our Lady of Fatima encourages us so that we will be able to say like St. Paul, even to the point of martyrdom if need be: “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the Faith.”

# Fatima: The Message for Our Times

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The 20th and 21st centuries must be understood in the light of Fatima. Mary's visit to this little hamlet in Portugal is a fact that is part of contemporary history. The Message of Fatima concerns all of us. Its blessed influence can touch all of us, touch families, touch nations: "If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace."

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# The Miracle of the Sun

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Editor's Note: An earlier version of this article appeared in the October 1987 issue of *The Angelus*.

October 13, 1917

“Silence, silence! Our Lady is coming!” Lúcia cried out as she saw the flash. The rain having ceased, the sun began gradually to appear, and Our Lady came. Her snowwhite feet rested upon the beautiful flowers and ribbons with which Senhora da Capelinha had adorned the tree. The faces of the three children assumed an unworldly expression, their features becoming more delicate, their color mellow, their eyes intent upon the Lady. They did not hear Lúcia’s mother warning her to look closely so as not to be deceived. “What do you want of me?” Lúcia

inquired of the Queen of Heaven.

“I want to tell you that they must build a chapel here in my honor; that I am the Lady of the Rosary; that they continue to say the Rosary every day. The war will end and the soldiers will return to their homes soon,” Our Lady responded.

“I have many favors to ask. Do you wish to grant them or not?”

“Some I will, others I will not. They must amend their lives, ask forgiveness for their sins. Offend not Our Lord any more,” Our Lady continued, her face becoming very grave, “for He is already much offended.”

Lúcia, knowing this was to be the last interview with Our Lady, wanted to make sure that she received all the commands Mary wished to give her. She hoped to spend the rest of her life on earth fulfilling the desires of Our Lady. “Do >

# Theme Fatima

you want anything else from me?" the girl asked.  
"I desire nothing else."

## The Brightening of the Sun

As Our Lady took leave of the children, she opened her hands which emitted a flood of light. While she was rising, she pointed towards the sun and the light gleaming from her hands brightened the sun itself.

Instinctively, Lúcia cried out in ecstasy, "Oh, look at the sun!"

did this, Our Lady stood in all her brilliancy to the right of the sun, dressed in the blue and white robes of Our Lady of the Rosary.

Meanwhile, Francisco and Jacinta were bathed in the marvelous colors and signs of the sun, and Lúcia was privileged to gaze upon Our Lord dressed in red as the Divine Redeemer, blessing the world, as Our Lady had foretold. Like St. Joseph, He was seen only from His chest up. Beside Him stood Our Lady, dressed now in the purple robes of Our Lady of Sorrows, but without the sword. Finally, the Blessed Virgin appeared again to Lúcia in all her ethereal brightness,



The echo of Lúcia's shout came back in a huge, immense cry of wonder and astonishment from the multitude. The sun was now pale as the moon. To the left of the sun, St. Joseph emerged from the bright clouds only to his chest, sufficient to allow him to raise his right hand and make, together with the Child Jesus, the Sign of the Cross three times over the world. As St. Joseph

clothed in the simple brown robes of Mount Carmel.

As the children stared enraptured by these most beautiful heavenly visions, the countless thousands of people were amazed and overpowered by other miracles in the skies. The sun had taken on an extraordinary color. The words of eye-witnesses best describe these



stupendous signs. “We could look at the sun with ease,” Ti Marto testified. “It did not bother us at all. It seemed to be continually fading and glowing in one fashion, then another. It threw shafts of light one way and another, painting everything in different colors, the people, the trees, the earth, even the air. But the greatest proof of the miracle was the fact that the sun did not bother the eyes.” A man like Ti Marto, who spent all of his days in the open fields with his flocks and tended his garden under the hot sun of the Portuguese hills, marveled at this fact. “Everybody stood still and quiet, gazing at the sun,” he went on. “At a certain point, the sun stopped its play of light and then started dancing. It stopped once more and again started dancing until it seemed to loosen itself from the skies and fall upon the people. It was a moment of terrible suspense.”

## Further Details on the Miracle

*O Seculo*, a newspaper of Lisbon, carried a more detailed account of the extraordinary events. “From the height of the road where the people parked their carriages and where many hundreds stood, afraid to brave the muddy soil, we saw the immense multitude turn towards the sun at its highest, free of all clouds. The sun called to mind a plate of dull silver. It could be stared at without the least effort. It did not burn or blind. It seemed that an eclipse was taking place. All of a sudden a tremendous shout burst forth, ‘Miracle, miracle! Marvel, marvel!’

“Before the astonished eyes of the people, whose attitude carried us back to biblical times, and who, white with terror, heads uncovered, gazed at the blue sky, the sun trembled and made some brusque unheard-of movements beyond all cosmic laws; the sun danced, in the typical expression of the peasants.

“On the running board of the bus from Torres Novas, an old man whose stature and gentle, manly features recall those of Paul Deroulede, turned toward the sun and recited the *Credo* in a loud voice. I saw him later addressing those about him who still kept their hats on, begging them vehemently to take their hats off before this

overwhelming demonstration of the existence of God. Similar scenes were repeated at other places. A lady, bathed in tears and almost choking with grief, sobbed, ‘How pitiful! There are men who still do not bare their heads before such a stupendous miracle!’

“Immediately afterwards the people asked each other if they saw anything and what they had seen. The greatest number avowed that they saw the sun trembling and dancing; others declared that they saw the smiling face of the Blessed Virgin herself; they swore that the sun turned around on itself as if it were a wheel of fireworks and had fallen almost to the point of burning the earth with its rays. Some said they saw it change colours successively.”

## More Testimony on the Miracle

The testimony of another witness, Dr. Almeida Garret, professor at the University of Coimbra, is most informative and corroborates the others. “As I waited,” he said, “with cool and serene expectation, looking upon the place of the apparitions and with a curiosity that was fading because the hour was passing away so slowly without anything to arouse my attention, I heard the rustle of thousands of voices. I saw the people stretched out over the large field turnabout from the point upon which their desires and anxieties had converged so far to the opposite side and they looked up to skies. It was almost two o’clock wartime or about noon, sun time.

“The sun had broken jubilantly through the thick layer of clouds just a few moments before. It was shining clearly and intensely. I turned to this magnet that was drawing all eyes. It looked to me as a luminous and brilliant disc, with a bright well-defined rim. It did not hurt my eyes. The comparison (which I heard while still at Fátima) with a disc of dull silver, did not seem right to me. The color was brighter, far more active and richer than dull silver, with the tinted luster of the orient of a pearl.

“Nor did it resemble the moon on a clear night. Everyone saw and felt that it was a body with life. It was not spheric like the moon, neither did it have an equal tonality of colour. It looked >



like a small, brightly polished wheel of iridescent mother-of-pearl. It could not be taken for the sun as though seen through fog. There was no fog at that time. (The rain and the fog had stopped). The sun was not opaque, veiled or diffused. It gave light and heat and was brightly outlined by a beveled rim. The sky was banked with light clouds, patched with blue here and there. Sometimes the sun stood out alone in rifts of clear sky. The clouds scuttled along from west to east without dimming the sun. They gave the impression of passing behind it, while the white puffs gliding sometimes in front of the sun seemed to take on the color of rose or a delicate blue.

“It was a wonder that all this time it was possible for us to look at the sun, a blaze of light and burning heat, without any pain to the eyes or blinding of the retina. This phenomenon must have lasted about ten minutes, except for two interruptions when the sun darted forth its more refulgent, lightning-like rays, that forced us to look away.

“The sun had an eccentricity of movement. It was not the scintillation of a celestial body at its highest power. It was rotating upon itself with exceedingly great speed. Suddenly, the people broke out with a cry of extreme anguish. The sun, still rotating, had unloosened itself from the skies and came hurtling towards the earth. This huge, fiery millstone threatened to crush us with its weight. It was a dreadful sensation.

“During this solar occurrence, the air took on successively different colors. While looking at the sun, I noticed that everything around me darkened. I looked at what was nearby and cast my eyes away towards the horizon. Everything had the color of an amethyst; the sky, the air, everything and everybody. A little oak nearby was casting a heavy purple shadow on the ground.

“Fearing impairment of the retina, which was improbable, because then I would not have seen everything in purple, I turned about, closed my eyes, cupping my hands over them, to cut off all light. With my back turned, I opened my eyes and realized that the landscape and the air retained the purple hue.

“This did not give the impression of being an eclipse. While still looking at the sun, I noticed that the air had cleared and I heard a peasant nearby say, ‘This lady looks yellow.’ As a matter of fact, everything far and near had changed now. People seemed to have jaundice. I smiled when I saw everybody looking disfigured and ugly. My hand had the same color..”

## Another Surprise Awaits the Crowd

As the miracle came to its end and the people arose from the muddy ground, another surprise awaited them. A few minutes before, they had been standing in the pouring rain, soaked to the skin. Now they noticed that their clothes were perfectly dry. How kind was Our Lady to her friends who had braved the rain and mud, and put on their very best clothes for her visit.

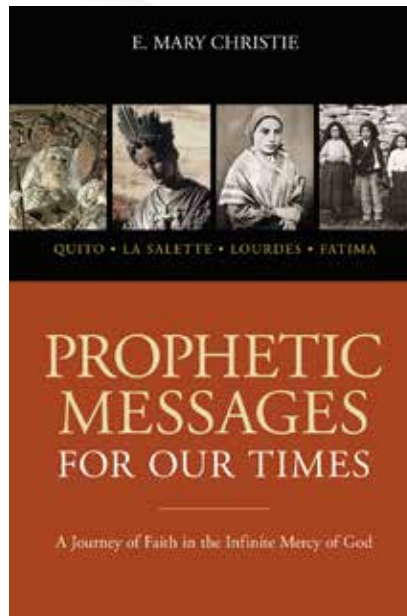
The Bishop of Leiria wrote in his pastoral letter that those who witnessed the events of this great day were fortunate indeed. “The children long before set the day and hour at which it was to take place,” he said. “The news spread quickly over the whole of Portugal and although the day was chilly and pouring rain, many thousands of people gathered...They saw the different manifestations of the sun paying homage to the Queen of Heaven and Earth, who is more radiant than the sun in all its splendor. This phenomenon which no astronomical observatory registered was not natural.

It was seen by people of all classes, members of the Church and non-Catholics. It was seen by reporters of the principal newspapers and by people many miles away.” These are his official words, spoken after long study and careful interrogations of many witnesses of the apparition. There is no possibility of error or illusion when close to a hundred thousand people concur in their testimony. God in Heaven had called the people of the world to join with the heavens in paying honor and glory to His Blessed Mother, Mary.

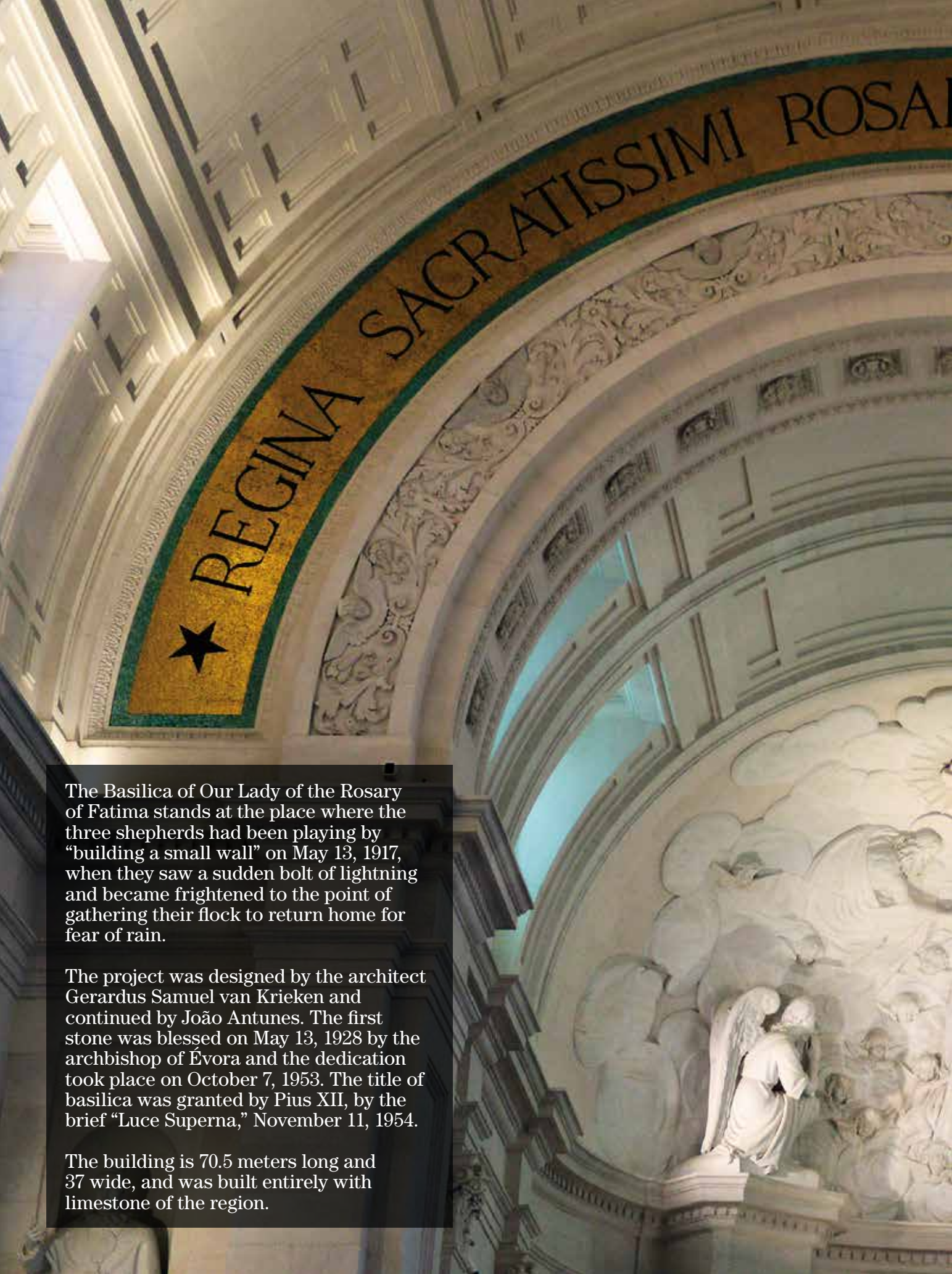
# Prophetic Messages For Our Times

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A Journey of Faith in the Infinite Mercy of God  
Quito • La Salette • Lourdes • Fatima



Provides, in a brief and profound manner, the history and meaning of four of the most relevant Marian apparitions for our day: Quito, La Salette, Lourdes, and Fatima. The messages of Our Lady, while sometimes dire, offer hope and consolation to the faithful, yet more importantly reveal sure remedies for overcoming the evils of today and the innumerable graces to those who follow her direction. How fortunate we are to have such a Blessed Mother, so desirous to draw souls into the heavenly embrace of her Divine Son.



The Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima stands at the place where the three shepherds had been playing by “building a small wall” on May 13, 1917, when they saw a sudden bolt of lightning and became frightened to the point of gathering their flock to return home for fear of rain.

The project was designed by the architect Gerardus Samuel van Krieken and continued by João Antunes. The first stone was blessed on May 13, 1928 by the archbishop of Évora and the dedication took place on October 7, 1953. The title of basilica was granted by Pius XII, by the brief “Luce Superna,” November 11, 1954.

The building is 70.5 meters long and 37 wide, and was built entirely with limestone of the region.





ORATIONI FATIMÆ ORA PRO NOBIS



# Mary's Mission Tour

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Taken from, *The Apostle*, #45, March 2017

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From October 2016 to the end of July 2017, a pilgrimage organized by Society of Saint Pius X traveled throughout the Philippines. The pilgrimage, called “Mary’s Mission Tour,” was a 1,200 mile walk with the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima. It was Fatima’s message in action—souls called to conversion and sanctification—through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The pilgrimage went from the Southern tip of the country (Marbel in Mindanao Island) to the top North (La Trinidad in Luzon Island). An eyewitness account of the facets of the pilgrimage follows:

## A Spiritual Pilgrimage

It has been 90 days since Mary’s Mission Tour commenced at Marbel, South Cotabato, with the

goal of reaching La Trinidad, Benguet by July 31, 2017, when the pilgrimage will be concluded. While we, the faithful here in Butuan City, await Our Lady’s arrival, I kept wondering what kind of reception the people of the city would render to Our Lady. Ever since I was young, I cannot seem to recall any such wondrous event ever gracing the people of Butuan. Perhaps this will be the first.

On Tuesday, January 17, an advance party arrived, led by Fr. Alexander Hora. Of course, it wasn’t to be just any other event to take place in the city. It was Our Lady who was coming to pay all of us a visit. And so, it was more than appropriate that Fr. Hora arrived ahead of all the other pilgrims to prepare the city for the coming of Our Lady. Everyone must know of her arrival so that they can participate and share in her





mission.

Fr. Hora spent the next two days until Thursday, January 19 going about preparing the city for Our Lady's arrival. In those three days, three private business establishments and a well-known radio station were all consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with the

in the Brown Scapular, but also in the Militia Immaculata. During those days, 740 students committed themselves to be soldiers of Mary. Oh, what better gift could we have given to Our Lady!

After a week of preparation, Our Lady finally arrived in Butuan City. On Wednesday, January 25, the Solemn Reception of Our Lady took place



imposition of the Brown Scapular offered to their respective employees and the distribution of both miraculous medals and rosaries. Such great privileges were even extended to the people at the city's central public market, as well as to the inmates at the city jail. And how they outnumbered those who previously received the imposition of the Brown Scapular! The market people and inmates who received the imposition numbered almost 500.

## Further Preparations for Her Arrival

The preparation for the arrival of the Queen of heaven and earth does not stop there. On Monday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 24, Fr. Albert Ghela visited two public primary schools and one public secondary school. At his visits, the students came forward not only to be enrolled

at the holy hour of 3:00 pm at the rotunda in Bancasi. As Our Lady was making her way, the Philippine National Police (PNP) Regional Band serenaded her with *Salve Regina* and *Dios te Salve*. And as she took her place before the many people, the wife of the Barangay Captain adorned her with a beautiful garland. Likewise, 16 little angels sang Marian songs in honor of Our Lady while showering upon her a rain of rose petals.

Following a grand welcome to Our Lady, the military came and escorted their Queen and Mother toward the covered courts where her children awaited her. As Our Lady was set near the altar, people came to place upon her feet flowers of every kind and to offer short prayers.

Moments after the sun had set, preparations were made for the High Mass. The people of Bancasi, led by their Barangay Captain, came to attend Mass; after that, the entire Barangay of Bancasi was consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was a heartwarming scene >

# Theme Fatima

to witness. They were about to witness a Mass much different from that which they have been accustomed to. It was the Tridentine Latin Mass—the Mass of all time! Oh, how blessed those people are to have had such opportunity, to have taken it, to have been there! They would have seen Our Lady look at them with tears of joy

support to the Mission by visiting other places and establishments. On Wednesday, January 25 and Thursday, January 26, Fr. Ghela visited two more public schools, one primary and the other secondary. What was most astonishing about his visits was that in the primary school, almost 900 persons, most of whom were students, came



from Heaven.

On the morning of Thursday, January 26, Our Lady next went to visit the PNP Camp Rafael Rodriguez Region 13 nearby the city proper. Around 700 police officers joined together to give to Our Lady a most grand welcome inside their camp. Some showered her with a rain of rose petals as she passed while some serenaded her. In the afternoon, Our Lady proceeded to visit Butuan City Hall where the city mayor holds office. Here I would like to note that previously the city's mayorial office was held by a non-Catholic for six years; and so, for Our Lady to have been welcomed inside City Hall's premises after being left out for years leaves me with great awe.

Now, as all these major events, led by the team headed by Fr. Tim Pfeiffer, have been going on, Fr. Ghela and Fr. Hora also provided some

forward to offer themselves to become soldiers of Mary. And the count still continues...

In the morning of the following day, Friday, January 27, Fr. Ghela, together with Fr. Hora, visited another Barangay opposite Bancasi, Barangay Baan, where the Barangay Captain, Honorable Gemma Tabada, together with all her Kagawads, had the entire Barangay of Baan consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the afternoon, both priests proceeded to visit the next Barangay, Barangay Ampayon.

## Consecrating the City

The city's recently elected mayor, Ronnie Vicente Lagnada, emotionally received Our Lady from Fr. Timothy Pfeiffer and carried her in procession, then placed her on the altar. Mass





was celebrated afterward and, interestingly, it was the mayor himself who, on this very busy day for the government employees of city hall, called a halt to everyone's work so that they were in attendance during Mass. Following the Mass, in the presence of all his staff, Mayor Lagnada had the entire city of Butuan consecrated to the

telling their own story. But, just as Fr. Pfeiffer mentioned in one of his sermons, it should not be enough that in taking part of Mary's Mission we were able to enroll thousands of persons in the Militia Immaculata or that we were able to offer the imposition of thousands of Brown Scapulars or distribute thousands of rosaries—the real



#### Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Friday, January 27 was the third day of Our Lady's visit in Butuan. From city hall, she proceeded to the provincial capital where the Provincial Governor of Agusan del Norte holds office. As in Bancasi, Our Lady was escorted by the Philippine National Police (PNP). In the absence of the governor, his proxy, Ma'am Nemia Alegarbez, together with all the provincial capital staff, had the entire province of Agusan del Norte Consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

During Our Lady's visit here in Butuan City, almost 3,200 persons received the Brown Scapular, around 1,100 Miraculous Medals were given, and lastly, almost 2,900 persons were enrolled to the Militia Immaculata. Now, I suppose I didn't need to wonder about the kind of reception Our Lady would receive upon her visit to Butuan City. The numbers have a way of

question is how many of these individuals will actually continue and persevere in what they have received?

#### Mary's Mission Trimester Report

- KM: 920 km
- Scapulars distributed: 25,000
- Cities, Municipalities, Barangays and other institutions consecrated: 32
- M.I.s enrolled on the Mission Trail: 5,099
- M.I.s enrolled in schools: 9,190
- M.I.s enrolled in Cities or Municipalities: 571
- TOTAL M.I.s from Mary's Mission: 14,860



# Personal Reflections

on a First Trip to Fatima

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by Dr. John Rao

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It is rather ironic that after 45 years of traveling to innumerable places intimately connected to the Catholic Faith and Church History I only first paid a visit to Fatima this past June, with a group of pilgrims of Remnant Tours who had just finished the Chartres Pilgrimage. What I found there really ought not to have surprised me, but I must confess that it actually did.

There was certainly nothing surprising about the presence of the many hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops that are so often pointed to by cynics and anti-Catholics as though they were proof positive that supposedly holy sites are “all too human” in character to reflect a dignified Faith. Of course such shrines are filled with things that are “all too human.” This is because the Catholic Church, with her immense respect for the body as well as the soul, and her recognition of the need to deal with an incredible variety of men of highly different backgrounds

and education, finds a way to nurture everything that is in some way capable of aiming the heart and spirit upwards. Because she is so supernatural, nothing human is alien to her. Her democratic enemies are pompous elitists.

## Intrusions Upon the Beautiful

Alas, there was also nothing surprising about the outright ugliness of some of the modern art and architecture added to what was first built



at the Cova da Iria. These intrusions upon the beautiful are the all too predictable products of a contemporary religious sense that has lost touch with solid supernatural truth. Such a religious sense and the crippled theology seeking to express it find themselves inevitably attracted to and approving of art and architecture that is kitschy at best and tyrannically unnatural at worst. Moreover, they seem to be diabolically committed to the construction of distorted objects, and evangelical in their determination to spread the message of ugliness by placing their graceless buildings right next to undeniably tasteful ones.

No, the “surprise” for me was not the humanity or the presence of the distorted next to the ordered. Rather, it was simply the spiritual “feel” of the place; a sense of it being “different” in a quiet but unmistakable manner. This is an experience I have had in a quite joyful fashion in towns like Assisi or in the quarter around the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua. And it is one that has taken on a light, subtle, feminine, maternal air in spots like Lourdes and Ephesus—the latter town possessing a shrine associated with the Blessed Mother because of her relationship with its bishop, St. John, in whose care Christ had placed her at the end of His earthly mission. That same light air seemed to drift about everywhere that I wandered in Fatima and the little village where the seers lived as well.

But, once again, how could this possibly have been a surprise for a believing Catholic? What other place boasting of a Marian apparition was accompanied by anything as extraordinary as the Miracle of the Sun? Who could deny the confirmation the Church herself swiftly gave to this now century old event? And yet I must admit that while I never for a moment have doubted either the official or the popular believing Catholic judgment regarding Fatima, I personally felt less willingness to come here in the past than to undertake the more awkward journey to the much less important and much less recognized shrine of Mary at Ephesus. Filled with great regret for this long delayed pilgrimage, it may still be of some value to *Angelus* readers for me to revisit the reasons behind it.

## Three Obstacles to Appreciating Fatima

Three obstacles stood in the path of my fully appreciating the Fatima apparitions, the first of which was connected with a sense of childhood disappointment. Although only eight at the time, I very much remember the autumn of 1959 and Catholic expectation that the Third Secret of Fatima would be released in the coming year. The tension and outright fear that this involved was even followed and encouraged by the mainstream media. I cannot forget how the announcement that the faithful were not to hear the long awaited message left an impression of deep betrayal in my young and unformed mind. Somehow, I began to associate Fatima with disillusionment.

A second obstacle presented itself from my late teenage years onwards. It was from that moment that I began to encounter Catholics who interpreted Fatima almost totally in conjunction with political questions. Admittedly, there is no denying that the 1917 apparitions involved the clear but at that time strange warning that a seemingly collapsing Russia was somehow going to spread her errors throughout the world. This warning did not seem baffling to young children like myself in 1959, when everyone was terrified of the nuclear power of the Soviet Union. The problem that began to bother me ten years later was that many of the believers whom I encountered were using the obvious anti-communism of the Fatima message as a tool for asserting the Blessed Mother’s support for their own inaccurate and even ultimately dangerously anti Catholic visions of what was needed to be done to counter Marxism-Leninism and guide the modern world down a proper pathway.

I may be wrong in saying this, since I have not had the time to look through all my notes on the subject, but I do not remember Antonio Salazar, the long time ruler of Portugal, exploiting the Fatima visions on behalf of his own political vision, which was, however, very seriously Catholic in its inspiration. In contrast, many Catholic supporters of Americanism have not been the slightest bit squeamish in this regard, and without possessing the potential right that a Salazar might have had to associate >



himself with a substantive defense of Catholic Christendom.

This is not the time or the place to discuss in detail the manifold problems of what amounts to being our own special national heresy, the dangers of which I had just begun to appreciate in those late teenage years. It is enough to note here that Americanism, which has its roots in the Moderate Enlightenment of the Britain of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, promotes an individualist doctrine seeking to reduce the legitimate authorities of religion and government to a state of dangerous impotence. Under the definition of freedom that it favors, and the conditions that it thereby creates, society gradually falls under the control of the strongest economic, libertine, and criminal wills, all of them in one way or another anti-Christian. Worse still, supporters of Americanism speak in such a way as to make one feel as though the definitive dates for the Redemption of Mankind were not those of the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Christ but 1776 and 1787, with the publication of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. They tend to give the Founding Fathers precedence over the Church Fathers, with their Enlightenment shaped "will" exalted over the teachings of the Bible, the Papacy, and the Ecumenical Councils.

The idea that Catholic promoters of Americanism could claim that anything of this sort would be the definitive Christian answer to communism, and then associate the national heresy with the message of the Blessed Mother at Fatima seemed to be me to be an absurdity. Nevertheless, they appeared to take it for granted that this association was an obvious one. And wrong-headed as my judgment was, their confusion helped stimulate me to neglect the most important Marian apparition of our age.

A third obstacle to my appreciation of Fatima was a fear of encouraging millenarianism. Just as with anti-communism, there is no denying that the promise of a possible period of peace is an integral part of the message of Fatima, and this promise obviously did not play a role in causing my blindness. What troubled me was the way in which many Catholics with whom I spoke seemed to interpret such a period of peace

as that concept of a thousand-year enjoyment of a land of milk and honey that the Church has regularly condemned as erroneous. Even on the rational level, the idea that such a flowering of Christian civilization could unfold without the requisite hard, long work of re-evangelization of individuals and nations appeared to me to be tantamount to tempting providence. This kind of mentality has been an obstacle to building Christendom since apostolic times, leaving the labor that we know lay behind the glories of the High Middle Ages to God alone without man's collaboration. And strangely enough, the emergence of this millennial era regularly was tied together with an expectation of imminent apocalyptic disaster that I viewed to be equally paralyzing to any substantive Christian endeavors on the part of believers.

## A Revelation at Fatima

In any case, not a single one of these obstacles stood in the way of my being surprised by the obvious on my first visit to Fatima: the fact that every intervention of the supernatural in our earthly lives brings with it an awareness of the victory of Christ over wickedness and the joy that comes from the hope this engenders. Yes, the emphasis at the Cova da Ira was on the penitence that the message of Mary in 1917 demanded, as well as the evils that failure to undertake that penance make inevitable. Still, I found this message borne by the mass of pilgrims around me with expressions of Christian hope and joy on their faces and not those of political ideology or apocalyptic fear. For one brief moment I forgot the ravages wrought by conciliar reforms and felt as though we were all one Catholic family again, with one Faith, one Savior, and one mother. That those ravages have indeed taken place and that we are not so united is all too true. But Fatima gave me the joyful hope that my own acts of penitence might mitigate those sad truths and give us the period of peace that the Church so desperately needs to free herself from false ideological friends and seek the transformation of all things in Christ that alone can save the world.



The Autumn Feasts of the

# Blessed Virgin Mary

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by Fr. Christopher Danel

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The entire ecclesiastical year is adorned with the feasts of Our Lady, and the autumn season brings with it several of particular note, commemorating the Blessed Mother's Nativity, her Holy Name, her Seven Sorrows, and her stupendous victories.

## The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Liturgical scholars place the origin of the liturgical feast of Our Lady's nativity in the fifth century, and it appears to have originated in the East. While Eastern sources are rather scant, in the mid-sixth century, an elaborate hymn was composed by St. Romanos the Melodist as a paeon to the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

which survives as an eloquent tribute to the devotion.

The nucleus of the devotion was the house of Sts. Joachim and Anne, situated at the northwest corner of the temple precincts in Jerusalem. St. Joachim was a priest and had his residence nearby the place of his service. Devout faithful through the centuries have maintained the site as the house of Our Lady's nativity and have kept the devotion to this privileged site alive. The church built atop the house was in the past called St. Mary's, but at the time of the Crusades it was renamed St. Anne's, in honor of Our Lady's mother, the name it still bears today.

Archeological evidence reveals an oratory built on the site of the house in the late second century or early third century, based on the structural and stylistic components. In the fifth >

# Faith and Morals

century the Empress Eudoxia built the Basilica of St. Mary on the site. Despite devastation by the invading Persians in AD 614, a religious community continued to inhabit the shrine. At the time of Charlemagne (742-814), a commission was sent to evaluate the conditions in the Holy Land, and it found a community of five clerics and 25 religious there. By the 12th century, the community there was Benedictine and gained greater prominence with royal support and with the entrance into the community of Baudouin II's daughter Princess Yvette in AD 1104.

The Crusaders rebuilt the current church in the early Gothic style. After the Muslim occupation of the Holy Land, pilgrims still made their way with difficulty, but bravely, to the shrine to venerate the site of Our Lady's birth. From 1550 onward, the Franciscans were able to celebrate the Mass with ever greater publicity and solemnity each year on September 8. After the Crimean War, the shrine was given to the French government, who carried out an extensive restoration until 1877 and entrusted it to the missionary congregation of the White Fathers.

## The Date of the Feast

The date of Our Lady's nativity, passed on by Tradition, is the eighth of September. In Angers, France, a mystical confirmation of the date took place in the early fifth century. The bishop St. Maurille (336-426) had a particular vision on that very night. He heard the choirs of angels in heaven singing with joy at the anniversary of the Blessed Virgin's nativity, and it is related that the feast was instituted there very early as a result of St. Maurille's vision.

It is also providential that the date of the nativity occurs in September, which was in earlier centuries considered to be the beginning of the liturgical year. An example of this is found in a very ornate liturgical manuscript from Constantinople called the *Menologion* of Basil II, an eleventh-century compilation of hagiography and liturgical propers, which began its cycle with September. It is fitting that the nativity of Our Lady is placed in that month, since her nativity already signals the historical beginning of the

whole work of our redemption, accomplished by her Divine Son on the Cross, and in which she as Co-Redemptrix cooperated so fully.



## Expansion into the West

The nativity of St. John the Baptist, precursor to Our Lord Jesus Christ, was already celebrated in the West in the seventh century, when the nativity of Our Lady was then adopted. This completed the triad of Nativities celebrated in the calendar of the Roman Rite, *i.e.*, those of Our Lord, Our Lady, and St. John the Baptist. The calendars and lectionaries from the time of Charlemagne testify to the celebration of the feast, and it is found even earlier in several 7th century sources. It not only appears in the



*Missale Gothicum*, a Gallican Rite exemplar from the early seventh century, but is given a special Preface therein. It is found as well in a celebrated seventh-century calendar from Riems, and in a contemporary *Evangeliarium* from Ancona in which the following Sunday is even designated as the “First Sunday after the Nativity of St. Mary.” At Rome, the feast was very well established by the end of the seventh century.

Our Lady’s nativity was one of the three feasts given a special procession by Pope Sergius I (AD 687-701), as described in the papal chronology called the *Liber Pontificalis*, “He ordered that on the days of the Annunciation of the Lord, on the Dormition, on the Nativity of the Holy and Ever-Virgin Mary Mother of God, and on St. Simeon, which the Greeks call Hypapante, the procession shall leave from St. Adrian’s and the people shall process to St. Mary Major.” The feast was upgraded to a Holy Day of Obligation in some places, which lasted up until the time of St. Pius X.

## The 1241 Conclave

The Feast was given an octave (now long suppressed) as a result of the Conclave of 1241, which began in September of that year. The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II held the conclave hostage in a way, in that he surrounded the city of Rome, preventing certain cardinals contrary to his interests from taking part in the papal election, and causing the remaining cardinals to be long delayed in being able to go forth with the election. The cardinals made a vow that, if delivered from this oppressive siege, the new pope elected to replace the late Gregory IX would enrich Our Lady’s Nativity with an octave. The pontiff elected at the conclave was Celestine IV, but due to the poor lodging conditions of the prolonged conclave, he died only eighteen days after his election. The vow was thus fulfilled by the next pope elected, who was Innocent IV. Thus the devotion to the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary which originated at the humble house of Sts. Joachim and Anne in Jerusalem reached its apogee of festal solemnity throughout the world.

## The Feast of the Holy Rosary

The seventh of October is the Feast of the Holy Rosary, and in consequence the first Sunday of October is known as Rosary Sunday. The external solemnity of the feast belongs *ipso iure* to that Sunday each year (*Rubricae generales*, 358b) as established by Pope Gregory XIII (†1585). The origins of the October feast are well known and trace their origins to the victory of Christendom over the Turks at Lepanto on October 7, 1571, but the feast also has connections with other victories over the Islamic horde and with the feast of the Holy Name of Mary celebrated in September.

In the second half of the 15th century, confraternities of the Holy Rosary began to be established in many places. The oldest of these was founded by the illustrious Dominican Father Alain de la Roche in Douai in 1470. The saintly Pope Pius V turned to these confraternities, and to all Christendom, urging recourse to the holy rosary in order for the Turkish fleet to be defeated and Europe to be saved from Islamic invasion. The victory was a splendid one, marked in many ways by the intervention of Heaven. In gratitude for such a signal grace, St. Pius V instituted the feast as that of Our Lady of Victory (*B. V. M. de Victoria*), later to be rechristened as the Feast of the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This feast gained even greater prominence with another stupendous victory over Islam during the reign of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI. On August 5, 1716, the feast of Our Lady of the Snow (dedication of St. Mary Major in Rome), the Habsburg Prince Eugene of Savoy defeated the Ottomans at the town of Peterwardein, in present-day Serbia. Prince Eugene soon after obtained the Ottoman’s surrender at Belgrade. Pope Clement XI (†1721), seeing the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary in this victory once again, extended the Feast of the Holy Rosary to the universal Church. The present Office texts of the feast were promulgated by Pope Leo XIII in 1888.

The Magnificat antiphon for Vespers heralds Our Lady as *gloriosa Regina mundi*, the glorious Queen of the world: “O Blessed Mother and >

inviolate Virgin, glorious Queen of the world, may all who celebrate thy solemnity of the most holy rosary feel thy assistance" (*Beata Mater et intacta Virgo, gloriosa Regina mundi, sentiant omnes tuum juvamen, quicumque celebrant tuam sacratissimi Rosarii solemnitatem*). The collect of the feast has been committed to memory by young and old, as it is the prayer customarily recited at the conclusion of the recitation of the holy rosary.

## The Holy Name of Mary

Although this feast celebrated on September 12 was instituted for the Diocese of Cuenca, Spain by Pope Julius II in 1513, it also was the occasion of a signal victory over Islam in later years. As the Turks had invaded all the way up to the gates of Vienna, at the heart of Europe, the hand of Our Lady once again turned them back. On the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary in 1683, the Polish King Jan III Sobieski routed the sacrilegious invaders with a much smaller force than theirs. As a consequence, Sobieski was greatly and fittingly honored for his valor, and the recognition to the Mother's hand was prompt. Innocent XI in the same year extended the feast of the Holy Name of Mary to the universal Church, fixing it to the Sunday following the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Later on, Pope Pius XII fixed it to the date of the Battle of Vienna, September 12.

## The Feast of the Seven Sorrows

The last of the September-October feasts we consider here is that of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The provincial synod of Cologne introduced the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows there in 1423 and assigned it to the Friday of the third week after Easter, the foundations of it having been well prepared by the ascetical literature of the preceding centuries. It was later transferred to the Friday after Passion Sunday by Pope Benedict XIII in 1721, who at the same time finalized its name as that of the Seven Sorrows. The feast remains in Passion Week, but a second one, the September

feast of the *Addolorata*, was introduced by the Servites, or the Order of the Servants of Mary. They were founded in Florence in the mid-13th century by the group known as the Seven Holy Founders, a group of Florentine men led by St. Amadeus degli Amidei, who retired in prayer and solitude to a hermitage on Mount Senario; their feast is February 12.

The Servites cultivated a devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows and did much to widely extend it. They obtained a Feast of the Seven Sorrows for September, which Innocent XI (†1689) fixed to the third Sunday of September. The feast was later extended to the entire Church by Pope Pius VII in the early nineteenth century, and then in the early twentieth century, Pope St. Pius X assigned the feast permanently to September 15, the day following the great feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

## Conclusion

It could be said that all of these autumn feasts fall under the mantle of Our Lady of Victory. Her Nativity is a victory in the order of grace, a triumph over Satan who strove to keep mankind bound in the chains of sin and death. The Holy Name of Mary makes the demons tremble and wins many a victory for those who invoke her. Her Seven Sorrows are a mystical comingling in the chalice of the Passion of the Divine Messiah ("Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink?"), which is in fact His definitive and absolute victory. Her holy rosary, furthermore, is the preeminent weapon of spiritual combat, ensuring victory over all enemies spiritual and temporal. As Sister Lucia of Fatima said, "The Most Holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families...that cannot be solved by the rosary. There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the holy rosary."





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Three Articles On

# Pius XII and Fatima

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Excerpts from the *Osservatore Romano*, 1998

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The following three articles on Pope Pius XII and Fatima are reprinted from sources not overseen by the Society of Saint Pius X. However, as they are of historical interest to the faithful, they are presented here in full.

## Pius XII, Father, Teacher and Friend of Our Time

*Editor's Note:* A version of this article originally appeared in the August 1998 edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*. It is reproduced here in full. However, it should be noted that not every opinion of the author concerning the direction of the Church after the death of Pope Pius XII, nor the author's opinions on Pius XII's successors, are endorsed in full by *The Angelus*.

On May 13, 1917, while the Mother of God was appearing in Fatima, announcing to the world her message of peace and conversion and warning humanity about the terrible crises of the 20th century, in the Sistine Chapel in Rome from which he would emerge years later as the Successor of Peter, the Nuncio Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pius XII, was being consecrated Archbishop by Pope Benedict XV.

In the perspective of faith, as we know, nothing happens by chance, and some apparently chance occurrences are indicative signs of a providential course of events. Nor, we believe, was it a chance occurrence that the burial of Eugenio Pacelli >

took place on October 13, 1958—40 years ago—the anniversary of the last apparition in Fatima. A further, clear confirmation of Mary’s desire to accompany that faithful son of hers to the threshold of eternity.

Indeed, the Blessed Virgin had taken that son by the hand when he was still very young, a child predestined by God to guide the Church in the most tragic period of history, she had accompanied him step by step from the fervent Marian devotion of his infancy to his first Mass celebrated in St. Mary Major’s in the Salus Populi Romani Chapel, from his episcopal consecration on the same day that Mary appeared in Fatima, to the Throne of Peter. Preparation, in a certain sense, for the role that the future Pius XII was destined to play in the glorification of the Mother of God, especially in relation to the events of Cova da Iria.

## **A Marian Pope**

Pius XII: the pope of the Dogma of the Assumption, of the Queenship of Mary, of the Consecration of the human race and of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the pope of the Holy Year and the Marian Year; that pope who, in “the decisive hour of divine judgement of the world,” would be called to co-operate, through the Mother’s mediation, in fulfilling God’s saving plan for humanity and who, as was prophesied, would have to suffer greatly, undergoing persecution together with the Church.

It is important to stress this Marian dimension of Pius XII’s Pontificate, not only because it constitutes an aspect with a particular “force of gravity” but also because it serves to connect it, in a profound line of continuity, with the exquisitely Marian dimension of John Paul II’s *totus tuus*.

From that May 13, 1917, in which Eugenio Pacelli received episcopal consecration, to the dramatic May 13, 1981, on which the blood of the Vicar of Christ was spilled on the ground in Rome, to March 25, 1984, when John Paul II himself, in union with all the bishops of the world and with reference to Pius XII, consecrated humankind and the people of Russia anew to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, repeating the vow of trust uttered in 1982, an invisible thread, passing

through Fatima, unites the two pontificates, placing them under the maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And the sensational, regained freedom of the peoples beyond the Iron Curtain, the re-opening of the church dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption in Moscow, and that bullet, set like a precious jewel in the crown of Our Lady of Fatima—which Pope Pius XII had placed on the “miraculous statue” by his legate on May 13, 1946—are merely equally unmistakable signs of a grandiose providential project which, begun originally by Pius XII, John Paul II, “the Pope from the East,” has successfully concluded.

They are also signs which, even in the darkness of the present time—showing the close bond between the Mother of God and the Roman Pontiffs—appear as an explicit, clear prelude to the prophesied triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary that will inaugurate a new era for the Church.

Pope John Paul II himself, in his pilgrimage to Fatima, asserting that there are no mere coincidences in the plans of divine Providence and thanking Our Lady for her special protection during the attempt on his life which took place “in mysterious coincidence with the anniversary of the first apparition,” confessed that he saw in this “an appeal and a reminder of the message” from Fatima at the beginning of the century; that message which, with its maternal and at the same time strong and decisive call to conversion and repentance—the pope underlines—is “so deeply rooted in the Gospel and the whole of Tradition that the Church feels that it imposes a commitment on her” (cf. Address outside the Chapel of the Apparition, May 12, 1982; Homily at Mass in Fatima, May 13, 1982).

Mary’s presence and the Fatima event, of such great importance for the history of the Church and of all humankind, are therefore deeply engraved in the heart of Eugenio Pacelli’s pontificate, which he expressly wanted to place under Our Lady’s protection, enlightening it with special reverberations that help to express its goals better and at the same time the undercurrent that runs all the way through it.



### Cooperating with the Blessed Virgin

It can almost be said that, contemplated in the beams of light radiating from the open hands of that Lady, “brighter than the sun,” Pius XII’s entire pontificate acquires a special clarity that exalts the essential core of his mandate: to co-operate, as we have said, through the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in God’s plan for the salvation of the world at a decisive moment in human history; to be, therefore, not only the Helmsman sent to guide St. Peter’s Barque in the planetary devastation of the 20th century; but also, and at the same time, to be the defender of civilization—through the promotion of “Christian renewal”—and the artisan of a new era for the Church in the difficult post-war period of reconstruction for which he would have to prepare Christianity.

In fact, Pius XII was deeply conscious of the determinative role the Church was called to play in God’s designs, at that critical hour, in the spiritual regeneration of a world ravaged and lacerated by conflicting ideologies and which ran the risk of destroying itself. With farsighted wisdom he perceived the formidable challenges she would have to face, which were already darkening the horizon.

Here we have the basic features of his pontificate: a work directed above all to consolidating within the Mystical Body its eternal and immutable principles, that is, its spiritual defenses, at the same time increasing on the outside its dynamic ability for incarnation in the most diverse fields of society; also an attempt to unify all positive human values, harmoniously and hierarchically arranged >

Pius XII delivering the consecration prayer via radio to Fatima.



in a mighty synthesis based on the profound affirmation of God's primacy in human life; and again, the energetic mobilization of all members of the Church with a view to an in-depth evangelization and re-evangelization of the whole social structure. Many strong points organically arranged in a far-reaching plan, characterized by a singular unity.

## **A Look at Pius XII's Magisterium**

In fact, from a careful analysis of the acts and documents of Pius XII, it can be said that all the policies of his magisterium, which contributed so much to impressing a vigorous rhythm upon the Church, preparing her for the new historical mission she had been sent to carry out in the world, converged essentially towards this one goal: to re-establish the gospel spirit in a society where all values had been destroyed and to bring or lead peoples back to Christ as soon as possible, through the mediation of the Blessed Virgin, if they wanted "to avoid immensely greater and more disastrous ruin than that sown by the war." Exactly the "heart" of Fatima. That "nucleus" which John Paul II would recall years later, underlining its special relevance and urgency, to the extent of indicating it as "the way that the Church follows at the end of the present century," in which "sin has thus made itself firmly at home in the world and denial of God has become widespread," and so many "almost apocalyptic menaces...gather like a dark cloud over mankind," "more than it has ever been in any other period in the course of history" (cf. General Audience, May 19, 1982; Homily at Mass in Fatima, May 13, 1982; *Regina Caeli*, May 9, 1982).

And it is always in that beam of supernatural light that the pontificate of Pius XII not only expresses the profound purpose and prophetic inspiration that permeates it, but also very clearly reveals its distinctive character: that sovereign theological view of history and the world which, animating and guiding from within the immense volume of acts, interventions and documents of Pius XII's Magisterium, constitutes its solid, unitary outline, providing at the same time the essential key for interpreting and understanding it correctly.

Therefore, the profound motivations of his

work are clearly perceived in this transcendent vision and one can easily understand on what level he tackled the issues related to the events of the civilized world. As in the case of the consecration of the Church and of the human race in 1942 and then of the people of Russia, ten years later, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in response to what Pope John Paul II would call the Mother of God's "powerful warning against the errors that have been spread in this very century" (cf. General Audience, May 19, 1982). In 1948 Pius XII had indicated that he saw in the consecration of humankind to the Blessed Virgin Mary a sure and effective way for obtaining from God, through Mary's powerful protection, the end of the "terrible universal conflagration," for which human means have proved uncertain and insufficient (cf. *Auspicia Quaedam*, May 1, 1948; *Meminisse iuvat*, July 14, 1958).

Again, we should remember the institution of the feast of Our Lady's Queenship, which he was sure would bring great benefits for the Church and the world (cf. *Ad caeli Reginam*, October 11, 1954); or the great mobilization of public and private prayer which he called for so that, by recourse to deeper remedies than human ones, a remedy could be obtained for the enormous calamities that weighed upon so many peoples and nations (cf. *Fulgens corona*, September 8, 1953; *Ingruentiurn malorum*, September 15, 1951; *Meminisse iuvat*, July 14, 1958, etc.).

The very definition of the Dogma of the Assumption can, in this perspective express at best its truest and most profound value, proving to be not only a gesture of great honor towards Our Lady, but also an excellent means for obtaining from God, through Mary's mediation, great benefits for the whole of humanity: peace, freedom for the Church suffering violent persecution, and deliverance from the imminent danger of new conflicts. An authentic vision of faith (cf. Bull *Munificentissimus Deus*, November 1, 1950; Discourse to the Consistory, October 30, 1950; *Summi maeroris*, July 19, 1950; *Meminisse iuvat*, July 14, 1958).

## **Praise from His Successors**

Thus the image of a great architectural work emerges: a work which John XXIII defined as a



“colonnade of the solid pillars of contemporary Christian thought.” The architecture of a papacy that far from indicating the end of an age, as Fr. Raimondo Spiazzi explains, inaugurates instead a new era for the Church, laying the solid premises for the Second Vatican Council and planning the milestones for the Church’s subsequent path towards the third millennium.

Today John Paul II, who in turn has received the heritage that was yesterday in the hands of Pope Pius XII, is leading the Church along this path, written in the beam of light that started to shine just over 80 years ago from Cova da Iria and which projects its radiance into the next century, preparing her to cross the threshold of the Year 2000: that new millennium which, we hope, will finally mark the advent, foretold at Fatima, of a more complete return of the nations to Christ, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Now, 40 years after his entrance into God’s glory, let us remember Pius XII as the: “Doctor *optimus, ecclesiae sanctae lumen, divinae legis amator*,” according to the definition of Pope John XXIII. But above all, let us remember him and feel him still as the Father, Teacher and Friend of our time, close to us through the Communion of the Saints; let us remember him—as Paul VI so touchingly exhorted—“this illustrious and elect Pontiff; let the Church remember him; let the world remember him; let history remember him. He is worthy of our pious, grateful and admiring memory.”

Pius XII’s motto for his pontificate was *Opus Justitiae Pax*, meaning “Peace is the work of justice.”

Emilia Paola Pacelli

## Pius XII Saw “Miracle of the Sun”: Handwritten Note Reveals Pope’s Experience By Antonio Gaspari

*Editor’s Note:* This article originally appeared on November 4, 2008 on the website *Zenit.org*.

According to his own testimony, the pope who declared the dogma of the Assumption saw the “miracle of the sun” four times.

This information is confirmed by a handwritten, unpublished note from Pope Pius XII, which is part of the “Pius XII: The Man and the Pontificate” display. The display opened in the Vatican to the public today and will run through January 6.

A commissioner of the display and a Vatican reporter for the Italian daily *Il Giornale*, Andrea Tornielli, explained to *Zenit* that the note was found in the Pacelli family archives. It describes the “miracle of the sun,” an episode that until today had only been affirmed by the indirect testimony of Cardinal Federico Tedeschini (1873-1959), who recounted in a homily that the Holy Father had seen the miracle.

Pius XII wrote, “I have seen the ‘miracle of the sun,’ this is the pure truth.”

The miracle of the sun is most known as the episode that occurred in Fatima, Portugal, on October 13, 1917. According to the Fatima visionaries, Mary had said there would be a miracle that day so that people would come to believe. Thousands had gathered at the site of the visions, and the sun “danced,” reportedly drying instantaneously the rain-soaked land and spectators.

### Confirming the Dogma

Pius XII’s note says that he saw the miracle in the year he was to proclaim the dogma of the Assumption, 1950, while he walked in the Vatican Gardens.

He said he saw the phenomenon various times, considering it a confirmation of his plan to declare the dogma.

The papal note says that at 4 pm on October 30, 1950, during his “habitual walk in the Vatican Gardens, reading and studying,” having arrived at the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, “toward the top of the hill...I was awestruck by a phenomenon that before now I had never seen.”

“The sun, which was still quite high, looked like a pale, opaque sphere, entirely surrounded by a luminous circle,” he recounted. And one could look at the sun, “without the slightest bother. There was a very light little cloud in front of it.” >



The Holy Father's note goes on to describe "the opaque sphere" that "moved outward slightly, either spinning, or moving from left to right and vice versa. But within the sphere, you could see marked movements with total clarity and without interruption."

Pius XII said he saw the same phenomenon "October 31 and November 1, the day of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption, and then again November 8, and after that, no more."

The Pope acknowledged that on other days at about the same hour, he tried to see if the phenomenon would be repeated, "but in vain—I couldn't fix my gaze [on the sun] for even an instant; my eyes would be dazzled."

Pius XII spoke about the incident with a few cardinals and close collaborators, such that Sister Pascalina Lehnert, the nun in charge of the papal apartments, declared that "Pius XII was very convinced of the reality of the extraordinary phenomenon, which he had seen on four occasions."

## Son of Our Lady

Tornielli told ZENIT that there was always a close link between the life of Eugenio Pacelli and the mystery of the Virgin Mary.

"Since childhood," he said, "Eugenio Pacelli was devoted [to Our Lady] and was registered in the Congregation of the Assumption, which had a chapel close to the Church of Jesus. A devotion that seemed prophetic, since he would be precisely the one to declare the dogma of the Assumption in 1950."

The future pope celebrated his first Mass on April 3, 1899, at the altar of the icon of Mary "Salus Populi Romani" in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. "And then," Tornielli continued, "Eugenio Pacelli received episcopal ordination from Pope Benedict XV in the Sistine Chapel on May 13, 1917, the day of the first apparition of the Virgin of Fatima."

As pope, in 1940, he approved the Fatima apparitions, and in 1942, consecrated the entire world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

As well, Pius XII often spoke with Sister Lucia, the visionary of Fatima, and he asked her to transcribe the messages she received from the Virgin. He thus became the first pope to know the

"third secret of Fatima," which Pope John Paul II would later make public.

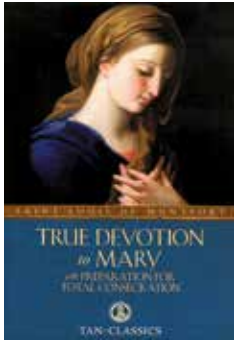
## Pius XII's Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Pope Pius XII's Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary took place on October 31, 1942 just before major turning points in World War II. Pope Pius XII performed a Marian consecration, entrusting not only the Catholic Church but the whole human race to the Virgin Mary, doing so as "Father of Christianity" as the representative of Christ, who has all power in heaven and on earth," referring to Mt. 28:18.

The consecration was made in the context of the reported messages of Our Lady of Fatima which had requested Marian consecrations, and the October 31, 1942 consecration was performed via a Portuguese radio broadcast; and then it was renewed on December 8, 1942 in Rome.

The noted Mariologist Gabriel Roschini called the 1942 consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary the greatest honour which anyone can imagine. It is the highest manifestation of the Marian cult. It opens new perspectives for salvation history. He and others see the consecration as a new "Marian way," a new definition of what human means between the collectivism and unlimited liberalism. The consecration to Mary by Pope Pius means "that an age of the Church" had begun: through Mary we understand the super-natural destiny of mankind and every human being.

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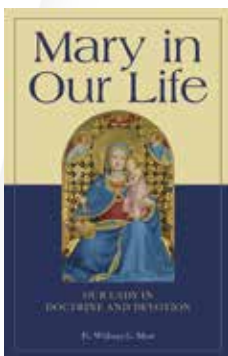
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### Fr. William G. Most

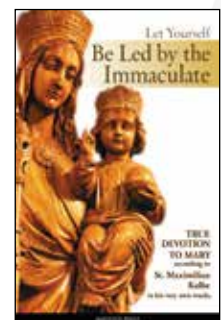
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# The Secret Of Fatima

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by Fr. Bertrand Labouche, SSPX

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*Editor's Note:* The following are excerpts from Fr. Bertrand Labouche's book *Fatima, The Message for Our Times*. The full translation, including footnotes and appendices, is available from Angelus Press.

## The Secret of Our Lady of Fatima

The Most Blessed Virgin Mary delivered messages to the shepherd children of Fatima, including three secrets that have been revealed. Have these secrets been published? Do they mean something that would interest the entire Church?

"Fatima": the name rings out like a clarion in the battle, springs forth like a living source, shines like a light in the night, a light both gentle and strong.

Never has Our Lady spoken to her children on earth with such gravity and insistence, using

unprecedented means to get them to heed her requests: the revelation of her sorrowful and immaculate heart (June 13, 1917); the promise of a miraculous aurora borealis (July 13, 1917); her request, repeated at each one of her six apparitions, for the daily recitation of the rosary; the miracle of the sun (October 13, 1917); and then an overwhelming *secret*, with three parts, communicated to the three shepherd children on July 13, 1917. Sister Lucy published the two first parts in her third *Memoir*, written on August 31, 1941. The third part, written on January 3, 1944, was officially published by the Vatican on June 26, 2000.



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## The Three Parts of the Secret

The parts are: the vision of hell, the devotion of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with the consecration of Russia to this same heart, and the martyrdom of many Catholics of all conditions, from the pope to the simple baptized faithful.

So this secret has an *individual*, a *social* and an *ecclesial* impact: the salvation of souls, the conversion of a nation for the good of other nations, and a bloody persecution of the Catholic Church.

### “You have seen Hell”

For the first time in the history of all her apparitions on earth, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary revealed hell. She did so after saying to Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta: “Sacrifice yourselves for sinners and say many times, especially when you make a sacrifice, ‘O Jesus, this is for love of Thee, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.’”

“As she said this,” tells Sister Lucia, “she opened her hands again, as she had done the last two months. The reflection of the light seemed to penetrate the earth and we saw a great sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and the souls (of the damned) 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 a huge fire, without weight or equilibrium, and amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. (It was at the sight of this spectacle that I must have let out the cry that they say they heard.) The demons could be distinguished (from the souls of the damned) by their terrifying and repulsive likeness to frightful and unknown animals, all black and transparent.

This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, who had already prepared us by

promising, in the first Apparition, to take us to heaven. Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror.

Terrified and as if to ask for help, we raised our eyes towards Our Lady, who told 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[.]’”

Some wonder that the best of mothers would show so terrifying a spectacle to children. But Our Lady’s teaching methods did not backfire. These children’s souls were not traumatized; they were filled with supernatural lucidity, with fervor in prayer, and with apostolic charity for the conversion of poor sinners. It was not so much the horror of the spectacle that overwhelmed them as the sorrow of Our Lady and the fate of the damned. A sickness that causes repulsive wounds inspires a good doctor not with insurmountable disgust but with the desire to do everything possible to heal it. These children would go on to do everything in their power, to the point of practicing heroic virtue, to save souls in danger of being lost from this frightful peril.

Listen to the moving laments of little Jacinta after the vision of hell: “Hell! Hell! How sorry I am for the souls who go to hell! Those living persons burning like wood in a fire!” And half-trembling, she would fall to her knees, join her hands, and recite the prayer Our Lady had taught them: “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.” Then she would repeat the same prayer on her knees, sobbing. And to Lucia: “You must ask Our Lady to show hell to all those people and you will see how they will convert! Why didn’t you tell Our Lady to show hell to all those people? How sorry I am for sinners! If only I could show them hell! I am going to Heaven, but I want all those people to go, too.”

Alas, not only are our times far from sharing in little Jacinta’s anguish, but hell is even “in” as they say. One might almost wonder whether Baudelaire’s comment “the devil’s greatest ruse is to make people believe that he does not exist” can still apply today. Young people, in search of strong emotions, are more and more fascinated by the devil, the admitted inspiration behind >



Pope	Year	Consecration	Russia	Solemnly	With the bishops
Pius XI	-	-	-	-	-
Pius XII	1942	Yes	World	Yes	No
Pius XII	1952	Yes	Yes	No	No
John XXIII	-	-	-	-	-
Paul VI	1964	Yes	World	Yes	No
John-Paul I	-	-	-	-	-
John-Paul II	1982	Offering	World	Yes	No
John-Paul II	1984	Yes	World	Yes	No
Benedict XVI	2010	Yes	The priests	Yes	No
Francis	2013	Yes	World	Yes	No

rock music. Satanic sects are multiplying at breakneck speed: their followers are less and less hidden, and they openly proclaim their attachment to the evil one. Worn wittingly or unwittingly, his emblems appear everywhere.

Thousands of souls will arise at the Last Judgment to say: “You knew, why did you never say anything, why did you even reassure us?” “You who knew our state, why did you not worry about our conversion?” “Why did you not at least pray and do penance for us?”

## Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

This devotion is to be fulfilled in two ways, as Our Lady herself explained on July 13, 1917: “I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays.”

### 1. *The Consecration of Russia*

It was on June 13, 1929, in Tuy, in the convent where Sister Lucia was living, that Our Lady came to ask her for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. We will let Sister Lucia describe this new and splendid vision: “I had requested and obtained permission from my superiors and my confessor to make a holy hour from 11:00 pm to midnight, from Thursday to Friday of each week. Finding myself alone one night...the only light was that of the [sanctuary] lamp. Suddenly, the whole chapel lit up with a supernatural light and on the altar appeared a cross of light which reached the ceiling. In a

clearer light, on the upper part of the cross, could be seen the face of a man with His body to the waist, on His chest a dove, equally luminous; and nailed to the cross, the body of another man. A little below the waist [of Christ on the cross], suspended in the air, could be seen a chalice and a large host, onto which some drops of blood were falling, which flowed from the face of the Crucified One and from the wound in His breast. Running down over the host, these drops fell into the chalice.

“Under the right arm of the cross was Our Lady; she appeared as Our Lady of Fatima, with Her Immaculate Heart in Her left hand, without sword or roses, but with a crown of thorns and flames.

“Under the left arm of the cross were large letters, like crystalline water which flowed over the altar, forming these words: ‘Grace and Mercy.’ I understood that the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity was shown to me, and I received lights about this mystery which I am not permitted to reveal.

Then Our Lady said to me: “The moment has come in which God asks the Holy Father to make, in union with all the bishops of the world, the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means.

“So numerous are the souls which the justice of God condemns for sins committed against Me, that I come to ask for reparation. Sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray.”

The conditions of this Consecration of Russia are clear: the pope must *solemnly* consecrate *Russia* in particular, and not the whole world in general, to the *Immaculate Heart* of Mary, in





*union, at least moral union, with all the bishops of the world.*

Alas, the request of our Lady has not yet been fulfilled, as the table shows.

## 2. *The Devotion of the First Saturdays*

Lucia arrived in Pontevedra in Spain at the end of October 1925 to prepare to enter the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Dorothy. Our Lady accomplished her promise from July 13, 1917, appearing to the postulant Sister Lucia in her cell on December 10, 1925, accompanied by the Child Jesus.

Here is the account of this vision: “The Most Holy Virgin put Her hand on my shoulder and showed me, at the same time, a heart surrounded by thorns which She held in the other hand. At that same moment, the Child said to me: ‘Have compassion on the heart of your Most Holy Mother, covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation to remove them.’

“Then the Most Holy Virgin said: ‘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 receive the sacrament of Confession, 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 my Immaculate Heart.’”

On February 15, 1926, the Child Jesus again appeared to Lucia to encourage her to spread this “First Saturday devotion.” Lucia explained to Jesus how difficult it would be for some souls to go to confession on Saturdays and asked him if the confession could be within eight days. Jesus answered:

- Yes, it can even be more than that, as long as I am received in the state of grace and with the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- My Jesus, what about those who forget to

have this intention? asked Lucia. Our Lord answered:

- They can return to confession as soon as they are able and add it at that confession.

The devotion includes *five* first Saturdays because, as Our Lord revealed to Sister Lucia on May 29, 1930, there are five kinds of offenses and blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

- blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception;
- blasphemies against her Virginity;
- blasphemies against her Divine Maternity, and at the same time refusal to recognize her as Mother of all men.
- the blasphemies of those who publicly seek to instill in the hearts of children indifference, contempt, or even hatred for this Immaculate Mother.
- the offenses of those who outrage her directly in her holy images.

Our Lord’s answer to Sister Lucia is a very sad reality: the great Marian dogmas are the object of ceaseless blasphemies; the Marian devotion by which children are so easily touched is pitilessly hidden from them or ridiculed before them; images and statues of Our Lady are the favorite targets of iconoclasts. It would be easy to give a list of facts, but that list would be far too long.

For those who only see in this only an “extra devotion” whose recompense (eternal salvation) seems far out of proportion with the practice, we quote these magnificent words from Rev. Fr. Alonso: “This great promise is simply another manifestation of the Most Blessed Trinity’s complacent love for the Virgin Mary. For those who understand this, it is easy to see how such humble practices can be associated with such marvelous promises. And they fulfill them faithfully with a simple heart full of trust in the Virgin Mary.”

## The Church Persecuted

This mysterious passage, about which so much has been written, begins with: “In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved,” >

etc. Then the Virgin of Fatima added: “Do not tell this to anyone. Yes, you may tell Francisco.”

The text of the third missing part of the secret of Fatima was written by Sister Lucia on January 3, 1944. And according to the visionary, it was not to be published until 1960. Here is the text, which was shared by the Vatican on June 26, 2000: it is a striking vision that is not accompanied by any words from Our Lady:

“J.M.J. I write in obedience to you, my God, who command me to do so through his Excellency the Bishop of Leiria and through your Most Holy Mother and mine.

“After the two parts which I have already explained, at the left of Our Lady and a little above, we saw an Angel with a flaming sword in his left hand; flashing, it gave out flames that looked as though they would set the world on fire; but they died out in contact with the splendor that Our Lady radiated towards him from her right hand: pointing to the earth with his right hand, the Angel cried out in a loud voice: *‘Penance! Penance! Penance!’* And we saw in an immense light that is God (something similar to how people appear in a mirror when they pass in front of it) a bishop dressed in white, (we had the impression that it was the Holy Father), other bishops, priests, men and women religious going up a steep mountain, at the top of which there was a big cross of rough-hewn trunks as of a cork-tree with the bark; before reaching there

the Holy Father passed through a big city half in ruins, and half trembling with halting step, afflicted with pain and sorrow, he prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on his way; having reached the top of the mountain, on his knees at the foot of the big cross he was killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him, and in the same way there died one after another the other bishops, priests, men and women religious, and various lay people of different ranks and positions. Beneath the two arms of the cross there were two angels each with a crystal aspersorium in his hand, in which they gathered up the blood of the martyrs and with it sprinkled the souls that were making their way to God.”

This vision does not fail to remind us of St. Pius X’s vision in 1909, during a General Chapter of the Franciscans: “What I saw was horrible! Will it be me? Will it be my successor? I do not know. But I do know that I saw the pope flee the Vatican stepping over the corpses of his priests! Do not tell anyone so long as I am alive!”

Several studies have sought to prove that this text was a fake. We will not go into this debate, which would take us off topic. But we can say just that since this text was published while Sister Lucia was still alive, she would certainly have protested, at least through her family members, if it had been invented!

But there is a point that seems to me to deserve our particular attention: when our





Lady showed the three shepherd children her Immaculate Heart, and then in the following month hell, she pronounced words each time that accompanied or commented upon the visions. So it is surprising that she did not offer any explanations for this vision, that was impressive to say the least, and somewhat mysterious, and with which the July 13 apparition ended.

The vision is introduced by the words “In Portugal the dogma of the faith will always be preserved, etc.” What does this “etc.” mean? If Portugal will always preserve the dogma of the faith, “we can clearly conclude,” comments Fr. Joaquim Alonso, “that in other parts of the Church this dogma is going to become obscure or even be lost.” This little phrase seems to call for more, for a development. Yes, the vision describes the death of martyrs, assassinated out of hatred for the faith, but it is not directly connected to the phrase “in Portugal the dogma of the faith will always be preserved.” In other words, just because a country is going to preserve the dogma of the faith, that does not necessarily mean that many people will die martyrs.

What is more, the words: “you may *tell* Francisco”; do they not refer to words? After all, Francisco saw the visions, but he did not hear what the Blessed Virgin said.

It would seem reasonable to believe that while the vision is authentic, the words that accompanied it were perhaps not revealed by the Vatican; which would go along with the theory of two texts by Sister Lucia, the text of the vision being only one of the two.

In any case this much is certain:

- The secret is introduced by speaking of the *Faith*.
- In our days, the disappearance of the faith is not only a generalized reality, but has given way to a growing apostasy of formerly Christian nations. “This message (of Fatima) is also addressed to societies, nations...societies threatened with apostasy,” declared John Paul II in 1982. Already in 1960, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani said: “The world risks becoming pagan, a paganism even more deplorable than the first, since it is worsened by apostasy.”
- Vatican Council II (October 11, 1962—December 8, 1965) did not contribute to

the renewal of the Faith; on the contrary: “From some fissure the smoke of Satan has entered into the temple of God: there is doubt, incertitude, problematic, disquiet, dissatisfaction,” admitted Paul VI himself.

- The Council’s adoption of ambiguous schemas on religious freedom and ecumenism considerably weakened her predication of the faith. Rev. Fr. Calmel, O.P., gave a pertinent analysis of the nature of these texts: “We have known for a long time now that these are the texts of compromise. And we know that a modernist fraction wished to impose a heretical doctrine. Although they did not succeed, they did manage to get non-formal texts adopted; these texts present a double advantage for modernists: they cannot be taxed with being actually heretical, but they can nonetheless be stretched in a sense that goes against the faith.”
  - “The *dogma* of the Faith,” Our Lady specifies. The simpler, more common expression “keep, preserve the faith” was not used. It was completed with a more difficult word: “dogma.” What could the expression “dogma of the Faith” mean, if not that the necessity of the faith is a dogmatic truth. That without the faith, no one can please God or save his soul or that of his neighbor?
  - According to the vision of the “third secret of Fatima,” many Catholics, religious, and laymen will keep the faith to the point of martyrdom.
  - Cardinal Silvio Oddi declared in the review *Trenta Giorni* (April 1981): “perhaps the secret says that in the sixties the Church would do something whose consequences would be very painful, with an enormous decrease in religious practice. And that afterwards, after great sufferings, the faith would come back.”
- Reading the secret of Our Lady of Fatima confirms the urgent need for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the salvation of souls and nations and the triumph of the Holy Roman Church! It also calls upon us urgently to do penance. And lastly, it encourages us to say, even to the death if need be: *Bonum certamen certavi, fidem servavi*, “I have fought the good fight, I have kept the Faith!”



The Basilica of the Rosary consists of a tall centralized bell-tower and nave, approximately 213 feet in height, and decorated by a crown of bronze of 15,000 pounds. Its architect was the Dutchman Gerardus Samuel van Krieken, who was born in Rotterdam and educated in Geneva. He came to Portugal in 1889 to teach at the Industrial Technical Schools. Although he was the originator of the basilica's design and followed its original construction, he never saw its consecration, owing to his death.





# The Prayer of Children

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by a Benedictine Monk

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“My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love  
You! I ask pardon of you for those who do not  
believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love  
You!”

-The prayer of the angel of Fatima

St. Benedict, in chapter 19 of his Rule, teaches his sons to pray the divine office. He tells us that “...we ought to behave ourselves in the presence of God and His angels, and so sing the psalms that mind and voice may be in harmony.” This is very similar to the instructions given to the children of Fatima. It is in the presence of an angel that they were taught to pray: “Do not be afraid! I am the angel of peace! Pray with me!” Excessive fear of events and anxiety of mind are two major obstacles to any prayer life. The angel taught the children not to be afraid of the

supernatural world, to desire the peace of good angels and to pray with them. Our own guardian angel could have used the exact same words to invite us to pray.

The past no longer exists and the future does not yet exist; we have no reason to be afraid of the non-existent. Worries and anxiety make us focus our thoughts and efforts on our perception of sometimes-imaginary problems. This lack of peace can only reduce our confidence in God, silence our conversation with Him and even disturb our judgment concerning the ordinary events of daily life. If we refuse to be afraid of the past and future ghosts of our imagination, if we willfully choose “thoughts of peace and not of affliction” and we join our voices with those of our guardian angels, we will quickly learn to pray.



## The Ordering of the Petitions

There is a logical ordering of the petitions: “My God...” The great spiritual masters, (starting with Our Lord praying the Our Father), ask us to place ourselves in the presence of God in order to begin prayer. We have the privilege of being able to speak to God when we so desire. We must remember that we are speaking to a Being that exists and is present, not to an imaginary someone who is absent, but with the Trinity dwelling within us. We often treat God as if He were not present and incapable of responding. This is not prayer, but rather a type of sentimental self-seeking or the conversation with a wall.

“I believe...” faith is the most urgent of all the virtues that unite us to God; without it there can be no spiritual life. The atheistic propaganda of our times strives to destroy the very idea of anything spiritual in our society. In 1917, the world was trying to eliminate God from the thoughts and desires of man. Happiness could only be found in materialism and to obtain it, man was asked to believe in the pleasure, wealth and power that the world offers. Faith in God was replaced by faith in technology; belief in the existence of the human soul was replaced by the pleasures of the flesh. History has shown the resulting catastrophe of this destruction of faith in today’s society.

“I adore...” The first consequence of our faith is to make an act of adoration. We submit our soul to the majesty of God, recognizing the beauty of His divinity and offering Him our humble praise. Today’s materialism empties man of his very soul, turning him away from God towards creatures that pass away. Man prefers to adore himself placing his personal good over all else. He attributes to his own excellence his capacity for high-tech activity, living in the virtual reality of a type of video game. He becomes the creator of his own “world” on the screen of a computer and seeks to adore his accomplishments. Man has learned to move and communicate with great speed, but without a final goal he has nowhere to go and nothing to say. In reality he is fleeing from God and himself...even if very quickly.

“I hope...” Hope is the virtue of desiring a

future good that we can obtain. It is the art of waiting for the promises of God to come true. It is a type of consoling presence of God in the midst of terrible trials that gives us great energy to overcome all difficulties. In a world that has excluded God and refuses to adore Him, there is no hope, but only despair. A society without



faith has nothing to hope for and is doomed to self-destruction.

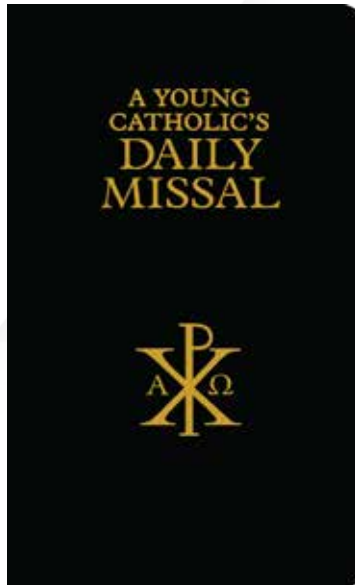
“...and I love You!” The love of God is the most noble activity that man can achieve in this world. Man’s greatest happiness is to love and be loved by God and, according to God’s law, to love and be loved by our neighbor. This exchange of love is the image of charity found in the Most Holy Trinity. A disordered love of self destroys this image of God in our souls, excluding the love of God and neighbor. Hatred is the logical consequence, which degenerates into bickering and war. Cruelty and injustice are the companions of hatred. Aborting the unborn and murdering the elderly can only lawfully exist in a society without God. In today’s world, charity has been replaced by the “survival of the fittest.”

The angel taught the children of Fatima to pray for themselves and for their neighbor in the midst of a modern world that rejected God. We have much to learn from this simple prayer and the children that prayed it. “In the presence of God and His angels...” they spent their lives in sacrifice adoring God with great simplicity and confidence putting into practice the prayer learned from the angel.

“Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”


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# A Young Catholic's Daily Missal



The Young Catholic's Daily Missal is designed to open up the spiritual treasures of the Mass for young Catholics from the time of their First Communion up through their preteen years. This missal conforms to the rubrics and norms of the 1962 Missale Romanum and includes the full Ordinary of the Mass in Latin and English; the Masses for Sundays and Holydays in English with paraphrases of the Propers. For all the other days of the year there are explanations, printed in smaller type, of the Introit, Epistle and Gospel. These, along with the Communion of Saints, make this missal ideal for daily use. Finally, this missal contains morning and evening prayers; instructions on the meaning of the Mass; and an array of traditional devotions. Illustrated throughout.

42 ORDINARY OF THE MASS




**THE PRIEST KISSES THE ALTAR**

**M**y God, the Priest walks up the steps to the altar, and kisses it with respect. I cannot do that, but yet I should like to assist him. So while he prays aloud and in Latin, I will say the very same thing to myself in English. My God, Thou hast pardoned the Priest his sins, pardon me mine, because I am sorry that I ever did them. I know that I do not deserve Thy pardon, for I always begin again to offend Thee. Do not think of me, but of the Saints whose relics are inside the altar, and of all the Saints in glory. For their sakes pardon me all my sins.

43

INTROIT



**INTROIT**

*Read this Introit, if you have not one marked in your little missal. It belongs to the feast of the Sacred Heart.*

**T**he divine Heart of Jesus loves us; He has delivered us from the sin that kills the souls, and He gives us His graces. You must not think any more of yourself; think of Him Who is about to come as a victim on the altar.

If you wish God to be very much pleased with you, promise Him that you will do everything as well as you can; so that when He comes you may be able to say to Him: My God, I intend to work for Thee, in order to please Thee. Whatever I do will be done for Thee, My Jesus. I give Thee this day.

280 PROPER OF THE SEASON

must love your enemies and pray for those who do you harm. Only then will you be the children of God; for you will do as God does. You know that God does good even to his enemies. God makes His sun rise upon the good and the evil; He gives His rain upon the just and the unjust.

**SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY**

INTROIT: God has heard Me and has had pity on Me, says Jesus, upon the cross. With Jesus let us say: I thank Thee, O God, because Thou hast delivered me from my enemies.

COLLECT: O God, hear our prayer, and help us to keep all the days of Lent well, by making many sacrifices, to care our soul made sick by sin.

EPISTLE: If we are good to your enemies, if you are charitable, says Jesus, God will reward you. He brought Jesus back to life after He was dead, and placed Him in heaven; He will give life to your soul, and give you heaven, if you do all you should to honor God, especially on Thursdays.

*Text of Ash Wednesday, p. 277.*


GOSPEL: It was dark at night; the Apostles were in a boat upon the lake, and had great difficulty in walking upon the water, where it was hoarse darkness. He stepped into the boat and the wind dropped. When they came ashore, people brought the sick to Him and He healed them. Always have confidence in Jesus, and He will always help you.

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

In the city of Rome the Mass is said today in the church of Saint Peter's Letters. The patron of this church are Jesus the Saviour and Saint John the Baptist, Jesus, who was baptized by Saint John upon the

281

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**



**ARCHIBANCA SANCTISSI SALVA TORIS**

through baptism. And Lent is to prepare those who are not yet Christians for the sacrament of baptism after the fast is blessed on Holy Saturday, and also Christians for their confessions, through which Jesus saves souls that have fallen into great sins after their baptism.

INTROIT: With Jesus in the desert we pray to God, for He has promised to help us if we say our prayers well.

PRAYERS: O God, every year we begin the holy season of Lent on this day as the Church wishes us to do. Grant that we may be really good, and make our little sacrifices generously.

EPISTLE: Saint Paul repeats what the prophet Isaiah said: Now is the right time to do penance; do not let the chance slip away. Now is the right time to correct our

282

**VARIOUS DEVOTIONS**

**DEVOTIONS TO OUR LORD**

**Litany of the Holy Name**

**LORD**, have mercy on us.  
**Christ**, have mercy on us.  
**Lord**, have mercy on us.  
**Jesus**, hear us.  
**Jesus**, graciously hear us.  
**God the Father of heaven**, have mercy on us!  
**God**, the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
**God**, the Holy Ghost,  
**Holy Trinity**, one God,  
**Jesus**, Son of the living God,

**LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME**

Jesus, splendor of the Father, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, brightness of eternal light,  
Jesus, King of glory,  
Jesus, sun of justice,  
Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary,  
Jesus, most lovable,  
Jesus, most admirable,  
Jesus, mighty God,  
Jesus, Father of the world to come,  
Jesus, Angel of great counsel,  
Jesus, most powerful,  
Jesus, most patient,  
Jesus, most obedient,  
Jesus, meek and humble of heart,  
Jesus, lover of charity,  
Jesus, lover of us,  
Jesus, God of peace,  
Jesus, author of life,  
Jesus, example of virtues,  
Jesus, zealous lover of souls,  
Jesus, our God,  
Jesus, our refuge,  
Jesus, Father of the poor,  
Jesus, our refuge,  
Jesus, treasure of the faithful,  
Jesus, Good Shepherd,  
Jesus, true light,  
Jesus, eternal wisdom,  
Jesus, infinite goodness,  
Jesus, our way and our life,



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# Centenary Pilgrimage to Fatima

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by a Pilgrim Priest

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They came from all parts of Europe, from Asia and Oceania, from the United States and Mexico and elsewhere, carrying their national flags and rosary beads, to honor the Blessed Mother of God. On August 19 and 20, Their Excellencies Bernard Fellay, Bernard Tissier de Mallerais, and Alfonso de Galarreta, clergy and seminarians of the Society of Saint Pius X and nearly 10,000 traditional Catholic faithful came to celebrate the greatest of the Marian apparitions. They came to pray, to sacrifice, and to give honor and glory to God at the place that Our Lady sanctified, 100 years ago, when she appeared to three shepherd children, leaving a message of timeless import, punctuated by perhaps the greatest miracle since the parting of the Red Sea: Fatima.

## The Land of Holy Mary

For the Catholic pilgrim, there is something distinctive and appealing about this nation, traditionally known as “the Land of Holy Mary.” It was in the sixth century that the then Roman province known as Lusitania was first evangelized. Then, after succumbing to Moorish invasions in 711, liberation would come three centuries later, with the notable help of French crusaders. It was Alfonso Henriques, son of Henry, Count of Portugal, who consolidated the independence of Portugal with his victory over the Moors in 1139. Summarily acclaimed king by his troops on the battlefield, Henriques requested and received the protection of Pope Innocent II and placed the kingdom under the protection of Mary. He likewise ordered an annual tribute to St. Bernard’s monks and gave the Order >

certain extensive lands near Fatima. While he was planning the conquest of Santarem, King Henriques vowed that, if he were given victory over the Moors, he would erect a monastery dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Thus was built the magnificent Cistercian monastery of Santa Maria de Alcobaca.

Even today, despite the Masonic persecutions of the last century and socialist government of the present, although Church and state are, regrettably, separated, it is a fact that “to be Portuguese is to be Catholic”—some 97 percent of the population considers itself Roman Catholic (the highest percentage in Western Europe). Our tour guide informed us, for instance, that the day we arrived (the Feast of the Assumption) was a national feast day. One must believe that there is a reason that Our Lady has protected this land, that she appeared here, and that she introduced the Third Secret by declaring, “In Portugal the dogma of the faith will be preserved . . .”

## The Town of Fatima Today

The town of Fatima today bears no resemblance to the hamlet of the early 20th century. In place of the groves of olive trees and holm oaks is a modern town of shops and hotels, surrounding a sanctuary dominated by two large churches—at the far end the beautiful Basilica of Our Lady at the Rosary (in which lie the tombs of the seers), and at the near end, the massive but otherwise forgettable Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity. The two are separated by an expansive esplanade on which a rosary procession is made nightly and in which is found the small Chapel of the Apparitions. The holm oak atop of which Our Lady appeared is long gone, but her statue now marks the precise spot of the apparitions. These changes aside, it is yet possible for today’s pilgrim, eyes closed, to instead visualize standing in that vast, muddy field, along with 70,000 men, women, and children, watching the sun dance in the sky, confirming the most important message since the Gospel.

Pilgrims wishing to exercise a bit less imagination and capture a flavor of life as lived by the dos Santos and Marto families a century ago







need not be disappointed either. Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta were born and lived in the nearby village of Aljustrel, walking distance (for a pilgrim, anyway) from the Fatima sanctuary. There one finds the houses of the children still preserved, as has been some of the quaintness of the village (despite being burdened by souvenir shops). The surrounding countryside, laden with olive groves, seems much unchanged from a century ago. Other special highlights of Aljustrel and its environs include the two sites of the apparition of the Angel of Peace (1916) at the Loca do Cabeço (where the angel taught the children prayers and gave them Holy Communion) and the Poço do Arneiro, near the back of Lucia's family home, where the angel gave the children a message that we may all take to heart: "Offer all that you do, to the Most High, as prayers and sacrifices." Finally, Aljustrel provides a notable living connection to the Fatima story: the niece of Lucia dos Santos is there, day by day, sitting in a small, unadorned room, wearing black and fingering her rosary, greeting lines of pilgrims.

The date selected for the opening of this pilgrimage corresponded to the centenary of the fourth appearance of Our Lady to Lucia dos Santos

and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. It will be remembered that the August apparition was the only one not occurring on the 13th of the month; the children had been kidnapped that day by the Masonic Administrator of Vila Nova de Ourem, who threatened death by burning oil if they did not reveal Our Lady's secret. Of course, none of them did. Neither were heaven's designs thwarted—Our Lady instead appeared to the children on the 19th, in Valinhos. Her message to the children then remains as relevant to us today: "Pray! Pray much and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls are going to hell because they have nobody who prays and makes sacrifices for them."

## A Pilgrimage for Our Lady

The faithful attending the pilgrimage this year had much matter for sacrifice, having had already come from long distances, now arriving at the Mass location, an expansive field with a paucity of trees for shade, and most standing for some 2 ½ hours. Even so, one could look about and see nothing but joyful countenances, quiet children >



## Spirituality

with their families, scores of priests hearing confessions, and an abundance of religious, including Dominican, SSPX, Franciscan, and Benedictine.

On that first day Solemn Mass was celebrated by Fr. Franz Schmidberger, Rector of the SSPX's seminary in Zaitzkofen. During his sermon (delivered in at least four languages), Father Rector reminded the pilgrims of the relevance of the message of Our Lady of Fatima, inviting them to offer up their sufferings so that the Church might overcome her present crisis and for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Immediately following Holy Mass, the clergy led a nearly two mile procession to Valinhos, where a statue of Our Lady stands at the apparition site. The faithful, segmented by language groups but united in faith and fervor, chanted or recited the rosary along the way sang Marian hymns as they made their way through the country roads, fields, and woods en route. Once gathered at the apparition site, beneath the olive trees, kneeling on the stone pavement and in the surrounding groves, the gathered multitude prayed the holy rosary in the universal language of the Church. After dinner,

many spent part of the night in front of the Blessed Sacrament, exposed for adoration and reparation.

The next morning, Sunday, under a bright sun, the pontifical Mass was celebrated by Bishop Bernard Fellay, Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X. He was assisted by Frs. Niklaus Pfluger and Alain-Marc Nély. Fr. Yves le Roux, rector of the SSPX seminary in the United States served as the Assistant Priest.

In his sermon, His Excellency first recalled the vision of hell that the three shepherd children of Fatima contemplated with horror; he explained that this fear is salutary. To the contrary, those who seek today to anesthetize consciences by offering them a broad path are truly assassins of souls.

Then Bishop Fellay emphasized that the message of Fatima is a message of hope: those who practice the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary will be saved. This divine promise of salvation offers us an easy means: all we have to do is take it seriously. We must make reparation for the offenses against the Most Blessed Mother of God. Like little Francisco, we must seek to console the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary. We







should accept all trials generously, offer them up, and sacrifice ourselves by faithfully accomplishing our duty of state, seeing souls through the eyes of Our Blessed Lord as He gazed at them from His Cross, and the eyes of Our Lady, standing at the foot of the same cross, “stabat Mater.”

In conclusion, the Superior General forcefully repeated that the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is willed by God for the world today. Not a superficial or mechanical devotion, either, but a profound one: her heart must be our intimate refuge. The prelate also announced that he would renew the consecration of Russia right after the Mass, just as Archbishop Lefebvre did here in Fatima thirty years ago. (It is understood, of course, that it is up to the Holy Father and all the bishops of the world in union with him to make this consecration authoritatively so as to satisfy the demand of the Blessed Virgin. The Society’s act of consecration is a way of expressing its desire to answer Heaven’s request, while fully aware of its limits, with the lively hope that the Vicar of Christ will one day consecrate the country himself.)

Later in the afternoon, our group and others walked the Stations of the Cross from Fatima to

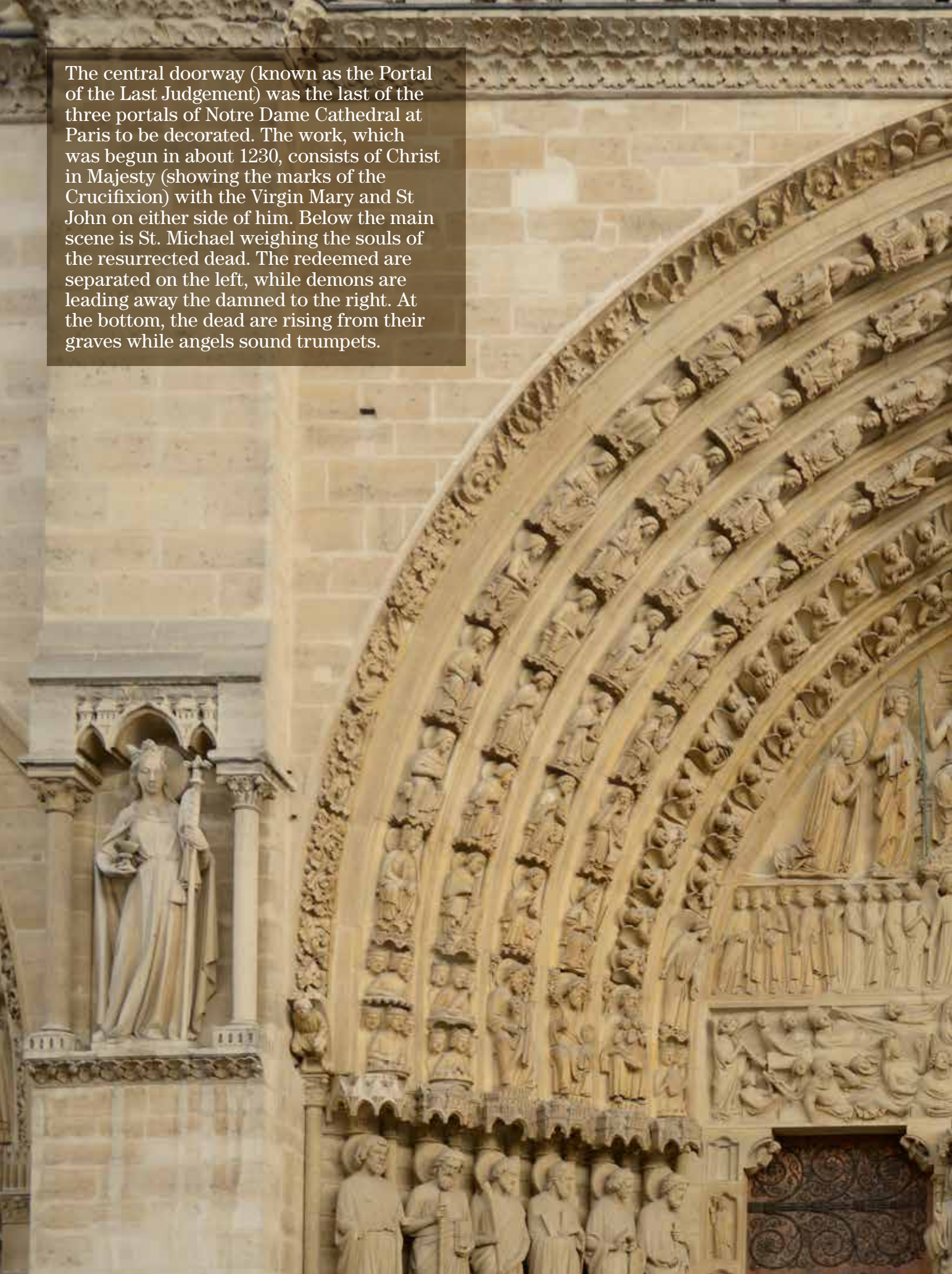
Valinhos, in temperatures exceeding 100 F. There, at 3 pm, thousands of traditional pilgrims, sons and daughters of Our Lady, gathered one last time for the final recitation of the rosary, this time with substantial meditations being offered by two Society priest between decades.

The final rosary having been said, the pilgrims dispersed from Valinhos into the town of Aljustrel. On the way to our bus I walked next to a young boy whose parents and sister were members of our tour group. I asked him what he found most meaningful about the pilgrimage. He mentioned the Church of the Holy Miracle that we had seen in Santarem, the actual Body and Blood of Our Lord having been preserved above the sacristy after the Eucharistic miracle 792 years ago. He mentioned as well having walked the penitential path down the esplanade of the Fatima sanctuary on his knees, as Lucia de Jesus had done, a century ago, in thanksgiving for her mother’s cure. And, finally, this young lad, about the age of St. Francisco Marto, said to me, “I want to be a saint”—the message of Fatima taking root in a new generation, no doubt bringing consolation to Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart.

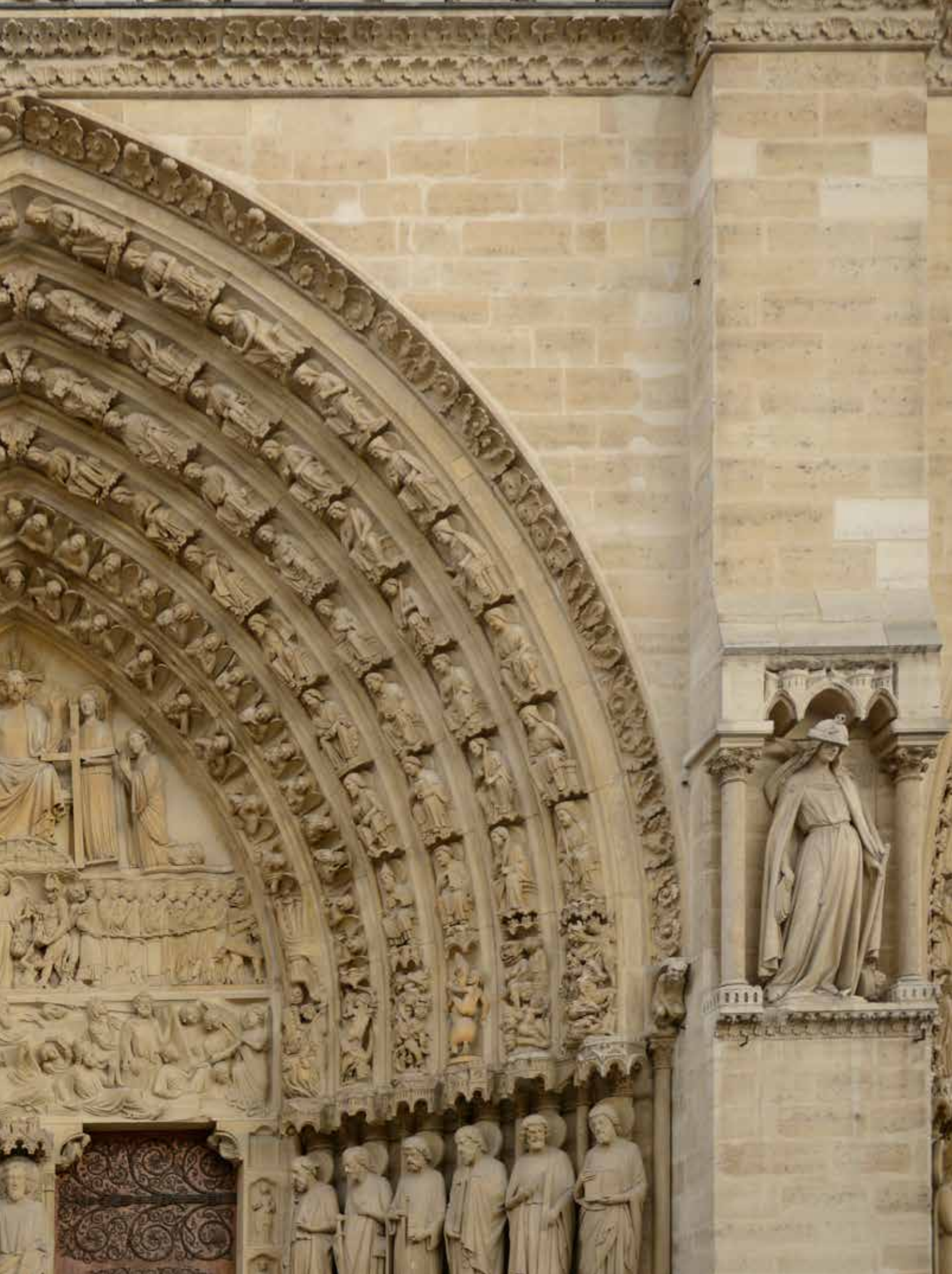




The central doorway (known as the Portal of the Last Judgement) was the last of the three portals of Notre Dame Cathedral at Paris to be decorated. The work, which was begun in about 1230, consists of Christ in Majesty (showing the marks of the Crucifixion) with the Virgin Mary and St John on either side of him. Below the main scene is St. Michael weighing the souls of the resurrected dead. The redeemed are separated on the left, while demons are leading away the damned to the right. At the bottom, the dead are rising from their graves while angels sound trumpets.









# Notre Dame Cathedral

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by Dr. Marie-France Hilgar

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Tourists who visit only one church in Paris will undoubtedly find their way to the finest jewel of Gothic art: the Cathedral of Notre Dame. However, even if they take a guided tour, they may miss many valuable details and historical significance regarding this magnificent structure. So, in the spirit of providing some elements of sightseeing combined with those of formal architectural study, the following summary is offered:

## The History of the Site

For 2.000 years, the prayers of worshipers have been offered on this particular spot: first, at a Gallo Roman temple, then at a Christian Basilica which St. Stephen built around the 5th or 6th centuries, situated where the nave is now. In

the 7th century, a Romanesque church of Notre Dame stood to the east of the present building and preceded the present sanctuary. With time, St. Stephen fell into ruins, and the remaining Notre Dame became greatly diminished in size. Bishop Maurice de Sully, supervisor of the diocese in 1159, undertook a building project to provide the capital city with a worthy cathedral. Construction began in 1163, in the reign of Louis the VII. To the resources of the church, which included royal gifts, were added the toils and skills of the common people: masons, carpenters, iron workers, sculptors, and glass workers.

All worked with religious fervor and ardor under the architects. By 1345, the building was complete, the original plan not having been modified in any way. The building is 33 meters high under the vault, 43 meters high under the



roof, the side aisles are 10 meters high, the towers are 69 meters. If you want to go to the top, be prepared for the 380 steps. The total length of the building is 128 meters. The wooden framework is made from over 1300 oak trees. The fact that we talk of the “forest” of Notre Dame is justified, since it comprises some 21 hectares of forest.

## An Important Historical Setting

Long before it was completed, Notre Dame became the setting for many major religious and political occasions. St. Louis placed the Crown of Thorns in the cathedral in 1239 until the Sainte-Chapelle was ready to receive it. Ceremonies, distributions of grace, state funerals, the *Te Deum*, and innumerable processions have followed down the centuries. The young Henry VI of England was crowned there in 1430. Mary Stuart was crowned there on becoming Queen of France by her marriage to Francis II, and Margaret de Valois stood alone in the chancel while her Huguenot suiter, Henri de Navarre, waited at the door as their marriage ceremony was performed in 1572. Henry converted to Catholicism later, having discovered that Paris was well worth a Mass.

The Revolution created enormous damage. Statues and steeples were broken, the treasure pillaged, reliquaries and bells, all but the largest one, were melted down. Notre Dame was dedicated to the cult of Reason, and then to the Supreme Being. The church was used to store forage and food until 1802. In 1804 Napoleon was crowned there by Pope Pius VII.

Gradually the building began to fall into disrepair, but the Romantic sense of fashion and Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* caused the July monarchy to order the restoration of the cathedral. A team of men worked for 23 years on the statuary and glass, removing additions, repairing the roof, erecting the spire, the sacristy, *etc.* The first thing general de Gaulle did when Paris was liberated in August 1944 was to sing the *Te Deum* there. His Requiem Mass was celebrated there in 1970.

## An Impressive Design

The façade's design overall is majestic and perfectly balanced. There are three portals: the one in the center is dedicated to the Last Judgment, the one on the right to St. Anne, and the one on the left to Mary. They are beautiful examples of the classical phase of the Gothic sculpture of around 1220. The figures on the jambs and on four of the buttresses, as well as the figures rising on the lowest row of the central portal, date from 19th century restorations. Many of the small reliefs on the socle are



representations of great vitality. In front of the large rose window and between two angels stands the Madonna, the Patroness of the Church. She is the new Eve, who has made reparation for the sin of the old Eve. In front of the window Adam and Eve stand on each side of the Madonna. The central portal is taller and wider than the others: the one on the left is surmounted by a gable. It was a medieval practice to avoid monotony by a lack of symmetry.

The 28 statues are those of the kings of Judah and Israel. In 1793 it was believed that they were the kings of France and thus they were shattered. They were restored in the 19th century. The design of the great rose window nearly 30 feet across is so perfect that it has never shifted in 700 years. It forms a halo to the group before it of the Virgin and Child supported by two angels. >

# Christian Culture

The gallery is a superb line of ornately carved arches linking the towers. The twin towers, majestic, graceful, and 226 feet in height, are pierced by slender lancets more than 50 feet in height. The north tower upper chapel contains original portal statues and paintings. Steps lead to the south tower platform from which the visitor gets a splendid view of the spire

and, above, the weighing of souls. The portal of St. Anne shows the cathedral's oldest statues, carved around 1170, some 60 years before the portal was erected. At the apex are a Virgin and Child with Louis VII kneeling. The 12th century central lintel shows the life of the Virgin and lower, that of St. Anne and St. Joachim. The exquisitely decorated transept facades were



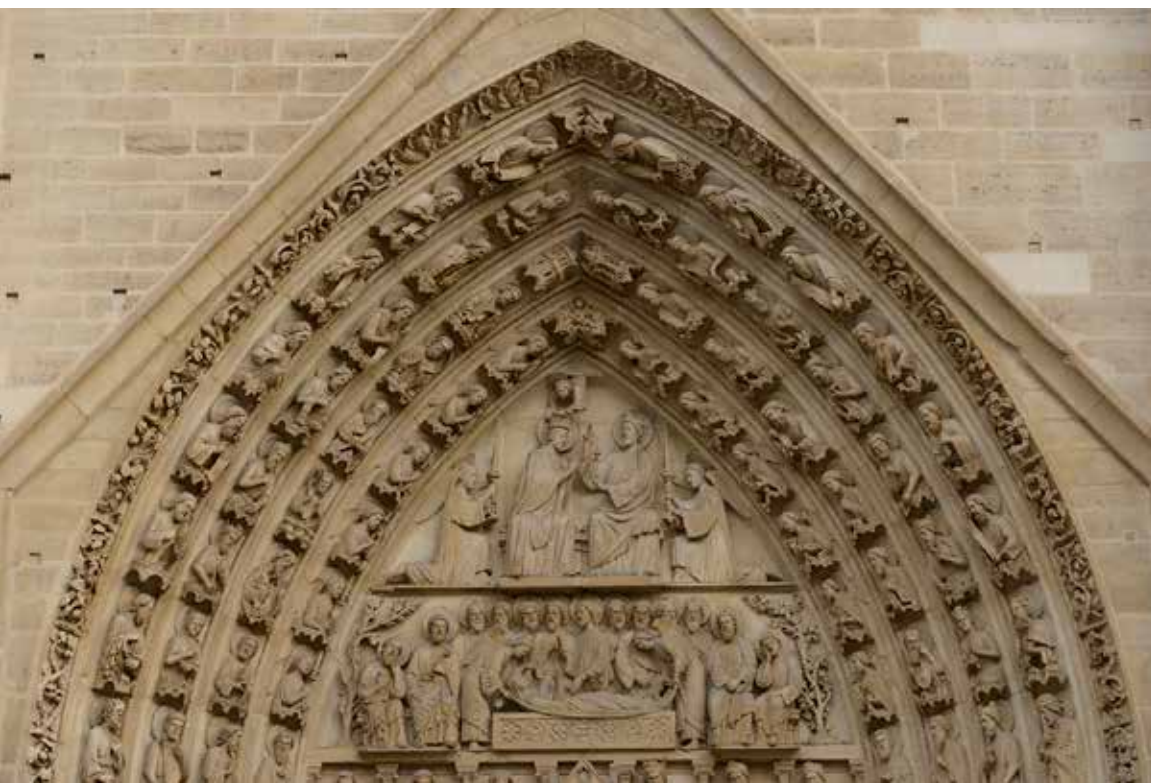
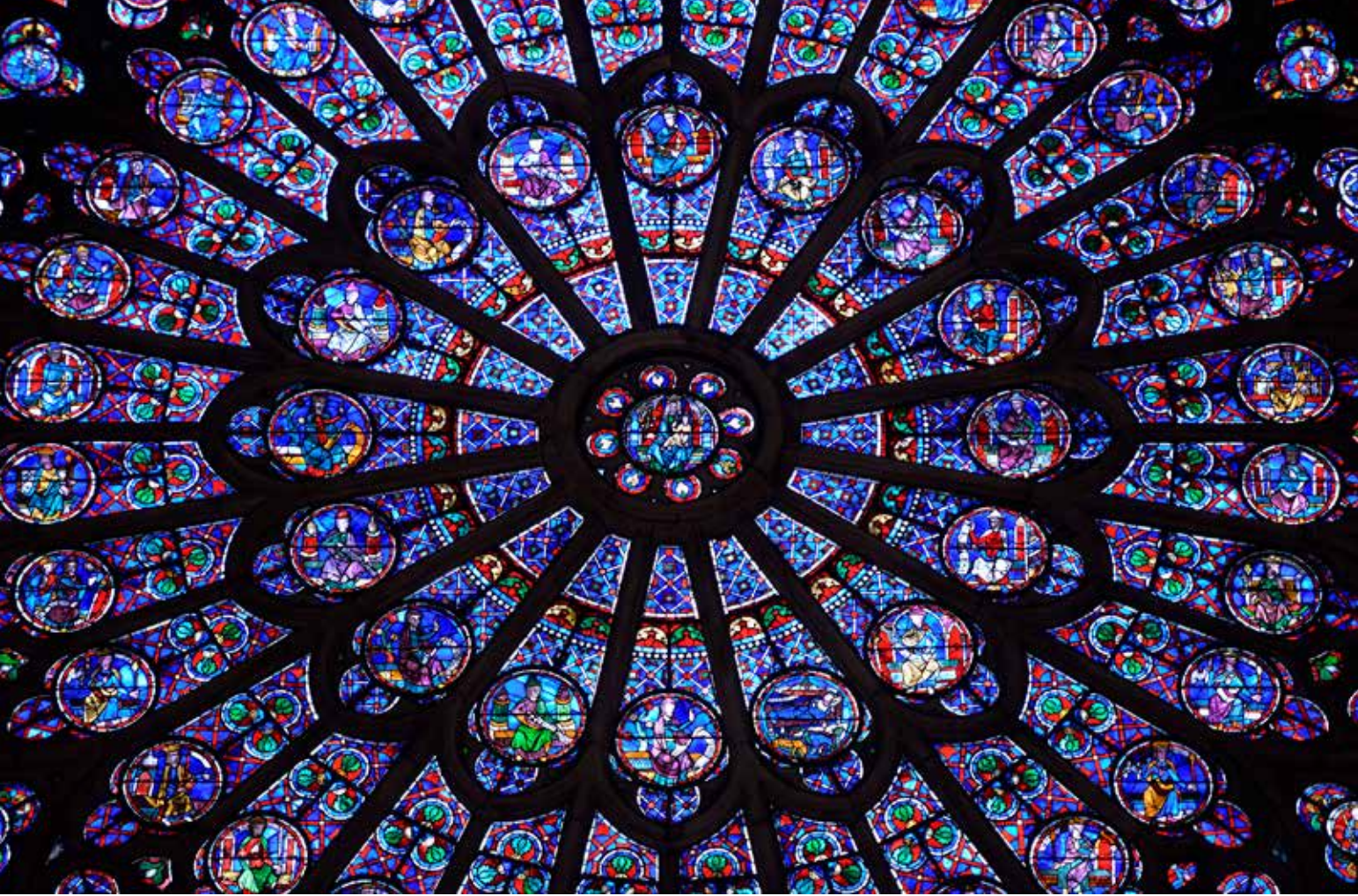
and flying buttress, and of the city of Paris in general. Statues, once multi-colored against a gilt background, stand in the portals, and used to afford a Bible in stone for those who did not know how to read. Today, without color, they remain worthy of examination. The dignity and harmony of Notre-Dame are apparent not only in the west façade. One must wander around the church and view it from different angles. The south side is at its best when seen across the river as it rises over the green-covered wall of the Seine embankment: the choir looks more beautiful when viewed from the Ile Saint-Louis.

The central west-facing portal, that of the Virgin, served as a model to the sculptors of the Middle-Ages. It shows, below, the Ark of the Covenant, prophets and kings; above, the Dormition in the presence of Christ, and at the apex, the coronation of the Virgin. The portal of the Last Judgement illustrates the Resurrection

created in the middle of the 13th century.

The appearance of those transept facades is quite different from that of the west façade, completed only a few decades earlier. For example, the transept wall is treated as a surface, not a three-dimensional unit. The emphasis is on the wall not as a supporting member, but as a transparent screen, with the gigantic rose window (43 feet in diameter) seeming to melt into the light-filled gallery beneath, creating the impression of one single window, 49 feet high. All of the wedge-shaped areas around the rose window and in the gable are filled with tracery. The rose itself, more delicately constructed than that of the west façade, is formed of small intricate arches interlaced within larger ones. The sculpture is less monumental than that of the west façade, but delightful in its narrative quality. The south door is dedicated to St. Stephen. His life is represented in the tympanum. The north >







portal is dedicated to Our Lady. She stands against a pillar, a magnificent figure dating from the second half of the 13th century. Only the lowest zone of the tympanum is devoted to scenes from the life of the Virgin, from the birth of Christ to the flight into Egypt.

## Further Details on the Interior

A congregation of 7,000 can be accommodated in the dimly illuminated interior, which possesses a commanding air of gravity. The plan is that of all large Gothic cathedrals. In the 13th century upper windows and galleries were enlarged and lowered to increase the light reaching the chapels. Flying buttresses were then added to support the roofing. Part of the 12th century architecture can still be seen at the transept crossing, in the small rose and tall windows. The pillars supporting the towers measure 16 feet across.

Notre Dame is surrounded by chapels. They were built between the buttresses. The transepts are a brilliant evidence of the rapid advances made in architecture in the Gothic period. The north rose, which has remained practically intact since the 13th century, shows Old Testament figures around the Virgin. At the entrance of the choir is the beautiful 14th century Virgin and Child, Our Lady of Paris. Inside the choir stand statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. Around the chancel are remarkable bas-reliefs of the life of Christ and His apparitions. Going up the three steps to the right of the podium, one enters the choir. Seen from the bottom right-handed side, nine carved panels show the occasions when the risen Christ appeared: to Mary Magdalen, to the women at the tomb, to Peter and John, to the disciples of Emmaus, in the upper room, to Thomas, by the sea of Galilee, in Galilee, on Ascension Day.

Entering the choir from the south, there are 46 stalls, and above them carved wooden panels which mostly represent the life of the Virgin Mary: Mary at the foot of the cross, Mary receiving the body of her crucified Son, Mary among the disciples on the day of Pentecost, Mary's Assumption. By walking across the

choir, the other set of panels can be seen. From east to west, they are: the visit the Magi, the Nativity, Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth, the announcement to Mary that she would be the mother of the Savior. At the end of the choir is the magnificent high altar, surmounted by the Pieta. On the left and on the right are Louis XIII and Louis XIV paying homage to Mary. Six bronze angels which stand around the marble group hold an object used during the Passion of Our Lord. Passing through the choir gate to the north side, there is the next section of the carved screen, whose figures represent the Visitation, the Nativity of Jesus, the adoration of the Magi, the slaughter of the Holy Innocents, the flight to Egypt, the Presentation at the Temple, Jesus among the teachers, the baptism of Jesus, the wedding at Cana, the entry into Jerusalem, the last supper, Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Returning to the transept, the south rose window can be seen and admired again.

## Some Unfortunate Happenings

An unfortunate addition had been made to the choir between 1979 and 1989. It was made to protrude into the nave. There is no communion rail. Eight steps lead to an "altar," made of bronze, no less, the top part being covered by a white cloth. The picture shows a full church, the "service" ready to start, a priest standing in front of the totally bare "altar": no crucifix, missal, candles.

Like all cathedrals in France, Notre Dame has been owned by the State since 1905 and the Parisian clergy are only the administrators. The State controls the visits to the towers and directs the conservation of the building as one of the Historical Monuments. The clergy, as well as providing Catholic services, must also light, heat, clean, and maintain the public parts of the monument.

Notre-Dame de Paris, emblem of the glory of God, is also a symbol of medieval faith.





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# School Days

For Educators All on the Same Page

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by SSPX Sisters

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It doesn't take much time at all for puppies and kittens to become independent, but little men are born so helpless and they need their parents' care for many long years. In entrusting a father and mother with the care of bringing a new human being into the world, God also gives them the responsibility of raising the child, educating him, and leading him to the autonomy of adulthood.

Children are born to natural life through the intermediary of their parents, but they are also born to the supernatural life of grace through the baptism conferred by the Church. The Church, too, has a duty to watch over the education of her children in order to make of them worthy sons and daughters of God.

Concretely, the early education of a baby is mostly in his mother's hands. It is on his mother's knees that little Peter learns to stammer out his

first words, to look at his first picture book, to put his little paws together for his first prayer. How precious this early maternal education is, and how much better it is for children to receive it from their own mother, and not from a nanny, a daycare or a nursery! "Every child learns to look at the world through his mother's eyes."

But little Peter will grow, and the time will come when he will need to learn to read and write and count, to learn his catechism and so many other things, too. Not all mothers are capable of turning into school teachers and then math professors, not to mention the fact that they also have the little brothers and sisters to take care of. When it comes down to it, the family, where the child receives his early education, is not able to accomplish the entire task of education all alone; it needs outside help. But >



this help is more than just help; it receives an authority delegated by the parents and by the Church, who remain the child's first educators.

## Harmony in the Choice of a School

Consequently, the parents must choose this help well, so that it will be a continuation of the education they give at home, and not counteract or destroy it. Such great care goes into the education of a king's son; what must not be the care put into the education of a son of God! Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre used strong words back in 1979, when he said, "If the schools corrupt your children, what are you going to

do? Deliver them to the corrupters? To those who teach these abominable sexual practices in the schools? In reality that is what they are teaching to the children: they corrupt them from their tenderest youth. Are you to put up with that? It is inconceivable!" And what Archbishop Lefebvre said of the schools is also true of all the other places where children receive an education outside of the family: summer camps, sports clubs, music schools. There are so many unfortunate surprises, alas, and it is a lucky thing when they are not discovered too late, when the child has already dabbled in drugs, when habits of idleness and vulgarity have already been formed, when his imagination has already been soiled, or worse yet!

But let us suppose that little Peter is enrolled



in a truly Catholic school that will provide him with the religious and non-religious education he needs, in keeping with his parents' religious convictions. This a good, an excellent start, but it is not everything. The parents still need to collaborate harmoniously with the different authorities, the teachers and priests, for the greater good of their child.

## Harmony Among Educators

First of all, the parents mustn't hesitate to meet with the teacher or priest and provide all the information that could be useful for the good of their child. For example, "Ever since his little brother was born, Marcus has been acting like a baby to get attention; he needs a lot of affection." "Anne has some serious health trouble and awful eczema that sometimes makes her grouchy." "My wife is very tired with the new baby coming, and she can't keep up with Joseph's homework; it is a difficult time for the children."

If the grades are dropping, instead of waiting for them to turn into a complete catastrophe, collaboration between the parents and the teachers can make it easier to find the reasons and the remedies (growth spurt? poor hearing? a lack of organization for the homework? too many extra-curricular activities? need to re-motivate the child with a severe scolding or the promise of a reward, or with supernatural incentives? etc.)

The one thing that must be avoided at all costs is one authority criticizing the other in front of the children. A professor who criticizes the parents in front of their children is odious; besides, he undermines his own authority, since it is delegated by the parents. Likewise, the parents must never judge the teachers in front of the children. "My poor little dear, this assignment is way too difficult for your age, and the topic is poorly written and completely uninteresting; this is how I would have done it ...": and you have succeeded in encouraging little Peter not to put any effort into it, since the assignment is uninteresting and too difficult; in encouraging him not to respect his teacher, who is no good, and to judge and criticize authority. Sometimes, when giving an assignment, a teacher can use

methods that are not necessarily the parents' methods; he takes the entire class into account, and what they have or have not seen together in class, and the parents are not always aware of all these factors. When in doubt, there is nothing to stop the parents from going to speak with him, and asking him to explain his educational goals, but above all, little Peter must not be present at this meeting! Perhaps one of his assignments really and objectively is unsuitable: everyone can make mistakes, even a teacher. Most likely, he will realize the problem on his own when he sees that the pupils' answers are not at all what he expected...

## Harmony between the Faith and Life

It is not just because of the lessons they learn, but more for the educational aspect of school life that it is so important for the family and the school to have the same standards. If at school he behaves one way but at home it is the diametrical opposite, it is a perfect training in duplicity for little Peter: there are some things you should do, but they are just a façade for in public when you are seen. "At school, we receive the sacraments; at home, Dad and Mom never do, so it must not be all that important. I'll do it now to make Father happy, and to look good, but when I'm older, I'll be free!"

But if what their father and mother say is repeated by the teachers and priests and vice versa, the children will be educated in a coherent and truthful, solid and safe atmosphere. They will have everything they need to develop a solid personality built on firm convictions: they will be our future leaders and tomorrow's saints...

# O&A

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by Fr. Juan-Carlos Iscara, SSPX

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## What is scrupulosity? Does it have a cure?

“Scruple,” as defined by the Catholic Encyclopedia, is an *unfounded apprehension and consequently unwarranted fear that something is a sin which, as a matter of fact, is not*. St. Alphonsus Liguori, who suffered from it, describes it as a condition in which one, influenced by trifling reasons and without any solid foundation, is often afraid that there is sin where there really is not.

The scrupulous is tormented in every action, even the most harmless, with the thought that he may be committing a sin. He then does his best to recover divine grace, achieves momentary peace, but unrest comes again upon him, suggesting that his decision was wrong. He ponders over the circumstances of an act which have simply no relation to its morality. Never at peace, he compulsively reexamines and reevaluates every aspect of the matter upon which his scruples center—and even each one of his past confessions. In his calmer moments, he knows



that all these fears are groundless, yet he falls back into this sad state. Although his anxiety is unfounded, his suffering is very real.

This habitual state of unreasonable doubt filled with anxiety—scrupulosity—must not be confused with what moralists call a “delicate conscience.” The delicate conscience loves God ardently and, in order to please Him, wants to avoid the least fault or imperfection; it has a horror of sin, and knowing its own weakness, has a rational but quiet fear of displeasing God. At the same time, it knows how to distinguish between moral and venial sin, between imperfections and temptations, and submits willingly to the judgment of the spiritual director. The scrupulous conscience, on the other hand, is led on by a certain self-centeredness which causes an inordinate eagerness for absolute certainty of one’s state of grace; it has unfounded, vain fears of sinning in every circumstance.

Scruples may have their origin in the natural temperament of a person or in his physical state at the moment, rendering the person nervous, dejected and easily frightened, or clouding his judgment, and thus strengthening the confusion and fears that may arise when one has doubts of conscience. God may permit scruples, in view of a greater spiritual good; but He cannot be supposed to wish this state to persist if it leads to despair, neglect of prayer, or worldly concerns. Satan, man’s enemy, is frequently the cause of scruples that lead to disquiet, despair and moral disorder.

The scrupulous’ fears usually arise regarding past confessions, or the possibility of having consented to sinful thoughts in the past, or the threats that he sees lurking even in the most harmless action of ordinary life.

Spiritual authors and moralists have offered a variety of remedies which should be effective. Unfortunately, the difficulty lies in getting the scrupulous to avail himself of those remedies, particularly of the fundamental one: obedience—full and absolute obedience to an enlightened spiritual director. But by sad experience, confessors know that often under an appearance of docility, they will find obstinate resistance to their advice: doubts, suspicion, and even open hostility.

Nonetheless, these remedies exist and should be applied as soon as there is the slightest indication of the advent of scruples.

First of all, the penitent must be convinced that he is really scrupulous and that his judgment on those particular matters is not reliable. Therefore, he must follow the direction of one good confessor—not many!—in all humility and obedience. He must be convinced that even if the confessor were to be wrong in his judgment, God will not hold the penitent responsible. He should be humble, resigned to God’s will, making frequent acts of confidence and love.

His examinations of conscience must be brief; he should never seek peace of mind by giving way and acting as his scruples dictate. The hope of finding peace in that way is bound ultimately to prove illusory, and the scrupulous condition would only be aggravated by yielding to it and so lead to greater anxiety in the future. He should act as he sees other people act, without constantly prying into his own motives.

He must disregard all doubts, being convinced that he cannot commit a sin, either mortal or venial, unless he is absolutely certain that the action is forbidden under pain of sin and fully aware of this fact—without paying any attention to probabilities. He must act without question upon the confessor’s judgment that a doubtful sin was not certain sin, and that he need not confess doubts but only certainties. If disturbed about the possibility of having consented to evil thoughts, he must assume that there was no consent; if troubled about his past confessions, he must assume that they were good.

As scruples produce a mental obsession, a disease of the will, recent moralists point out that, in certain cases, they could be a manifestation of an obsessive-compulsive disorder, a mental illness that will require clinical assistance, as it exceeds the competence of the confessor or spiritual director, who will nonetheless continue offering the proper spiritual support.





## Is it morally permissible to try to avoid physical pain, or should we always be willing to endure it in a spirit of sacrifice?

Life and health are gifts from God, which we have the duty to preserve, which implies the consequent duty to avoid and to fight what detracts from them: illness, pain, suffering.

Nonetheless, life and health are temporal, limited goods. They are relative, to be affirmed and preserved as gifts from God, yet not in themselves and absolutely, but in the manner in which, and for the end for which, He has given them. Spiritual goods are higher in the scale of values. Therefore, we may accept the evil of physical suffering for a greater, spiritual good.

The Catholic faith looks upon suffering in two different ways: (1) As an evil, the result of sin; forerunner of death by the judgment of God and as man's merited punishment because of his sin. But the command of God (that man must will to live and not die; to be healthy and not sick) is not withdrawn, not revoked, not even for sinful man forfeited to the judgment of God. (2) As an occasion for spiritual growth, if the proper dispositions are present. It is an evil out of which God can bring good.

These two notions are not contradictory, but complementary. We should care for those who suffer, but we should not imagine that suffering can be eliminated from human life or that it can have no point or purpose in our lives. Nor should we suppose that suffering must be eliminated by any means available to us, for a good end does not justify any and all means. Seeking medical help does not necessarily demonstrate lack of trust or faith on our part. Rather, it indicates that we trust God to care for us through the means He provides us—through doctors, medical treatment, medicines. But we cannot expect more from medicine than it can offer. The healing of an illness may increase our sense of invulnerability, an exhilaration that may lead us away from God—a physical healing disastrous for our spiritual health. On the other hand, the inability to heal our illness may be for us an occasion of drawing closer to God, by accepting suffering and

dependence, in conformity with the example of Our Lord, in submission to the will of the Father.

In principle, it is permissible to avoid physical pain. Far too often, physical pain becomes the occasion of other sins: impatience, anger, lack of charity regarding those who surround us, rebellion against God's will, despair, etc. But it may be reasonably accepted because of motives of abnegation and internal purification, to tend to a greater perfection, in imitation of Christ and His saints. But no decisions on this regard should be taken without having sought beforehand the advice of a prudent priest.

Nonetheless, the Church has always been wary of the motives of those too eager to suffer. In the early centuries, the Church refused to consider as martyrs those who rushed to offer themselves to the persecutors to be put to death, because of their presumption that God would give them the graces needed to endure what a man cannot normally endure by his own natural forces. She judged that such people were, in fact, trying to oblige God to comply with their own will to suffer, rather than submitting themselves to the dictates of His will.

In the end, it is a question of a prudential judgment, of balancing the duty to preserve life and health by undergoing medical treatments, taking medications, etc., with a counsel of perfection by enduring physical pain and suffering with patience and confidence, as coming from the hand of God. If pain and disability persist in spite of our efforts to regain health, then it becomes perfectly clear that God's will is that we have to continue suffering. In these circumstances, acceptance of pain and disability is perfect submission to God's will, a more perfect conformity to the example of Our Lord.

Q&A



## What is a “living will”? Should we have one?

In recent decades, side by side with the advances in medical technology and treatment options, there has also developed the question on the morality of using or withholding the use of such advances—in particular, a reflection on the moral possibility of refusing extraordinary means to preserve one’s life and health, and, conversely, a concern about assuring the continuance of the available ordinary means to the same end. As a result of the concern for the proper stewardship of the gifts received from God—life and health—many Catholics in recent years have been led to consider the possibility of availing themselves of the so-called “advance directives” for health care.

The “advance directives” are documents stating our personal health-care choices. The most common types are: (1) a “living will,” directing the physician to withhold or withdraw certain life-sustaining procedures if we are in a terminal condition and unable to decide for ourselves; (2) a “durable power of attorney for health care,” which is a document by which we appoint a particular person to make health care decisions on our behalf if we are unable to make them ourselves; and (3) a “do-not-resuscitate directive” forbidding cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other life-sustaining procedures.

In deciding whether to use one of these documents, we should not forget that they originated in various organizations that were in favor of euthanasia. Their original intent was to favor the termination of life. They were—and, in fact, they still are—slanted towards the termination rather than the preservation of life. Their promoters usually tied them to the notion of “quality of life,” leading to the refusal of medical interventions if a certain level of activity and self-sufficiency could not be preserved. Crafted by non-Catholics, such documents were an assertion of independence, a final act of autonomy: to die in accord with one’s own wishes, refusing to acknowledge that *whether we live or die, we belong to God*, thus denying the supreme dominion of God over life and death. They were also seen as promoting

“death with dignity,” which usually meant the avoidance of pain and of the spectacle of death for relatives and friends, thus in practice denying the redeeming value of pain, the possibility of atonement for past sins, and depriving others of a salutary reminder so that, subject to a common fate, we may begin our preparation to come, one day, face to face with God.

This should make a Catholic think twice before rushing to make a “living will,” which is the most usual kind of directive. Moreover, we must keep in mind that the existence of an “advance directive” does not by itself solve the problems that may arise regarding medical treatment. Legally speaking, medical providers cannot act against a patient’s clear directives or against the patient’s authorized proxy, but concrete factors complicate the situation... For instance, the health provider may not know about existence of an “advance directive” and therefore not follow it. Also, very often people do not express their wishes very clearly or precisely—general language like refusing “heroic measures” does not give much guidance to the doctor; therefore, problems of interpretation arise. But a more careful wording means going down to the description of concrete treatments, which cannot be foreseen before the actual illness or accident.

Thus, on the purely practical level, it would be safer not to use any kind of “advance directives.” If, however, one were to insist on having some kind of legal protection against what one perceives as the excesses or shortcomings of the “medical machinery,” the “durable power of attorney” would be the safest choice—without forgetting that, in any case, it is not strictly necessary, as health care decisions can be made on our behalf even without any such document by our relatives in consultation with the physician, and always requiring the moral guidance of a Catholic priest.

But we must also look above the purely practical and natural level. On the spiritual level, it would be far more perfect not to try to second-guess the designs of divine Providence and to reach the end of our lives in total submission to God’s will—whatever that will may be.

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## Cardinal Joachim Meisner, Rest in Peace

The Archdiocese of Cologne, Germany has announced the death of His Eminence, Joachim Cardinal Meisner which occurred on July 5, 2017. According to the announcement, the former Archbishop of Cologne died peacefully in his sleep while on his summer vacation. Born in Breslau on Christmas Day in 1933, he endured the Second World War and the forced relocation of his family to communist-ruled East Germany and entered the seminary in 1951 and ordained to the priesthood in 1962.

In 1980 Meisner was named as Bishop of Berlin by Pope John Paul II and created a Cardinal in 1983. In 1989 was transferred to the Archiepiscopal See of Cologne which is considered the most important Archdiocese in Germany. During his time as Archbishop, Cardinal Meisner was known to be continually trying to hold back the ever more progressive element in the German hierarchy.

Most recently, His Eminence was one of the four Cardinals who sent Pope Francis the *dubia* concerning the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* and the Church's teaching on



marriage. There can be little doubt that the German bishops did not look kindly upon this action, since they have been the most vocal in their support for *Amoris Laetitia* and other innovations put forward by Pope Francis.

Although Cardinal Meisner was certainly no traditionalist and clearly adhered to the teachings of Vatican II, he did show his willingness to defend the Church's perennial teaching on the Sacrament of Matrimony. May he rest in peace.

## Two French Bishops Respond to Cardinal Mueller's Letter

The bishops of two dioceses in France have extended ordinary delegation to the priests of the Society of St. Pius X to witness the marriages of the faithful who attend SSPX chapels. This delegation follows upon the letter of Cardinal Mueller to the world's bishops asking their cooperation in removing any doubt as to the validity of SSPX marriages by either assigning a diocesan priest to witness the vows or by giving delegation directly to the priests of the SSPX to witness marriages of the faithful within their dioceses.

Bishop Alain Planet of the Diocese of Carcassonne and Bishop Dominique Rey of the Diocese of Fréjus-Toulon have chosen to implement Cardinal Mueller's request (actually the request of Pope Francis) by giving delegation directly to the priests of the SSPX. This solution is

the definitely more preferable one since it allows the couple being married to have their vows witnessed by the priest they are familiar with and who, in most cases, prepared them for the Sacrament of Matrimony. Bishop Rey, in particular, has been a supporter of the Traditional Mass in his diocese. The decisions by these two bishops to grant ordinary delegation for marriages helps to dispel the idea in the minds of many Catholics that the priests and faithful of the Society are somehow not Catholic or are outside the Church.

At the time of this writing there is still no word on how the bishops of the United States will cooperate with this request from Rome. One would hope and pray that their response will be as pastorally sensitive as that of Bishops Planet and Rey.

### The Slaughter of Christians in the Middle East Continues

On Palm Sunday, at least 44 Coptic Christians were killed and more than 100 injured as a suicide bomber detonated an explosion during the Sacred Liturgy inside a church in the town of Tanta, Egypt. Another suicide bomber attempted to gain access to a Coptic church in Alexandria but was prevented from entering the church by Egyptian police. When he could not gain entrance, he detonated the explosive device by in the street and killed 11 people waiting to enter the church. ISIS claimed responsibility for both attacks and promised to continue their war on “worshippers of the cross.” Despite these continual attacks, many in the Church, including Pope Francis, continue to portray Islam as a religion of peace and that these attacks are the result of extremists who misinterpret the Koran and teaching of Mohammed.

In an effort to emphasize that both Christianity and Islam, in his mind, speak

of peace, Pope Francis traveled to Egypt in April and once again spoke the same message which has been continually belied by Muslims throughout the world as they continue to exile and kill Christians. In addition to proclaiming this demonstrably false idea, Pope Francis also insists on the notion that Catholics and Muslims worship the same God (another false teaching found in the documents of Vatican II). The official logo of the pope’s trip to Egypt puts this thinking into pictorial form, by placing the Cross within the crescent moon of Islam.

When faced with this syncretism, we must vociferously refute the idea that the same God is being worshipped by Catholics and the followers of Mohammed, since Muslims reject our Lord’s divinity. Our Lord Himself told us that “he who rejects Me, rejects Him who sent me” and that whoever “denies Me before men I will deny before My heavenly Father.”

### Five New Cardinals

In a consistory held on June 28, 2017, Pope Francis named five new members of the College of Cardinals. The new Cardinals are Archbishop Omella of Barcelona, Spain; Bishop Arborelius of Stockholm, Sweden; Archbishop Zerbo, of Bamako, Mali; Apostolic Vicar Bp. Ling, of Pakse, Laos; and the Auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, El Salvador, Bishop Rosa Chavez. The raising of Bishop Rosa Chavez to the College is extraordinarily surprising because he is an auxiliary bishop and the current Archbishop of San Salvador is not a cardinal.

The choice of Bishop Anders Arborelius of Stockholm is also interesting given the small number of Catholics in his country (the vast majority of inhabitants of Sweden are Lutheran, if anything). It was speculated that his choice was somehow connected to the upcoming “celebration” of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant revolt in October. In any case, when asked about the possibility of intercommunion between Catholics and Lutherans (something which Pope Francis

seems to be pushing for), Bishop Arborelius clearly stated that this would not be possible because the Lutherans do not share the same faith in the Eucharist as Catholics. He did, however, emphasize the need for continued “dialogue” with the Lutherans which seems to echo a major theme in Pope Francis’s allocutions. Bishop Arborelius is a convert from Lutheranism and is a member of the Discalced Carmelite order.

As with the previous Consistories, Pope Francis’s choices exemplify his desire to have the College of Cardinals represent those on the “peripheries” of the Church. Although one could argue that he wants to include bishops from the four corners of the world, it would also seem that he wants to bring into the College of Cardinals men whose thinking (like Pope Francis’s own) is on the peripheries of Catholicism. Chicago is clearly not on the peripheries geographically, yet its Archbishop (Cardinal Cupich) was named and he is clearly of the same mind as the Pope.





## The Celebration of Fatima Centenary Begins

As is well known, this past May 13 saw the beginning of the centenary of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima. Although there will certainly be many events and stories about Our Lady's apparition as the centenary continues, there have already been two notable events.

The first is the canonization by Pope Francis of Francisco and Jacinta Marto on May 13 during his pilgrimage to Fatima to mark the opening of the centenary. The two youngest of the three seers were told by Our Lady that they would soon be with her in heaven, and both died within a few years of the final apparition on October 13. It

liturgical Calendar. Surprisingly, although the Church gave official approval to the apparition of Our Lady at Fatima, no feast day was ever placed on the calendar. It was not until after his assassination attempt in 1981, that Pope John Paul II decreed that May 13 be established as the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima and placed on the General Calendar of the Church. One of the items put forward by Pope Benedict XVI after the publication of *Summorum Pontificum* (the decree allowing any priest of the Roman Rite to offer the Traditional Mass without asking for special permission) was the possibility of adding



should be recalled that both of these little ones promised Our Lady that they would willingly suffer for the salvation of souls, many times taking upon themselves voluntary acts of sacrifice and penance. Additionally, both suffered physically as they approached their deaths and offered this final sacrifice to almighty God for the salvation of souls.

The second event was the publication of a decree from the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* (the Commission in Rome dealing with all matters pertaining to the Traditional Mass and religious communities) effectively establishing the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima in the traditional

more recently established feasts to the traditional calendar. The adding of the feast in honor of Our Lady of Fatima is the first addition to be made. Thankfully, instead of creating new prayers for the Mass of the feast (which would have inevitably been the prayers from the *Novus Ordo* Mass for the feast), the decree stipulated that the Mass of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (from August 22) be offered in commemoration of Our Lady of Fatima. By this decree, the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission clearly emphasizes the promise of Our Lady that "in the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph."

### Pope Benedict XVI Reflects on the Sacred Liturgy in Our Day

The theological writings of Pope Benedict XVI are being published in Russian for the first time in a joint effort by the Vatican and the Russian Patriarchate. This latest ecumenical abuse should come as no surprise, given the innumerable “joint efforts” the Church has endured since the time of Vatican II. What makes this newsworthy for this column is the short preface Pope Benedict XVI wrote for the text in 2015. In it, he states what traditional Catholics have been saying since the advent of the *Novus Ordo Missae* in 1969—that in the Sacred Liturgy the primacy of God has been replaced with the primacy of man. Pope Benedict wrote:



*In the conscience of the men of today, the things of God, and with this the liturgy, do not appear urgent in fact. There is urgency for every possible thing. The things of God do not ever seem urgent... If God is no longer important, the criteria to establish what is important are changed. Man, by setting God aside, submits his own self to constraints that render him a slave to material forces...*

*In the years that followed Vatican II, I became once again aware of the priority of God and of the divine liturgy. The misunderstanding of the liturgical reform that has spread widely in the Catholic Church led to putting ever more in first*

*place the aspect of instruction and that of one's own activity and creativity. The action of men led almost to the forgetting of the presence of God. In such a situation, it becomes ever clearer that the existence of the Church lives through the just celebration of the liturgy, and that the Church is in danger when the primacy of God does not appear anymore in the liturgy, and therefore in life. The deepest cause of the crisis that has subverted the Church is located in the effacing of the priority of God in the liturgy.*

One can hardly deny the veracity of the Pope's statements, and the conservative *Novus Ordo* Catholic blogosphere reacted with delight. Their reaction did seem to overlook two relevant points which lay within the text. The first is the insistence that it was a “misunderstanding of the liturgical reform” which came from Vatican II that has led to this situation. Even a cursory reading of the Vatican II document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* clearly shows that there was no misunderstanding—the man-centered, didactic nature of the *Novus Ordo* Mass can be seen clearly in this document, albeit in its embryonic form. What was promulgated as the *Novus Ordo Missae* in 1969 is the child of the decree on the liturgy; even the “author” of both is the same: Annibal Bugnini. It is becoming extraordinarily tedious to constantly be told that the Vatican II isn't the problem, just the “misunderstanding” of it.

The second point that is overlooked is that, although being pope for some eight years, Benedict did precious little to attempt to restore almighty God to the center of the Liturgy with the exception of a few “nods” to tradition in the papal Masses he celebrated. If he genuinely saw the problem clearly, which he claims he did, then we must conclude that he chose to allow the “misunderstandings” to continue in an effort to assure that the blame would not be placed where it actually belongs in order to preserve Vatican II in which he played a major role.

The entire text of the Pope Benedict's Preface can be found here: [rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2017/04/exclusive-text-by-benedict-xvi-crisis.html#more](http://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2017/04/exclusive-text-by-benedict-xvi-crisis.html#more)



## Cardinal Mueller Out as CDF Prefect

The Vatican Bulletin of July 1, 2017 announced that Pope Francis has not renewed the “mandate” of Cardinal Mueller as Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). Cardinal Prefects are appointed by the pope for a term of five years and normally this mandate is renewed unless the Cardinal in question has reached the retirement age of 75. (Cardinal Mueller is just 69 years of age.) The announcement came after months of speculation that there was a growing rift between Pope Francis and the former Prefect, most notably regarding the interpretation of *Amoris Laetitia*, about which Cardinal Mueller stated that any ambiguous passages must be interpreted in light of the Church’s Tradition.

Interestingly, although Mueller voiced his reservations regarding certain passages of *Amoris Laetitia*, he was also on record as criticizing his fellow Cardinals who presented Pope Francis with the *dubia* for taking that action! It is so very symptomatic of the confusion reigning in the Church when seeming contradictions are put forward as totally compatible with each other.

Following the announcement of Cardinal

Mueller’s non-renewal as Prefect, many in the more conservative Catholic media began to wring their hands at losing a “conservative” head of the CDF. Not surprisingly, many of those expressing these sentiments were the same ones who were decrying Mueller’s appointment as Prefect of the CDF by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. Only five years ago it was being said that Mueller wasn’t orthodox enough to be the Church’s doctrinal watchdog since he believed in Liberation Theology and had written some rather questionable items regarding the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady. This is the situation in Pope Francis’s Rome: even those of dubious orthodoxy are seen as “conservative” when compared to the Pope and many others in the Roman Curia.

In the same announcement it was stated that Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, S.J., the secretary of the CDF is the Pope’s choice to become Prefect. Although said to be “conservative” it has also been noted that being a Jesuit means he will be obedient to the wishes of the Holy Father when it comes to the many innovations being put forward. Only time will tell if this is the case.

## Consecrations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

It has been announced that Archbishop Cordeleone will consecrate the Archdiocese of San Francisco to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on October 7, 2017, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. He has also requested that the faithful of the Archdiocese prepare spiritually for the consecration. In his announcement of the consecration, the Archbishop stated that he is doing so in response to the large number of requests he has received from the faithful that he consecrate the Archdiocese to the Immaculate Heart.

In addition to the Archdiocese of San Francisco, it has also been announced that all the dioceses of the Netherlands were consecrated to the Immaculate Heart on May 13, 2017. This news is somewhat more surprising given the current



state of affairs of the Church in Holland. Long having been seen as *avant garde* in liturgical and theological matters (read: completely adhering to Modernism), the fact that all the Dutch bishops saw fit to place their dioceses under the patronage of Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart is something bordering on the miraculous. This may well be one of the first visible fruits of the Centenary of Our Lady of Fatima.

# Christian Education Renewed

Fr. Calmel's Views

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by Fr. Alain Lorans, SSPX

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*Editor's Note:* During the summer university of the Society of Saint Pius X District of France, which was held at Saint-Joseph-des-Carmes School from August 12-16, 2016, the theme was "The Family in Danger? Catholics Respond!" There Fr. Alain Lorans gave this conference on the relation between education and instruction, according to Fr. Roger-Thomas Calmel. In order to preserve this conference's character, the oral style has been maintained and the citations suppressed.

For those unaware of his life and his work, Fr. Roger-Thomas Calmel, OP (1914-1975), was a French Dominican, a Thomist philosopher and theologian, who made an important contribution to the fight of Catholic Tradition with his writings and conferences. He collaborated with the journal *Itinéraires* for 17 years, from 1958 to 1975. Before Vatican II, he was made a counselor to the Congregation of the Teaching Dominicans of the Holy Name of Jesus of Toulouse, at the request of Mother H el ene Jamet, who was Mother General in 1948. The Congregation had almost 200 sisters at

the time and founded fourteen schools between Bordeaux and Grasse. In 1950, Pius XII approved the Congregation's new constitutions that had been written up by Fr. Calmel and Mother H el ene Jamet. His most important influence was with the teaching Dominican Sisters of Brignoles and Fanjeaux—both from the Congregation of the Holy Name of Jesus of Toulouse—who have founded schools for girls in France, South America, and the United States. Fr. Calmel formed the founding members of these communities, giving them the philosophical and educational principles needed for educating Catholic girls





in a de-Christianized society.

### Fr. Calmel and Education

“Christian Education Renewed,” is the title of this conference; it is borrowed from a book by Fr. Roger-Thomas Calmel whose exact title is *Christian School Renewed*. Why did I choose this theme? Because during this summer university we are speaking about the family and Fr. Calmel’s book is about education and instruction, because it shows the role of the family in education, and the collaboration the family owes to the school where the children receive their instruction. He insists repeatedly upon the fact that education and instruction must not be separated. However, several objections can be made before even we even treat the subject.

I gave you the book’s title, but not its subtitle: *The Education of Girls*. Nor did I tell you it was published for the first time in 1956, 60 years ago! We might wonder whether a 60-year-old book is still relevant today! Plus, a book for girls will not be of much interest for boys!

If you look at the table of contents, you find chapters on Catholic doctrine, on the role of literature, on how to teach French, on writing well, on the role of teachers in the early classes, and even on grammar in the early classes. In other words, useful pedagogical considerations for teachers of young girls.

But these chapters also contain some biting lines by Fr. Calmel that dispel any qualms and show us that he is writing about precisely what interests us: education and instruction, the family and society. On page 165, you have a chapter inspired by Péguy—Fr. Calmel was an avid reader of Péguy—entitled “Christendom Must Go On,” in which he says:

“To all those who easily make do with today’s situation and civilization and who accept them—sooner or later, openly or under the table—and thus make any form of compromise with them: how to make those willing to compromise understand what Christendom represents? Truly it would be impossible to discuss the issue with them constructively without first questioning today’s institutions, the spirit behind them, and the direction they have taken.”

And he continues energetically: “One can only constructively discuss Christendom with those

who are willing to admit that today’s institutions, at least a certain number of them, are more or less air-conditioned antechambers of Hell, because they are institutions that go against natural law; they legitimize, they authorize, they offer the cover of their authority to acts and attitudes that are an offense against the Creator and Redeemer of human nature. Whereas a society that deserves to be called Christian, a Christendom, must be in conformity with natural law, worthy of God and worthy of man, inspired by the teaching of the Church, and must allow men to win Heaven.”

These are the heights from which Fr. Calmel takes up his stand; the reflections we have collected here and there in some of the chapters of this book will allow us synthesize everything we have seen during this summer university. They speak of education and instruction, the family and Christendom, and that on the most interesting level there is: *sub specie aeternitatis*. For Fr. Calmel was not writing only for the Christians of 1956 or only for elementary teachers for girls. And he certainly is not for the mediocre who merely want a small, vapid, comfortable, not too demanding version of Christianity, with flexible convictions and alternative loyalties. They can continue on their way; Fr. Calmel is not talking to them, he does not speak their language!

### We Are Not Monads

In the chapter entitled “Christendom Must Go On,” a fact we may have forgotten, Fr. Calmel reminds us that the family is an institution, that the school is an institution, that we social beings, and thus that we need institutions. We cannot be monads—he borrows this term from the vocabulary of the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Nor are we, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed, individuals, perfect and solitary “wholes.” Fr. Calmel is rightly anti-individualistic. And whether we like it or not—in 2016, as in 1956—we are all more or less contaminated by individualism and we have a great difficulty understanding what an institution is. Fr. Calmel’s thoughts are going to help us realize what a Christian institution is, in other words, what we need in order to recreate Christendom.

What we say, even in our own circles, or what we think without daring to put it into words is this: >

“It is enough for each one to live his catechism well on his own. We do not need an institution.” Some even think that they can very well send their child to a non-Catholic school and add on a sprinkling of catechism, and that will be enough.

Fr. Calmel has an answer for them: “These arguments are perverse. They ignore the fundamental truth that man is not a sort of monad untouched by exterior influences; in truth, man cannot escape scandal and edification, especially the scandal and edification that come from a social reality, from habits and customs that are approved by the authority of the law.”

Yesterday, we heard a conference on the crime of abortion. Like all sin, it unfortunately has always existed. But the drama is that today abortion has been made legal, institutional, even though it is intrinsically immoral. And so we are no longer in a society or a civilization, but in a “dis-society,” which Marcel De Corte (1905-1994) energetically calls a “termite mound.”

Yes, we have original sin, we have our actual sins, we can do evil all by ourselves. But the question presented is this: are we not drawn even more towards evil, are the wounds original sin left in us not infected even more, is not our vulnerability made even worse by a law that goes against natural law, the law of God?

And on the contrary, are we not protected by truly Christian institutions that hold us back, that keep us from falling into all those excesses re-proved by morality?

As Fr. Calmel has written, “It’s agreed, man is weak enough and spoiled enough to do evil without any incitement from outside, without any encouragement from society; but it is truly something else to be protected from incitement and encouragement to do evil; it really is a chance to do less evil, a chance to remain more upright.”

## The Christian Institution

Fr. Calmel realistically observes that a school, a weekly, or a theater group are the beginnings of a Christian institution....The minute you have natural and Christian rules for these activities, you have a little piece of Christendom, an “isle of Christendom” as Gustave Thibon would say. Wherever Christians come together, they must try to create these isles—very simply, because they are

nothing more than dispersed isles, similar to the times when the barbarians invaded Christianity: there were little isles called monasteries. The monks maintained the institution and recopied the treasures of tradition while the barbarians came swarming in. But under the eyes of the barbarians, the monks stood their ground.

This social, institutional dimension is fundamental. “There is nothing trivial,” continues Fr. Calmel, “about not being drawn to evil by the permanent and authorized scandal of an unnatural institution, and on the contrary by being supported in the good by an upright institution that is a permanent and authorized invitation to uprightness and an honorable life.” Concretely, this means that all the sacrifices we make to develop the schools, or to have large and truly Christian families should be seen in this light. And it is this high ideal that we seek, that we desire—and we accept all the sacrifices, sufferings, and difficulties because we know our eternity is at stake.

## The Institutions Depend on People

Fr. Calmel explains that an institution maintains, retains, and contains the human being wounded from the start, but that it also depends on the quality of the people who comprise it. Thus if a Christian institution is composed of members who do not seek to live up to the proposed ideal, they are a hindrance rather than a help to the institution. It is a logical requirement: we have to be consistent with the institution to which we belong because it is fragile; and if we do not live up to this level of demand, the institution could disappear. Or we will end up with an institution that hobbles along as well as it can, like a cover-all: on the inside, no one lives up to the ideal, which is a form of pharisaism, of hypocrisy.

Fr. Calmel says this about the school, about the family, and, as a consequence, about all institutions. As far as the institutions of the school and the family go, it can be summed up in a word: the family must collaborate with the school.

Let’s face it: many find this need for coherence a bit exaggerated. They think it is enough to respect the demands of the good priests and the good sisters during the week so they will not have to worry about them on Saturday and Sunday— but this makes no sense. And it creates torn, divided



children...schizophrenics, a psychiatrist would say.

“It is not as pathologically serious as all that!” you will say, and you are right, but know that Fr. Calmel does not want torn children, with intellectually and morally misaligned eyes. And he says so. Thus in one chapter he quotes the full text of a letter distributed to the parents by the Mother Prioress of a school on the first day of school. It explains in black and white what is expected of the children and especially of the parents:

“Instruction is different from education, and we wish to respect all its requirements, the first being to transmit the truth, but we will never separate instruction from education. In fact, we believe that transmitting the truth is the first way to dispose the heart to good and to virtue [not only in the family but for life]. We do not make a break between the doctrine [learned from Monday to Friday] and life [which begins on Friday evening and ends on Monday morning when class starts], between the student who is a sort of conventional person and the young lady who is a real person [on Saturday and Sunday]. Also, without disregarding the importance of exams, we do not make them our supreme concern. These consecrated educators know there is an exam that mustn’t be failed, the exam for which they are preparing the children: the great final exam for which we all know there is no retake.”

The institutions of the family and the school depend on people, and these people must not separate themselves or drift away from those institutions: “Just temporal institutions have their dignity and their own necessity. Here below, people cannot normally do without them.” You do not restore Christendom on your own, all by yourself, just as the Church does not begin so with us! The Church is two thousand years old. And we cannot say that tradition begins with us either; and we cannot say that Christendom is summed up in our own little person. We are members of an institution.

“Here below, people cannot normally do without them. These institutions uphold people, their character, their virtue, and the uprightness of their life; but they are first raised up and carried by these people.” Hence the importance of people who are in harmony with the institutions to which they belong.

And here Fr. Calmel says something interesting: “If someone finds a way to live on the level of ego-

ism within an institution of justice, if he makes the public order a protection for his private disorder, then sooner or later the public order will be harmed by it. And besides, how could those who do not truly love justice or who refuse to believe in it not pounce on the opportunity to question the truth of an institution that too many people have forced to become a sinister mask or a clever protection for their exasperating iniquity? They will not fail to say, for example: ‘What value does a hierarchy have when the leaders are profiteers? What significance does a social order have when it makes a pact with a state of affairs that makes crime morally unavoidable for the less fortunate?’” We are no longer in the year 1956, but what Fr. Calmel said 60 years ago is still true today—perhaps even truer than it was 60 years ago.

So instruction and education, the Christian school and the Christian family, require, in his eyes, the necessity that those who live in these institutions and who live off these institutions be in harmony with the Christian spirit that animates the institutions from within. They must not seek to use the institutions to hide their mediocrity; on the contrary, they must seek to live more and more in keeping with the ideal these institutions infuse into them: to always strive towards sanctity.

### **Education through Instruction**

For instruction properly speaking, since it is his subject, Fr. Calmel offers teachers a charter for instruction that is the polar opposite of mediocrity. He says that if we transmit the truth—and such is the defining characteristic of Christian instruction—we must live the truth; we must not content ourselves with simply pouring knowledge into an intelligence, we must—by living the truth—make the truth communicative, contagious.

What Fr. Calmel eschews is to see teachers pouring their knowledge into the heads of their pupils like you pour liquid into an inert container. He believes you cannot simply pile on knowledge: either you live it—and it is interesting, fascinating, captivating; or you merely receive it passively—to spit back out when the exam comes around. In this case, you are formatted, if not stuffed, and everyone knows that a stuffed bird is a goose...a silly one. In other words, a creature that is not at all or not very well formed, is not or not very capable of >

defending itself, and terribly vulnerable to errors. The silly goose has not assimilated, has not understood, and therefore cannot explain or use. Let's hear what Fr. Calmel says:

"Education can't be plastered onto instruction. And instruction alone is not enough to ensure it, but it does come through instruction." There is a necessary interdependent relation. We could tell ourselves a little too easily: education is learning the rules of how to behave in the family; instruction is what teachers teach to help the students get their high school diploma. No! There must be a deep, interdependent relation between education and instruction. Practically speaking, how does one create this harmony between what is intellectually received and the realities of daily life? Fr. Calmel explains and then gives some practical examples.

"It depends very much on the human authenticity of the teacher, the originality and quality of his human reactions; having the right ideas is not enough, nor is the art of making oneself obeyed.... You see it, it is a whole different ideal from that of a one-dimensional professor, skinny, brainy, so specialized he has been stupefied. It is even worrisome that some professors dream of being just specialists. While specialization is useful to a certain extent, we do not see what could be the advantage of the specialist drying out and destroying the man; no one wins, neither the specialist nor the man—neither the students nor the teacher."

So Fr. Calmel does not want any freeze-dried teachers. He wants an irrigated teacher, capable of irrigating others. For he wishes to show us that in the end a teacher teaches what he knows, but he mostly teaches what he is. And if he is only a specialist, he will only teach a specialty. This specialty makes him very good in his domain, he may be the specialist on the aorist in Aeschylus in 400 BC, but not before and not after: Aeschylus, but not Xenophon. He may be unbeatable. But he is unlivable. And he does not live, and he doesn't know how to live. And he does not know how to make things come alive. And he does not know how to thrill his students. He is there, dry, dried out, a dryer. But he will not teach them to live. He will not teach them to think. He will not teach them to react as Christians.

## Living Orthodoxy

But how to make this symbiosis a reality? Remember, by the way, that this book was written 60 years ago. It is no old dusty volume I pulled out of some forgotten drawer: it is prophetic. Fr. Calmel saw ahead of time what we are living today. And you could say the suggestions he offers, the prescriptions he gives us after a thorough diagnosis, are the remedies for today. But you are already convinced!

For him, orthodoxy is the principal quality of a Catholic teacher. He teaches baptized children, so he must be orthodox, that is to say, his doctrine must be sure—in all the subjects he teaches, whether religious or profane. But it must be a living orthodoxy. Not the orthodoxy of a bookworm.

"Instruction is the transmission by a living mind to another living mind of the truth received from human tradition but reinvented....It is the truth, the communication of the truth that makes a school; but the truth is not very effective if it has not taken root and come alive in the intelligence and heart of the teacher."

The definition of school is "the communication of the truth." If the teacher contents himself with being nothing more than a megaphone, and does not himself live the truth he teaches, if you can feel that there is a difference between what he lives and what he says, then there can be no contagious enthusiasm.

Saying: "It is truth that makes the school," is the same as saying: "It is the life of the truth in the soul of the teacher that makes the school." If this truth does not have a living existence but is simply book knowledge, if the teacher simply repeats a textbook, if all he has to give is tips for reviewing with *Cliffsnotes*, then he does not live, and he will not bring anything to life. "The primacy of the truth means the primacy of the teacher living in the truth."

So all of this is extremely demanding. But what Fr. Calmel says of teachers he necessarily says of parents as well. Because what is true of instruction is also true of education. There is a short chapter on this called "The House of Nazareth" in which he shows how the mother of a family educates her children not in a university or scholarly fashion, but by example—and unfortunately also by counter-example. She thus teaches more through her interior





dispositions than through the words she speaks to her children. The requirement of coherency and excellence is the same for education as for instruction. Here is what he writes:

“Who will give the home its face: this familiar setting that permeates us day after day without our realizing it? On whom does [the home’s] sincerity or its flashy mask depend? Its clutter or its airiness? The enthusiasm or the boredom of the humble daily chores; the frugality or refinement of the meals; the frivolity or dignity of the conversations, attitudes, and attire—who is the most responsible for it all? The house has a soul and bears the imprint of a mind. What soul and what mind? One of the two spouses, doubtless. But (this is a daily evidence) most men’s houses are made in the image of a woman; the image of the happiness or the misfortune, the nobility or the mediocrity of the young girl and the young wife.”

We are still talking about the institution, about education, whose etymology you know well, *e-ducere*, to raise up, elevate, bring higher, and not the absence of education, as Fr. Calmel says a little further on: “How many women, alas, ruin the homes they should have edified, drag down those to whom they should have given wings [and zeal]; either they bog them down in softness and comfort; or they accept, with I know not what despicable tenderness, to place themselves meticulously at the service of the least desires: “Here, sweetheart, have a fourth spoonful of Nutella...”

### **The Danger of Moralism**

Orthodoxy must therefore be living, and lived to the full. This means that the education cannot be plastered onto instruction and vice versa. There has to be a close interdependent relation. And Fr. Calmel gives a counter-example in Chapter 29, “The Centers of Interest and the Danger of Moralism.”

“A teacher in one of the young classes had made up all her lesson plans on the theme of effort. For her, this theme was a self-serving catch-all. She had chosen it as her central subject with an ulterior motive that was apparently very practical but in reality very mistaken. She told herself: ‘These little ones who are so indolent and so encouraged by their surroundings to laziness, I need to get something out of them—for their own good, of course,

but also because otherwise my class would be too unbearable. So how do I go about it? I am going to talk about effort. I am going to drive it home. We’ll run into effort on any and every topic: family is an effort; the Church is an effort; a walk is an effort; even sleep is an effort. Everything for effort; nothing without it, everything for it.”

This is exactly what you mustn’t do. It is completely plastered on. There is no education. “It is true,” writes Fr. Calmel, “that children need to make efforts, but we would be wrong to remind them of this obligation a thousand times a day, on every topic and even off-topic; it would tire them or exasperate them. And above all, while making all these unlikely acrobatics to convince them that life, virtue, and sanctity are summed up by effort, we are not even in the truth; reality is not that simplistic.”

Next he explains that you have to start with what is real and concrete to help them understand how there are situations in which one must soak up the “realities of life and family, honor, work, and suffering, and other mysteries, too”—a far cry from a simplistically plastered effort, a far cry, too, from mind-numbing entertainment. And Fr. Calmel gives some of the mysterious realities that little children can understand: “They sense [he is speaking of little girls], even without being able to put it into words, that these mysteries are more than just effort. What are you waiting for to show them as they are, instead of skirting around the edge with moralizing? What are you waiting for, for example, to help them realize what they have already sensed of the mystery of life: their impression by the side of a crib; their feelings of maternal joy and pain; the lies they have perhaps already breathed in on selfishness in the home and controlling births; their religious emotion at a worthily celebrated baptism or an Easter vigil when some child is baptized.”

You learn the lessons of things from what is concrete and real. There was a time when no one talked about “science class.” Back in my days—days those under the age of 20 never knew—we called it “lessons of things.” And Bossuet said: *res ipsa loquitur*, the thing speaks on its own.

### **Communicating the Truth**

Before concluding, I am going to read to you a passage that would draw a smile from a superficial mind unable or unwilling to rise to the heights >

to which Fr. Calmel invites us. But I know that you, you will not smile, I know that you will see in these few lines the summary of his thoughts, in beautiful and marvelous words, for we must admit that the truth is beautiful, that it is not necessarily grouchy, wrinkled, leathery or freeze-dried. Far from it.

Here is what he says:

“The child has a mind that must be awakened, not crushed. What awakens a mind is another mind that is awake. You think perhaps that it will never be the case for you. But observe how when, for example, you write to someone out of tenderness or displeasure, your mind is beautiful and awake. Why would it not be the same with the children; especially since you love them and you love to communicate the truth to them. So let this love go all the way down into your intelligence and you will be capable of awakening, or communicating a singing and germinating truth.”

It is marvelous. To communicate a “singing” truth, with no false notes, perfectly in tune with the baptismal ideal. And “germinating,” not sterile, not shriveled, but fertile, capable of bearing fruit. That is Christian education. That is Christian instruction. That is the renewed Christian school.

It is very difficult for a soporific teacher to awaken students. Fr. Calmel writes elsewhere that it is absolutely impossible for a teacher who is fundamentally, methodically “disparaging.” That is to say, who always denigrates, who sees everything in a negative way, because he has extinguished any capacity for admiration and wonder. He will never awaken anyone. Besides, he is not a teacher, but an anesthesiologist, not even a re-animator. It is always dangerous to follow an anesthetic teaching from which we might never awake....But let’s read: “Is a teacher naturally disparaging, or if you will, naturally unappreciative and grudging—imagine a teacher who has hindered or ruined his capacity for admiration, how do you want him to communicate enthusiasm, even when explaining Corneille or Péguy? Try as he may, he will come across as he is, he will betray himself.”

## **Institution and Restoration**

I shall conclude with the word I have been using since the beginning of this talk: “institution”—institution of the family, institution of the school. At its root is: institute, the duty of “re-instituting”—or

restoring—Christendom, of re-instituting a truly Christian social, familial, educational order, as Fr. Calmel says: “A society that deserves to be called Christian, a Christendom, must be in conformity with natural law, worthy of God and worthy of man, inspired by the teaching of the Church, and must allow men to win Heaven.”

You have St. Pius X’s motto as a filigree here. Christian education and instruction are there to *instaurare omnia in Christo*. And all the rest is just literature. We cannot do less. Anything less is maybe an ersatz of education, or a counterfeit of instruction, but it is not Christian instruction.

Do not say: “Yes, but restoring everything to the Christian order means taking a step backward, borrowing a time-travel machine, going back to 1956.” No! Restoring is not going in reverse. Restoring is making an eternal principle apply at all times. Restoring is making the Kingship of Our Lord apply here and now.

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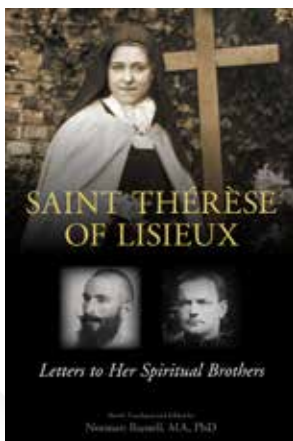
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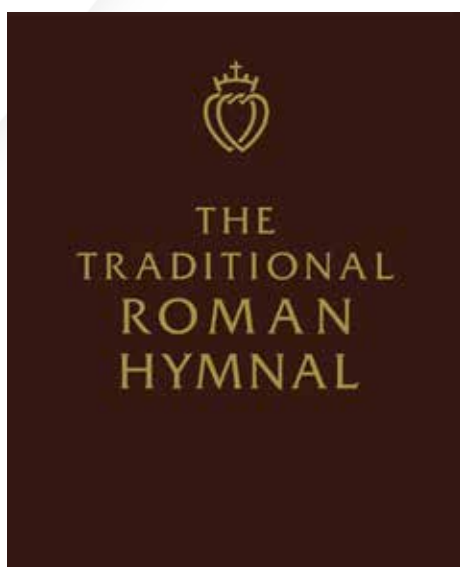
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# The Last Word

Dear readers,

To write this “Last Word” I really need the pen of G. K. Chesterton!

How can one ever write a last word on an intervention of the Mother of God? Will there ever be a last word on Fatima? And tell me, dear reader: Who really wants to hear that last word, to turn the last page of that heavenly book? Have we not been told: “*De Maria numquam satis*”—that we never should stop talking about Her who will be our consolation for all eternity?

Fatima starts with Heaven on May 13: “I come from Heaven!” What a consoling, energizing breath of fresh air! The first and last word all people need to hear: Heaven! That’s where we come from and that’s where we must go. Heaven. That’s the first word.

Fatima ends with that great sign in heaven on October 13. Did one ever consider that the dancing sun was an allegory of the Women clothed with the sun, putting the fear of the almighty God (*the beginning of wisdom*) into people’s heart while playing yoyo with such a cosmic ball? And at the same time, gently, un-noticeably, with a skillful motherly hand drying the pilgrims’—her children’s—wet clothes while they clung upon them, by the penetration of the rays of the rainbow (a biblical image of Her as a sign of peace), as Northern Lights dancing in the sky?

She will have the last word:

“My Immaculate Heart *will* triumph!”

“The Holy Father *will* consecrate Russia!”

“Russia *will* be converted!”

Again employing the mellifluous St. Bernard: The last word is Mary herself! “*Ratio spei meae, Maria!*” The very reason of my hope is that name, Mary!

“*Ubi Maria, ibi gratia.*” Where Mary is, there grace is found. And Fatima is the blessed Mary.

So, let this “Last Word” simply be: Blessed Lady of Fatima, our life and our hope, thank you!  
*Ave, Maria!*

Fr. Daniel Couture

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