



**Father Carlos Cabecinhas, Rector of the Shrine**



In a celebration held on the morning of June 11, after the 11h00 Mass in Most Holy Trinity Church, at the Shrine of Fatima, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, priest of the Diocese of Leiria-Fátima, 40 years old, a native of Bajouca, Leiria, took possession as Rector of the Shrine of Fatima, thus succeeding Bishop-elect Virgílio Antunes, of the Diocese of Coimbra. Immediately afterwards it was the turn for Fr. Cristinao Saraiva to be reappointed to the job of administrator of the Shrine of Fatima. After having taken possession as Rector, the new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima headed for the Little Chapel of Apparitions, where he renewed his personal consecration to Our Lady of Fatima, first made right after his priestly ordination. At the same time he also consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary the chaplains, employees, volunteers and all collaborators and pilgrims of the Shrine: "This Shrine is Yours (O Mary!) and, therefore, I entrust it to Your maternal protection. Please bless the activities and projects that, faithful to the mission of this Shrine, we will seek to execute and, in all we'll do, please help us to be instruments docile to the will of God, the way You Yourself were. I beg of You, for all pilgrims, Your maternal help and protection and, for all others, Heavenly graces. May all those who seek You here be able to particularly experience the presence of God in their lives". In his first words after taken possession, uttered in Most Holy Trinity Church, and after the initial greeting, the new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima stressed "all the timeliness and freshness" of the Message of Fatima: "Faithfulness to this message of the Mother of God and Our Mother is the true pastoral priority of the Shrine. The itinerary of seven years of celebration of the Centennial, which is ongoing and will lead us to 2017, intends none other than to make us rediscover or be conscious of the great richness of the Message, of the urgency to live it and of the need to spread it". In his greeting he also addressed some words to the pilgrims of Fatima: "I also wish to address a few words to all the

pilgrims that daily demand this Shrine through the pilgrims here present today. The pilgrims are the reason of all the initiatives that animate the life of the Shrine. All of us who work here intend to be instruments at the service of the Message of Fatima, making it possible for this Shrine to continue being a place of strong experiences of an encounter with God through Mary". In continuity with the project begun this pastoral year, the priest recalled the priority of the mission of the Shrine of Fatima: "My Immaculate Heart shall be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God". These words of Our Lady were the inspiration for the entire thematic itinerary of celebration of the Centennial, which has as its general theme: "My Immaculate Heart shall lead you to God". This seven-year itinerary constitutes the pastoral plan for the Shrine until 2017 and it is in its materialization and fulfillment that resides the current pastoral priority of the Shrine of Fatima, because it focuses the essential of the Message". The date when Fr. Cabecinhas took possession as new Rector coincided with the date of birth of Blessed Francisco Marto, June 11, 1908: "Blesseds Francisco and Jacinta were excellent disciples of the school of Mary and their luminous example is, for us, a continuous challenge. I particularly implore their intercession on this occasion". In his words after the possession of Fr. Cabecinhas as the new Rector, the Most Rev. António Marto, Bishop of Leiria-Fatima, thanked the outgoing Rector for his work and wished well to the new job holders of the Shrine of Fatima: "The human, priestly and intellectual gifts which God granted to Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas and the job of administrator already well done by Fr. Cristiano Saraiva assure us that the Shrine is being entrusted to good hands. I want to express my esteem, trust and collaboration to them. Good wishes! Lot of happiness and the blessing of Our Lady of Fatima for your noble and delicate mission are our wishes!"

**ARCHIVE** Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas is going to be the new Rector of the Shrine of Fatima. He will take possession of his new job on July 11, at 11h00, in Most Holy Trinity Church, at the Shrine of Fatima. Fr. Cabecinhas is a priest of the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima and works full-time for the Shrine of Fatima since August 2010 as Chaplain and as Head of the Department of Liturgical Pastoral Ministry. Here is his reaction after having been named: "The challenge is great, but I believe that he who counts on the maternal protection of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima and on the intercession of Blesseds Francisco and Jacinta Marto doesn't have reason to be afraid". He addressed a special word to all devotees of Our Lady of Fatima: "The Message Our Lady revealed here to the three Seers focuses the essence of the Christian faith. I want to assure the many pilgrims of Fatima that they will continue to find in Fatima the place of prayer and strong experience of God capable of giving new meaning to their lives, capable of transforming them. That is the essence, for only from the encounter with God are born lives completely renovated". During the announcement on May 5, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima stressed the human qualities and the "rare intellectual gifts" of the next Rector of the Shrine of Fatima.

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