



Saint Francisco Marto was born 110 years ago



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This date is recalled in all the celebrations of the Shrine's official program

Saint Francisco Marto, presented in the iconography with a large hood and a short jacket, a crook in the hand and a lunch box on the shoulder, was born 11th of June 1908 and was christened on the 20th of June in the parish church of Fatima. Today, Fatima is celebrating his birth 110 years ago.

When he was only 8 years old, with his sister Jacinta, he started to shepherd the flock of his parents in Cova da Iria, a place where, with his cousin Lucia, they were the witnesses of the Apparitions, during which he could hardly see, hear or talk.

In his intimate desire to console the heart of Jesus, as he used to affirm that he wanted to bring joy to a God who was sad and whose heart was in grief, Francisco intensely lived the contemplative prayer. To achieve this, he used to spend consecutive hours in prayer in front of the tabernacle of the parish church of Fatima, while his sister and cousin were going to school.

On the 18th of October 1918, a bit more than a year after the latest Apparition, he became ill, victim of the influenza pandemic that swept the country that year, and also known as the Spanish flu, an illness that reached Portugal in the middle of that year and led to the deaths of tens of thousands of people in a short time.

On the 2nd of April of the following year, he confessed himself and received the communion for the last time "with a great lucidity and devotion" as underlined by the priest of Fatima in the Register of Deaths upon the registration of his death on the 4th of

April who added: "And he confirmed he had seen a Lady in Cova da Iria and Valinho."

He was buried in the cemetery of Fatima from which his mortal remains were exhumed on the 17th of February 1952 to be placed in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima on the 13th of March 1952, in the right part of the transept, where he now rests.

Francisco and his sister Jacinta were canonized in the Shrine of Fatima on the 13th of May, during the Mass of the First International Pilgrimage of the Anniversary of the Centennial of the Apparitions, celebrated by Pope Francis; he thus became the youngest saint not-martyr of the Catholic church.

The canonization was approved on the 23rd of March, when the Vatican announced that Pope Francis would recognize the miracle attributed to Francisco and Jacinta, which was the last step of a process that had been launched 65 years before.

The approval of a miracle that happened through his intercession after the beatification, is a process that falls within the competency of the Congregation for the Cause of the Saints, it is ruled by the Apostolic Constitution *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*, promulgated by John Paul II in 1983.

During Francisco and Jacinta Marto's process, the miraculous cure of Lucas was accepted as a miracle, this 5-year-old Brazilian child fell from a 6.5-meter-high window on the 3rd of March 2013 and lapsed into a coma, a loss of cerebral tissue in the right frontal lobe was observed.

The prayer of the family and of the sisters of the Carmel of Campo Mourão in Brazil, asking the intercession of Francisco and Jacinta, resulted in the complete cure of Lucas, a fact that doctors cannot explain.

www.fatima.pt/en/news/saint-francisco-marto-was-born-110-years-ago