



FÁTIMA LUZ E PAZ

Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

Director: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

Quarterly publication | Year XIII | Nr. 56

Time of Grace and Mercy: to give thanks for the gift of Fatima

Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto are gifts of the Holy Spirit! / Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

On May 13th 2017, Pope Francis canonized the two youngest seers of Fatima, in a festive and solemn celebration, which completely filled the Shrine of Fatima and was accompanied by a numerous crowd, through social media. In this month of February, less than a year later, we celebrate their liturgical feast, invoking them for the first time, in these circumstances, as Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

The canonization was intensively lived by the crowd participating in the celebration and which couldn't hide their joy for this act, as they interrupted the Holy Father as he was saying the formula of canonization. It was the most important pontifical statement in Fatima and moreover about the sanctity of two of the protagonists of the Fatima event. Not all of the Pope's interventions have the same value or importance. The canonization is included among the most important: a solemn act, by which the Holy Father declares definitively that one or more Christians Faithful are in the eternal glory, an example to other Christians in their way of living their faith and intercede for us with God. Months after this solemn act, let us look at the formula of canonization of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta.

Pope Francis began to explain the purpose of such an act: "To the honour of the Most Holy Trinity, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and increase of the Christian life". On the other hand, as a solemn act of the papal magisterium, he invoked the authority of Christ, of the Apostles and of the Pope himself, making a clear reference to the ecclesial communion, to conclude: "we decree and define Blessed Francisco e Jacinta Marto to be Saints, and we place their name in the Catalogue of Saints, decreeing that in the Universal Church they are to be venerated among the Saints with pious devotion".

These new and young Saints are a true gift of the Holy Spirit, which leads the Church. In them, we discover the efficiency of the Gospel and its light, which transforms the world and transfigures the existence. In them, we find an example of Christian life and a strong encouragement to live intensively and with enthusiasm in following Christ.

In his intercession for us we can see a support for our weakness.

Saint Francisco Marto, pray for us! Saint Jacinta Marto, pray for us!

Pilgrim Virgin Statue will visit three continents

Marian icon has already 20 journeys scheduled for 2018 / Diogo Carvalho Alves



In April, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue will be in Benin, in the city of Allada

Every year, the Shrine of Fatima receives a significant number of requests to send this unique Marian icon to catholic communities all over the world. In order to correspond to all of them, 12 Statues were made, similar to the first, sculpted according to Sister Lucia's indications, and crowned on May 13th 1947.

One of the Pilgrim Virgin Statues is travelling through the region of Sicily, in Italy, since November 2017, in a journey organized by the World Apostolate of Fatima in the region, which will be extended until the end of March this year.

In February, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue will visit several dioceses in Spain. At the request of the World Apostolate of Fatima, the Statue will remain in the neighbouring country until October.

Under the coordination of the Marian Movement of the Message of Fatima in Italy, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue has been visiting several dioceses in that country since November 2016, in a journey to be ended late this year. In the north, this Marian icon will be present in Brescia, during the month of February, and in the region of Lombardy in the second half of April, by the request of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Servants and the World Apostolate of Fatima.

The Pilgrim Virgin Statue will travel to the African continent on the first half of April, to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of the Divine Mercy, located in the city of Allada, in Benin.

The month of Mary is the one with most journeys scheduled. In May, in Portugal, the Pilgrim Statue will visit: the parish of Caranguejeira in the Leiria-Fatima diocese; in Óbidos and the parish of Almargem do Bispo, in the Patriarchy of Lisbon; and in the parish of Gafanha da Encarnação in the diocese of Aveiro. Across borders, the Pilgrim Statue will travel to Montreal, in Canada, Brasil and Colombia.

In June, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue will be present in the "3rd International Congress in the honour of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary" in Miami, in the United States of America. During September, the Statue returns to the diocese of Toledo, in Spain, and in October, it returns to the United States of America, to visit a parish in New Jersey.

The Pilgrim Virgin Statue will travel through Europe, Africa, and North and South America, according to the pre-established schedule for 2018.

Fatima began new pastoral year with eyes set on the post-centennial

2017-2020 Triennium seeks to maintain the dynamic generated in the one hundred years of the Apparitions celebrations / Carmo Rodeia

The Shrine of Fatima inaugurated last December 2nd the new 2017-2018 pastoral year looking at the “post-centennial”, seeking to maintain the dynamic generated in the 100 years of the Apparitions celebrations.

In the opening day of the new cycle, Monsignor António Marto, bishop of Leiria-Fatima, complemented “the originality of the centennial celebration” between 2010 and 2017, not minimizing the celebrations to a year of activities.

These seven years allowed us to create a “new approach” to the Message of Fatima, said the diocesan prelate, with a “attitude and attitudes change”, moving from a “merely devotional” vision or curiosity over the secrets, to looking the events in Cova da Iria “in their whole”, “reaching its nucleus” and looking at its actuality.

“The mystic dimension of Fatima was often covered only by the devotional aspect”, said Monsignor Antonio Marto, to who is necessary to underline the invitation to “open the human heart to God in times of disbelief and indifference”.

The Bishop of the Leiria-Fátima diocese said, regarding the future, that Fatima “accompanies the history of mankind each time period” and that the “great present” of the Centennial was the canonization of the little shepherds Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

Speaking about the increase of the devotion to the new saints, Monsignor Antonio Marto quoted Pope Francis, in a private audience that the Pontiff granted him: “today people seek innocence in a disturbed world”.

The Leiria-Fátima diocese bishop also reminded the request of “purification of the devotion to Our Lady” that Pope Francis

made in the last May pilgrimage and emphasised the experience of “universality” and the “national and global projection of Fatima”, visible in this last year, “particularly in the groups of pilgrims coming from Asia”, with a specific reference to Catholics from China, which were “beyond all expectations”.

As for the triennium 2017-2020, with the main theme “Time of grace and mercy”, it is expected to “promote the consolidation of the created dynamics”.

Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas, rector of the Shrine of Fatima, presented the specific themes for each pastoral year, starting with the current one, “Time of grace and mercy: to give thanks for the gifts of Fatima”.

The year 2018-2019 has the theme “Time of grace and mercy: to give thanks to pilgrim in Church”, evoking the ecclesial dimension of Fatima; 2019-2020 will be lived under the theme “Time of grace and mercy: to give thanks for living in God”.

In the presentation of the new Pastoral Year, the rector advanced that the “great goals of this triennium” are based in “reminding the moments of grace along these 100 years of the Fatima Event, to heighten the conscience that Fatima is a gift for the contemporary world and to emphasize the dimension of the ecclesial nature in the message of Fatima”.

“To deepen the baptismal dimension of the message of Fatima, to value pilgrimage as an indication of the human condition and the pilgrim’s figure as the central character of the event of Fatima and to deepen the knowledge on specific sanctity models of Fatima”, are other defined objectives, said the Rector.

This way, it will be proposed “a prayer itinerary for pilgrims”, “a catechesis in the Prayers Area promenades regarding the



Monsignor Antonio Marto affirms that Fatima accompanies the history of mankind

theme”, and the book of the year, now as “The Pilgrim’s Guide”.

Regarding the training level, Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas revealed that the “usual frequency of theological and pastoral symposiums” and “the frequency of conference cycles, although in a slightly different configuration” will be kept, being extended throughout the entire pastoral year.

The cultural program “will not be as intense as it was in the last few years”, but the Shrine of Fatima intends to “keep the annual rhythm of temporary exhibitions”, because it is considered “a qualifying element of the message that is intended to be transmitted”.

“We will reflect on the importance of Fatima as a place of culture – where culture has a place, where culture is produced and from where new cultural development axes irradiate- as well as its anthropological relevance, specifically before urgent welcoming challenges of the human sacrifice or the care for the Common House and the humanity living in it, according to a christian perspective integrated and integral”, he said.

The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima said that in the next few years we will celebrate “remarkable ephemerides” of the 100 years of Fatima: the restoration of the Diocese of Leiria, occurred on January 17th 1918; the death of Saint Francisco Marto, on April 4th 1919; the edification of the Chapel of the Apparitions in the Spring months of 1919; the death of Saint Jacinta Marto on February 20th 1920; the creation of the statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, and in 1920, the beginning of the pastoral work of Monsignor Jose Alves Correia da Silva as the bishop of Leiria.



New 2017-2020 triennium will mark the important events of the 100 years of Fatima

Shrine promotes Itineraries to deepen the spirituality of the Message of Fatima

“School of the Shrine” is a spiritual and educational program open to the general public / Carmo Rodeia

The Shrine of Fatima is promoting throughout this pastoral year a new spiritual and educational project called “School of the Shrine”. The activities regarding the program will be held in the Retreat House of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

The “School of the Shrine” offers several itineraries open to the general public to a maximum of 40 participants per session. These educational itineraries are based in the idea that Fatima is a place to experience God, where each pilgrim is invited to experience that presence.

The “School of the Shrine” is set to deepen and discover the Message of Fatima and its spirituality, promoting the initiation, growth and spiritual maturity from the Message; the recognition of the Message ecclesiality and its pastoral relevance, as well as the Message reading regarding significant contemporary experiences.

In the many itineraries to experience, in addition to the praying moments and indoor oriented sessions, visits to several places of the Shrine, Aljustrel and Valinhos, the participants will be able to interpret and reflect about Mary using other languages, specifically the artistic language present in the stained-glass windows of the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, which holds a true

catechesis about the Event and Message left in this place by Our Lady one hundred years ago.

In March, the School will offer an itinerary to deepen the Trinitarian and Eucharistic dimension of the Message of Fatima, with the general theme “Trinity and Eucharist, adoration and solidarity”. This Itinerary will be held on March 17th and 18th.

In April 21st and 22nd, the School will discuss the “Suffering and freedom, sacrifice and reparation”, deepening the meaning of suffering and sacrifice in the Message of Fatima’s spirituality.

The last Itinerary of the School of The Shrine, scheduled before summer, will be held May 21st and 27th and the theme will be “The Rosary, evangelic itinerary of a theological life”. In this theme, throughout a week, participants will be invited to meditate about the meaning of the Rosary as Christ-centred Marian prayer practice and its importance in the Message of Fatima. The goal is for each one to experience the value of this prayer in the personal and community life.

In addition to these thematic weekends, from the 5th to 8th, 12th to 15th and 19th to 22th of March, three editions of an itinerary for

a specific audience will be suggested: people over 65, living their retirement. The “Spirituality Meetings for Retired People” is set to discuss the knowledge of the meaning of the Fatima event in the 20th century and new millennium dramas. They will also offer the discovery of the Message as a fountain of spirituality to live in a thankful and fertile retirement.

The “School of the Shrine” team will include the Chaplain Fr. José Nuno Silva, responsible for the Message of Fatima’s pastoral; Sister Ângela Coelho, from the Francisco and Jacinta Marto Foundation; Sister Nanci Leite, from the Daughters of the Heart of Mary Congregation, Pedro Valinho Gomes, theologian, and André Pereira, consultant in the Rectory of the Shrine of Fatima.



First edition of the School of the Shrine with 45 participants

New pastoral year continues to confirm the Shrine of Fatima as a place of Culture

In addition to the celebrations, the Shrine of Fatima is once again promoting concerts and conferences on Sunday afternoons / Carmo Rodeia

“Meetings in the Basilica” is one of the many suggestions of the Shrine of Fatima for the pastoral year initiated last December 2nd, and which will bring to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima a lecture and a musical recital on Sunday afternoons.

Overall there will be five sessions, beginning at 3.30 pm. The 2nd Meeting in the Basilica will be held on March 11th with the lecture “The ecclesial recognition of the apparitions of Fatima”, by Fr. João Paulo Quelhas, chaplain of the Shrine of Fatima, followed by the 3rd Meeting, on June 3rd, with the theme, “Grace and Mercy: the apparitions of Pontevedra and Tuy”, by André Pereira. The 4th Meeting,

on September 9th, led by Eduardo Caseiro will cover the theme “The Message of the Popes in Fatima” and the 5th Meeting on November 11th with the theme “The Pilgrim Statue and its role in the message preaching”, by Marco Daniel Duarte. The lectures will always be followed by a musical recital: Eva Braga Simões, Hugo Sanches and Carmina Repas Gonçalves, on March 11th; the Coral Group Sol Nascente, directed by Vianey da Cruz on June 3rd; João Santos (organist) on September 9th; and the Polyphonic Choir Eborae Music, directed by Eduardo Martins on November 11th.

On February 18th, the first Sunday of Lent, the Basilica of Our Lady of Fatima

will held the 4th Evocative Concert of the Three Little Shepherds of Fatima, by the Ricercare Choir, directed by Pedro Teixeira, and on April 8th, the Easter Concert also in the Basilica of Our Lady of The Rosary of Fatima.

The first Course of the deepening of the spirituality of the Message of Fatima of this pastoral year will begin on April 21st.

Visits to the temporary exhibition “The Colour of the Sun: the light of Fatima in the contemporary world” will continue and the exhibition will remain open to pilgrims at the *Saint Augustin’s Social Hall*, on the lower floor of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity until October 31st 2018.

The number 1 statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima returns home after 12 days in the Shrine of San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy

Friar Francesco Dileo, Rector of the Italian Shrine, manifested “joy and gratitude” for this journey / **Cátia Filipe**

The Chapel of the Apparitions welcomed the number 1 statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima after a 12-day-journey to the Shrine of San Giovanni Rotondo, where one can find remains of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, who had a very strong bond with Fatima.

In his greetings to the many pilgrims accompanying the Statue's arrival, the Rector of the Shrine of San Giovanni Rotondo, Friar Francesco Dileo manifested his “joy and gratitude” for this “beautiful journey”.

“I invite each one of you to keep this journey in your heart so that in your daily life you can find the strength to take the perfume of God to the world”, said the Italian Rector.

The Marian pilgrimage had the participation of great local Church figures, especially Cardinal Fernando Filoni, prefect for the Congregation for the Evangelization of People, who presided at the Sunday Eucharist on November 19th, in the Church of St. Pio of Pietrelcina built in 2004, and where one can find the remains of Padre Pio.

Friar Francesco Dileo reminded: “Mary continues the journey, through our lives, through our house, in our hometown and today we came to Her house. May we know how to imitate Her in her gestures, and may we be capable of taking the perfume of Christ throughout the world's road, through our testimony”.

On the eve of the statue's arrival to Fatima, a relic from the body of Padre Pio was transferred to the Church of Saint Mary of Graces, where the celebration was presided at by Monsignor Rino Fisichella, the president of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization.

The statue's journey to Italy, was held in an absolutely exceptional context, regarding the strong connection between Padre Pio and Fatima.

At age 72, Padre Pio suffered of pleurisy which forced him to remain immobilized in bed for several months, with no recovery expectations. Coincidentally, a statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima made a technical stop in San Giovanni Rotondo, and watching it from his bedroom window, he waved to the statue asking for the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima's intercession in improving his health, which eventually



Friar Francesco Dileo manifested joy and gratitude for the journey of the Pilgrim Statue

happened. It was on August 1959 and Padre Pio would only pass away in 1968, in his convent bedroom, with the rosary between his fingers and repeating the names of Jesus and Mary. He was beatified on May 2nd 1999, by Pope John Paul II, and canonized on June 16th 2002.

Currently, in San Giovanni Rotondo, where he spent most of his life, rises a Marian Shrine, annually visited by hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world. The ancient Capuchin convent, dated from 1540 and where the saint lived, the Church of Saint Mary of Graces and the modern Shrine dedicated to the mystic Saint Pio form a complex where a strong popular compassion lives, assuming itself as the larger shrine in Italy.

The number 1 Statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, sculpted according to Sister Lucia's indications, was offered by the bishop of Leiria and solemnly crowned by the archbishop of Évora, on May 13th 1947. Since that day, the Statue covered, on several occasions, the entire world, taking with it, a message of peace and love.

The origin of this path takes us back to 1945, shortly after the end of World War

II, when a parish priest from Berlin suggested that a statue of Our Lady of Fatima's travel through all the episcopal capitals and cities of Europe, until the Russian border. The idea was taken up again on April 1946, by an International Council of Roman Catholic Feminine Youth representative from Luxembourg, and in the following year, on the exact day of its coronation, the first journey begun. After more than half a century in pilgrimage, in which the Statue visited 64 countries from several continents, some of them several times, the Rectory of the Shrine of Fatima considered that the Statue shouldn't travel anymore, unless in an exceptional circumstance. In May 2000, it was placed in the Fatima Light and Peace exhibition, where it was venerated by tens of thousands of visitors. After three years, on December 8th 2003, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Statue was enthroned in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima in a column beside the main altar. The Statue left again on May 12th 2014, first for a visit to the religious contemplative communities in Portugal, which went on until February 2nd 2015, and after to all the Portuguese dioceses, from May 13th 2015 to May 13th 2016.

Shrine of Fatima celebrates the 58th anniversary of the *Laus perennis* establishment

Our Lady of Fatima's Sisters of Reparation ensure the daytime service and permanent adoration / **Cátia Filipe**

On the November 13th pilgrimage 1959, at the Shrine of Fatima, Monsignor João Pereira Venâncio, bishop of Leiria, informed the pilgrims that, after the pontifical he was to celebrate, on New Year's Eve 1960, he would take the Blessed Sacrament to the Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in the New Hospital, beginning the *Laus perennis*, which is the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament day and night, in a solemn exposition, as it was the wish of his ancestor. The adoration was trusted to the Our Lady of Fatima's Sisters of Reparation, living in Cova da Iria.

Therefore, the *Laus perennis* was established in the entire diocese, requesting the collaboration of all parishes and religious communities, to stand before the Blessed Sacrament. On January 1st 1960, the *Laus pe-*

rennis or the perpetual Eucharist adoration had begun.

When the so called "Chapel of the Sun" was finished, with a stained-glass window of the "miracle of the sun" and a painting of the Immaculate Heart of Mary's Triumph, in the Old Hospital (later the Shelter of the Sick), perpetual adoration began being held there. The establishment of a specific location for the *Laus perennis* in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima was set aside, and on January 1st, 1987, the adoration began taking place in a Chapel, on the top of the southern colonnade (current Chapel of the Angel of Peace), where the Blessed Sacrament was exhibited in a silver monstrance, from sculptor Zulmiro de Carvalho. It remained there until the construction of the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament located in

the Galilee of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul on the lower floor of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity and it is currently open day and night.

The Our Lady of Fatima's Sisters of Reparation continue to assure permanent adoration daytime service.



Sacred *Laus Perennis* is located in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity

Fr. Pio of Pietrelcina: the saint who was healed by his devotion to Our Lady of Fatima

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of his death / **Cátia Filipe**

Father Pio, baptized as Francesco Forgione, was born in Pietrelcina on May 25th 1887 (2017 marks the 130th anniversary of his birth) and died in San Giovanni Rotondo on September 23rd 1968 (2018 marks the 50th anniversary of his death). Father Pio, from the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor, was very devoted to Our Lady and it was to the Virgin of Fatima that he accredited his cure when, in 1959, a Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady was in Italy.

Father Pio faced a severe illness when he was 72 years old. It all began in April 1959, when he got weary by a pleurisy which stopped him from exercising his ministry. In August 1959, the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima arrived by helicopter to San Giovanni Rotondo, where Father Pio was.

According to some reports, on the morning of August 6th, Father Pio, even down by exhaustion, was able to go to Church and stand before the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Sitting in front of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, he offered her a rosary and kissed her feet.

In that moment, Father Pio mourned: "Oh Mother of mine, you came to Italy and found me with this disease. You came to visit me here in San Giovanni and found me suffering. Now you are leaving and I am not free from my disease! It was when his cure took place. Father Pio suddenly felt a chill, followed by a feeling of heat and well-being. The capuchin friar exclaimed: "I am healed! Our Lady has cured me!"

Father Pio had great devotion to the Virgin Mary along his entire life, by gestures and words. It is said that he used to pray the 15 mysteries Rosary up to 35 times a day. When advising the faithful, he would recommend "to love Our Lady and pray the Rosary, because the Rosary is the weapon against all the evil in the world".

Because of this connection, the Shrine of Fatima authorized the number 1 Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady, which doesn't leave the Shrine, to be present in the celebrations which started the commemorations of the 2017 ephemerides, in the Shrine of San Giovanni Rotondo.

Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady was welcomed in celebration by the suburbicarian diocese of Sabina

The Centennial celebrations were concluded in this region on December 10th / **Enzo Sorrentino**

The national pilgrimage of the venerated Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady, programed to visit 32 parish Communities in Italy – from 22 dioceses, to the Papal Basilicas of Rome, Convents and Monasteries of Contemplative Life, accompanied by the Message and Plenary Indulgence granted by Pope Francis – has reached its end.

The last stage went by the suburbicarian diocese of Sabina – Poggio Mirteto, in the Saint Biagio Parish, where on December 10th, in a solemn celebration, the Centennial of the Apparitions of Fatima celebrations officially ended. It was a joyful moment, in which predetermined dioceses and parishes participated, and in the Parish front square colourful lights illuminated the churchyard and the church front to the sound of Chants from Fatima, played by the local music band. The night was concluded with beautiful fireworks reminding the event lived to close the celebrations of the Centennial of Fatima.

President of Ukraine visited the Shrine of Fatima

Petro Poroshenko highlighted the prophetic character of the Message of Fatima / Carmo Rodeia



Commemorative medal of the Centennial of the Apparitions was presented by Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

Rector Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas welcomed, last December 17th, the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, who came

as a pilgrim to the Shrine of Fatima, in a private visit accompanied by several family and government members.

Surrounded by strong security measures, the president was welcomed by the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima who offered him the commemorative medal of the Centennial of the Apparitions. In its turn, the Rector received a painting with the image of Saint Sophia's Cathedral in Kiev, in silver.

The president signed the Shrine's book of honour in which he left a message claiming he had felt "the strength of this sacred place": "I am deeply impressed with the message of Fatima, particularly with the warning of the Russian threat to mankind, which if they do not repent, will spread its mistakes all over the world, causing wars and mass perishing", said the Ukraine's head of state reminding that his country "has been feeling in its own flesh the veracity of these prophecies".

After being welcomed in the Rectory, The President and his delegation visited some of the Shrine's places like the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima and the Chapel of the Apparitions where they prayed for peace and tranquillity in Ukraine.

Municipality of Poços de Caldas, in Minas Gerais, Brazil, marked the Centennial of the Apparitions of Fatima

Shrine of Fatima will receive a commemorative plaque of the event / Cátia Filipe

The City Hall of Poços de Caldas, in Minas Gerais, Brazil, held last October 10th a special session in the ambit of the 100 years commemorations of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, in Cova da Iria, and the 300 years of the finding of the Statue of Our Lady of Aparecida, in Aparecida.

The event, proposed through a request from Councillor Carlos Roberto de Oliveira Costa, honoured the representatives of the Parishes of Our Lady of Aparecida, Our Lady of Good Health and the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima.

The ceremony had the participation of the Administration and Management of People Municipal Secretary Ana Alice de Souza, the Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Brazil, Fr. Francisco Marins Gonçalves, the parish priest of the Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health Fr. Francisco Carlos Pereira, and other members of pastorals from different city churches and the community in general.

In addition to the diploma handed to

the parishes' representatives, two commemorative plaques were made and will be sent to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, in Portugal, and to the

National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, in Aparecida, Brazil, and therefore representing the Municipality of Poços de Caldas tribute.



Several civil entities were honoured in the ceremony

“Fatima has become a spiritual goal for me”, says the Vatican Secretary of State

Cardinal Pietro Parolin thanks the Shrine of Fatima for its welcome / Carmo Rodeia

The Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, says that Fatima has become a personal “spiritual goal” and that the place’s “beauty”, its “simplicity” and the pilgrims enthusiasm are conducive for a true meeting with God and others.

“Fatima became a spiritual goal for me, where the simplicity and the beauty of the places, the silence and the pilgrim’s enthusiasm help us to find ourselves, to meet God and our neighbour, under the maternal and tender eyes of the Virgin Mary” wrote the responsible for the Holy See diplomacy in a letter to the Shrine of Fatima, in which he thanks the attention given to him during the Centennial of the Apparitions celebration.

The Vatican Secretary of State travelled to Fatima twice in the Centennial of the Apparitions celebration context, namely in October 2016, when he presided at the last great International Pilgrim-

age before the Centennial year, and in May 2017 accompanying Pope Francis.

On May 12th he celebrated the Vigil Mass and emphasised that the message of Fatima “is the central Christianity message, it is the declaration of Jesus resuscitation and that He is the Lord of History”.

On the occasion, Cardinal Parolin stated that Fatima asks for “perseverance in the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary” to achieve peace, in the certainty that prayer is “never useless”: “In this Centennial of the Apparitions, thankful by the gift that the event, the message and the Shrine of Fatima have been along this century, we unite our voice to the voice of the Virgin Mary: ‘My soul glorifies the Lord, (...) for He has looked upon His lowly handmaid (...) His mercy extends from generation to generation’” (Lk 1, 46-50), he said.

In 2016, when presiding at the October International Pilgrimage, the Holy



Pietro Parolin was in Fatima in two different occasions

See Secretary of State said: “I am happy to be here, a pilgrim as all of you, in this place where the heart of the Virgin Mother and the heart of the Church meet”.

Pope Francis remembered his visit to Fatima during meeting with diplomats

The speech was given in the annual meeting with the accredited diplomats of the Holy See / Cátia Filipe

The Pope remembered the apostolic visits he made in 2017, among which the visit to the Shrine of Fatima for the celebration of the Centennial of the Apparitions and canonization of the Blessed Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

In the annual audience with the accredited members of the Diplomatic Corps in the Holy See, Pope Francis highlighted his presence “as a pilgrim” in Portugal, between May 12th and 13th, the way he was welcomed and how people lived those celebration moments. “I could see the faith, filled with enthusiasm and joy, that the Virgin Mary raised in the crowd of pilgrims gathered there”, said pope Francis who, in his visit to the Marian Shrine, presided at the Canonization of the Little Shepherds Jacinta and Francisco Marto.

Over the last year, the Holy Father went on another four international jour-

neys: to Egypt (from 28 to 29 of April), to Colombia (from 6 to 11 of September), to

Myanmar and Bangladesh (from November 26th to December 2nd).



“I was able to see the crowd’s faith, filled with enthusiasm and joy”

Ricardo Diniz arrived in Salvador da Bahia on the last day of 2017 with the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima

The journey began in Fatima on October 2017 / Cátia Filipe

Ricardo Diniz arrived in his sailing boat, on last December 31st, in Salvador da Bahia, in Brazil, after a journey that started in Portugal.

The lonely navigator received on October 15th, 2017, a Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which he took to Brazil, with the purpose of uniting the Centennial of the Apparitions of Fatima with the Tercentenary of Our Lady of Aparecida.

Fatima Light and Peace (FLP) – Faith moves mountains, it is true, and it was that same faith that took you to Brazil?

Ricardo Diniz (RD) – Truly, faith moves mountains, it is true, and it was that faith that allowed me to arrive in Brazil. But it wasn't that same faith that made me want to go to Brazil. The two are quite different. When I felt I had to do this journey, my reasons weren't about my faith, it wasn't my devotion to Our Lady, it wasn't my connection to this or that Church or religion. I simplified the most and focused only in faith, in the people's faith. Whatever the religion or belief, it is always emotional to see people's faith and, in this case, being Portuguese and having spent most of my life out of Portugal, I realised earlier the importance of Our Lady of Fatima to the Portuguese, but not only to them; and that is very exciting. So, from the moment I realised that the 100 years of the apparitions of Fatima coincided with the 300 years of Our Lady of Aparecida, in Brazil, I felt it was important to make this journey, because we are honouring and celebrating people's faith in a very special year of alignment between the two countries and valu-

ing that faith and that bond people have, in this case, to Our Lady of Fatima. After, with all the challenges I had in so many levels – technical, physical, financial and of health – there were moments I thought I wasn't going to make it. For example, I left Portugal with not enough food for the entire journey, I had food for a few days and I don't eat animals, so I couldn't even fish. But I went on, in a tremendous leap of faith and prayers for support and safety.

FLP – In the Centennial year this was a special journey. Did you feel that people welcomed you in Brazil and were feeling happy for having the Statue of Our Lady in their country?

RD – During the entire mission, since I started walking, when I left the altar on the October 15th mass, I was approached by people from different nationalities and that happened during the entire walk to Peniche and in all the places where I went by, specially in Cabo Verde. In Brazil it is indescribable the people's gratitude, the expression in their eyes while adoring the Statue of Our Lady, so many people wanting to touch it, to kiss it, praying, rising their hands, thanking for having it there,



"In prayer I found peace, I prayed many Hail Marys"

thanking the gesture...; it is all very special! I simply carry a message which is not mine, the focus is the message of faith, peace and love, not me. I only did what I felt I should do. May this mission be useful and an awakening of good emotions and reflections on people.

FLP – During the journey, in difficult moments, what did you think about?

RD – I had so many setbacks, technical problems on board, the weather between Canary Islands and Cabo Verde was rough; financial problems; I had moments of despair, absolute exhaustion and concern. By praying I would find peace and I prayed many Hail Marys, not only walking but also in the sea. Sometimes, I found myself, just repeating that prayer for an hour, and that gave me peace.

FLP – Do you have another journey planned?

RD – In 2017 I made the Portuguese way to Santiago and I want to continue that walk. I want to go to Cape Finisterre. I would like to make the walk from my house to Fatima, which is 160 km. I found myself thinking how beautiful it would be for Our Lady to travel by sea to other nations! There is a strong symbolism in the idea of Our Lady arriving from Portugal by sea.

FLP – What message do you wish to send?

RD – I wish it wouldn't be necessary to exist a navigator, I wish it wouldn't be necessary these gestures and statues to awake and reinforce faith in people. That it wouldn't be necessary to go to a Shrine to be closer to God. Faith comes from within, and may that connection to the Heavenly Father be pure and special.



"In Brazil the people's gratitude is indescribable"

Virgin's Statue Pilgrimage to Italy with the Marian Movement of the Message of Fatima

Celebrative moment took place in the year of the Centennial of the Apparitions / **Movimento Mariano**

After the words of farewell, in the parish of Our Lady of Fatima, in Aranova, Rome, the Sacred Pilgrim Statue of the Virgin, which arrived from Portugal on the first days of April, was again departing to meet thousands of faithful who were expecting it at the Roman Shrine of the Divine Love, about 12 Km south of Rome, along the Via Ardeatina.

This devotion was born, in the mid-18th century, when a story, about a pilgrim who was traveling to the Basilica of Saint Peter, started circulating. In the story he got lost in the roman fields and was miraculously rescued by the Statue of Our Lady with Baby Jesus which was placed at the tower of the Castle of Leva, in the surroundings. Thanks to this miraculous intervention, a pack of rabid dogs about to attack the pilgrim ran away and a group of shepherds appeared and helped the pilgrim to get back in the right direction to reach Rome. The salvation metaphor is crystal clear and also the primary context of the people's life. In 1745 the Statue of Our Lady is transferred to the main altar of the Shrine built in the proximities of the tower of the miracle, to welcome the faithful who came in greater number, drawn by the venerated Statue's fame. The Shrine was, since then, the destiny of many pilgrimages of roman citizens, some consisting in an on foot nocturnal itinerary every Summer Saturday. A tradition

and a devotion which continue to be renewed nowadays.

With the solemn confraternities procession, on the Saturday night, after the Eucharist presided by the spiritual assistant of the Movement, Monsignor Vito Gomelino, the Marian week of the precious Statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the Shrine was concluded.

On board the plane, the National Coordination for Missions collaborators, on behalf of the Rectory of the Portuguese Shrine in Italy and the Marian Movement

of the Message of Fatima in Italy, with the precious Statue, concluded this last stage of this very long Pilgrimage of Mary in 2017, in the memory of the Centennial of the Apparitions of Fatima.

The pilgrimage initiated on April 22nd 2017, scrolled thousands of miles, crossing Italy from north to south, and saw in its journey hundreds of thousands of faithful leaving them an indelible memory, and also in our hearts, united in one cause: lead us to Jesus through His mother.



Pilgrimage covered thousands of kilometres and crossed Italy from north to south

Shrine of Fatima has received a record number of Prayer Requests in the Centennial of the Apparitions year

Those responsible counted almost 400 thousand petitions until June 2017 / **Cátia Filipe**

In the Centennial of the Apparitions of Fatima's Jubilee Year, requests for prayers to the Shrine of Fatima broke all records.

Sister Giustina Mainini, the superior of the Oblate Sisters of the Virgin Mary of Fatima community, the congregation responsible for answering to the prayers requests which arrive at the Shrine, told the *Fatima Light and Peace* bulletin, that it was only possible to count these requests until the end of June 2017.

By letter, email or in person, in the first six months of 2017, Our Lady received 381 235 prayer requests.

Sister Giustina Mainini explained that the number of requests from Poland grew substantially this year. Until the end of June, 87 858 requests in the Portuguese language were counted, 30 866 in Spanish, 17 929 in French, 117 671 in English, 9 121 in Italian and 117 790 in other languages.

Prayer requests are essentially pleas for jobs and health. Among them, almost always, we can find a request for the world's peace.

It is important to remember that in 2016 the Shrine of Fatima received 243 485 prayer requests.



Oblate Sisters receive prayer requests from all over the world

Pilgrim statue in Luanda

Marian Journey overcame all expectations forcing into changes in the program / António Mucharreira

It was in an apothotic atmosphere that Luanda welcomed the venerated Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima last October 13th, almost 70 years after it visited the country in a pilgrimage which would cross more african countries.

When in Portugal, the centennial of the apparitions celebrations were ending in Fatima, the Angolan were starting to celebrate it effusively, with jubilee manifestations and unique veneration for the significant visit.

After the airbus 340 landed on the airport on February 4th around 7.30 am, the statue remained in the airport protocol room until 6.00 pm, the time the procession to the church of Our Lady of Fatima started, running over 6 km for more than 5 hours, with thousands of faithful accompanying the procession and others in the avenues sidewalks where it went by, with many waiting for quite some time to get the best places for better view of the lady brighter than the sun. Bridges, walls, balconies, trees, anything would do; it was a true sea of people, as servite Antonio Mucharreira, organizer and promoter of this pilgrimage who, moved by the situation said he had never lived moments like those:

“When I came down the stairs of the plain my legs were shaking and in that moment, I was only thinking in putting down the statue on Angolan ground, so in need of peace, in memory of all those



Our Lady's Pilgrim Statue travelled aboard an Air Bus 340

who forever perished there in the colonial war which caused so many dead on both sides”. “After the procession another unique emotion took over – he said – with thousands of people intensely saluting Our Lady. They attribute the so wished peace in their country to the fact they prayed the rosary insistently for a long time just as Our Lady asked in Fatima”.

Arriving at the church, it was even more difficult to cross the crowd, even with the police cordon and scouts opening the way.

Initially, it was planned a visit to Uíge, but due to logistic motives the plan was annulled.

Three Eucharists were celebrated daily, at 6.30 am, 11.00 am and at 6.30 pm a solemn mass, presided by several bishops; and

one of them, the Sunday mass, right after the arrival, was presided by the apostolic nuncio, with the presence of all the Angolan and São Tome and Príncipe bishops, among others, the Luanda's archbishop, monsignor Filomeno Dias, the Saurimo archbishop, monsignor Jose Imamba, and the Luanda's auxiliary bishop, monsignor Zeferino Zeca Martins.

Initially the celebrations were programmed to be held inside the temple, which is an enormous space capable to welcome over a thousand faithful, but on the second day, due to the growing pilgrim's inflow, the capuchins were forced to transfer all the 6.30 pm celebrations to the authentic shrine the church front square became.

It is worth mention that as the days

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima was in South Korea in an unprecedented visit

For two months the Statue visited 14 dioceses in the country / Cátia Filipe

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima was in South Korea for two months, where it visited 14 dioceses in an unprecedented visit.

The initiative resulted from a joint organization between the World Apostolate of Fatima in this country from the Korean peninsula and the local catholic Church, and it was held from August 22nd to October 30th.

The Shrine of Peace of Fatima, located near the boarder between North and South Korea, welcomed, from August 22nd to October 30th, a novena for the country's peace.

After, the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady visited other 13 dioceses.

On October 13th, last day of the visit, a mass was celebrated in the Ganseo Gymnasium in Busan, presided by Monsignor Sam Seok, auxiliary bishop of Busan, where 7 000 representatives of all the country's dioceses, were present.

It is estimated that in those 50 days, over 55 500 pilgrims accompanied the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima had already been in South Korea in 1978, at the time of its pilgrimage around the world.

On that same day, October 13th, it arrived in Luanda, in Angola, another Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady, almost 70 years

after its last visit to the country. The Statue travelled to Angola at the invitation of the Capuchins Friars, but it received the local Church and even some of neighbourly countries such as Namibia full attention.

According to the congregation speaker, during the Pilgrim Statue's visit, over 20 000 people celebrated the reconciliation sacrament; and one of the highlights of the celebrations was the Candle Procession on October 21st across the main streets of Luanda, in a walk that took more than five hours to complete.

Another very touching moment was the Statue's overnight stay at the Convent of the Poor Clares, where 58 sisters live.

went by more and more faithful arrived, coming from the most different and far provinces of Angola and even pilgrims coming from neighbouring countries, such as Namibia and Zaire. Many of them stayed for several days, sleeping in corners, and other lucky ones, were able to accommodate themselves in houses for pilgrims that the shrine had in the churches' backyard.

According to the capuchins speaker, it is estimated that between 15 000 and 20 000 people reached the sacrament of reconciliation during the 12 days of the statue permanency, some hadn't done it in 20 or 30 years. The same source said that more than 50 000 hosts were distributed.

There were other highlights such as the vigil – which started on Friday the 20th, right after the 6.30 pm mass, and only ended at 6.00 am the following day – experienced and participated by thousands who stood there in a contagious joy. On Saturday 21st, the great candle procession, which covered some of Luanda's avenues for more than 5 hours, was an unprecedented event for those people; not to mention the final procession to the airport, in which moments impossible to describe were experienced, because only those who lived it can understand the emotion of those people saying goodbye to the statue of Our Lady. Not even the strong police barrier was able to contain the crowd which burst towards the statue trying to touch the figure beloved by the Angolans, *mama fatinha* as they tenderly called her. Another great moment, this one more private but very touching, was the statue's visit to de convent of the poor clares in Luanda, where

it stayed overnight with the 58 nuns who live there cloistered. It was a moment Antonio Murracheira won't forget, especially when he took the rosary from the statue's hands and placed it in the mother superior's hands so that they could all have the chance to pray with such an important rosary during that night of vigil which will remain in their memories forever.

Everyone worked in unison to make sure everything turned out well, from the Angolan Police, which was always present to the permanent security features around the church. The scouts were also a great support; the large number of formidable acolytes who were true professionals; and the committee led by the capuchins fraternity, all magnanimous during the program.

Antonio Murracheira says he feels "very appreciated by the *Tap Air Portugal* gesture in the face of this pilgrimage, for offering



Pilgrim Statue was venerated by thousands of pilgrims

3 tickets for the delegation (3 servites) and another 3 for the statue which travelled by our side occupying 3 seats".

To the servite Antonio Murracheira, who has been planning at distance this pilgrimage for the last three years this was, as he said: "a great and touching experience of faith, I will never forget. The strong emotions started right after I left the plain and placed the statue on Angolan ground, 40 years after he landed in the same place with a war weapon in his hands; and now he was standing there with a peace, love and prayer weapon. It was a unique moment in which I intent to honour all those who disembarked there and mainly those who didn't returned".

The Angolans lived these days so intensely that the possibility of the statue's return in three years is already in sight, this time for a longer pilgrimage, including a visit to Uíge, where the capuchin friar maiato, is buried, who recently passed away in Fatima, during his participation on the Centennial Celebrations, and who is considered a saint by the Angolans.

Several television and radio channels in Angola and the Ecclesia, were extraordinary providing the deserved covering of the visit. It is important to emphasize the fact the TPA (Public Television of Angola) sent a team to Portugal to cover the whole event from the Portela airport to Luanda.

In Mozambique, for example, everything was seen with great enthusiasm and joy, so much that, next year, the Mozambicans want the statue to visit Nacala, in Beira, where it will be built a shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima, and Maputo the capital.

Book of Gold of the Great Novena of Fatima given at the Chapel of the Apparitions

37 Polish priests came on a pilgrimage to Cova da Iria to deliver the document / Fr. Krzysztof Czaplak and Fr. Andre Gladysz – Zakopane-Polska

The Chapel of the Apparitions, in the Shrine of Fatima, welcomed last November 19th, 2017, the *Book of Gold of the Great Novena of Fatima* by the hands of 37 Polish priests.

The book contains petitions and intentions from private individuals, religious congregations, prayer communities, parishes, as well as media, publishers and institutions from Poland and other 31 countries. It is possible to determine that approximately 3 million people were united to the idea of the *Book of Gold of the Great Novena of Fatima*.

The document has approximately 35x45 cm and it weighs about 6 kg. it is leather bounded, and it is tied with golden clasps.

Many of those who wrote this book will

unlikely get the chance to visit Cova da Iria, and the importance of leaving this book in the Chapel of the Apparitions is larger, because it symbolizes each one of these pilgrims.

There were 37 Polish priests accompanying the *Book of Gold of the Great Novena of Fatima* deliver. A prayer was also said during the deliver.

This book rises after an inquiry over Poland's Marian devotion and the country's devotion to Fatima. The investigation carried out in November 2015, through surveys to all Polish parishes – 12 thousand – according to the Polish Episcopal Conference, was done by the Institute of Sociology of the Catholic Church.

From this inquiry results it was possible to determine that the Marian devotion is an important element of the Polish Catholicism. It is characterized by a wide diversity and richness of practices and customs. Statistical data state's the existence of three main forms of Marian devotion in Poland: the rosary, the celebrations related to the month of May and the celebrations related to Fatima. It was possible to understand, for example, that in 2009 the first Saturdays celebrations were a very rare practice in the parishes; today the devotion to the first Saturdays is celebrated in almost 80% of the parishes, completely and correctly (with all the elements), in almost 30% of the Polish parishes.

“The spiritual fight is in the centre of the ‘School of Fatima’”, said the former archbishop of Maribor

Marjan Turnšek, in an interview with the bulletin *Fatima Light and Peace*, spoke of the contemporary nature of the Message of Fatima intensively lived in Slovenia / **Cátia Filipe**

Fatima Light and Peace (FLP) – How did Slovenia live the Centennial of the Apparitions?

Marjan Turnšek (MT) – In Slovenia we prepared the Centennial with a pilgrimage of the Statue of Our Lady in 2016, from May to October, and this was a beautiful and merciful experience for many faithful. Everything happened as a true mission of Our Lady in Slovenia.

The Centennial started with the first five Saturdays in a great number of parishes, from January to May, while in other parishes, another time period, from May to October, was chosen. Many groups of faithful prayed the Rosary in their Churches on the 13th of each month. Also very important was the initiative in which each community welcomed a Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, from May to October, among its families to pray the Rosary next to the Statue. Numerous pilgrimages were made to our Marian centres, but also to Fatima. Practically every month, from May to October, in each diocese, a diocesan feast of the Centennial was held. On October 14th, we celebrated the Centennial on a national level in the

Stična Monastery. For this celebration, Croatian faithful were also invited, and they came with five bishops and more than 2000 pilgrims, making a total of 6000 pilgrims. It was a truly festive Centennial closure, filled with so many spiritual gifts. We can say the same about the entire jubilee year.

(FLP) – What is left after the Centennial?

(MT) – In November, there will be a thanksgiving Slovenian pilgrimage to Stična for all the spiritual gifts. Some prayer initiatives remain alive for the future. The Message of Fatima – pray, pray and make sacrifices for peace and the conversion of sinners – is still very strong in Slovenia. Also the devotion to the first Saturdays will become more present. Also there are being prepared small groups of “little shepherds” with the mission to pray together and spread the Message of Fatima.

(FLP) – Is the Message of Fatima a current one and can it last another one hundred years?

(MT) – I believe the Message of Fatima is practically perennial and it will be

current until the end of the world. Evil is and it will always be real in the world, but also real and even stronger is the good and God wants us to participate in the positive change in the world with our good.

(FLP) – Pope Francis, recalled us last May that “we have a mother”. How can we answer to the requests Our Lady made in Fatima?

(MT) – Children show their love to their mother with fidelity to her words, to her way of living, and so do we, regarding our Celestial Mother. I think Our Lady would be pleased to see us fight against all kinds of evil and practice good; the spiritual fight is in the centre of the “school of Fatima”.

(FLP) – The Message of Fatima is a message of Peace. Can a world filled with conflicts find solutions here?

(MT) – What Mary says is true! There is no other solution for conflicts but to pray and make sacrifices; praying the Rosary and the offering of the daily life. All of this leads to conversion, primarily, of ourselves, and after, of others. Evil can only be defeated with good.

Bulgaria: “Shrine of Plevén is a beating heart”

Bulgarian Catholics celebrate the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima in the recently created Marian Shrine in Plevén / **AIS**

On July 1st, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, travelled to the Shrine of Fatima in Plevén, in northern Bulgaria, to celebrate the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima with the Bulgarian Catholics. He called the Plevén Shrine “a beating heart, from which rises again a current calling to conversion”.

When in 1996, Monsignor Petko Christov, bishop of Nicopoli, made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Fatima, in Portugal, with other Bulgarian bishops, to consecrate Bulgaria to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, he also prayed for a very special intention: “If I can obtain authorization to build a new church in Plevén, I will dedicate it to you, Our Lady of Fatima”, he promised.

In that moment, only seven years had passed after the fall of Communism and

the Catholic Church had to start over. The ex-communist governors made everything possible to prevent the authorization to build this Church.

As soon as Monsignor Christov returned home, a land was found and authorities gave permission to start building. Today, the Plevén Parish of Our Lady of Fatima is a diocesan Marian Shrine where the Mother of God is venerated by countless Bulgarian faithful. Soon, the Shrine will rise its category to National Shrine. In Bulgaria, the creation of this Shrine is highly symbolic. Indeed, it was in 1917, shortly before the start of the Russian revolution, that the Mother of God warned three little shepherds, in the small Portuguese village of Fatima, to the dramatic consequences of the emerging communism, which directly affected the Church in Bulgaria.



Centennial of the Apparitions was celebrated with great joy

National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and the Relics of the Saints Francisco and Jacinta visited Walsingham

The visit occurred between September 25th and 27th 2017 / Oliver Abasolo

In this Centennial year of Our Lady's apparition, the World Apostolate of Fatima (WAF), recognised by the Pontifical Council for the Laity as a Public Association of the Faithful had brought the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and the Relics of the newly canonised Saints Jacinta and Francisco to the different cathedrals and shrines across England & Wales. The NPVS of Our Lady of Fatima was blessed by Blessed Pope Paul VI on 13 May 1967 on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Fatima, it was given by the Bishop of Fatima for Great Britain at the closing year of the 50th Anniversary and is with the custody of the WAF. It was again blessed by Pope St. John Paul II during his apostolic visit to the UK in 1982.

The NPVS national visitation was accompanied by the Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco which have been taken from their original coffins and kept in a beautiful reliquary with two angels.

The Church has proclaimed that living Our Lady's message through the children's example is an assured path of personal sanctification for all of us. There was an opportunity to venerate the Relics of Saints Jacinta & Francisco in the 3-day Fatima Retreat at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The NPVS was received and crowned by the Rector of the Shrine of Walsing-

ham – Mgr. John Armitage on September 25th 2017, with a welcome mass at noon. The programme included talks on the Message of Fatima focusing on the Five First Saturday devotion, Rosary, consecration by wearing the brown scapular, Fatima devotions and enrolment and investiture in the Brown Scapular, mass, adoration, sacrament of reconciliation, evening vigil & procession.

The participants had the opportunity to venerate the Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco which was provided by the Postulation Centre to accompany the NPVS. A torchlight procession to the slipper chapel on the second night was led by Fr. Simon Chinery, a priest of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, who was leading the main part of the Retreat. The farewell Mass on September 27th was celebrated by Bishop Campbell, the Bishop of Lancaster who came with pilgrims from his very own Diocese which culminated in the procession of the NPVS to the slipper chapel.

The NPVS was received and crowned for the first time at Walsingham on May 13th 1971 in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the coronation of Our Lady of Fatima in 1946. It was a simultaneous coronation of all the NPV statues in the respective national shrines in 70 countries, with Walsingham chosen as the site for England.



Pilgrim Virgin was accompanied by the Little Shepherds relics

Bishop Alan Clark, then Bishop of Elmham, presided at the ceremony after concelebrating Mass with twenty other priests in the Slipper Chapel meadow. The statue was escorted from Friday Market along the Holy Mile by a procession of over 1000 people. They then later kissed the statue and touched it with their rosary beads and other articles of devotion while interceding with Our Lady of Fatima. The date also marked the anniversary of Pope Pius XII proclaiming Our Lady as "Queen of the World."

Celebrations schedule

PALM SUNDAY

- 10.30 am – Blessing of Branches and Procession, in the Prayer Area
- 11.00 am – Mass, in the Prayer Area
- 02.00 pm – Way of the Cross, in the Prayer Area
- 05.30 pm – Vespers, in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima

HOLY THURSDAY

- 09.00 am – Lauds, in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima
- 06.00 pm – Mass of the Lord's Supper, in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity
- 11.00 pm – Community Prayer of the Agony of Jesus, in the Chapel of the Death of Jesus

HOLY FRIDAY

- 00.00 – Way of the Cross to Valinhos, beginning in the Chapel of the Apparitions

- 09.00 am – Lauds, in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima
- 03.00 pm – Celebration of the Death of Jesus, in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity
- 09.00 pm – Way of the Cross, in the Prayer Area

HOLY SATURDAY

- 09.00 am – Lauds in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima
- 12.00 pm – Rosary in the Chapel of the Apparitions
- 03.00 pm – Prayer to Our Lady of Sorrows, in the Chapel of the Apparitions
- 05.30 pm – Vespers in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima

EASTER

- Saturday*
- 10.00 pm – Easter Vigil in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity
- Sunday* – Sunday's program

Fatima is the “most significant Portuguese religious tourism destination” says Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas

The Rector of the Shrine of Fatima participated in the opening session of the International Congress on Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage / Cátia Filipe



In the future, Fatima intends to break boundaries and bring people together

Fatima welcomed the International Congress on Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage and the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima seized the opening session to state that this place “is the most significant Portuguese religious tourism destination”.

“The Centennial celebration matured the city’s internationalization, placing Fatima on an international level as the most significant Portuguese religious tourism destination” said Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas in the opening session of the congress, promoted in a partnership between the City Hall of Ourem and the World Tourism Organization (WTO), under the theme “The sacred places potential as a tool to the development of sustainable tourism”, which was held in the Pastoral Centre of Paul VI, in Cova da Iria.

“The variety of the pilgrims’ origins,

who come to Fatima each year, proves that this is in fact a worldwide known Shrine. And if this was clear in the past, with the Centennial it became even more evident with the significant rise of pilgrims coming from all continents”, said the priest who was pleased that the event was happening in Fatima.

“This Congress is especially positive, because it provides us a chance to reflect on the sacred places potential, such as Fatima, as a factor of sustainable development”, he said.

On the other hand, the Rector pointed out the importance of encouraging a reflection on the pilgrimage and religious tourism potential, seeing both as complementary: “May this Congress reflect on pilgrimage and religious tourism potentials as means to the development of a sustainable tourism and as a mean to bring people together assuming a special

focus in this place” said Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas.

The Shrine’s responsible underlined the common elements between the pilgrim and the tourist experience: “When we talk about sacred places or shrines, there is a very fine line between the religious tourism and pilgrimage”, he said, emphasizing that pilgrimages, “as universal religious experiences” not only in Christianity but also in all great religions, “always tried to break boundaries and bring people together”.

“The existence of “international” or “transnational” places of pilgrimage is not a recent reality. They are a form of contact between people, a bonding mean, a path to peace. In Fatima, this is the experience of each day” said the Rector of the Shrine of Fatima.

The international congress had the support of the Ministry of Economy and counted with the presence of WTO general secretary, Taleb Rifai, as well as many ministers and ex-ministers from countries such as Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Lithuania, Macedonia and Egypt.

The Congress was also attended by many experts on the tourism sector from South Korea, Spain, Norway, Ethiopia and Israel.

The main goals of the congress were focused on the need to reflect on the competitive potential of the religious tourism sector, increasing the religious destinations attractiveness, continue to establish the religious tourism in the regional, national and international innovation networks, and share knowledge on the best policies to promote religious destinations.

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Fátima Light and Peace

Editor: Fr. Carlos Cabecinhas
Proprietor, Publisher and Editor: Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima
Social Security nr. 500 746 699
Address: Santuário de Fátima – Apartado 31 2496-908 FÁTIMA (Portugal)
Tel.: +351 249 539 600 * **Fax:** +351 249 539 668
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www.fatima.pt

Printing: Gráfica Almondina – Torres Novas
Legal Deposit: 210 650/04
ISSN: 1647-2438
 Isento de registo na E.R.C. ao abrigo do decreto regulamentar 8/99 de 9 de Junho – alínea a) do n.º 1 do Artigo 12.º

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Pilgrim Virgin Statue was in Venezuela

Marian icon was a hope for a peaceful solution to the crisis the country is facing / Diogo Carvalho Alves

Over the 30 journeys the Pilgrim Virgin Statue made during the year of the Centennial, there were countries where the Marian icon's message of peace gained a special meaning. It was the case of Venezuela, a country facing a political, social and economic crisis, which has been weakening the population's security and living conditions. Between April and December, with the theme "Light, peace and reconciliation for Venezuela", the Pilgrim Statue visited several Venezuelan dioceses and cherished the faithful's hope in the Virgin's intercession for "a peaceful and durable solution, provider of a

brighter tomorrow: more dignified, fair and human".

The request, for the Pilgrim Statue's visit arrived at the Shrine on February 2017, and came from the bishop of Maracay, Monsignor Rafael Conde Alfonso. The interlocutor between the two parties was a priest from that diocese who had been in the Shrine, as a confessor, three years before.

At the beginning, the Pilgrim Statue's visit was scheduled to visit only the diocese of Maracay, in northern Venezuela, where a vocational jubilee was beginning, but the Marian devotion of the

Venezuelan and the Portuguese community in Venezuela, strongly present there, united to the hope in Our Lady of Fatima as "a great incentive to building peace and to reconciliation", brought the desire to extend the visit to the neighbourly dioceses. The request to extend the Pilgrim Statue's presence was promptly accepted by the Shrine of Fatima.

Between April 21st and December 3rd, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue visited churches, schools, hospital, congregations, homes and institutions from several dioceses of Venezuela, a country where Catholics are the majority of the population, which due to the political instability, is living an economic and social crisis, "with security and violence problems dividing families", says the bishop of Maracay.

Speaking to the *Fatima Light and Peace* bulletin, the Maracay's prelate was very thankful for the visit "which attracted many blessings for a spiritual and pastoral renovation", and which he described as "a moment of grace in the middle of so many difficulties". In the heart of the Peace Messenger's presence, was the hope in a more human future for the country.

"In all the places the visit took place, the faithful would ask the Virgin Statue to show them the way to a peaceful and durable solution, provider of a brighter tomorrow: more dignified, fair and human, so that we can escape this tremendous crisis which is devastating us. To the Pilgrim Virgin Statue, we ask her intercession to accompany us in our pilgrimage", Monsignor Rafael Conde Alfonso concluded.

Faith, enthusiasm and a contagious joy

In all the Venezuelan dioceses where it passed by, the Pilgrim Virgin "was accompanied by manifestations of Marian faith, with much enthusiasm and a contagious joy, by crowds of Venezuelans, the portuguese community members and its descendants", said the bishop of Maracay. We can testify that in the internet page, created by the organization, to report the Marian icon's presence in that South American country.

"When arriving, the faithful approached to welcome the Statue almost immediately, with applauses, dances, role-plays, Marian chants and prayers. Among prepared and spontaneous tributes, everyone welcomed the Pilgrim Virgin Statue with great devotion", one can read in one of the publications, accompanied by photos illustrating it.

Praying the Rosary was a shared moment, where people "prayed for the Virgin's intercession for peace and reconciliation in Venezuela, and for the conversion of sinners", giving life to the Message of Fatima.



"The faithful plead the Virgin to show them the way in finding a peaceful solution"

In Marcaray there is a vast and significant community of Portuguese which brought its devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima. Between May and October, more than ten festivities in Our Lady of Fatima's honour are celebrated in that diocese. In fact, one of the parishes which received the visit of the Pilgrim Statue is named Parish of Our Lady of Fatima.

Number of pilgrims in the Shrine of Fatima in 2017 exceeds all expectations

Official statistics indicate 9,4 million pilgrims participating in 14.326 celebrations organized officially or in groups, in the Shrine / Carmo Rodeia



In the Centennial of the Apparitions Jubilee Year, the Shrine of Fatima welcomed 9.4 million pilgrims

The Shrine of Fatima welcomed, in 2017, on the occasion of the Centennial, 9,4 million pilgrims, who participated in the 14.326 official and private celebrations organized in the celebrative places of the Shrine of Fatima.

It is a record number, which exceeds the highest expectations transmitted in the beginning of the year by the civil authorities (local council and tourism) for the celebration year of the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady to the Little Shepherds in Cova da Iria.

Pope Francis presence, who came as a pilgrim of Fatima, in May, and the Saints Francisco and Jacinta's Canonization contributed for the record number of pilgrims in this Shrine, whether in organized groups – 8.881 (national and international) –, coming from 109 countries, or spontaneously.

If we consider that the greater number of pilgrims visits Cova da Iria between May and October, which is when the Shrine marks the six apparitions of Our Lady and is for that reason considered the great international anniversary pilgrimages season, it was registered in that period an average of 1,6 million pilgrims per month, with September and October as the increasingly favourite months of organized groups to pilgrimage to Fatima.

To be noted that in 2017, compared with last year, the foreign pilgrimages almost tripled (7.110 pilgrimages in 2017 and 2711 in 2016), and the number of foreign pilgrims has more than tripled (374.586 in 2017 and 124.504 in 2016). Also the origin of the groups was more diverse in 2017, confirming not only the universality of the Message of Fatima but also the internationalization of the Shrine, as a place of prayer, adoration and conversion. It is also worth mention that from Asia only, from predominantly Hindu and Muslim countries, 31.561 pilgrims visited the Shrine in organized groups, confirming the growing tendency already manifested in previous years. It is important to note the presence of numerous pilgrims coming from continental China, Republic of Korea, Philippines and Vietnam. Europe continues to be, however, the origin of the majority of pilgrims who visit Cova da Iria in groups. Countries like Italy, Poland, Spain and Ireland, and in the Centennial year particularly the Eastern Europe countries like Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Czech Republic, were noticed in the Pilgrims Department in superior numbers. From Portugal, a set of diocesan pilgrimages are to be registered, particularly the diocesan pilgrimages of Leiria-Fátima, Lisbon, Coimbra

and Porto for the number of pilgrims involved. During 2017, the diocese of Porto brought to the Shrine 80 thousand people, 40 thousand of them in the diocesan pilgrimage of September 9th. From the diocese of Lisbon, 51.612 people participated in the celebrations and from the Leiria-Fátima diocese, 27.247.

From the Shrine's official statistics regarding 2017, we must also emphasize the presence of numerous celebrants – 86.555 – as well as the number of communicants in the celebrations, exceeding the two million. The official masses continue to be the most participated celebrations in the Shrine, with 3,9 million pilgrims, followed by the Rosary and Candle Procession with 1,9 million pilgrims participating. The Chapel of the Apparitions and the two Basilicas are the most visited places, with 3,7 million and 1,1 million pilgrims. Also to note, that the organized foreign groups participate in the Way of the Cross, organized by themselves in the Little Shepherds Way.

Out of curiosity, it is also important, a statistical reference to the number of private celebrations organized in the Shrine which doubled regarding private masses (8005 in 2017 and 4535 in 2016) and also other celebrations (2092 in 2017 and 1102 in 2016).