

The Story of Fatima—Part Three of Four

Jesus Christ: Yesterday, Today, and Forever ~



This week we continue our four-part series on the events of Fatima. If you missed the first two parts, please go on-line to the Holy Redeemer website at www.holyredeemervan.org and click on the pastor's column tab on the right side of the page. The following account of the Story of Fatima is based on the booklet, "*Lucia Speaks – The Message of Fatima*," – a condensed version of *Sister Lucia's Memoirs* – published by

The World Apostolate of Fatima-USA. I have added some further insights in brackets. Enjoy.

May Our Lord and His blessed Mother Bless You,

Fr. Thomas Nathe

The Story of Fatima continued . . .

July 13, 1917, Continued . . . The Vision of Hell

During the July 13 apparition, The Blessed Virgin Mary, told the children of the need to sacrifice for the salvation of sinners. As she did so, she opened her hands and rays of light from them seemed to penetrate the earth revealing to the children a terrifying vision of hell full of demons and lost souls amid indescribable horrors. This vision of hell was the first part of the three part secret of Fatima which was unknown until the writing of Sister Lucia's *Third Memoir* dated August 31, 1941.

The second secret follows: The children looked up to the sad face of the Blessed Virgin, who spoke to them kindly: "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. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is go-

ing to end [World War One] but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the pontificate of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, 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, famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father.

"To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world." [Not knowing what Russia was, the children assumed it was a woman because Mary referred to it as "she".]

This concludes the second part of the secret. The third part was not made public until the year 2000 at the beatification ceremonies of Jacinta and Francisco Marto.

Mary specifically told Lucia not to tell anyone about the secret at this stage before continuing: "When you pray the Rosary, say after each mystery: O my Jesus! Forgive us, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are most in need." After assuring Lucia that there was nothing more, Mary disappeared off into the distance.

August 1917

As August 13th approached, the story of the apparitions had reached the anti-religious secular press, and while this ensured that the whole country knew about Fatima, it also meant that many biased and negative reports were circulating. The children were kidnapped on the morning of the 13th by the Mayor of Vila Nova de Ourem, Arturo Santos. They were interrogated about the secret; but despite his threats and promises of money, they refused to divulge it. In the afternoon they were moved to the local prison and threatened with death but determined that they would die rather than reveal the secret.

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On August 19, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta were together at a place called Valinhos, near Fatima, late in the afternoon, when they again saw Mary, who spoke to Lucia: "Go again to the Cova da Iria on the 13th and continue to say the Rosary every day." Mary also said she would perform a miracle, so all would believe, and that if the villagers had prevented the authorities from kidnapping them, the miracle would have been even greater. [Greater than the miracle of the sun!]

Looking very sad, Mary then said: "Pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners; for many souls go to hell, because there are none to sacrifice themselves and pray for them." With that she rose into the air and moved towards the east before disappearing.

By now the children had thoroughly absorbed Mary's plea for prayer and penance, and did everything they could to answer it. They prayed for hours while lying prostrate on the ground and went as long as they could without drinking in the burning heat of the Portuguese summer. They also went without food as a sacrifice for sinners to save them from hell, the vision of which had so profoundly affected them. They even knotted some pieces of old rope around their waists as a form of mortification, not removing them day or night.

September 13, 1917

On September 13 very large crowds began to converge on Fatima from all directions. Around noon the children arrived. After the customary flash of light they saw Mary on the Holm oak tree. She spoke to Lucia: "Continue to pray the Rosary in order to obtain the end of the war. In October Our Lord will come, as well as Our Lady of Dolorous and Our Lady of Carmel. Saint Joseph will appear with the Child Jesus to bless the world. God is pleased with your sacrifices. He does not want you to sleep with the rope on, but only to wear it during the daytime."

Lucia then began to put forward the petitions for cures, to be told: "Yes, I will cure some, but not others. In October I will perform a miracle so that all may believe." Then Our Lady began to rise as usual, and disappeared.

October 13, 1917

The prediction of a public miracle caused intense speculation throughout Portugal, and the journalist, Avelino de Almeida, published a satirical article on the whole business in the anti-religious newspaper *O Seculo*. People from other parts of the country descended by the tens of thousands on the cova despite the terrible storm that lashed the



mountain country around Fatima on the eve of the 13th. Many pilgrims walked barefooted, reciting the rosary as they went, all crowding into the area around the cova. By mid-morning

the weather again turned bad and heavy rain began to fall.

The children reached the Holm oak around noon and then saw the flash of light as Mary appeared before them. For the last time, Lucia asked what she wanted: "I want to tell you that a chapel is to be built here in my honor. I am the Lady of the Rosary. Continue always to pray the Rosary every day. The war is going to end, and the soldiers will soon return to their homes."

Again Lucia made requests for cures, conversions and other things. Our Lady's response was: "Some yes, but not others. They must amend their lives and ask forgiveness for their sins."

Sister Lucia tells us that at this point Mary grew very sad and said: "Do not offend the Lord our God anymore, because He is already so much offended." [How much more does our own generation offend the Lord than the people of 1917?!] Then, opening her hands, she made them reflect on the sun and, as she ascended, the reflection of her own light continued to be projected on the sun itself. After she disappeared, as the people witnessed the great miracle which had been predicted, the children saw the visions foretold during the September apparition.

(To be continued next week)