

## THE FORGOTTEN PART OF THE MESSAGE OF FATIMA

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You may consider that the Message of Fatima has progressed much since the early days. We will be celebrating soon the Centennial of the Fatima Apparitions in the year 2017. Nevertheless, there is a part of the Message which is not well known through the Universal Church. Maybe, it is not well known because it is part of the complementary apparitions of Fatima. Maybe it is not universally known because it did not occur in Portugal, but in Spain, under a different ecclesiastical jurisdiction than that of the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima. There might be a spiritual reason why it is not well known and not yet established in the world, although it was approved by the Bishop of Leiria on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September, 1939.

This forgotten message is associated with obtaining world peace, the conversion of sinners, the special grace of final perseverance for those practicing it, the grace of unity and strength for the Universal Church against inner dissensions opposing the Magisterium of the Successor of Peter. All these four graces are related to the definitive triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced at Fatima. You would ask now, then, if this message is so important, why it is forgotten by many? Precisely because it is so magnificent, precisely because it is associated with the greatest graces obtainable from heaven, it is forgotten. There is a mystery of iniquity (as Saint John Paul II used to say) whereas the evil one associated with the corruption of our societies and mankind's weaknesses has a special art for making people forget precisely what is most crucial for them to be saved, to hasten and increase in size the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary promised at Fatima. The consequences of sin diminish God's glory and grace in the mystical body of Christ, the Universal Church and we may not deserve for the moment such tremendous graces promised at Fatima. But our lack of merit is compensated abundantly by God's compassion and mercy. The signs of our time, with the pontificate of Pope Francis and his constant calls to authentic conversion, may indicate that the time has come to receive the missing graces promised to us.

The First Saturday's Devotion in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a devotional practice that includes sacramental reception of Confession (at least one per month), Holy Communion on Five Consecutive First Saturdays of the month; meditation of the Holy Rosary, including 15 minutes reflecting on its Mysteries, to accompany Mother Mary in her solitude, with the intention of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Thus, it is a Eucharistic and Marian devotion.

The five consecutive Saturdays are offered in reparation for five different offenses, blasphemies and ingratitude against the Immaculate Heart of Mary: (1) blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception; (2) blasphemies against Her virginity; (3) blasphemies against Her Divine Maternity, refusing at the same time to accept Her as the Mother of all mankind; (4) those who try publicly to

implant in the children's hearts indifference, contempt and even hate against the Immaculate Mother; (5) those who insult Her directly in Her sacred statues. It was the Sacred Heart of Infant Jesus , who requested this special reparation to the Heart of His Mother at Pontevedra, Spain, from May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 1930. Jesus said to Lucia: "Here my daughter is the motive why the Immaculate Heart of Mary made Me ask for this little act of reparation and due to it move My mercy to forgive those souls who had the misfortune of offending Her. As for you, try incessantly with all your prayers and sacrifices to move Me into mercifulness toward those poor souls."

The Apparitions began on December 10, 1925 while Sister Lucia was at the Dorothean Convent in Pontevedra. Our Lady of Fatima in the company of the Sacred Heart of Infant Jesus appeared to her while the Child Jesus said to Lucia: "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." Our Lady rested her hand on Lucia's shoulder, embracing her as a mother embraces her child. This was the second time in the history of Marian apparitions that Our Lady made physical contact with the seer. (First time was at the Apparition of Paris of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal to St. Catherine Labouré.)

#### THE GREAT PROMISE OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

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 say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me."

The promise of final perseverance is a magnificent promise only comparable to that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margarite Marie Alaquoque at Paray-le-Monial and the nine consecutive first Fridays. Only that here, we only have five consecutive first Saturdays needed to obtain the grace associated with the promise. It is like if the Good Lord grants a special consideration and privilege to those making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of His dearest Mother. Such great love has the Son for His Mother!

There were subsequent apparitions of the Infant Jesus (February 15, 1926) and Our Lady giving follow-up to Sister Lucia's mission to spread this devotion of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. There were difficulties by Lucia's confessor and apprehensions by her Mother Superior. Jesus replied: "It is true that your Superior alone can do nothing, but with my grace, she can do all." Lucia presented Jesus questions about how to solve the difficulties to implement this devotion (the same difficulties some of our priests and people find today to practice the devotion). Jesus answered them with His infinite compassion and mercy.

1. Confession can be that same Saturday or eight days after, and even more (it is understood that it can be within one month), provided that they are in the state of grace when they

receive Holy Communion on the First Saturday and have the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. (The intentionality of making reparation is crucial in this devotion. Mystery of love!)

2. Those who forget to make this intention can do so at their next Confession, taking advantage of the first opportunity to go to Confession.
3. If someone could not accomplish all those obligations on a Saturday, would Sunday not do? The answer of Jesus was direct: "The practice of this devotion will be equally accepted on the Sunday following the first Saturday, when for just motives, My priests will allow it."

If the person does not practice the devotion for five consecutive Saturdays, the person should begin it again. After completion of five consecutive Saturdays, it is strongly recommended that you continue the devotion for life, as you can always offer every five consecutive Saturdays for someone special you love, so that God's compassion and mercy will reach him or her at the hour of death.

#### COMPASSIONATE AND MERCIFUL DEVOTION

The deepness of God's compassion and mercy is clearly seen in the First Saturdays Devotion, not merely because of the concessions granted to those having some difficulties in accomplishing its conditions but also in the profound significance of its theology.

This devotion is obviously addressed to extend to the world true devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: "He (Jesus) wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart" (June 13, 1917). This is the soul of the Message of Fatima, giving structure and unity to the rest of the Message. The Immaculate Heart of Mary is not another advocacy of Our Lady. The Immaculate Heart of Mary is Her essence, the most formal representation of Her being. It was in Her Heart that she pronounced "Yes" to God's petition to become the Mother of Jesus Christ, Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, God Incarnated. Her "fiat" of joyous acceptance of God's will was pronounced in Her Heart and it changed the history of humanity forever! Jesus was firstly engendered in Her Heart and afterwards in Her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit. This mother's Heart received the new mission of becoming spiritual mother of humanity on the First Good Friday. Jesus Crucified gave Her to us as our spiritual Mother through His beloved disciple John. It was through Her Heart that the children-shepherds of Fatima received a light which was Jesus Christ himself, Her beatific vision of the Most Holy Trinity! And this light transformed the children's hearts forever, as they had the vision of the mystery of God and they were immersed into an ocean of infinite love. The experience of God's love to them came through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and this experience performed "the metanoia" they needed to understand that GOD IS FIRST! The seers of Fatima accepted God's will with heroic virtues that excelled as models to all! Everything was made through the Immaculate Heart of Mary!

To have the definitive triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the world (1) it is necessary that the hearts of many will be purified from sin. And this is done through sacramental Confession, a practice secured in the First Saturdays Devotion. (2) Then, it is also necessary that many will ordain their hearts, their priorities and values according to God's priorities: GOD IS FIRST! We

must love people and things according to God's order of priorities and values. We must love more that which is more valuable in God's hierarchy of values. We must love less that which is less valuable in God's hierarchy of values. As St. Augustine, patron saint of the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima taught: "Your value, the weight of your love." (3) We must promote a New Evangelization that will beautify the hearts of many with Christian virtues so that our world will become a better place to live in. Christian education must strive to form the heart of our children and youngsters, more than their intellects, and the hearts must be filled with charity, perfect love, accompanied by Christian virtues, to provide happiness and joy to the hearts, with peace and harmony in a balanced personality. This will create a civilization of love, a solidarity that is no other than the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced at Fatima.

In the letter of Sister Lucia to Father Gonzalvez, written on May 18, 1936, having asked Our Lord why He would not convert Russia without the Holy Father making the collegial consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Jesus responded: "Because I want my whole Church to acknowledge that consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that it may extend its cult later on, and put the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart." This passage is crucial.

The collegial consecration was performed by Saint John Paul II on March 25, 1984 at Rome. The Catholic bishops (and even the Orthodox bishops) united the Pope in consecrating the world and those nations in most need of God's mercy and compassion (especially Russia) to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We saw the New Marian Lepanto at the end of the XXth century. The Soviet Union collapsed without bloodshed, the Berlin wall was destroyed, the countries of Eastern Europe opened to the Gospel and rejected atheistic communism, beginning with the Pope's Motherland, Poland. Russia began the journey of conversion, providing for religious education after lecture hours in public schools, returning Church properties, assigning public funds for repairing churches, monasteries and shrines destroyed under Communism and providing access to religious public activities, education and media coverage. These are signs of a renewal, difficult but nevertheless authentic as all conversions are a gradual process made with difficulties, with up's and down's.

But let us look at "the forgotten part of the Message of Fatima". The changes experienced in the world after the collegial consecration are clearly a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary as prophesied in Fatima. "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." But the whole Church has not yet acknowledged that consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that we can pass to the next step, THE EXTENSION OF ITS CULT LATER ON, SO THAT THE DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY IS PUT BESIDE THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS. We can see some deviated brothers and sisters from the authentic Message of Fatima, claiming that the collegial consecration was not properly done, or that it was not made specifically of Russia. We know this is not true, as Sister Lucia clearly manifested that the consecration was accepted by heaven and we can all see the tremendous changes in world history after it was done. And we must have trust in Our Lady and her promises and in Saint John Paul II, the Fatima Pope, that accomplished such great task with the assistance of

the Holy Spirit. We must be grateful to the prevention of a nuclear war in those days of Cold War as Our Lady protected us from nuclear destruction (See text of the collegial consecration by St. John Paul II, a consecration having eternal value as it is an act of collegiality of the Universal Church, the mystical body of Christ!).

As the Message of Fatima develops gradually, after the stage of the collegial consecration comes the stage of the extension of the cult to the Immaculate Heart of Mary throughout the world. This is happening too slowly because of lack of faith and poor gratitude. We are now in this period of time. We would like to see as Pope Benedict XVI said during his pilgrimage to Fatima, that the proximity of the celebration of the Centennial of the Fatima Apparitions in the year 2017 will see the coming of the definitive triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced at Fatima.

#### “POPE FRANCIS’ EFFECT” IN TODAY’S CHURCH

Pope Francis was elected Pope on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, 2013. He immediately decided to consecrate and entrust his petrine ministry to Our Lady of Fatima. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 2013, Pope Francis’ ministry was entrusted to Our Lady of Fatima at Her Shrine in Portugal at the request of the Holy Father, who asked Cardinal Polycarp, accompanied by the Portuguese Bishop’s Conference, to consecrate him to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Then, in another rich gesture, Pope Francis requested the original statue of Our Lady of Fatima from Her Little Chapel of the Apparitions in Portugal to be brought to Rome so that he could renew the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. From time to time it is important to renew the consecration performed by Saint John Paul II as we, the faithful need to renew our spiritual alliance with Mother Mary so that we can witness Her Son, Jesus Christ, with a pure heart.

Pope Francis is a unique man, rich in gestures. He possesses the force of the Spirit as he preaches a simple yet profound Gospel of conversion and renewal. He adopted his name “Francis” seeking the spirit of renewal in the Church exhibited by Saint Francis of Assisi, seeking a humble Church that portrays the authentic image of Jesus Christ looking for the lost sheep of Israel. The Holy Father has broken many irrelevant traditions without ever breaking the orthodox doctrine just to show the creative power of the Holy Spirit in His calls to live the Gospel of Jesus in a more authentic way, closer to our Master and Saviour’s ways.

It is to this Pope that the World Apostolate of Fatima International has petitioned through the personal audience granted to its International President (accompanied by the Director of the International Secretariat) the establishment of the First Saturdays Devotion in the Universal Church so as to disseminate the cult of veneration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, “putting the devotion to this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart” as Jesus said to Sister Lucia. A letter of eight pages exposing in the Spanish language (the vernacular language of Pope Francis and the language spoken at Pontevedra) “the forgotten part of the Message of Fatima”, that is, the Eucharistic and Marian reparatory practice of the First Saturdays Devotion, the missing link needed to pass from one stage of the Message of Fatima to the next and definitive one, making possible the announced triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

“So that it may extend its cult later on” as Jesus said. And that “later on” is now, in our present time, as we spread among the faithful with our apostolic efforts the minimum knowledge needed for them to recognize the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary accomplished by the collegial consecration of Pope John Paul II. Pope Francis can be the Successor of Peter that accomplished the establishment of the cult of veneration in the Universal Church to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, through the universal practice of the First Saturdays Devotion. Thus, he will carry on the definitive triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as the extension of the First Saturdays Devotion to the Universal Church and the establishment of the cult of veneration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary throughout the world, will be our anniversary gift to Our Lady for the celebration of the Centennial of Her apparitions in Fatima in the year 2017, as Pope Benedict XVI, his predecessor, announced in his pilgrimage to Fatima on May 13, 2010. Let us pray and offer penance for the Holy Father, Pope Francis, as he guides his flock through the perils of our time, that he may be the one to fulfil “the forgotten part of the Message of Fatima.”