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FATIMA



...AND YOU

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FATIMA . . . AND YOU

Prelude . . . The Angel of Peace

In the spring of 1916 three little shepherd children had one day taken their sheep to the pasture land near the Portuguese village of Fatima. It was just another "routine day" in the lives of Lucy, aged 9, her cousin, Francis, aged 8, and his little sister, Jacinta, whose age was only 6. "We had played only a short while," wrote Lucy, many years later, "when a strong wind shook the trees and above them a light appeared, whiter than the driven snow. As it approached, it took the form of a young man, transparent with resplendent light. He began to speak: *'Fear not! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me.'*"

He knelt on the ground, bowed low, and three times recited a prayer: "*My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You. I beg pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You.*" Then he arose and said: "*Pray this way. The hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications.*"

Three times in all the Angel visited the children, the third time holding aloft a chalice with a host suspended above it, from which drops of blood fell into the chalice. Leaving both suspended in mid-air, he prostrated himself on the ground and three times recited this sublime prayer of reparation:

"Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I adore You most profoundly, and I offer You the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which He Himself is offended. And by the infinite merits of



His Most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of You the conversion of poor sinners."

The Angel then arose, gave the host to Lucy and the contents of the chalice to Francis and Jacinta, saying:

"Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Make reparation for their crimes and console your God."

Once more prostrating himself on the ground, he recited three times with the children the prayer, "*Most Holy Trinity . . .*" Then he disappeared from view.

THE BEAUTIFUL LADY

A year went by. On May 13th, 1917, in almost the same spot where the Angel had appeared, the children were once more tending their sheep. They had said their Rosary, finished their meagre luncheon and begun to play when suddenly, out of an azure blue sky, a brilliant flash of light appeared in the East. Fearing a storm, they were running excitedly to gather the sheep together and return home, when another flash, this time more brilliant than the first, literally rooted them to the spot. It had settled above the branches of a little holm oak tree and there, to their utter amazement, they beheld "the most beautiful Lady they had ever seen." "It was," writes Lucy, "*a lady dressed all in white, more brilliant than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal glass filled with the most sparkling water pierced by the burning rays of the sun.*"

Six times in all, monthly from May till October, the beautiful Lady appeared to the Children. Over and over she stressed the necessity of penance; told them that men must cease offending her Divine Son, already too grievously offended and urged them to "pray the Rosary . . . pray the Rosary" to bring to an end the war then raging and to ensure peace for the world.

Vision of Hell

During the July apparition the Mother of God showed those innocent children a terrifying vision of Hell. "She opened her hands and the light issuing from them seemed to penetrate into the very depths of the earth. Even the earth itself seemed to vanish and we saw huge numbers of devils and damned souls in a vast and fiery ocean. The devils resembled hideous black animals, each filling the air with despairing shrieks. The damned souls were in their human bodies and seemed brown in color, tumbling about constantly in the flames and screaming with terror. All were on fire, within and without their bodies and neither devils nor damned souls seemed able to control their movements. They were tossing about like fiery coals in a furnace, with never an instant's peace or freedom from pain." So terrible was the vision that Lucy said they would have died of fright were it not for the fact that the Mother of God was near and had told them that they themselves would go to Heaven. To the children she now explained:

You have seen Hell, where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish throughout the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If people do what I tell you, many souls will be saved and there will be peace."

More Terrible War (World War II)

"But if they do not stop offending God, another and more terrible war will break out in the reign of Pius XI. When a night illumined by an unknown light is seen, know that this is the signal that God gives that the chastisement of the world for its many transgressions is at hand." (The unknown light in question was seen all over Europe the night of January 25th, 1938. It was an ominous red glow, as if great cities were on fire. Three months later Hitler invaded Austria. The

“chastisement of the world” was about to become a terrible reality, the *most* terrible reality mankind has ever known.)

Russia Converted . . . and Peace

“To prevent this,” the Blessed Virgin continued, (N. B. to *prevent* the second World War, which *could* have been prevented had people heeded the warnings of Mary at Fatima) *“I shall come to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of Reparation on the first Saturdays. If people heed my request, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not, she shall spread her errors throughout the world, promoting wars and persecution of the Church. The good will be martyred; the Holy Father will suffer much; different nations will be destroyed, but in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, which will be converted and some time of peace will be given to the world.”*

Miracle of the Sun

During the July apparition the Blessed Virgin had told the children that in October she would work a miracle so great that all would believe her predictions and promises. Therefore it was to be expected that all roads would lead to Fatima on the days preceding this final apparition. *O Dia*, a secular newspaper of Lisbon, had this to say of the night of October 12th, 1917:

“All night long and into the early morning a light, persistent rain fell. It soaked the fields, saddened the air and chilled to the bone the men, women and children and the beasts plodding their way to the hill of the miracle. The rain kept falling, a soft, unending drizzle. Drops trickled down the women’s skirts of coarse wool or striped cotton, making them weighty as lead. Water dripped from the caps and broad-brimmed hats of the men, onto the new jackets of their suits for

seeing God. The bare feet of the women and the hob-nailed shoes of the men sloshed in the wide pools of the muddy roads. They seemed not to notice the rain."

Threats of Violence

Morning dawned. The ground was a veritable quagmire. Yet the light of day saw 70,000 people crowded together, singing hymns, praying the Rosary, undismayed by the dark, lowering clouds and the relentless, never-ending rain. Among the vast throng were atheists and scoffers who welcomed the impending showdown, confident that the events of the day would give the lie to all those silly and stupid fairy tales about miracles and a Lady from Heaven. There were even ugly rumors of violent treatment of the children and their parents should the affair turn out to be a fiasco. But never was it more strikingly manifested that "those who came to scoff remained to pray."

"Our Lady is Coming"

Just at noon the familiar flash appeared towards the East. "*Silence, Our Lady is coming!*" cried Lucy. Her words were passed from person to person till the whole vast assembly grew tense and alert with excited expectancy. The faces of the children assumed an ecstatic expression and the people nearby realised that once more they were gazing at the Beautiful Lady from above. The interview was brief. The Lady kept the promise made in the first apparition to tell them who she was. She announced: "*I am the Lady of the Rosary.*" Then her face grew very grave as she imparted her last message to the children: "*People must amend their lives, ask pardon for their sins, and not offend Our Lord any more for He is already too much offended.*" As she took her leave of the children, she opened her hands and from them rays of light extended in the direction of the sun. "*There she goes, there she goes!*" shouted Lucy, and her words found echo in a

great cry of astonishment from the multitude, by now observing the first awe-inspiring manifestations of the stupendous miracle of the sun.

A Wheel of Fire

Gradually the sun grew pale, lost its normal color and appeared as a sort of silver disc at which all could gaze directly without even shading their eyes. Then, to the astonishment of all present, rays of multi-colored light shot out from the sun in every direction; red, blue, green, yellow—every color of the spectrum. Meanwhile, the whole heavens seemed to be revolving as the sun spun madly on its axis like a gigantic wheel of fire, painting the rocks, the trees, the faces of the people with sunshine such as human eyes had never seen before. Three times it stopped and three times the mad dance was resumed. Then while the crowd fell to its knees in sheer terror, the sun suddenly seemed to be torn loose from its place in the heavens. Down it hurtled, closer and closer to earth, staggering “drunk-enly” as it zig-zagged through the skies, while from all parts of the now thoroughly terrified multitude arose cries of repentance and appeals for mercy. *“It’s the end of the world!”* shrieked one woman hysterically. *“Dear God, don’t let me die in my sins!”* cried another. *“Holy Virgin, protect us!”* implored a third. But just when it seemed that the end was at hand, the sun suddenly resumed its accustomed place in the heavens, whence it shone forth as peacefully as before.

Heavenly Tableau

Meanwhile, the children alone were privileged to witness a Heavenly Tableau “at the side of the sun.” Our Lady reappeared, first with St. Joseph and the Divine Infant, then with her Divine Son as a grown Man, blessing the assembled crowd, and finally in the garb of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Mary our Hope

Thus the stupendous miracle of the sun, the stamp of Divine approval on the promises made to humankind by God's own Blessed Mother. For this is the age of Mary. If our world is to be saved, it will be saved through Mary, and since almighty God has placed the peace of the world in her hands she has done all in her power to give that peace to a weary and despairing world. But that peace will not be ours without our own co-operation. That she has made abundantly clear. The Mother of God needs, pleads for, your help and mine. In this pilgrimage she is literally "hurrying around the world" in search of that "sufficient number" who will hear her requests and help her hold back the avenging hand of her Divine Son from descending in punishment on a heedless and sinful world. This may, indeed, be the last call for peace on earth in our generation; the last loving appeal of a mother's heart to a world that has turned its back on God, her Son. If it be heard, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not, the errors of Communism will spread *throughout the entire world*, and the Mother of God *did not exclude the United States of America*.

Two Forces

From the words of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima it is clear that the issue is fast being crystallized. There are two forces at work in the world, the forces of love and the forces of hate; those who are on the side of her Divine Son and those who are against Him. Truly on the side of the evil one are those who by abandoning themselves to lives of sin further wound the Heart of Jesus Christ and the Heart of His Immaculate Mother and invite Divine retribution upon the world. Those who heed the message of Mary, live Christian lives and offer their prayers and sacrifices in atonement for sin and the conversion of sinners are literally the people

who today are helping to save the world. Which side are you on? The time may be shorter than you realise.

WHAT MUST I DO?

1. *Penance . . . Reparation.*

Be prepared to make any sacrifice demanded by Christian duty. That means doing your ordinary duties well, with the acceptance of all the sacrifices this entails, offered up in reparation for sin and for the conversion of poor sinners.

2. *The Rosary.*

Recite the Rosary every day. If you are not already doing so, begin at once the family Rosary in your home. "The family that *prays* together *stays* together." After each decade add the prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin:

"Oh, my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fire of Hell and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of Thy Mercy."

3. *Consecration.*

Consecrate yourself—today—without reserve, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Be prepared to *live* that consecration. Wear her brown scapular always as evidence of your belonging to the Mother of God.

4. *The Five First Saturdays.*

Practice faithfully this devotion especially requested by the Blessed Virgin. It consists in: (a) Receiving Holy Communion on the first Saturday of five consecutive months; (confession any time during the week before). (b) Reciting five decades of the Rosary that day, meditating briefly on the meaning of each mystery. Not just a mechanical repetition of words. (c) Meditating for fifteen minutes on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary. A sermon on this subject may take the place of the meditation for all concerned.

Act of Consecration

O Mary, Virgin and most powerful Mother of Mercy/
Queen of Heaven and Refuge of sinners / we consecrate
ourselves today / to thine Immaculate Heart. / We con-
secrate to thee / our very being and our whole life, / all
that we have, / all that we love, / all that we are. / To
thee we give our bodies, / our hearts and souls; / to thee
we give our homes, / our families and our country.

Mindful of this consecration / we now promise to imi-
tate thee / by the practice of Christian virtues / without
regard for human respect. / We resolve to receive Holy
Communion / on the first Saturday of every month when
possible / and to offer daily / five decades of the
Rosary / with all our sacrifices / in the spirit of penance
and reparation. / Amen.

Prayer to Our Lady of Fatima

Queen of the Rosary, / sweet Virgin of Fatima, / who
hast deigned to appear / in the land of Portugal / and
hast brought peace / both interior and exterior / to that
once so troubled country, / we beg of thee / to watch
over our dear homeland / and to assure / its moral and
spiritual revival.

Bring back peace / to all nations of the world / so
that all, / and our own nation in particular, / may be
happy to call thee their Queen / and the Queen of Peace.

Our Lady of the Rosary, / pray for our country. Our
Lady of Fatima, / obtain for all humanity / a durable
peace. Amen.

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