

## **The Story of Our Lady of Fatima**

It all began in Fatima, Portugal with Lucia Santos and her two cousins, Francisco and Janita Marto, on Sunday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1917. The three children were in a grassland called the Cova tending sheep. As usual the children prayed the rosary after lunch. Then a beautiful young woman with a beautiful white robe came to the children. She smiled at them and said "I want you children to come here on the 13<sup>th</sup> of each month until October. Then I will tell you who I am." "Do you come here from heaven?" asked Lucia. "Yes" replied the woman. "Will I go there?" asked Lucia. "Yes" replied the woman "if you say the rosary honestly".

Then the strange woman vanished and the three children hurried home to the small village to tell their parents. The parents thought the children were crazy, they did not believe them at all and became very angry. The woman came to visit each month as promised and during her visit in August, she kept her word and said that on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October a miracle would happen. On that day the children arrived at the Cova with 70,000 other people who had heard about the wonderful lady and wanted to see her.

Finally, at noon, the children knelt down to pray the rosary. Then the miracle happened! The sun danced, whirled around and came close without hurting anyone's eyes. The sun then went back to its proper place in the sky. Then the young woman appeared in radiant brightness. "Who are you and what do you want?" asked Lucia. The woman replied, "I am the lady of the rosary and I have come to warn the faithful to amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins. People must not continue to offend the Lord, who is already deeply offended. They must say the rosary."

The Virgin Mary then asked to have a church built where she appeared. Today there is a large Basilica where people visit every year. There is also a statue of Mary in front of the Basilica where she appeared.

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