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### Was Our Lady Of Fatima An Alien?

Started by DJ\_Quinn , May 23 2005 12:28 PM

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DJ\_Quinn

Posted 23 May 2005 - 12:28 PM

"On October 13th, 1917, one of Christianity's great miracles took place at Fatima in Portugal. For a number of months, three shepherd children had been having visions of a <u>female</u> entity. Beginning on Sunday May 13th of that year, 10-year-old Lucie dos Santos and her cousins François and Jacinthe Marto had seen an apparition on the 13th of each successive month, above a small oak-tree at the heart of a natural basin called Cova da Iria. On each occasion, growing crowds also witnessed strange phenomena, <u>the details</u> of which deserve greater scrutiny. Here is a synopsis of each 'vision':

Sunday May 13th: Lucie describes everything becoming suddenly quiet, and then the 'Virgin' begins talking to her.

Wednesday June 13th: The children are accompanied by some fifty people. Lucie sees a bright flash and begins communicating with a vision that the others present neither see nor hear. The crowd does hear, though, a humming sound described as 'many bees'. The vision ends when the group hears an explosive sound, "like the blast of a firework when you hear it going up in the distance". At this point all of them see a little white cloud moving away from the tree.

<u>Friday</u> July 13th: A group of several thousand arrives with the children on this occasion. During this vision, Lucie is promised a 'great miracle' to convince the doubters during the October vision. The children are also entrusted with three secrets (the third of which gained legendary status, before being revealed just a few years ago). Once again, an explosive sound is heard and the little white cloud moves away. Again the crowd hear the "humming of a bee", and notice a decline in daylight.

Monday August 13th: The children are unable to attend as a local official had detained them due to the public disorder being caused. Nevertheless, a crowd close to 20,000 gathers and once again see and hear the usual sequence of events. Witnesses also describe seeing "a <a href="mailto:luminous">luminous</a> globe turning around on itself".

Thursday September 13th: The children are accompanied by more than 25,000 people - including two investigating priests. The crowd notices a bright sphere approaching from the sky. Lucie again speaks with the 'Virgin'. As she departs, the crowd cries "There She goes!" as they sight a luminous oval moving away, "calmly but with a certain speed". At this point the group also observe a <a href="shower"><u>shower</u></a> of what later became known as 'rose petals' - although original acounts actually suggest silvery flakes which dissolved as witnesses caught them in their hands.

Saturday October 13th: Despite heavy rain overnight, and drizzle throughout the day, some 70,000 people turn up in expectation of the promised 'miracle'. According to the Portuguese historian Leopoldo Nunes, "at the time of the great miracle, there were present some of the most illustrious men of Letters, Arts or Sciences of the day, almost all non-believers, who had come out of simple curiosity."

At noon, Lucie was alerted to the onset of the vision by a regular tell-tale sign - a series of blinding flashes. She asked the crowd to close their umbrellas, which they did despite the continuing drizzle. Some members of the crowd reported seeing "a column of cloud [smoke] fine and bluish, perfectly visible" around the three children. Then, the miracle occurred - the "sun" was seen to <a href="mailto:dance">dance</a> and descend to the Earth. Many have surmised that what the crowd actually saw was once again one of the silvery orbs previously seen - the 'sun' was described as "a sharply outlined disk" and "a flat piece of dull silver", and that notably it "shone without hurting one's eyes. Descending with a zigzag motion, and spinning on itself, the orb/disk then seemed to fall upon the crowd, turning blood red, before ascending once more. During the orb's 'dance', the crowd reported - despite the drizzle - feeling a gentle warmth, and this appears to have been physically true because one of the great mysteries of the 'miracle' is that afterwards witnesses were surprised to find their <a href="mailto:clothes">clothes</a> almost completely dry.

Many reports also told of how the orb threw off different colours - white, yellow, blue and purple are mentioned.

On the 13th of October 1930, based on an exhaustive inquiry, the Catholic Church officially recognised the authenticity of the apparitions at Fatima.

### A Curious Substance

Many researchers, including the esteemed Jacques Vallee, have noticed the similarities in the Fatima visions to some UFO cases. One of these similarities is the 'angel hair' that fell on the crowd during the September event (the later attribution of 'rose petals' is a good example of how embellishment of religious accounts occurs). 'Angel Hair' is a phenomenon well-known in ufology, where silver craft - variously described as disks, spheres and cigars - are seen leaving a white contrail. Soon, a cobweb-like substance is found to fall from the sky, sometimes in flakes but also quite often in long strands which drape themselves over power-lines and fences. When witnesses attempt to pick up some of the substance, it seems to disintegrate into nothing at their touch. The curious substance which showered on the crowd at Fatima no doubt conforms to the usual appearance of angel hair - silvery orbs (moving often in zig-zag motion, and also turning 'blood red' at high noon no less), explosive sounds, the sublimation of the substance as people touch it. Additionally, it should be noted that the sublimation is said to sometimes occur with a trace of light blue smoke or vapour...a possible link with the fine blue cloud seen around the children?

Consider these accounts of 'angel hair' over the years (see here for a substantial list):

In 1477, in Japan, white cotton-like <u>material</u> fell for 6 hours after a luminous object crossed the sky
In 1596, in Japan, a greath earthquake struck the Kyoto area at night and strange white hair fell over the region.
In 1702, once again in Japan, at high noon the sun changed colour to a blood-like red and strings of a substance similar to white cotton fell to the ground.

In 1945, in the US, a man was hunting when he saw a UFO land in a clearing in the woods. The craft then emitted a humming sound, began revolving and ascended vertically. As it disappeared it discharged a shower of silvery thread-like material.

In 1952, in France, 'saucers' were seen travelling in pairs in a 'zig-zag' motion. These objects left long trails which drifted down and covered trees, telephone wires and houses.

In 1954, in France, a mysterious explosion was heard, enough to make the roof tiles on houses shake. A few minutes later, white strands fell on the countryside, which evaporated when people touched them.

Also in 1954 in France (on Oct 13th no less), a witness reported seeing a huge white disk moving at tremendous speed. Suddenly it exploded in full flight, and a smaller silver object seemed to spurt from the explosion and continued on a southward trajectory. The remnants of the disk fell gently like shredded paper.

In 1998, at Quirindi in Australia, a 61-year-old said she saw cobwebs falling from the sky. On looking up, she saw some twenty silver orbs, which continued floating around the sky for another hour and a half. When she tried to pick up the substance, it disintegrated in her hand.

In 2000, residents of two north-Italian towns reported an unusually loud boom, followed by a shower of "long sheer white filaments drifting down from the sky."

The phenomenon of angel hair has not been at the forefront of modern UFO research, partly because recently there haven't been a great number of reports, and also because many people accept the orthodox line that the 'angel hair' is in fact the web of migrating ballooning spiders, which travel on the air currents using silken web 'parachutes'.

Many skeptics point to a paper written by researcher Brian Boldman which <u>supports</u> the spider web hypothesis (<u>the original</u> website appears to be down, but it is available via Google's cache). In it, he puts forward his hypothesis that angel hair UFOs are in fact statically charged balls of spider web, based on numerous accounts of the angel hair appearing to behave as if it were charged (eg. 'jumping' from grass onto one's hand). The ballooning spider hypothesis is solidly supported by the fact that instances of 'angel hair' occur very regularly around October, the usual time of migration for these spiders. Indeed, the UFO wave of 1954 - which contained many instances of angel hair - was concentrated right around the month of October.

The view of these 'orbs' as statically charged balls of spider web filaments may also be supported by the fact that they are often seen 'in formation' and joined together. For example:

In 1952 in France, two objects spotted in the sky appeared to be connected by a whitish trail, 'like an electric arc'. Angel hair fell from the sky subsequently.

In 1953 (October 13th again), four round objects were spotted by a woman after a flock of turkeys she was feeding became alarmed - she said one of the objects appeared to flying ahead of the rest, with the other three appearing to linked together. In 1954, over the course of a number of days, thousands of witnesses numerous luminous points flying over Rome in Italy, grouped in V-shapes which also came together to make a diamond shape and an "enormous Saint Andrew's cross". The sighting was followed by the falling of 'angel hair'.

 $In \ 1968 \ in \ Canada, \ a \ farmer \ saw \ three \ football-shaped \ objects. \ Two \ of \ the \ UFOs \ appeared \ to \ be \ connecte \ by \ a "long, white \ long \ a \ lo$ 

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arc or loop" which appeared to fraying, with the third object separate. Afterwards, long white filaments fell upon the farm. In 1971, in Australia, silvery-white globes were reported. Many appeared to be 'double' with a joining thread or cord, moving around each other. The objects were seen moving in separate directions, and also changing direction suddenly (which seems to argue against the wind as the propellant). Pieces of 'fairy floss' were found on the ground, which melted when touched.

However, despite being the 'poster essay' for skeptics, Boldman's view appears to have changed, as in a more recent paper (which I recommend everyone reads) he seems to be renouncing his previous conclusion:

If spider webs are angel hair, then we have been the victims of a cruel joke of nature, the similarity of two separate phenomena, both in appearance and pattern. But I consider spider web to be a red herring...the evidence seems overwhelming that angel-hair cases are indeed related to genuine UFOs, and provides more evidence of their reality. Both UFOs and angel hair deserve the serious attention of the scientific community.

The 'ballooning spider' explanation is certainly prosaic, so what aspects of 'angel hair' cases don't lend themselves to this idea? For one, the spheres are often seen heading in opposite directions, and also stopping, hovering, and making 90 degree turns. This would tend to argue against balls of web being carried on the breeze. Also, spider web normally doesn't dissolve in the hands of humans (or indeed before it hits the ground). The sheer amount may count against it as well some 'orbs' seem particularly large, and angel hair falls have covered many square miles at a time. Perhaps most importantly, when samples have been 'captured', analysis usually ends in confusion - and nobody has equated the substance with spider's web (see Boldman's essay, page 13-14). However, four separate analyses have resulted in detection of silicon, calcium, magnesium and boron each time...and Boldman points out that while the first three are common elements, the presence of boron is puzzling.

Things turn interesting when Boldman correlates something else with the presence of angel hair. Firstly, he points out that not all UFO waves have instances of angel hair reported - in fact, only the 1954 and 1973 waves showed significant reporting. These two waves not only featured angel hair, but also "were replete with a large quantity of high strangeness cases of high quality involving 'entity' sightings [and] electromagnetic (EM) effects". Graphing the UFO waves of 1954 and 1973, he found that the showers of this mysterious substance correlated strongly with reports of entities:

What is really interesting about the entity reports is that they correlate with the peaks of both waves

In the concluding chapter of this essay, I will discuss the implications of this finding and how it relates to other aspects of the 'miracle at Fatima'."

ref: http://www.dailygrail.com/node/529 (http://www.dailygrail.com/node/529)

Method		Posted 23 May 2005 - 12:30 PM
	so your saying she was an alien?	
DJ_Quinn		Posted 23 May 2005 - 12:40 PM
	I don't beleive she was an alien. Mass crowd halucination? I don't know.	
		Posted 23 May 2005 - 02:50 PM
Bogeyman	Maybe they just came along to watch the show and ended up contributing to the co	·

Mr Ed	Posted 23 May 2005 - 04:21 PM	
	I find it very annoying when people quote this muchcut it down or something next time, if you can be bothered that is. You will probably get more responses if you do.	
	Edited by Mr Ed, 23 May 2005 - 04:21 PM.	
Amalgamut	Posted 23 May 2005 - 05:30 PM	
	hmmmmm	
Gabriel	Posted 23 May 2005 - 05:32 PM	
Gustrer	they say all the fatimas have come true. the last one was the atempt on pope john paul <sub>2</sub> .	
greychupa	Posted 24 May 2005 - 07:12 AM	
	I honestly think they were eyewitnesses to some occurance involving alien beings, and their spaceships. All these facts describe meeting aliens.	
	D. J. Jan. M. Land	
earthchick	Posted 25 May 2005 - 05:07 AM	
	QUOTE(DJ_Quinn @ May 23 2005, 09:28 AM) "On October 13th, 1917, one of Christianity's great miracles took place at Fatima in Portugal. For a number of months, three shepherd children had been having visions of a female entity. Beginning on Sunday May 13th of that year, 10-year-old Lucie dos Santos and her cousins François and Jacinthe Marto had seen an apparition on the 13th of each successive month, above a small oak-tree at the heart of a natural basin called Cova da Iria. On each occasion, growing crowds also witnessed strange phenomena, the details of which deserve greater scrutiny. Here is a synopsis of each 'vision':  (http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?app=forums&module=forums&section=findpost&pid=635534)	
	This is very, very interesting. I'd never heard any of this before. alien.gif	
DJ_Quinn	Posted 25 May 2005 - 06:17 AM	
	QUOTE(earthchick @ May 25 2005, 05:07 AM) QUOTE(DJ_Quinn @ May 23 2005, 09:28 AM) "On October 13th, 1917, one of Christianity's great miracles took place at Fatima in Portugal. For a number of months, three shepherd children had been having visions of a female entity. Beginning on Sunday May 13th of that year, 10-year-old Lucie dos Santos and her cousins François and Jacinthe Marto had seen an apparition on the 13th of each successive month, above a small oak-tree at the heart of a natural basin called Cova da Iria. On each occasion, growing crowds also witnessed strange phenomena, the details of which deserve greater scrutiny. Here is a synopsis of each 'vision':  (http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?app=forums&module=forums&section=findpost&pid=635534)	
	This is very, very interesting. I'd never heard any of this before. alien.gif	

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(http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?app=forums&module=forums&section=findpost pid=639052) It is ineteresting. There were other Marian apparitions, right here in Ireland as well. There were some right down the road from my house. I, unfortunatley, didn't see any "angel hair" or have any visions. Others swore that they did. Must have been to poteen. Posted 25 May 2005 - 09:35 PM **Babs** Fascinating. You say there were other 'fatima like' visions near you...could you tell us about these? I have read a little about them, but the books didn't really go into detail. I think the children and witnesses saw UFO's. Somehow the UFO phenomena is related to religion. Edited by Babs, 25 May 2005 - 09:35 PM. Posted 26 May 2005 - 05:43 AM DJ\_Quinn QUOTE(Babs @ May 25 2005, 09:35 PM) Fascinating. You say there were other 'fatima like' visions near you...could you tell us about these? I have read a little about them, but the books didn't really go into detail. I think the children and witnesses saw UFO's. Somehow the UFO phenomena is related to religion. (http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?app=forums&module=forums&section=findpost& pid=640695) There was a 'moving statues' hysteria that gripped the island of Eire during the early to mid 1980s. Everyone has a grotto story and great hordes of us Paddies seem to have undergone simultaneous hallucinations. People visiting a grotto at Melleray, Cappoquin, County Waterford, on 16 August 1985, said that a statue of the Virgin Mary came to life and gave them messages. It would seem that a mass wave of religious hysteria swept Ireland in 1985, as statues were reported moving all over the place, notably in Asdee, County Kerry and Ballinspittle, County Cork I live very close to Cappoquin, and there have been other events reported at this grotto in recently. Posted 26 May 2005 - 07:05 AM Mr Ed Does a Fatima prophecy predict the end of days? Also does anyone know if any of the other alleged prophecies were proved to be right? Posted 26 May 2005 - 07:55 AM DJ\_Quinn Among the information, the children were given three secrets. The first secret of Fatima is the vision of hell, the WWII prophecies and the rise of communism. The second secret of Fatima is the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The third secret was written down, and placed in an envelope. It eventually made it to the Vatican where despite the apparition's instructions for it to be read to the world in 1960, it has remained a secret. Some of the prophecies from the first secret are: The war is going to end. (Meaning WW1) A worse war will break out in the time of Pius XI (WW2) The good will be martyred. (Those terrorized by the Nazis?) Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, promoting wars. (the rise of communism?)

Russia will be converted and some time of peace will be given to the world.

A night illuminated by an unknown light will be the sign of coming hunger, war and persecution. (Happened on Jan. 25, 1938)

The Holy Father will have much to suffer (some say this was the attempted assassination of John Paul II on the anniversary of the Fatima apparitions. He had a vision of Mary in the crowd, which caused him to change his position and possibly kept the shot from being fatal.)

In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me.

The third secret was not for public consumption - Sr. Lucy has stated many times that the information was a message for the pope only - should he wish to share it with the world he was not to do so before 1960.

Sr. Lucia stated that, at that time, she was not permitted to reveal the 3rd part of the secret.

Bishop da Silva was given permission to read it, but he did not want the responsibility. He tried to get it to the Holy Office, but Rome refused to receive it. It was then agreed that if Bishop da Silva happened to die, the envelope would be entrusted to Cardinal Cerejeira, the Patriarch of Lisbon.

The secret was kept at the palace of the bishop of Leira until 1957, when the Holy Office changed its mind, and demanded the text of the 3rd secret. The sealed document was then delivered by the auxiliary Bishop Venancio to Bishop Cento, then the Apostolic Nuncio to Lisbon.

The sealed envelope arrived in Rome on 4/16/57. It was placed in a little chest bearing the note, "Secret of the Holy Office", and kept in the office of Pope Pius XII.

It is believed that Pope Pius XII did not read the secret, because the envelope was still sealed when Pope John XXIII opened it in 1959. This is according to Cardinal Ottaviani and Monsignor Capovilla, secretary of Pope John XXIII. Pope Pius XII had apparently decided to wait until 1960. He died on 10/9/58.

The Virgin had asked that the secret be made public in 1960 because, as Sr. Lucia told Cardinal Ottaviani, "in 1960, the Message will appear more clear." Catholics throughout the world were waiting for the Pope to reveal the third secret by 1960. Pope John XXIII and the subsequent Popes have greatly disappointed the faithful by refusing to reveal its contents.

It has not been released to the public, in my opinion. Despite the "release" in the year 2000, many do not think it has truly been revealed.

The vision described in the text is a scene in which the Pope is shot dead by soldiers, and then bishops, priests and so forth are killed in the same way, one by one, after they have all gone through a half-ruined city. This clearly has nothing to do with Pope John Paul II not being shot dead by Ali Agca.

### **DJ\_Quinn**Posted 26 May 2005 - 08:42 AM

Why several Popes did not reveal the secret is a mystery. Scholars disagree on whether or not the 3rd secret was meant only for the eyes of the Popes or if it was to be released to the general public.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, (now Pope Benedict XVI), is known for the Ratzinger Report. He has read the third secret.

In August 1984, he said that the 3rd secret concerned the "dangers, which threaten the faith and the life of Christians."

In the Ratzinger report, he wrote that the 3rd secret of Fatima has to do with what he called "denivissimis". This Latin expression means "dealing with the end times", pertaining to the latter days, or about the final events.

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# Our Lady of Fátima

# Our Lady of Fátima Our Lady of Fátima as described and personally approved by Sister Lúcia. Location Fátima, Portugal Date 13 May—13 October 1917 Witness Lúcia dos Santos Jacinta and Francisco Marto Type Marian apparition Holy See approval 1930, during the pontificate of Pope Pius XI Shrine Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fátima, Fátima, Portugal

Our Lady of Fátima (Portuguese: *Nossa Senhora de Fátima*, European Portuguese: ['nose st'nore dt 'fatime]<sup>[1]</sup>) is a title for the Virgin Mary due to her reputed apparitions to three shepherd children at Fátima, Portugal on the thirteenth day of six consecutive months in 1917, beginning on May 13. The three children were Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto.

The title of *Our Lady of the Rosary* is also sometimes used to refer to the same apparition (although it was first used in 1208 for the reputed apparition in the church of Prouille), because the children related that the apparition called herself the "Lady of the Rosary". It is also common to see a combination of these titles, i.e. **Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima** (Portuguese: *Nossa Senhora do Rosário de Fátima*).

The events at Fátima gained particular fame due to their elements of prophecy and eschatology, particularly with regard to possible world war and the conversion of Soviet Russia. [2] The reported apparitions at Fátima were officially declared "worthy of belief" by the Catholic Church.

### **History**

On May 13, 1917, ten year old Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto were herding sheep at a location known as the Cova da Iria near their home village of Fátima, Portugal. Lúcia described seeing a woman "brighter than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal ball filled with the most sparkling water and pierced by the burning rays of the sun." [3] Further appearances were reported to have taken place on the thirteenth day of the month in June and July. In these, the woman exhorted the children to do penance and Acts of Reparation as well as making personal sacrifices to save sinners. The children subsequently wore tight cords around their waists to cause themselves pain, performed self-flagellation using stinging nettles, abstained from drinking water on hot days, and performed other works of penance. According to Lúcia's account, in the course of her appearances, the woman confided to the children three secrets, now known as the Three Secrets of Fátima.

Thousands of people flocked to Fátima and Aljustrel in the following months, drawn by reports of visions and miracles. On August 19, 1917, the provincial administrator and anticlerical Freemason, [4] Artur Santos [5] (no relation to Lúcia Santos), believing that the events were politically disruptive, intercepted and jailed the children before they could reach the Cova da Iria that day. Prisoners held with them in the provincial jail later



Page from *Ilustração Portuguesa*, 29 October 1917, showing the people looking at the miracle of the sun during the Fátima apparitions attributed to the Virgin Mary.

testified that the children, while upset, were first consoled by the inmates, and later led them in praying the rosary. The administrator interrogated the children and tried unsuccessfully to get them to divulge the contents of the secrets. In the process, he threatened the children, saying he would boil them in a pot of oil, one by one unless they confessed. The children refused, but Lúcia told him everything short of the secrets, and offered to ask the Lady for permission to tell the Administrator the secrets. <sup>[6]</sup> That month, instead of the usual apparition in the Cova da Iria on the 13th, the children reported that they saw the Virgin Mary on 15 August, the Feast of the Assumption, at nearby Valinhos. <sup>[3]</sup>

As early as July 1917 it was claimed that the Virgin Mary had promised a miracle for the last of her apparitions on October 13, so that all would believe. What happened then became known as "Miracle of the Sun". A crowd believed to number approximately 70,000,<sup>[7]</sup> including newspaper reporters and photographers, gathered at the Cova da Iria. The incessant rain had finally ceased and a thin layer of clouds cloaked the silver disc of the sun. Witnesses said later it could be looked upon without hurting the eyes. Lúcia, moved by what she said was an interior impulse,



Photograph taken during the reputed "Dance of the Sun" at Fatima on 13 October 1917.

called out to the crowd to look at the sun. Witnesses later spoke of the sun appearing to change colors and rotate like

a wheel. Not everyone saw the same things, and witnesses gave widely varying descriptions of the "sun's dance". The phenomenon is claimed to have been witnessed by most people in the crowd as well as people many miles

away.<sup>[8]</sup> While the crowd was staring at the sun, Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta said later they were seeing lovely images of the Holy Family, Our Lady of Sorrows with Jesus Christ, and then Our Lady of Mount Carmel. They said they saw Saint Joseph and Jesus bless the people.<sup>[9]</sup> The children were aged 10, 9, and 7 at the time.

Columnist Avelino de Almeida of *O Século* (Portugal's most influential newspaper, which was pro-government in policy and avowedly anti-clerical), <sup>[3]</sup> reported the following: "Before the astonished eyes of the crowd, whose aspect was biblical as they stood bare-headed, eagerly searching the sky, the sun trembled, made sudden incredible movements outside all cosmic laws - the sun 'danced' according to the typical expression of the people." <sup>[10]</sup> Eye specialist Dr. Domingos Pinto Coelho, writing for the newspaper *Ordem* reported "The sun, at one moment surrounded with scarlet flame, at another aureoled in yellow and deep purple, seemed to be in an exceeding fast and whirling movement, at times appearing to be loosened from the sky and to be approaching the earth, strongly radiating heat". <sup>[11]</sup> The special reporter for the October 17, 1917 edition of the Lisbon daily, *O Dia*, reported the following, "...the silver sun, enveloped in the same gauzy purple light was seen to whirl and turn in the circle of broken clouds...The light turned a beautiful blue, as if it had come through the stained-glass windows of a cathedral, and spread itself over the people who knelt with outstretched hands...people wept and prayed with uncovered heads, in the presence of a miracle they had awaited. The seconds seemed like hours, so vivid were they." <sup>[12]</sup>

No movement or other phenomenon of the sun was registered by scientists at the time. [3] According to contemporary reports from poet Afonso Lopes Vieira and schoolteacher Delfina Lopes with her students and other witnesses in the town of Alburita, the solar phenomenon was visible from up to forty kilometers away. Not all witnesses reported seeing the sun "dance". Some people only saw the radiant colors, and others, including some believers, saw nothing at all. [13][14]

Since no scientifically verifiable physical cause can be adduced to support the phenomenon of the sun, various explanations have been advanced to explain the



Chapel of Apparitions, built at the place where the Fatima apparitions were reported

descriptions given by numerous witnesses. A leading conjecture is a mass hallucination possibly stimulated by the religious fervor of the crowds expectantly waiting for a predicted sign. Another conjecture is a possible visual artifact caused by looking at the sun for a prolonged period. As noted by Auguste Meessen, a professor at the Institute of Physics, Catholic University of Leuven, looking directly at the Sun can cause phosphene visual artifacts and temporary partial blindness. He has proposed that the reported observations were optical effects caused by prolonged staring at the sun. Meessen contends that retinal after-images produced after brief periods of sun gazing are a likely cause of the observed dancing effects. Similarly Meessen states that the colour changes witnessed were most likely caused by the bleaching of photosensitive retinal cells.<sup>[15]</sup> Meessen observes that solar miracles have been witnessed in many places where religiously charged pilgrims have been encouraged to stare at the sun. He cites the apparitions at Heroldsbach in Germany (1949) as an example where exactly the same optical effects as at Fatima were witnessed by more than 10,000 people.<sup>[15]</sup>

There is no evidence that people who came to Fátima, even those expecting a miracle, were staring at the sun before Lúcia spoke. Most would have been focused on the tree where the children said the apparition appeared. Some onlookers reported other phenomena, including luminous mist and the showers of flower petals seen around and above the tree during previous visitations.

In addition to the Miracle of the Sun, the seers at Fátima indicated that the apparition prophesied a great sign in the night sky which would precede a second great war. [16][17] On January 25, 1938, bright lights, an aurora borealis appeared all over the northern hemisphere, including in places as far south as North Africa, Bermuda and

California. [16][17] It was the widest occurrence of the aurora since 1709<sup>[18]</sup> and people in Paris and elsewhere believed a great fire was burning and fire departments were called. [19] Lúcia, the sole surviving seer at the time, indicated that it was the sign foretold and so apprised her superior and the bishop in letters the following day. [16][17] Just over a month later, Hitler seized Austria and eight months later invaded Czechoslovakia. [16][17]

### Three Secrets of Fátima

### First two secrets

The first secret was a vision of hell, which Lúcia describes in her Third Memoir, as follows:

"Our Lady showed us a great sea of fire which seemed to be under the earth. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in a huge fire, without weight or equilibrium, and amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. The demons could be distinguished by their terrifying and repulsive likeness to frightful and unknown animals, all black and transparent. This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, who had already prepared us by promising, in the first Apparition, to take us to heaven. Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror."[20]

The second secret included Mary's instructions on how to save souls from hell and convert the world to the Christian faith, also revealed by Lúcia in her Third Memoir:



Lúcia Santos (*left*) with her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto, 1917

"It 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 going to end: 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 illuminated 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 [sic] 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 shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world." [21]

### Fate of the three children



Statue depicting the Immaculate Heart of Mary as described by Sister Lúcia of Fátima.

Sister Lúcia reported seeing the Virgin Mary again in 1925 at the Dorothean convent at Pontevedra, Galicia (Spain). This time she said she was asked to convey the message of the First Saturday Devotions. By her account a subsequent vision of Christ as a child reiterated this request.

Sister Lúcia was transferred to another convent in Tui or Tuy, Galicia in 1928. In 1929, Sister Lúcia reported that Mary returned and repeated her request for the Consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart.

Sister Lúcia reportedly saw Mary in private visions periodically throughout her life. Most significant was the apparition in Rianxo, Galicia, in 1931, in which she said that Jesus visited her, taught her two prayers and delivered a message to give to the church's hierarchy.

In 1947, Sister Lúcia left the Dorothean order and joined the Discalced Carmelite order in a monastery in Coimbra, Portugal. Lúcia died on February 13, 2005, at the age of 97. After her death, the Vatican, specifically Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (at that time, still head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith), ordered her cell sealed off. It is believed this was because Sister Lúcia had continued to receive more revelations and the evidence needed to be examined in the course of proceedings for her possible canonization. [22]

Sister Lúcia's cousins, the siblings Francisco (1908–1919) and Jacinta Marto (1910–1920), were both victims of the Great Spanish Flu

Epidemic of 1918-20. Francisco and Jacinta were declared venerable by Pope John Paul II in a public ceremony at Fatima on May 13, 1989. He returned there on May 13, 2000 to declare them 'blessed' (a title of veneration below that of sainthood; see Canonization). Jacinta is the youngest non-martyred child ever to be beatified.

In 1936 and again in 1941, Sister Lúcia claimed that the Virgin Mary had predicted the deaths of two of the children during the second apparition on June 13, 1917. Besides Lúcia's account, the testimony of Olímpia Marto (mother of the two younger children) and several others state that her children did not keep this information secret and ecstatically predicted their own deaths many times to her and to curious pilgrims. <sup>[23]</sup> In fact, it was the first thing Jacinta told her mother when she spoke to her after the initial apparition. <sup>[24]</sup> According to the 1941 account, on 13 June, Lúcia asked the Virgin if the three children would go to heaven when they died. She said that she heard Mary reply, "Yes, I shall take Francisco and Jacinta soon, but you will remain a little longer, since Jesus wishes you to make me known and loved on earth. He wishes also for you to establish devotion in the world to my Immaculate Heart." <sup>[25]</sup>

Exhumed in 1935 and again in 1951, Jacinta's face was found incorrupt or immune from decay. "When both coffins were opened, nothing was found of Francisco but his bones, but Jacinta's face was intact and incorrupt, she seemed to be only asleep, waiting for the Resurrection, and the good odor of Paradise hung about her. Her mother was one of those who saw her." [26] Francisco's body, however, had decomposed.

### **Consecration of Russia**

According to Sister Lúcia, the Virgin Mary promised that the Consecration of Russia would lead to Russia's conversion and an era of peace.<sup>[3]</sup>

Pope Pius XII, in his Apostolic Letter *Sacro Vergente* of 7 July 1952, consecrated Russia to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Pius XII wrote,

Just as a few years ago We consecrated the entire human race to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, so today We consecrate and in a most special manner We entrust all the peoples of Russia to this Immaculate Heart...<sup>[27]</sup>

In 1952 the Pope said to the Russian people and the Stalinist regime that the Virgin Mary was always victorious. "The gates of hell will never prevail, where she offers her protection. She is the good mother, the mother of all, and it has never been heard, that those who seek her protection, will not receive it. With this certainty, the Pope dedicates all people of Russia to the immaculate heart of the Virgin. She will help! Error and atheism will be overcome with her assistance and divine grace." [28]

Popes Pius XII and John Paul II both had special relations to Our Lady of Fátima. Pope Benedict XV began Pacelli's church career, elevating him to archbishop in the Sistine Chapel on May 13,



Statue of Pope Pius XII in Fatima, Portugal. Just as a few years ago We consecrated the entire human race to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, so today We consecrate and in a most special manner We entrust all the peoples of Russia to this Immaculate Heart...

1917, the date of the first reported apparition. Pius XII was laid to rest in the crypt of Saint Peter's Basilica on October 13, 1958, the Feast of Our Lady of Fátima.

Pope John Paul II again consecrated the entire world to the Virgin Mary in 1984, without explicitly mentioning Russia. Some believe that Sister Lúcia verified that this ceremony fulfilled the requests of the Virgin Mary. [29] However, in the Blue Army's Spanish magazine, Sol de Fatima, in the September 1985 issue, Sister Lúcia said that the ceremony did not fulfill the Virgin Mary's request, as there was no specific mention of Russia, and "many bishops attached no importance to it." In 2001, Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone issued a statement, claiming that he had met with Sister Lúcia, who reportedly told him, "I have already said that the consecration desired by Our Lady was made in 1984, and has been accepted in Heaven." Sister Lúcia died on February 13, 2005, without making any public statement of her own to settle the issue.

Some maintain that, according to Lúcia and Fátima advocates such as Abbe Georges de Nantes, Fr. Paul Kramer and Nicholas Gruner, Russia has never been specifically consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by any Pope simultaneously with all the world's bishops, which is what Lúcia in the 1985 interview had said Mary had asked for. [30][31][32]

However, by letters of August 29, 1989 and July 3, 1990, she stated that the consecration had been completed; indeed in the 1990 letter in response to a question by Rev. Father Robert J. Fox, she confirmed:

I come to answer your question, "If the consecration made by Pope John Paul II on March 25, 1984 in union with all the bishops of the world, accomplished the conditions for the consecration of Russia according to the request of Our Lady in Tuy on June 13 of 1929?" Yes, it was accomplished, and since then I have said that it was made.

And I say that no other person responds for me, it is I who receive and open all letters and respond to them. [33]

### **Third Secret**

The third secret, a vision of the death of the Pope and other religious figures, was transcribed by the Bishop of Leiria and reads:

"After the two parts which I have already explained, at the left of Our Lady and a little above, we saw an Angel with a flaming sword in his left hand; flashing, it gave out flames that looked as though they would set the world on fire; but they died out in contact with the splendour that Our Lady radiated towards him from her right hand; pointing to the earth with his right hand, the Angel cried out in a loud voice: 'Penance, Penance, Penance!' And we saw in an immense light that is God: 'something similar to how people appear in a mirror when they pass in front of it' a Bishop dressed in White 'we had the impression that it was the Holy Father'. Other Bishops, Priests, Religious men and women going up a steep mountain, at the top of which there was a big Cross of rough-hewn trunks as of a cork-tree with the bark; before reaching there the Holy Father passed through a big city half in ruins and half trembling with halting step, afflicted with pain and sorrow, he prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on his way; having reached the top of the mountain, on his knees at the foot of the big Cross he was killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him, and in the same way there died one after another the other Bishops, Priests, Religious men and women, and various lay people of different ranks and positions. Beneath the two arms of the Cross there were two Angels each with a crystal aspersorium in his hand, in which they gathered up the blood of the Martyrs and with it sprinkled the souls that were making their way to God." [34]

### Controversy around the Third Secret

The Vatican withheld the Third Secret until 26 June 2000, despite Lúcia's declaration that it could be released to the public after 1960. Some sources, including Canon Barthas and Cardinal Ottaviani, said that Lúcia insisted to them it must be released by 1960, saying that, "by that time, it will be more clearly understood", and, "because the Blessed Virgin wishes it so." [35][36] When 1960 arrived, rather than releasing the Third Secret, the Vatican published an official press release stating that it was "most probable the Secret would remain, forever, under absolute seal." [37] After this announcement, immense speculation over the content of the secret materialized. According to the New York Times, speculation over the content of the secret ranged from "worldwide nuclear annihilation to deep rifts in the Roman Catholic Church that lead to rival papacies." [38]

Some sources claim that the four-page, handwritten text<sup>[2]</sup> of the Third Secret released by the Vatican in the year 2000 is not the real secret, or at least not the full secret. [39][40][41][42] In particular, it is alleged that Cardinals Bertone, Ratzinger and Sodano engaged in a systematic deception to cover-up the existence of a one-page document containing the so-called words of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which some believe contains information about the Apocalypse and a great apostasy. These sources contend that the Third Secret actually comprises two texts, where one of these texts is the published four-page vision, and the other is a single-page letter allegedly containing the words of the Virgin Mary which has been concealed. [39][40][41]

The Vatican has maintained its position that the full text of the Third Secret was published in June 2000. According to a December 2001 Vatican press release (subsequently published in *L'Osservatore Romano*), Lúcia told then Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone in an interview that the secret had been completely revealed and published - that no secrets remained. [43][44][45] Bertone, along with Cardinal Ratzinger, co-authored *The Message of Fatima*, [2] the document published in June 2000 by the Vatican that allegedly contains a scanned copy of the original text of the Third Secret.

During his apostolic visit to Portugal between May 11 and 14, 2010 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the beatification of Jacinta and Francisco Marto, [46] Pope Benedict XVI explained in a rare conversation with reporters that the interpretation of the third secret did not stop with the interpretation of a prediction of the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in Saint Peter's Square in 1981. The Third Secret of Fátima, said Benedict XVI, "has a permanent and ongoing significance" and that "its significance could even be extended to include the suffering

the Church is going through today as a result of the recent reports of sexual abuse involving the clergy". [47]

### Fátima prayers and reparations

Many Roman Catholics recite prayers based on Our Lady of Fátima. Lúcia later said that, in 1916, she and her cousins had several visions of an angel calling himself the "Angel of Portugal" and the "Angel of Peace" who taught them to bow with their heads to the ground and to say "O God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love you. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you." Lúcia later set this prayer to music and a recording exists of her singing it. [48] It was also said that sometime later the angel returned and taught them a eucharistic devotion now known as the Angel Prayer. [49][50]

Lúcia said that the Lady emphasized Acts of Reparation and prayers to console Jesus for the sins of the world. Lúcia said that Mary's words were "When you make some sacrifice, say 'O Jesus, it is for your love, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary." At the first apparition, Lúcia wrote, the children were so moved by the radiance they perceived that they involuntarily said "Most Holy Trinity, I adore you! My God, my God, I love you in the Most Blessed Sacrament." Lúcia also said that she heard Mary ask for these words to be added to the Rosary after the Gloria Patri prayer: "O my Jesus, pardon us, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need." [52]

In the tradition of Marian visitations, the "conversion of sinners" is not necessarily religious conversion to the Roman Catholic Church, for that would be the "conversion of heretics or apostates who are 'outside the church and alien to the Christian Faith' according to Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical on the Unity of the Church, Satis Cognitum". Conversion of sinners refers to general repentance and attempt to amend one's life according to the teachings of Jesus for those True Catholics who do profess the faith truly, but are fallen into sins. Lúcia wrote that she and her cousins defined "sinners" not as non-Catholics but as those who had fallen away from the church or, more specifically, willfully indulged in sinful activity, particularly "sins of the flesh" and "acts of injustice and a lack of charity towards the poor, widows and orphans, the ignorant and the helpless" which she said were even worse than sins of impurity. [54]

## **Pilgrimage**

An estimated 70,000 people assembled to witness the last of the promised appearances of the Lady in the *Cova da Iria* on October 13, 1917. The widely reported miracle of the sun was a factor that led to Fátima quickly becoming a major centre of pilgrimage. Two million pilgrims visited the site in the decade following the events of 1917. A small chapel - the *Capelinha* was built by local people on the site of the apparitions. The construction was neither encouraged nor hindered by the Catholic Church authorities. On May 13, 1920, pilgrims defied government troops to install a statue of the Virgin Mary in the chapel, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was first officially celebrated there in January 1924. A hostel for the sick was begun in that year. In 1927 the first rector of the sanctuary



The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fátima is one of the largest Marian shrines in the world.

was appointed and a set of Stations of the Cross were erected on the mountain road. The foundation stone for the present basilica was laid the next year. [57]

1930 was the year both of official church recognition of the apparition events as "worthy of belief" and the granting of a papal indulgence to pilgrims visiting Fátima. In 1935 the bodies of the visionaries Jacinta and Francisco were reinterred in the basilica. The coronation of the statue of Our Lady of Fátima there in 1946 drew such large crowds that the entrance to the site had to be barred. [58]

Today pilgrimage to the site goes on all year round and additional chapels, hospitals and other facilities have been constructed. The principal pilgrimage festivals take place on the thirteenth day of each month, from May to October, on the anniversaries of the original appearances. The largest crowds gather on 13 May and 13 October, when up to a million pilgrims have attended to pray and witness processions of the statue of Our Lady of Fátima, both during the day and by the light of tens of thousands of candles at night.<sup>[59]</sup>

### **Political aspects**

From the French Revolution onwards the Catholic Church had adopted an increasingly embattled world view and from the pontificate of Pius IX the Church had been waging war against the so-called twin enemies of liberalism and socialism. At the same time religion had become predominantly a female activity by the early twentieth century. <sup>[60]</sup>

The numerical predominance of women within the Catholic Church went alongside a corresponding development of female divine symbols. Dramatic affirmations of feminine power were given in the apparitions of the Virgin Mary which occurred all over Western Europe from the 1840s. The Virgin, usually in the form of the Immaculate Conception, revealed herself to female seers, often children. When Our Lady appeared to Catherine Labouré, Bernadette Soubirous, Lúcia dos Santos at Fátima, or to the children at Beauraing later, in 1932, and Mariette Beco in 1933, these dramatic affirmations of divine power in an increasingly irreligious/secular age, a transformation more strongly felt in the Western world, offered 'proof' of the power of heaven against "the onslaughts of secularizing governments".

"The Marian militancy of the Jesuit congregations divided the world into two camps, those who would defend the Virgin and those who would defile her. In the wake of the apparitions at Fatima in Portugal such a view of the world appeared to be shared by the Virgin herself. The 'secrets of Fatima' revealed periodically by the seer Lucia showed Mary's concern with the apostacy of Soviet Russia and the threat of communist anticlericalism. Our Lady of Fatima presented a vision of a world divided. Rome, and Mary, were ranged against the Soviet Union in a struggle between the redeemed and the fallen. With the advent of the Spanish Second Republic, the Virgin Mary [would be] seen on Spanish soil at Ezquioga. Ramona Olazabal insisted Mary had marked the palms of her hands with a sword. Seers gained much credence in Integrist and Carlist circles. The visions at Ezquioga were widely covered in the press, as were the sixteen other visitations of the Virgin to Spain in 1931. There was also the Fatima story, an officially sanctioned apparition, the cult of which, far from being condemned, was actively encouraged by the Church. As the forces of the Republic gathered strength in Spain, the Virgin Mary was to be found leading the armies of the faithful ranged against the Godless." [61]

The Blue Army of Our Lady is made up of Catholics and non-Catholics who believe that by dedicating themselves to daily prayer (specifically, of the Rosary) they can help to achieve world peace and put an end to the error of communism. In 1952, a feature film, *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*, was released. Critics held that the film overplayed the role of socialist and other leftist elements in Portuguese government as the "adversaries" of the visions. They state that since the government was controlled not by socialists but by Freemasons at the time, most government opposition to the visions would have been motivated by concern for separation of church and state, not by atheistic, antitheistic or Communistic ideology. Other critics have stated that only the enemies of the message propose such a belief.

### Official position of the Catholic Church

Private revelations do not form part of the deposit of faith of the Catholic Church, and its members are not bound to believe in any of them. However, as a matter of prudence, assent would normally be expected of a Catholic based on the discernment of the Church and its judgment that an apparition is worthy of belief. [62][63] After a canonical enquiry, the visions of Fatima were officially declared "worthy of belief" in October 1930 by the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima. [64]

Inside the Basilica of the Rosary

### Popes and Fátima

Ecclesiastical approbation does not imply that the Church provides an infallible guarantee on the supernatural nature of the event. Theologians like Karl Rahner argued however, that Popes, by authoritatively fostering the Marian veneration in places as Fátima and Lourdes, motivate the faithful into an acceptance of divine faith. [65] Popes Pius XII, Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI all voiced their acceptance of the supernatural origin of the Fátima events in unusually clear and strong terms. After the local bishop had declared that (1) the visions of the three children are credible and (2) the veneration of the Blessed Virgin is permitted, the Portuguese bishops approved and declared the genuine supernatural nature of the event. The Vatican responded with granting indulgences and permitting special Liturgies of the Mass to be celebrated in Fátima. [15] In 1939, Eugenio Pacelli, who was consecrated bishop on May 13, 1917—the day of the first apparition—was elected to the papacy as Pius XII, and became the Pope of Fátima. [66] One year after World War II had started, Sister Lúcia asked Pope Pius XII to consecrate the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She repeated this request on December 2, 1940, stating in the year 1929, the Blessed Lady requested in another apparition the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. She promised the conversion of Russia from its errors..

On May 13, 1942, the 25th anniversary of the first apparition and the silver jubilee of the episcopal consecration of Pope Pius XII, the Vatican published the Message and Secret of Fátima. On October 31, 1942, Pope Pius XII, in a radio address, informed the people of Portugal about the apparitions of Fátima, consecrating the human race to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin with specific mention of Russia. (See below)<sup>[67]</sup> On December 8, 1942, the Pontiff officially and solemnly declared this consecration in a ceremony in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. On May 13, 1946, Cardinal Masalla, the personal delegate of Pius XII, crowned in his name Our Lady of Fátima, as the Pope issued a second message about Fatima:

• "The faithful virgin never disappointed the trust, put on her. She will transform into a fountain of graces, physical and spiritual graces, over all of Portugal, and from there, breaking all frontiers, over the whole Church and the entire world". [68]

On 1 May 1948, in Auspicia Quaedam, Pope Pius XII requested the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of every Catholic family, parish and diocese.

• "It is our wish, consequently, that wherever the opportunity suggests itself, this consecration be made in the various dioceses as well as in each of the parishes and families." [69][70]

On May 18, 1950, the Pope again sent a message to the people of Portugal regarding Fátima: "May Portugal never forget the heavenly message of Fátima, which, before anybody else she was blessed to hear. To keep Fátima in your heart and to translate Fátima into deeds, is the best guarantee for ever more graces". [71] In numerous additional messages, and in his encyclicals *Fulgens Corona* (1953), and *Ad Caeli Reginam* (1954), Pius XII encouraged the veneration of the Virgin in Fatima.



Statue depicting Our Lady of Fátima.

At the end of the Second Vatican Council Pope Paul VI renewed the consecration of

Pius XII to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and, in an unusual gesture, announced his own pilgrimage to the sanctuary on the fiftieth anniversary of the first apparition. On May 13, 1967, he prayed at the shrine together with Sister Lúcia. This historic gesture further cemented the official support for Fátima. Pope John Paul II credited Our Lady of Fátima with saving his life following the assassination attempt on Wednesday, May 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fátima, in 1981. He followed the footsteps of Paul VI, on May 12, 1987, to express his gratitude to the Virgin Mary for saving his life. The following day, he renewed the consecration of Pius XII to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin. [15]

On May 12 and 13, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI had visited the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fátima and strongly stated his acceptance about the supernatural origin of the Fátima apparitions. In the first day, the Pope arrived to the Chapel of Apparitions to pray and gave a Golden Rose to Our Lady of Fátima "as a homage of gratitude from the Pope for the marvels that the Almighty has worked through you in the hearts of so many who come as pilgrims to this your maternal home". The Pope also recalled the "invisible hand" that saved John Paul II and said in a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary that "it is a profound consolation to know that you are crowned not only with the silver and gold of our joys and hopes, but also with the 'bullet' of our anxieties and sufferings". [72] In the second day, Pope Benedict's homily had pronounced in front of more than 500,000 pilgrims a reference to the Fátima prophecy about the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and related it to the final "glory of the Most Holy Trinity". [73][74]

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### **Footnotes**

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- [4] "At twenty-six he joined the Grand Orient Masonic Lodge at Leiria." OPPOSITION TO FATIMA (Part I) (http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr07/cr07pg12.asp), The Fatima Crusader, Issue 7 Page 12, Spring 1981
- [5] Stanley Jaki God and the Sun at Fatima (1999) Real View Books, Michigan, p15
- [6] Lúcia explained this in an interview with seminary professor Manuel Formigão, published in John De Marchi's True Story of Fatima (http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/tsfatima.htm), entire text online, page found 2011-06-21.
- [7] Estimates of the crowd size range from "thirty to forty thousand" by Avelino de Almeida, writing for the Portuguese newspaper *O Século* (De Marchi, John (1952). *The True Story of Fatima*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Catechetical Guild Entertainment Society.), to one hundred thousand, estimated by Dr. Joseph Garrett, Professor of Natural Sciences at Coimbra University (De Marchi 1952, p. 177), both of whom were present that day (De Marchi 1952, pp. 185–187). The accepted figure is 70,000.
- [8] Journal of Meteorology, Vol. 14, no. 142, October 1988
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- [11] (De Marchi 1952, p. 147)
- [12] (De Marchi 1952, p. 143)
- [13] Basilica and Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima (http://www.sacred-destinations.com/portugal/fatima-shrine-of-our-lady-of-fatima.htm)
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- [18] "Aurora borealis glows in widest area since 1709" [Chicago Daily Tribune, January 26, 1938, p.2
- [19] "Aurora borealis startles Europe. People flee, call fireman" [New York Times, January 26, 1938, p.25]
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- [21] Fatima In Lucia's Own words, Lucia de Jesus (1995), The Ravengate Press, pp104
- [22] Sister Lucy's Cell Ordered Sealed by Cardinal Ratzinger (http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr79/cr79pg15.asp) by Christopher Ferrara. Article in the *Fatima Crusader*, #79, p. 15, text online found 2010-05-15.
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- [26] William Walsh. Our Lady of Fatima. page 217.
- [27] PIUS PP. XII, Epist. apost. Sacro vergente anno de universae Russorum gentis Immaculato Mariae Cordi consecratione, [Ad universos Russiae populos], 7 iulii 1952: AAS 44(1952), pp. 505-
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- Sanctuary of Fátima Official Website (http://www.santuario-fatima.pt/)
- Chapel of Apparitions (Live 24h) (http://www.santuario-fatima.pt/capelinha.html)
- Online version of the book *Fátima in Sister Lucia's own words* (http://fatima.ageofmary.com/overview/in-lucias-own-words/), all five memoirs, with background information and explanatory material.
- Official Vatican statement releasing the message of Fátima (http://www.vatican.va/roman\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\_con\_cfaith\_doc\_20000626\_message-fatima\_en.html)
- The Wax Museum of Fátima (http://www.mucefa.pt/)
- Wax Museum "Life of Christ" in Fátima (http://www.vidadecristo.pt/)
- Fátima news and information (http://www.fatimavirtual.com/)
- Sacred Destinations: Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima (Portugal) (http://www.sacred-destinations.com/portugal/fatima-shrine-of-our-lady-of-fatima)
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- "The True Story of Fatima" (http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/tsfatima.htm) Book by John De Marchi
  containing first-person accounts, including those of newspaper reporters and the children themselves. Entire text
  online.
- The 13th Day (http://www.the13thday.com/) 2009 film about Fátima, produced by Ian and Dominic Higgins
- Fatima (http://www.musicafilm.it/movie-dvds/fatima.html) DVD of a 1997 film released in Italy and Portugal

• "The Call To Fatima" (http://www.thecalltofatima.com/) Documentary about the story and the message, explaining Lúcia's book *Calls of the Fatima Message*.

- United Nations' pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fátima (http://www.thefatimastatue.org/)
- High Resolution image of Our Lady of Fátima (http://uncatolico.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/ Virgen\_de\_Fatima.jpg)
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