

Ave Maria!

## Our Lady of Fatima and Divine Providence

A scripture scholar once taught that you will know the underlying reason and goal of all human events, past, present, and future, if you know the first three chapters of Genesis. Actually you need to know only one verse from those first three chapters, Genesis 3:15, *“I will put enmities between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. Thou shall strike at her heel and she shall crush thy head.”* In the Liturgy of the Hours we read that God's providence is revealed in history. Every age of history has been a living out of this battle between the woman and the serpent, the Christ and the anti-Christ. In this year of 2017 there are many significant anniversaries that show clearly this on-going spiritual battle between good and evil and Divine Providence coming to the aid of mankind.

We start with the most important and recent, as well as the key to understanding better the other anniversaries that occur this year, with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Lady's appearance to the three shepherd children at Fatima, Portugal in 1917. So much could be said and written about Fatima and so much has, 100 years' worth, of this most important supernatural event of the 20<sup>th</sup> century! To briefly put into a few short paragraphs is but an appetizer to a much deeper study and reflection of Our Lady's message so that we can put it into practice. For information about how to obtain the Plenary Indulgence for this year, visit [guadalupe Shrine.org/events/fatima-centennial](http://guadalupe Shrine.org/events/fatima-centennial); and, go to the website [livingfatima.com](http://livingfatima.com) for more information and help in living the message.

In a nutshell, what is the central message of Our Lady at Fatima?

Father Joseph de Sante Marie, OCD, an expert on the message of Fatima stated the message of Our Lady at Fatima was “Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary”. Our Lady in her apparition in July 1917 showed the children a brief vision of hell and then stated, “You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart.” Fr. Sante Marie further explains that devotion in its ultimate and most perfect expression is consecration. Our Lady also said to Lucy, and indirectly to us, “My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.” Father De Sante Marie's judgment is further validated by Fr. Joaquin Alonso, CME, the official archivist of Fatima who stated that the central message of Fatima is “Cordimarian Spirituality,” meaning “Heart of Mary Spirituality”. All of the other messages of Our Lady relate to this Immaculate Heart theme. For example, Our Lady asked for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart so that Russia would be converted. She asked the children for the Communions of Reparation on the First Saturdays which Our Lady will further explain to Lucy are for the offenses committed against her Immaculate Heart, the praying of the daily rosary, which Pope St. John Paul II stated was pondering with Our Lady in her heart her Divine Son's words and actions. Finally, Our Lady's last apparition during the miracle of the sun in October 1917 she appeared as Our Lady of Mount Carmel holding out the Brown Scapular. When Sister Lucy was asked the significance of this, she said, “Because Our Lady wants everyone to wear the Brown Scapular.” Later, Pope Pius XII would teach that the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was a sign of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Many believe that the message of Fatima is intimately connected to the proclamation of the fifth and final Marian Dogma of our Lady's Universal Co-redemption and Mediation of all Graces, and that the Triumph of her Immaculate Heart cannot take place without this proclamation nor would it be a “triumph” without it. This connection of the Dogma and Fatima is hinted to by the fact that the reigning pontiff in 1917, Pope Benedict XV, on May 5, 1917 sent a letter to his Secretary of State, referring to Our Lady as the Mediatrix of all Graces, stating, “Since all graces are dispensed through the hands of the Most Holy Virgin, we wish that the petition of her most afflicted children, more than ever, in this terrible hour, may turn with lively confidence to the august Mother of God for a speedy end of the war and a return to peace and tranquility.” The Pope also directed that the invocation “Mary, Queen of Peace” be permanently added to the Litany of Loreto. Eight days later, on May 13<sup>th</sup>, Our Lady appears to the three shepherd children identifying herself as the Queen of Peace. It is through

the Pope's invoking Our Lady as Mediatrix of all Graces that the world received this visit from the Queen of Heaven. Also, Our Lady's role as Co-redemptrix is hinted at with her appearance as Our Lady of Sorrows during the miracle of the sun.

So why does God want to establish devotion to his Mother's Immaculate Heart?

Because Our Lady is the means by which Our Lord chose to come to us the first time in the Incarnation and it is the way that he comes to us in every age since. St. Bonaventure taught that the mode of the Incarnation, the way in which Our Lord comes to us, is not only Marian at the first moment but at every moment. It is another way Our Lord is repeating from the cross, "Behold your Mother!" and "take her into your home". Also, Our Lord wants all of mankind to acknowledge her role in the work of redemption, which is the ultimate act of love: a work of love that was the work of two hearts, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary; these two hearts, united as one, brought about our redemption. Our Lord wants His Mother's part in this work to be universally acknowledged and proclaimed. Of course, Our Lady's involvement is subordinate to Christ's, but subordinate does not mean unimportant.

This, of course, leads to another anniversary that takes place this year: the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Revolt, which is nothing to celebrate. One of the last errors of the Protestant revolt to be corrected is the notion of *Christus Solus*, or Christ Alone, the notion that the work of redemption was the work of Christ alone. This error is so subtle that many Catholics have adopted this erroneous teaching by accepting a very minimalistic view of Our Lady, which was furthered by an erroneous interpretation of Vatican II, stating that the Council threw out devotion to Mary. The heresy "*Christus Solus*" is disproved by the very term itself since "Christ" means Jesus in his human nature, and Jesus did not take a human nature from thin air, but rather chose to become the child of Mary, not because He had to, but because He willed to have Mary as His Mother and Co-redemptrix in the work of redemption. St. Bonaventure in the 13<sup>th</sup> century wrote of Our Lady's role in the work of redemption:

*"Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her (Prov.31,10). This is the price of which the Apostle says: "You have been bought at a great price; glorify and bear God in your body" (I Cor. 6,20).... This price had to great to redeem. the whole world and the entire human race. Hence, it was necessary that "the price" have a divine and a human nature. Where is that price found? Nowhere but in the womb of the glorious Virgin. Thus it is read in Isaiah: Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and he shall be called Emmanuel (7,14). Emmanuel is translated: God with us. It was not fitting that a Virgin should have anyone as son but God, nor for God to have as a Mother but a Virgin. That price then could only be found in the Virgin. ... Whose is this price? This price by which we are able to reach the kingdom of heaven belongs to this Woman, the Blessed Virgin. It is hers, because taken from her, offered by her, possessed by her: taken from her in the Incarnation of the Word; offered by her in the redemption of the human race; possessed by her in attaining the glory of paradise. She brought forth this price, paid this price and possesses this price."*

What a great price Our Lord and His Holy Mother paid!

Both in the June and July messages to the children. Our Lady at Fatima spoke of establishing devotion to her Immaculate Heart. In June she said Jesus wants it, and in July she states that God wishes it, as if to doubly stress how important this devotion is to Jesus and the Holy Trinity.

How important is this devotion?

Our Lady promises those who will accept this devotion will save their souls and they will be loved by God like flowers placed by her to adorn His throne. In July Our Lady mentions the devotion in the context of saving many souls and establishing peace in the world. To this she adds the necessity of consecrating Russia to her Immaculate Heart and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. Our Lord explained to Sister Lucy the reason for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart: "Because I want my whole Church to

acknowledge that consecration as a triumph of Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that it may extend devotion to it and place devotion to this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart.” Later in 1925 Our Lady would specify that it should be Five First Saturdays, consisting of Communion, Confession, five decades of the Rosary with fifteen minutes of meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary. All with the purpose of making reparation to her Immaculate Heart.

Why *five* First Saturdays, and not seven or nine?

Sister Lucy would answer that it was to make reparation for the five kinds of blasphemies committed against her Immaculate Heart, which are:

1. blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception,
2. blasphemies against her perpetual virginity,
3. blasphemies against her Divine Maternity and spiritual maternity of all mankind,
4. those who try to instill indifference, contempt and even hatred toward this Immaculate Mother in the hearts of children, and finally,
5. those who insult her directly in her sacred images.

Our Lord wanted reparation made to the Immaculate Heart of Mary because Catholics do not give due honor to His Mother, let alone the Protestants. After 500 years of Protestant errors, many Catholics have forgotten the reason why the Catholic Faith is called “Catholic”, that is, “Universal”, meaning for every man, woman and child on the face of the earth. Our Lord wants everyone to be Catholic! What novel thought in some Catholic circles these days! Russia needs conversion not only because of Communism, but also because of its separation from Rome with the schismatic Russian Orthodox Church. St. Padre Pio said that the reason that Russia was visited with the scourge of atheistic Communism was because of all of the schismatic churches in the East - it was the most anti-Roman.

Other important 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries take place this year which are very much connected with the Fatima event. St. Maximilian Kolbe's founding of the Militia Immaculatae, the world wide movement of total consecration to Our Lady as the Immaculata. In 1917 Saint Maximilian Kolbe was inspired to establish the MI after witnessing a violent parade in St. Peter's Square by Freemasons celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their founding in which they proudly boasted, “Satan must reign in the Vatican, the Pope will be his slave.” Without knowing anything about Our Lady's appearance at Fatima, three days after the miracle of the sun, on October 16, 1917, St. Maximilian founded the MI to counteract the army of Satan with a militia of knights totally consecrated to the Immaculata. Hmmm, consecration to my Immaculate Heart – consecration to the Immaculata? Coincidence or Divine Providence? There is a saying that coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous.

The mission of Our Lady at Fatima will not be completed until all she has asked for is fulfilled. There can be no triumph of the Immaculate Heart without the conversion of Russia to the Catholic Faith and the papal proclamation the Fifth Marian Dogma. If one thinks otherwise, he has a rather odd interpretation of “Triumph”. So, there is much to ponder on this 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and much work still to be done to fulfill Our Lady's and Our Lord's desires for mankind. If we put into practice the message of Our Lady at Fatima, we will be doing something truly effective in bringing about this heavenly solution to our modern ills, assisting the woman in crushing the head of the serpent in our day. In many ways 2017 may be a year of deciding factors of whether Our Lady's triumph of Her Immaculate Heart will be sooner or later. Let us pray for the former.

Ave Maria!

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