

THE FATIMA APPARITIONS

~ AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS FOR PEACE IN 20TH CENTURY ~

Continued from previous poster:

THE REQUEST FOR THE CONSECRATION OF RUSSIA

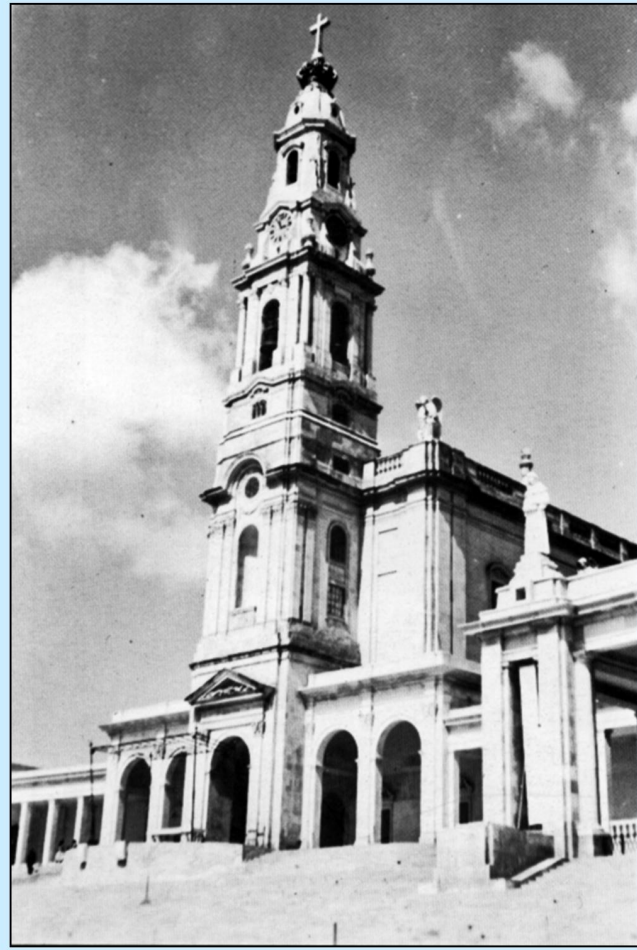
Historical Context - The evil of Communism enslaves Russia: Back on July 13, 1917 the Blessed Mother had warned that Russia (which would soon become the largest Republic in the Communist USSR) would spread its errors (atheistic Communism) and would provoke wars (of which there were many during the period of the Cold War from 1945-1991, which were promoted and supported by the USSR to spread Communism). She also said the Church would be persecuted and this too proved to be true and the persecution was particularly severe in the USSR.

Between October 1917 and his death in January 1924, Vladimir Lenin led the Bolshevik Revolution and the atheistic and authoritarian Communist government which followed. After his death, the leadership was shared for the next several years but Josef Stalin, the future dictator of the USSR, was already becoming a dominant figure in the USSR leadership when Our Lady made her December 1925 request for the First Saturday Devotion.

The Russian historian Dmitri Volkogonov wrote: "In the middle of the 1920s, Stalin had only a dim awareness of the path of the socialist construction, but he undoubtedly already had his method in mind: force, command, directives, orders. That is to say: dictatorship." And he added that at the 14th Communist Party Congress in December 1925: "The dominant figure at the Congress was Stalin." The eventual dictatorship of Stalin would have drastic consequences for not only Russia but also for the world. The errors of Russia did spread to China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba, Afghanistan and countries in Eastern Europe, South America and Africa.

When the Blessed Mother appeared to Sister Lucia on June 13, 1929, the USSR continued progressing toward Stalin's dictatorship, which would have terrible ramifications for the nation, particularly for the peasants. Farms were collectivized and priority given to industrial growth, which resulted in mass relocations of people and a great famine that claimed the lives of millions in the early 1930s. Also the Communists continued harsh persecution of the Orthodox and Catholic clergy and closing churches, monasteries, etc..

A noted historian on Communism, Archie Brown, wrote that Stalin's 50th birthday in December 1929 "saw the launch of what was later to be called 'the cult of personality'"; and that "Stalin's personal power had been increasing throughout the first half of the 1930s, but it was with the purges between 1936 and 1938 that... gave way to personal dictatorship."

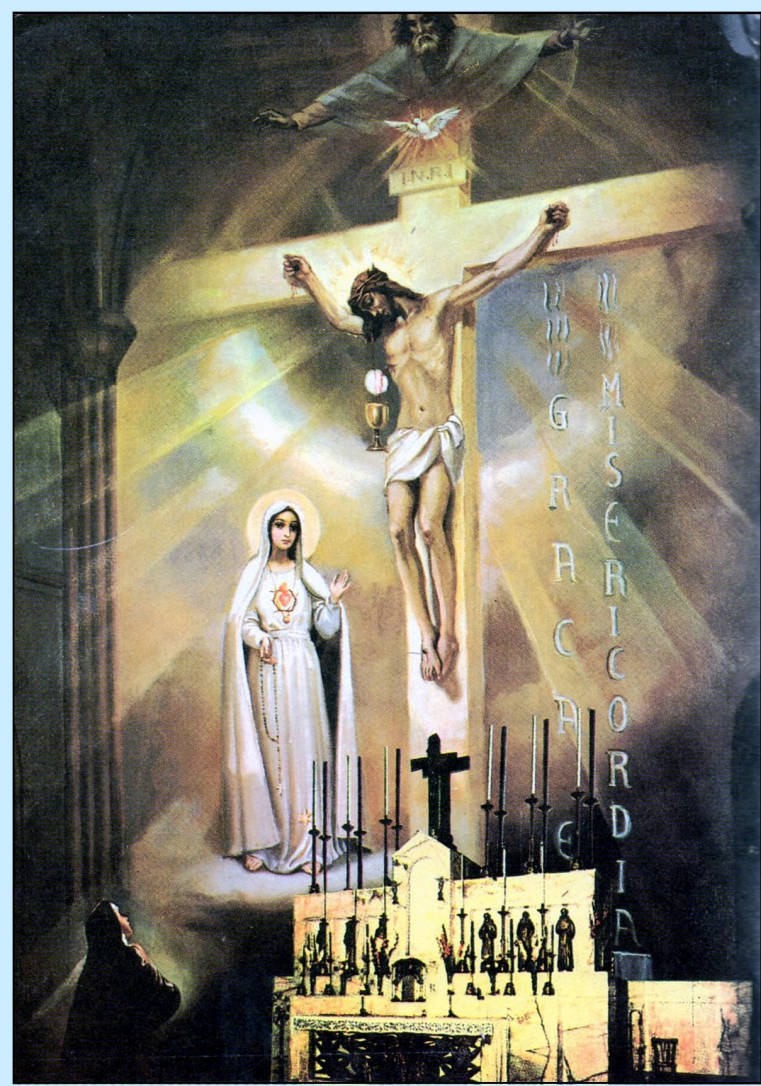


The Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima. The first foundation stone laid in 1928, dedicated by Bishop on October 13, 1930 upon approval of the apparitions and completed in 1954.

It seems unlikely a coincidence that the Blessed Mother would request the Consecration of Russia in June of 1929 considering what happened in the 1930s and beyond. The timing of both Our Lady's 1925 and 1929 requests proved to be prophetic yet unfortunately they were not heeded and the consequences would be very tragic.

June 13, 1929: While in prayer in the chapel, Sister Lucia had a very powerful and enlightening vision of the Most Holy Trinity. Our Lady of Fatima was part of that vision. Lucia wrote of this vision:

"Suddenly the whole chapel was illuminated by a supernatural light, and above the altar appeared a cross of light, reaching to the ceiling. In a brighter light on the upper part of the cross, could be seen the face of a man and his body as far as the waist; upon his breast was a dove of light; nailed to the cross was the body of another man. A little below the waist, I could see a chalice and a large host suspended in the air, onto which drops of blood were falling from the face of Jesus Crucified and from the wound in His side. These drops ran down on to the host and fell into the chalice. Beneath the right arm of the cross was Our Lady and in her hand was her Immaculate Heart. (It was Our Lady of Fatima, with her Immaculate Heart in her left hand, without sword or roses, but with a crown of thorns and flames). Under the left arm of the cross, large letters, as if of crystal clear water which ran down upon the altar, formed the words: 'Grace and Mercy.'"



Painting of Sister Lucia's "Trinity Vision" of June 13, 1929

Sister Lucia later wrote, "I understood that it was the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity which was shown to me, and I received insights about this mystery which I am not permitted to reveal."

Our Lady then spoke: "The moment has come in which God asks the Holy Father, in union with all the bishops of the world, to make the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means. There are so many souls whom the Justice of God condemns for sins committed against me, that I have come to ask reparation: sacrifice yourself for this intention and pray."

A period of time later Our Lord communicated to Sister Lucia:

"They did not wish to heed My request. Like the King of France [Louis XIV - see insert], they will regret it and then do it, but it will be late. Russia will already have spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions against the Church. The Holy Father will have much to suffer."

Sister Lucia passed the Blessed Mother's requests onto her confessor, Fr. Gonçalves, who through the Bishop of Leiria, "employed some means to have it forwarded to His Holiness Pius XI." In a pastoral letter the Bishop of Leiria officially recognized the Fatima apparitions on October 13, 1930.

While it appears that Pope Pius XI believed in the Fatima apparitions and he issued in 1937 two strong encyclicals denouncing Nazism and atheistic Communism, he did not act upon the request for the consecration of Russia. In his book Fr. Apostoli wrote "knowing about the persecution going on in Russia, we wonder even more why Pope Pius XI did not make the consecration..." but he did provide some possible explanations why the Pope did not act.



Pope Pius XII greeting the Fatima Pilgrim Statue in St. Peter's Square

In December 1940 Sister Lucia finalized a letter, which was approved by her Bishop and sent to Pope Pius XII proposing the consecration of the world be made with special mention of Russia. In October and December of 1942, the Pope made consecrations but they did not involve "all the bishops". Yet within days or weeks after both consecrations were made, major turning points occurred for the Allies against Germany and Japan in World War II in the Western European and Pacific theaters in November 1942 and in the Eastern European theater in January 1943.

In July of 1952 the Pope Pius XII made another consecration but again without "all the bishops". Yet, a series of important events followed that led to the end of the Communist-initiated Korean War and finally the end of Stalin's dictatorship.

May 29-30, 1930: In a June 12, 1930 letter to her confessor, Sister Lucia answered his questions about the First Saturday Devotions. She was able to do so since earlier on the night of May 29-30, 1930, Our Lord had explained to Lucia the reason why He requested five First Saturdays instead of nine as with novenas or seven in honor of the Sorrows of Our Lady. Our Lord said:

"My daughter, the motive is simple. There are five ways in which people offend and blaspheme against the Immaculate Heart of Mary: the blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception; against her virginity; against the Divine Maternity, refusing at the same time to accept her as the Mother of all Mankind; those who try publicly to implant in the children's hearts indifference, contempt and even hatred against the Immaculate Heart; those who insult her directly in her sacred images.

"Here, My daughter, is the reason why the Immaculate Heart of Mary, My Mother, causes Me to ask for this little act of reparation and, due to it, more of My mercy to forgive those souls who had the misfortune of offending her."

Circa January 1932: In a January 21, 1935 letter to her confessor, Sister Lucia wrote: "About three years ago Our Lord was very displeased because His requests had not been attended to and I made this fact known to the Bishop in a letter."

Occurred prior to May 18, 1936: In a May 18, 1936 letter to her confessor, Sister Lucia responded to his question as to why Jesus would not convert Russia without the Holy Father making the consecration, by providing Our Lord's answer:

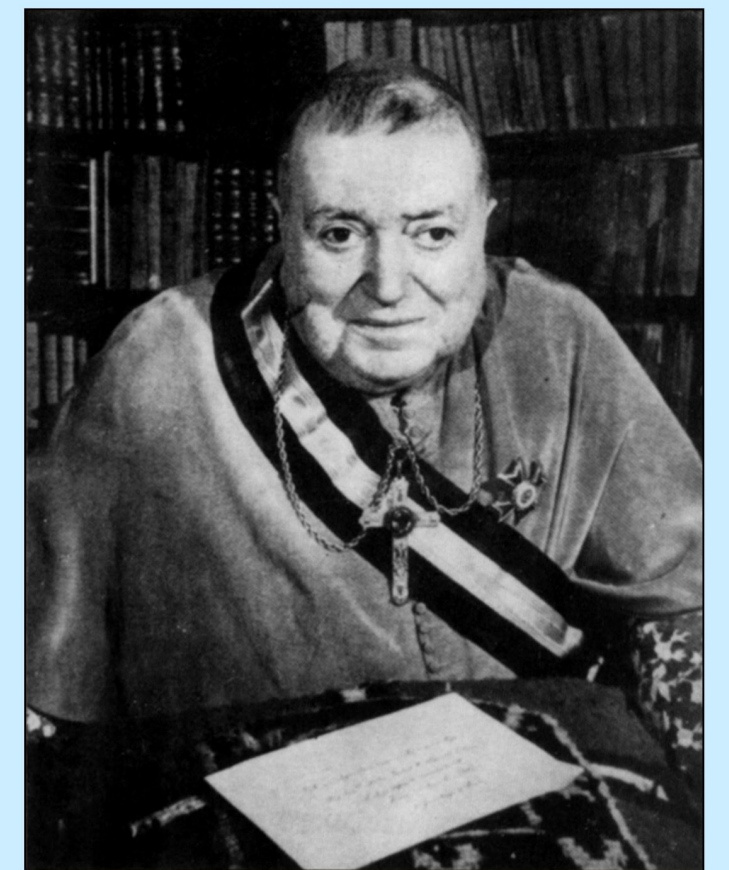
"Because I want My whole Church to acknowledge that consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary so that it may extend its cult later on and put the devotion of the Immaculate Heart besides the devotion to My Sacred Heart."

Lucia: "But my God, the Holy Father probably will not believe me unless You Yourself move him with a special inspiration."

Our Lord: "The Holy Father, pray much for the Holy Father. He will do it, but it will be late. Nevertheless, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will save Russia. It has been entrusted to her."

After continued insistence by Sister Lucia through her Superior at the convent and her confessor, on September 13, 1939, the Bishop of Leiria published the appeal of the Blessed Mother for the Communion of Reparation of the First Saturdays. Two weeks earlier, on September 1, 1939, Hitler's Germany had invaded its third country, Poland, which resulted in Britain and France declaring war on Germany.

Just prior to the invasion, Hitler's Germany and Stalin's USSR had signed a non-aggression pact on August 23, 1939, which was very advantageous to Germany during the initial phase of World War II. This self-serving action by Russia contributed to Germany's initial successes in the War against France and Britain but Russia would later pay a very heavy price almost two years later when Hitler would renege on the pact and invade Russia in June 1941.



The Bishop of the Diocese of Leiria-Fátima from 1920 to 1957, José Alves Correia da Silva, who initiated the formal investigation of and later approved the apparitions in 1930 and who received in 1944 for safekeeping the envelope in the above photo that containing the Third Secret

THE THIRD SECRET REVEALED

By order of the Bishop of Leiria, Portugal and the Most Holy Mother, in January 1944 Lucia wrote the third part of the July 13, 1917 secrets, the *Third Secret*, and placed it in a sealed envelope that was initially kept in the custody of the Bishop of Leiria. On the envelope Sister Lucia wrote that it could be opened in 1960 by either the Patriarch of Lisbon or the Bishop of Leiria. The year 1960 was based on an intuition of Sister Lucia as to when the secret would be best understood.

Later in April 1957, the envelope was transferred unopened to the Vatican's Secret Archives. The document was given to Pope St. John XXIII in August 1959 but he returned it to the Archives and did not reveal anything. Pope Venerable Paul VI read the contents in March 1965 and returned the envelope to the Archives deciding not to publish. Pope St. John Paul II asked for the envelope following the assassination attempt on his life on May 13, 1981 and on May 13, 2000, he released the *Third Secret* to the public. In the released document was Sister Lucia's original description of the *Third Secret* which follows:

"After the two parts which I have already explained [the vision of Hell and the warnings and requests], 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, men and women Religious 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, men and women Religious, and various laypeople 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."

THE VATICAN'S 'THIRD SECRET' THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

In the Vatican's May 13, 2000 release of the *Third Secret*, there was a Theological Commentary that explained the relevance of the prophetic *Third Secret* to events that did occur in the 20th century. The following is an excerpt from that release [the full commentary is available on the Vatican's Internet site]:

"That text contains a prophetic vision similar to those found in Sacred Scripture, which do not describe photographically the details of future events, but synthesize and compress against a single background facts which extend through time in an unspecified succession and duration. As a result, the text must be interpreted in a symbolic key.

"The vision of Fatima concerns above all the war waged by atheistic systems against the Church and Christians, and it describes the immense suffering endured by the witnesses of the faith in the last century of the second millennium. It is an interminable *Way of the Cross* led by the Popes of the twentieth century..."

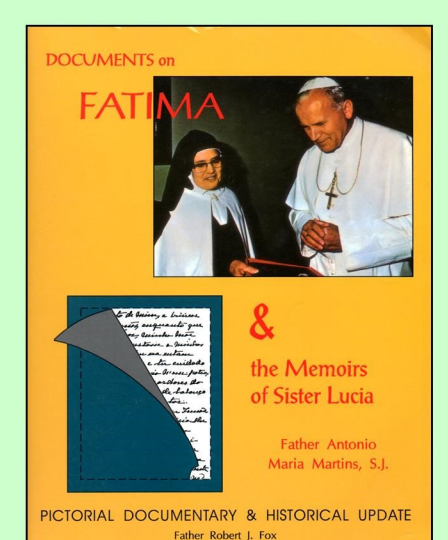
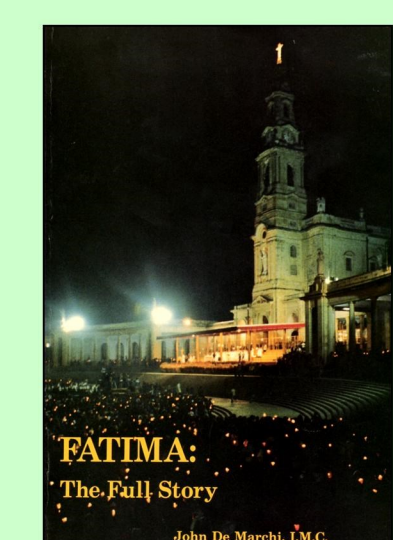
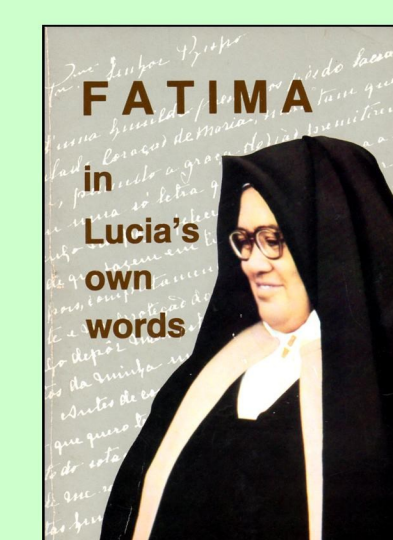
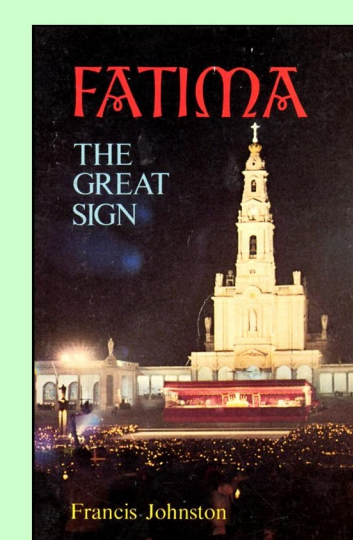
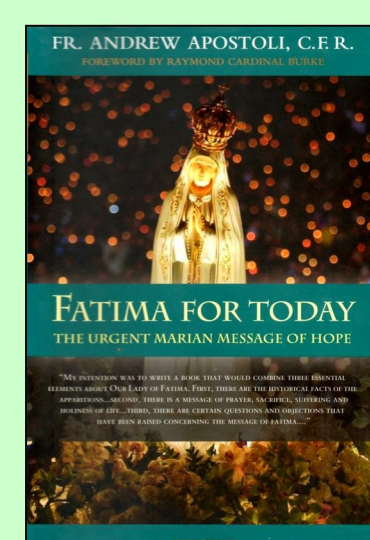
"After the assassination attempt of 13 May 1981, it appeared evident that it was "a mother's hand that guided the bullet's path", enabling "the Pope in his throes" to halt "at the threshold of death"... The successive events of 1989 led, both in the Soviet Union and in a number of countries of Eastern Europe, to the fall of the Communist regimes which promoted atheism. For this too His Holiness offers heartfelt thanks to the Most Holy Virgin. In other parts of the world, however, attacks against the Church and against Christians, with the burden of suffering they bring, tragically continue. Even if the events to which the third part of the "secret" of Fatima refers now seem part of the past, Our Lady's call to conversion and penance, issued at the start of the twentieth century, remains timely and urgent today. "The Lady of the message seems to read the signs of the times - the signs of our time - with special insight... The insistent invitation of Mary Most Holy to penance is nothing but the manifestation of her maternal concern for the fate of the human family, in need of conversion and forgiveness".



Pope John Paul II and Sister Lucia in May 2000.

PRIMARY INFORMATION SOURCES

The Fatima messages, information and images in Parts 1 & 2 of this Exhibit were drawn from primarily six sources which were: "*Fatima for Today - The Urgent Marian Message of Hope*" by Fr. Andrew Apostoli, C.F.R. published by Ignatius Press; "*Fatima, The Great Sign*" by Francis Johnson, published by Tan Books and Publishers, Inc.; "*Fatima in Lucia's Own Words*" published by the Postulation Centre, Fatima, Portugal; "*Fatima: The Full Story*" by Fr. John de Marchi, I.M.C. published by the World Apostolate of Fatima; and "*Documents on Fatima & Memoirs of Sister Lucia*" by Fr. Antonio Maria Martins, S.J. and Fr. Robert J. Fox, published by the Fatima Family Apostolate. The viewer is encouraged to review these sources for a more complete understanding of the Fatima apparitions.



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