

**WORLD-PRAYER-CONGRESS FOR LIFE
in Fatima, Portugal, Oct. 4 – 8, 2006**

„Mary, We Entrust You with the Cause of Life" (H.H., Pope John Paul II., *Evangelium Vitae*, #105)

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Address to the Pro Life Prayer Congress in Fatima

INTRODUCTION

His Excellency D. Karl Josef Romer, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family;

His Excellency D. António Marto, Bishop of the Diocese Leiria-Fatima;

His Excellency D. Serafim Ferreira de Sousa e Silva, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Leiria-Fatima;

Monsignor Luciano Guerra, Rector of the Fatima-Shrine;

Rev. Fr. Luis Kondor, SVD, Vice-Postulator for the Cause of Canonization of Jacinta and Francisco Marto,

Fr. John Eutenauer; President of Human Life International;

Mons. John Reilly, Director of Helpers of God's Precious Infants;

Fr. Dr. Leo Maasburg; National Director of Missio Austria;

Mr. Dietmar Fischer, President of Human Life International, Austria,

Mr. Pius Stössel, President of the organization Ja zum Leben International,

Guest speakers and delegates to the Pro Life Prayer Congress in Fatima,

I am deeply honoured to open this congress in Fatima, "Altar and Cathedra of the World", City of God and school of prayer and sanctity. Fatima, your sole name inspire us with the thirst and hunger for God, Lord of Life and Prince of Peace.

Here in Fatima, a most marvellous ephemerides occurred 90 years ago, revealing to the world the paths conducting to life and peace in an era of death and war. The Angel of Peace prepared the way to the coming of our Most Blessed Mother, Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima, who opened her Immaculate Heart, full of experiences and intimate moments shared with Jesus Christ, her Son and Redeemer. Through her Immaculate Heart the light of God himself came to the three shepherds of Fatima and the mystery of the Holy Trinity revealed to them transforming their lives forever, making them "new creatures" longing for the eternal life and everlasting peace experienced at the divine vision.

The Message of Fatima is a message of life and peace. It is a life and peace-giving message for through it the Gospel's Message of Salvation is announced to humanity in a new way adapted to the needs and urgencies of our present times. The Message of Fatima is a most excellent instrument for the "New Evangelization"; essential task of the Church in our days. In this way, a private revelation serves the public revelation as a way to face the present moral and spiritual crisis of our civilization.

Fatima and its Message are life-giving, peace-giving instruments of unique force and dynamism, because through prayer they open the channels of divine grace, communicating us a “culture of life and peace”, a new style of living, new attitudes and values, new folkways and mores, making possible the establishment of the Kingdom of God in our days with a new vigour and strength.

The World Apostolate of Fatima has as its mission the New Evangelization proposed by the Great John Paul II, and his successor Benedict XVI, using the Message of Fatima as its instrument for achieving a culture for life, world peace, Church unity and conversion of sinners, a new “civilization of love”. This new springtime for the Church, this Marian Pentecost, is prophesied By Our Lady of Fatima as the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart, a triumph that should and must be achieved during the XXI century.

We must pray for solutions to war, abortion, terrorism, genocide, child slavery, assisted suicide and other atrocities. These problems have a spiritual component and thus require spiritual as practical solutions. A World Pro Life Prayer Congress in Fátima is a major step towards this goal. Also, the WAF is inviting everyone to join on October 8th to pray for Life and Peace, on the largest day of organised prayer the world has ever seen. One billion meditative prayers will rise to heaven this day from 120 countries, asking that the culture for life overcomes the culture of death, bringing forward an era of peace promised in Fatima as the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE FATIMA APOSTOLATE

The Primacy of God in the Message of Fatima

Pope John XIII said: “Fatima is the centre for all Christian hopes”. When we consider our human frailties, and when all hope seems to vanish, THE MESSAGE FROM FATIMA SHINES THROUGH LIKE THE LIGHT OF A LIGHTHOUSE IN THE DENSEST FOG. This is so because, as Pope Paul VI said, the message from Fatima brings up to date the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for all to know.

Through the words of Our Lady of Fatima the “Good News” of her beloved Son comes to life. The Virgin Mary came to Fatima to warn us of the dangers that threaten humanity. The atheism of the totalitarian Marxist governments, as well as the materialism of the masses are denounced as serious impediments to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. In simple words which could easily be understood by the children. Our Lady points to the way of MEDITATIVE PRAYER, PENITENTIAL REPARATION, AND SANCTIFYING CONSECRATION.

The goals Our Lady strives for are clear: world peace, the repentance of sinners, and the establishment of the “Reign of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary”, with everything that it implies.

The goals of Our Lady should become the guiding goals of our own lives. Our collective national and international projects should be based on the prophetic vision of Our Lady of Fatima, striving for a NEW ERA FOR HUMANITY, which will be the product of the TRIUMPH OF HER IMMACULATE HEART over the enemies of Christ.

As we know, in the decisive battle between the forces of Woman and the Ancient Serpent, we – the children of Woman – will be the protagonists in the DRAMA OF THE CENTURY because through our joint effort, our ample creative force, and our push to spread the Good News we will modify the corrupt structures that serve as barriers to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Our Lord will use us as small, fragile and apparently useless tools in the transformation of the world to fit His image. That is why the Virgin Mary is putting together a ARMY OF SOULS CONSECRATED TO HER as apostles for our times. When everything seems to be lost, when the forces of evil claim their victory, when the shadows seem to overwhelm the face of the earth, then THE VIRGIN, THE WINNER OF ALL THE BATTLES OF GOD, will bring forth her ARMY OF CONSACRATED SOULS to intervene in a decisive way recognizable to all and claim victory THROUGH JEUSU CHRIST, WITH CHRIST, AND IN CHRIST. This will be the triumph of HIS MOTHER’S HEART, AND THE BEGINNING OF HER REIGN OVER HUMANITY. Then “all generations will call her blessed because the Almighty has done great things through Her”. All lips will sing the glories of Mary.

The signs of the announced TRIUMPH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY can be found in the context of the Message from Our Lady: World Peace, the Conversion of Russia, the weakening of the influence of evil over humanity, the unity of all Christians, and the strengthening of the Universal Church. In Fatima Our Lady prophesies these great qualitative changes in the life of man, not as unreachable ideals but as real and practical goals to be obtained through her and through our own enthusiastic and decisive intervention.

Even if what has to be done strikes us as formidable, it is important to point out the practical character of Our Mother’s prophesy in Fatima. The message from Fatima is an EXISTENCIAL CALL TO HUMANITY for a change in lifestyles, a rejection of sin, and a reparation for the crimes committed. Our Lady offers a SAFE AND REALISTIC METHOD that can change the course of Human History. The requests from Our Lady are the following:

1. Meditative Prayer – through daily recitation of the Holy Rosary (at least five of the mysteries, a tertiary) as an effective method for the development of souls in harmony with Our Lord capable of applying to their lives “the spiritual direction” which meditation on the events of the lives of Christ and Mary has to offer. The Rosary, like a version of the Gospel summarized through the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries will teach us how to live as Christ and Mary would have lived in our particular circumstances. We will not have to wait long for the results: abundant fruits of peace as a consequence of the dispersal of the shadows of the contemporary world. With that, the great tragedy of modern man alienated by his unhealthy egocentricity will be overcome until the collective neurosis that seems to infect interpersonal relationships and poison international relations inciting wars and conflicts which only serve to increase human misery will be eradicated.

2. Reparation – which becomes life-giving penance, whose principal manifestation is the joyous acceptance of God’s will, offering Our Lord through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our prayers good deeds, sufferings, joys and happiness, in other words, all our being and existence, in order for us to become like Christ – a pure sacrifice to God the Father – so that we truly become his disciples, carrying our crosses every day, until we can say along with St. Paul: “I am no longer the one who lives, it is Christ who lives in me”. This is the principal function of Mary in our lives, to mould our souls in the image and likeness of her Divine Son. It is the essence of Mary, her “FIAT” of the joyous acceptance of God’s will, “I am the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy Word”. In the submission

of Mary; correctly understood as a voluntary, free, and spontaneous giving up of her own liberty, which is transformed into a loving promise with the self-revealing Truth; resides the greatness of Mary. There is no greater honour than that of being the servant to the servant of the Lord, because there we give up our free will which bestows human dignity upon us, for LOVE, which we will surpass all our possibilities in an infinite and ineffable ocean of affection. As a corollary to such an attitude towards life, mortifying acts undertaken for love become possible, to the extent of being willing to give up even permissible pleasures, in order to discipline ourselves spiritually and morally. Sacrifice will root our essence in Christ, which will be the **TRUE DIRECTING CENTER OF OUR LIVES**. Rooted in Christ, our true essence, we will truly belong to our Lord, as effective instruments in the pursuit of his plans of salvation for modern man. The result will not be long in waiting: “Numerous souls will convert, because many are lost for lack of someone to pray and SACRIFICE for them”. And after the conversion of many, others will forsake their indifference for an authentic fervour, while those already blessed with fervour will attain high levels of perfection.

In Fatima, Reparation is offered to us through three paths, which are:

a. Penance – in its dual acceptance of our submission to the will of God, which implies that we carry our daily cross, accepting the suffering that God sends us, as well as the mortification we inflict on ourselves by voluntary privation and sacrifice.

b. Reparatory Prayer – with a profound adoration for the Majesty of God which we offend with our lack of love, and which is superbly contained in the prayer by The Angel from Fatima and addressed to the Holy Trinity with the purpose of “consoling Our Good Lord, who is greatly offended”.

c. Reparatory Holy Communion – through the Holy Sacrament of the altar transformed into a Banquet through the Eucharist, the Virgin offers **THE GREAT PROMISE OF HER IMMACULATE HEART**, a promise of salvation for those she most especially loves, being Pontevedra, in the unity of Fatima, the nerve centre of such a great opportunity for men hungering for God. Through the reparatory devotion of the first Saturdays of the month Our Lady emphasizes the major importance of the Eucharistic as **THE UNBENDING PILLAR OF CHRISTIAN LIFE**.

3. Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, SOUL OF THE MESSAGE OF FATIMA, which consists of entrusting of our past, present and future existence to the Lord through Mary. This is the true realization of our baptismal promises, in which we renounced Satan and all his works, the corrupt world, and our own egocentric weaknesses, in order to become the “new man”, the “new being”, raised up to the dignity of an adopted son of God, a true “**ALTER CHRISTUS**”, with all that that implies. Through our consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary we become true spiritual children of Mary, conceived in her own heart, beating in union with all the Sacred Hearts, in an ineffable harmony of loving. The authentic consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in which we find various levels of perfection, constitutes a real school of sanctity, a marvellous spirituality, that even today is not an exhausted subject, but on the contrary, continues bringing forth new works dedicated to Mary that diffuse throughout the Church and the world “the marvels” contained in the heart of such a unique mother.

For now, we can point to several levels of consecration suggested by the Story of Fatima, which are as follows:

a. A rejection of sin, timidity, and indifference in favour of an imitation of Christ, his virtues and teachings, through a Marian spirit of joyous acceptance of the will of God, with

all its repercussions for the human soul.

b. A deepening in the inner life of prayer, through the discovery of a personal God who beats within our hearts, and a desire to please “the Good Lord” even in the smallest details so that “the fire of Our Lord burns our heart”, This fire being of a spiritual nature in two respects, to “console” Our Lord for all the ingratitude and indifference with which we offend him as much as to convey and communicate the wave of burning love which consumes everything in grace and apostolic dedication, “to whomever I may communicate this burning fire within my breast”. In the first respect, we find that Francisco distinguished himself, the prophet enamoured of the spiritual consolation of Our Lord and frequently forgotten and despised by humanity. In the second respect, we find that Jacinta distinguished herself as an untiring apostle in the conversion of sinners.

c. The highest mystical peaks can be reached as the priceless gift of the Heart of such a Holy Mother who gives sublime gifts to her favourite children revealing her most unimaginable treasures. Lucia, APOSTLE OF HER HEART, contemplates in Thy the ineffable mystery of the Holy Trinity, through the Heart of Mary, receiving illuminations concerning this mystery which she is not allowed to reveal. The total spiritual marriage, the entrusting of total existence in reciprocity with Christ, making the human soul “another beloved disciple of his”, with a love so special that it elevates us to the category of intimate friends with Christ as “flowers placed by Mary to adorn the throne of God”. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO REACH SUCH A STATE OF SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, THAT PERSIST AND TRIUMPH, FOR THEY TRULY BECOME OTHER MARYS, ADORNING THE CREATION OF THE FATHER WITH THEIR LOVING PRESENCE AND SAINTLY FRAGRANCE. They are the ones, more than anyone else that will make triumph that is imminent in our times, the twenty-first century.