

Fatima



...Mary's Peace Plan from Heaven ¹⁵

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No. 41



Why the Knights of Columbus Advertise Catholic Faith

The reason is simple. We Catholics want our non-Catholic friends and neighbors to know us as we really are and not as we are some times mistakenly represented.

We are confident that when our religious Faith is better understood by those who do not share it, mutual understanding will promote the good-will which is so necessary in a predominantly Christian country whose government is designed to serve all the people—no matter how much their religious convictions may differ.

American Catholics are convinced that as the teachings of Christ widely and firmly take hold of the hearts and conduct of our people, we shall remain free in the sense that Christ promised (John VIII, 31-38), and in the manner planned by the Founding Fathers of this republic.

Despite the plainly stated will of the Good Shepherd that there be "one fold and one shepherd," the differences in the understanding of Christ's teaching are plainly evident. It has rightfully been called "the scandal of a divided Christianity."

If there is anything which will gather together the scattered flock of Christ, it is the nationwide understanding of the Savior, what He did and how He intended mankind to benefit by the Redemption.

To this end, we wish our fellow-Americans to become acquainted with the teachings of Christ as the Catholic Church has faithfully presented them, since the day the apostles invaded the nations of the world in willing and courageous obedience to Christ's command: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations..." (Matt. XXVIII, 19).

**SUPREME COUNCIL
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
Religious Information Bureau
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THE DAY THE SUN PLUNGED TOWARD THE EARTH

On a warm summer morning in 1952, thousands of people passing through Times Square in New York City paused to watch a group of workmen erect a sixty-foot billboard over the marquee of the Astor Theatre. There was nothing strange about the sight of a new sign being erected. Times Square is a constantly changing forest of magnificent advertisements. It was the message on this display that attracted their attention.

According to New York standards, the sign was a simple one. It merely showed a large crowd clustered around the foot of a tiny hill. Arms were extended heavenward as though the people were appealing to God for help. On top of the hill were three little children looking toward the sun. And in the middle of the sign was the sun itself — a brilliant ball of light apparently falling from the sky.

Eight words at the top of the billboard described the entire scene: **THE DAY THE SUN PLUNGED TOWARD THE EARTH!**

The display was advertising a new motion picture which was



having its premiere in the city — "*The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima.*"

Day after day crowds filled the Astor. All attendance records for a Labor Day weekend were broken. Night after night long lines stood at the box-office to get tickets. Everyone wanted to know what happened the

day the sun plunged toward the earth.

The movie told the simple story of three little children who were given a vital message for the people of the world by a beautiful Lady, who said she was from Heaven. To prove her claim she promised a very special "sign" on October 13, 1917. This sign turned out to be an amazing solar display in which the sun "spun like a pin-wheel" emitting colored shafts of light that turned from red to orange to yellow ...

One by one all the colors of the spectrum appeared. Then, finally, when it seemed that nothing more amazing could happen, the sun plunged toward the earth. Seventy thousand people witnessed the phenomena.

"Did this really happen?" pa-

trons asked one another as they left the theatre.

They were accustomed to such movies as "*When Worlds Collide*" and "*Mars Invades Earth*." Such pictures they took in stride. They were make-believe. But *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima* was advertised as a "true story of our time."

Did something so fantastic as the movie depicted really happen? Skeptics laughed. But there were thousands who were bewildered. It wasn't exactly the miracle that bothered them, it was the message of the movie.

God's Warning

If that were true, then why weren't people doing something about it? If the message were true, it was a direct warning from Heaven, tempered by a plan for peace. "*If my requests are granted,*" the Lady had said, "*then Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not, then Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions . . . the good will be martyred . . . entire nations will be annihilated.*"

In the light of world conditions in the summer of 1952, it wasn't hard to accept the message. Millions of Americans already had witnessed two World Wars, and Korea was threatening to develop into World War III — an atomic war or worse.

More amazing was the fact that in 1917, when the prediction was made, Russia was a prostrate, defeated nation, driven out of World War I in one of the bloodiest defeats in modern history. Yet, thirty-five years later, Russia was the threat to world peace that the prediction had said she would be.

The big problem, then, for many of these movie-goers, was to believe or not to believe. If the miracle and message were true, they certainly wanted to believe. If both were fakes perpetrated and perpetuated by the Catholic Church, then the Catholic Church should be condemned and forced to stop hoaxing the people.

However, this didn't solve the problem in their minds. Was "*The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*" really true as advertised?

That is the purpose of this pamphlet; to acquaint you with the story of the amazing series of events that took place at Fatima, Portugal (pronounced fah-tee-mah with the accent on the first syllable) from May to October, 1917. Whether or not you believe, you'll have to agree that it is one of the most beautiful stories of our time. It is a message of hope for a world wearied by war, and disillusioned by the failure of its leaders to bring peace. It is a story for Catholic, Protestant and Jew. It is — in all truth — a peace plan from Heaven.

STRANGE EVENTS ON MAY 13, 1917

The story of Fatima begins on a warm day in May. But the story does not begin alone in the central section of Portugal. It begins in three widely-separated locations; Portugal, Russia and Italy.

The events that took place in all three were to come into sharp focus in the middle of the Twentieth Century — our time. And all three, today, have a direct bearing on the life of everyone of us.

Italy

The first event took place in Rome. It was a happy day for the people of Italy. Giant church bells boomed out an invitation for men and women to witness a special event. Pope Benedict XV was consecrating a group of monsignors — elevating them to the rank of bishop.

Among the group knelt a young Italian priest, Monsignor Eugenio Pacelli. Like the others who knelt with him, he knew that the rank of bishop was the first step toward the highest office in the Catholic Church — the Papacy. But only a few ever rise so high, and there



was certainly no indication on this May morning that anyone in this group would ever become Pope.

Yet, Eugenio Pacelli did. He is now Pope Pius XII, head of the Catholic Church in the year 1953. No one can deny that he is one of the greatest opponents of Communism alive in our age. He is the arch-foe of the arch-enemy of the world. He was the first piece in the picture that began to form on May 13, 1917.

Russia

The second event took place in Moscow. On this particular day Russia was in the midst of a terrific internal struggle. A new form of government was endeavoring to come into power, and it was on the brink of using force to achieve its aims.

All these things meant little, however, to Maria Alexandrovitch. On May 13, 1917, she and two hundred children were gathered in one of the smaller churches. She was teaching them their catechism.

"God made us," they chanted in unison, "to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this

world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next." They were so engrossed in their lesson that they were not aware of a commotion outside the church until the rear doors banged open, and a group of horsemen raced down the center aisle, screaming and brandishing swords.

Enemies Of God

They vaulted the Communion rail, and started hacking at the altar. Next they turned to the statuary that lined the walls. Down the side aisles they thundered, knocking statues to the floor and grinding them to bits under the horses' hooves. Then they forced their plunging mounts between the seats, rode down the children, killing several and injuring many more.

Later that day, Maria Alexandrovitch, still sobbing, knocked at the door of one of the leaders of the Revolution. "The most terrible thing has happened," she cried. "I was teaching catechism in the church, when horsemen came in, destroyed the church, charged the children and killed some of them."

The revolutionist answered, "I know it. I sent them!"

This was the first instance of Communistic violence — a mild forerunner of things to come. It was the second piece in the picture that began to form on May 13, 1917.

Portugal

The third incident took place in the central section of Portugal about 90 miles north of Lisbon. In the hills just outside the village of Fatima, three little children were

shepherding their flock in a barren hollow, known as the Cova da Iria (Hollow of Irene). The oldest was Lucia dos Santos, age 10, and the others were her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, ages 9 and 7, respectively.

At noon on Sunday, May 13, the sky was clear and the sun shone brilliantly. The sheep grazed contentedly and the children played. World War I raging in Europe was far away, and the fact that a few weeks before, on Good Friday, the United States had entered the fight meant nothing to them. This day was made for playing, laughing and living.

The Visitation

They were engaged in one of their simple games, when suddenly a blazing flash of lightning lit up the sky. There wasn't a cloud visible, but the children were afraid a storm was brewing, and began rounding up the sheep, when another flash, more brilliant than the first, stopped them in their tracks.

The second flash had settled above the branches of a small holm-oak tree directly in their path. And in the dazzling light they saw "the most beautiful Lady they had ever seen."

She was "dressed all in white"—this is Lucia's account—"more brilliant than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal glass filled with the most sparkling water pierced by the burning rays of the sun."

The children were about to turn and run, when the Lady beckoned them closer. With her gesture their

fears faded. "Do not be afraid," the Lady said, "I shall not harm you."

She was young and very beautiful. Her slender hands were folded on her breast, and in them she held a long, white Rosary with beads, cross and chain of shining pearl.

For several seconds the children said nothing. They just stood and stared. Then Lucia, always the spokesman for the trio by virtue of her age, found her voice. "Where do you come from?" she asked.

"I come from Heaven."

"And why have you come down here?" Lucia wanted to know.

"Because I want you to come here at this same hour on the 13th day of every month until October. Then I will tell you who I am and what I want."

No Childish Fable

By now Lucia's childish inquisitiveness had overcome any fear that remained. "Shall I go to Heaven?" she asked.

"Yes, you will go there."

"And Jacinta?"

"Jacinta will go to Heaven, too."

"And Francisco?"

"Yes, but he will first have to say many Rosaries."

At this point Francisco interrupted. "I can't see anybody, Lucia,

and I can't hear anything either. Let's throw a stone at the light and see if anybody's there."

Lucia, horrified, hurriedly started to tell the Lady of Francisco's plight. But before she could finish, the Lady said, "Let him say his Rosary and then he will see me."

(It is important to note that on May 13, and in the months that followed, Lucia saw, heard and spoke to the Lady; Jacinta saw and heard her; but Francisco only saw her.)

A Prophecy

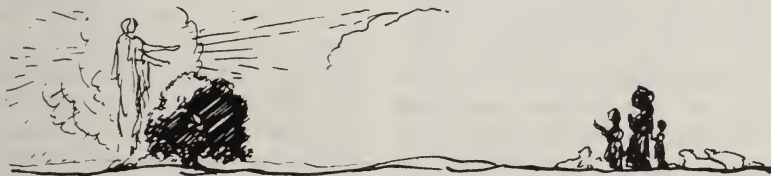
Finally, the Lady asked, "Do you wish to offer yourselves to God in order to accept all the sufferings He wishes to send you in reparation for sin and for the conversion of sinners?"

"Yes," answered the children.

"Then you will suffer much, but God's grace will strengthen you. My children, go on always saying the Rosary as you have done."

With that, the Lady disappeared.

This event, far stranger than the other two, was the third piece in the picture of 1917. Or rather, it was the beginning of the third piece. In months that followed the piece was completed, and it gave the world a message of hope, especially for people who have faith in God.



THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY OF FATIMA

What would be your reaction if, some afternoon, your children told a story such as Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco had to tell?

At first you would suspect them of telling a story merely for the fun of it. Then, if they persisted, you would demand to know the truth, and if they insisted the story was true, you probably would threaten to punish them if they didn't stop lying. And if they didn't change their story, you'd begin to suspect them of suffering hallucinations.

Young as they were, the three children of Fatima seemed to have realized these things. Before going home they discussed the apparition and decided to keep the events of the afternoon a secret.

But for little nine-year-old Jacinta, always bubbling over with enthusiasm and mischief, the memorable experience was too much to keep locked in her heart. At supper that evening she told her mother.

Repercussions were instantaneous. Jacinta's brothers and sisters—all home for Sunday night supper—spread the story throughout the village next day, and the youngsters



became the center of attraction. But it was not the kind of attention they desired.

Relatives and friends gathered in their homes demanding to know why the children were telling such lies. Most critical was Lucia's mother, who sent her daughter off to bed without supper the follow-

ing evening for telling such stories. Within twenty-four hours after seeing the Lady, the prediction she had made—"You will have much to suffer"—started coming true.

In the weeks that followed, the children were called hypocrites, liars, rascals. Their families were abused and snubbed by the villagers, and even the local priest, Father Manuel Ferreira, shrugged off the reported apparition with a smile.

In their own family groups the children suffered even more, because their "lies" were bringing disgrace on all their relatives. Only one person really believed them. He was Ti Marto, father of Jacinta and Francisco. He did not think his children would lie to him and he became the first person to believe that wonderful things were

happening at Fatima.

However, he wanted to make sure, so he visited Father Ferriera and asked his advice. Although the priest was doubtful, he suggested that since the Lady had said she would return the following month, they should wait and see what happened. "Let the children go to the Cova," he advised, "then bring them to me and I'll question them one by one." But as he gave the advice, it was evident that he was as skeptical as everyone else.

Effect On Children

Despite what people said about the trio, a very definite change began to take place in the children's lives. As usual they took the



sheep into the hills every day, but they didn't run and play as much as before. They were quiet and reserved and stayed away from the other children as much as possible.

This brought further censure, be-

cause some people thought they now considered themselves better than the other villagers. Actually, the children saw how much trouble they were bringing into the lives



of everyone with whom they associated. To spare their friends, they ostracized themselves.

Very often, when they disappeared, their friends would find them in some secluded spot, praying their Rosaries as though their lives depended on it.

As June 13th approached, talk of the apparition began to fade and an air of new excitement rippled through the village. June 13 is the festival of St. Anthony, most popular saint in Portugal, and patron of the little church at Fatima. On that day great celebrations were held with both Catholics and non-Catholics participating.

The nucleus of the celebration was the village church in each district. There was a special Mass,

a special sermon and a colorful procession. Little girls, dressed all in white, marched and sang hymns as a preparation for the final ceremony—distribution of "St. Anthony's bread." This was small loaves of white bread, much tastier than anything the peasants could ordinarily afford and the children, particularly, looked forward to the treat. After the feasting there was music and dancing, climaxed with fireworks in the evening.

Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco loved the festival, and their mothers knew it. A week before the celebration, the women announced calmly that the children would have to forego the visit of the Lady, and attend the festival with their families.

Many Scoffed

This was a blow to the children. Ever since the first appearance of the Lady, they had talked among themselves about the second visit. They begged to be allowed to go to the Cova, but for several days their mothers remained adamant. Jacinta's mother was the first to relent. Perhaps Ti Marto had something to do with her change of heart. In any event, she gave Jacinta and Francisco permission to go to the Cova. (In later years she admitted she thought that if the children were merely telling a story, they wouldn't pass up the celebration to continue their hoax.) Lucia's mother, on the other hand, was more firm. She refused to release the girl until the moment to leave for the Cova arrived. Then, gruffly she relented and Lucia went

with the other children.

When they arrived at the clearing about sixty villagers were on hand to greet them. For several minutes nothing happened, then suddenly Lucia exclaimed, "Our Lady is coming." The children fell to their knees and started reciting the Rosary. Before they were finished Lucia repeated, "Our Lady is coming. I just saw the flash."

The Lady Again!

The villagers pressed around the children, but they could see nothing except the top of the oak bend ever so slightly as though someone were standing on it. They also heard nothing, except Lucia's voice,



apparently in conversation with an invisible visitor.

"What does Your Excellency want of me?" Lucia asked.

"I want you," the Lady answered, "to come here on the thirteenth day of the coming month, to recite

a third of the Rosary every day, and to learn to read. I will tell you later what I want."

Then Lucia, showing her childish simplicity, said, "I should like to ask you to take us to Heaven."



The Lady's answer brought tears to Lucia's eyes. *"I will come soon, and take Jacinta and Francisco. But you must remain here for some time more. Jesus wishes to make use of you to have me acknowledged and loved. He wishes to establish in the world the devotion to my Immaculate Heart. To all those who embrace it I promise salvation and their souls will be loved by God as flowers placed by me before His throne."*

"Am I to stay here alone?" Lucia cried.

"No, my daughter. Don't be discouraged. I will never forsake you." As she said these words the Lady opened her hands — they had been clasped on her breast — and bright rays seemed to come from the palms and envelop the children. In front of her right palm was a heart pierced with thorns. After several minutes, the Lady disappeared in the direction of the sun.

Years later Lucia wrote in her Memoirs, "We understood that it (the heart) was the Immaculate Heart of Mary outraged by the sins of humanity for which there must be reparation."

After the Lady left, the children returned home slowly. They knew that an inquisition awaited them, especially when they would have to appear before the parish priest.

Priest Dubious

Father Ferreira was very unfriendly. Perhaps he had reason to be. The children were so frightened in his presence that Jacinta told him nothing, Francisco mumbled a few incoherent sentences at best, and Lucia gave only a very sketchy account of a few of the things they had witnessed.

The priest decided that the apparitions could be the work of the devil. To make matters worse in the village, the children decided not to talk any more about the Heavenly Visitor. So, whenever anyone questioned them, they merely muttered, "It's a secret."

This made the weeks preceding July 13 — date of the next visit from the Lady — exceptionally bad.

But they were mild by comparison with what the children had to suffer in the months that followed.

Early on the morning of July 13, Ti Marto went to the Cova. A large crowd had already gathered around the holm-oak tree.

There were many who admitted



they didn't believe in the apparitions. But like the little boy who doesn't believe in ghosts, but still whistles every time he passes a cemetery at night, they wanted to be on hand "just in case" supernatural things were happening in the Cova.

"Say The Rosary"

At noon the three children arrived, and soon the Lady was speaking to them. Again she requested their presence on the thirteenth of the following month.

Then she said, "*Continue to say five decades of the Rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary to obtain the end of the*

war and peace for the world. For she alone can save it."

With this statement Lucia saw her chance to find out once and forever whether the Lady was actually from Heaven or if this were a trick of the devil.

"Dear Lady," she said, "will you please tell us who you are. Will you work a miracle so that all the people will know that you really do appear to us?"

"Continue to come here every month," the Lady answered. "In October I will tell you who I am and will work a miracle so great that all will believe in the reality of the apparitions. Sacrifice yourselves for poor sinners and say this prayer very often: *Oh, my Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners and in reparation for all the wrongs done to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*"

As she uttered these words, the Lady once more opened her hands, and again rays came forth as they had the previous month. But this time they seemed to pass through the earth, and the children saw themselves standing on the brink of a sea of fire.

Tossing about helplessly in the flames were souls with human forms. They were on fire within and without. Shrieks and groans of horror and despair filled the air. The souls seemed unable to control their movements, and to add to their suffering, devils tortured them ceaselessly. "The devils," wrote Lucia later, "were distinguished by horrible and loathsome forms of animals, frightful and unknown, but transparent like black

coals that have turned red-hot."

When the vision vanished, the Lady said, *"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. If they (people) do what I will tell you, many will be saved, and there will be peace. The war is going to end. But if they do not stop offending God, another and worse one will begin in the reign of Pius XI."*

"When you see a night illuminated by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign God gives you that He is going to punish the world for its crimes by means of wars, of hunger, and of persecution of the Church and of the Holy Father."

"There Will Be Peace"

To prevent this I shall come to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays. If they (people) listen to my requests, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace. If not she will scatter her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, and various nations will be annihilated.

"In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and it will be converted and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world."

"Tell this to no one. Francisco, yes, you may tell him."

Then the Lady revealed something else to the children. What it is has never been told. However, a few years ago on instructions from her bishop, Lucia wrote out this final secret and sealed it. It will be opened in 1960 or at her death, whichever comes first.

When the children told the people after this apparition that they could not tell them what the Lady had said, the persecutions increased. Also, by now the story of strange happenings in Fatima were spreading far, and soon reached the ear of the Administrator of the Council of Ourem, head of the district to which Fatima belonged.



Early in August, an official messenger served the fathers of the children with formal notices. They were to present their children at the town hall on August 11 to stand trial—the charge: disturbing the peace.

So at last what everyone has feared would happen, did happen. The government stepped into the picture.

THE MIRACLE OF FATIMA

The Administrator of Ourem in 1917 was Arturo de Oliveira Santos, a blacksmith by trade, and an active anti-Catholic. In Fatima he saw a threat to his authority, and he decided to do something about it.

On August 11, however, he accomplished very little. Simple people that they were in this section of Portugal, Santos' authority meant little to them. The fathers of the children reasoned that it was quite a journey from Fatima to Ourem, and that "it was too far for the children to travel." They decided to ignore the summons.

At the last minute, however, for want of something better to do since it was Saturday, they put Lucia on a donkey and started for Ourem. Naturally, they weren't in a hurry, and every mile or two they stopped to chat with people along the road. When, finally, they did arrive in the city, the public building was locked. But this did not deter them. If the Administrator wanted to see Lucia, he was going to see her. They hunted him up at his home.

If they thought their delay was



going to mellow him, they were badly mistaken. Santos was angry and demanded that Lucia tell him the secret the Lady had given her. Apparently he didn't know there were two more children involved, because he didn't even ask about the others. And Ti Marto certainly wasn't one to offer

any free information.

Lucia stood the inquisition alone, refusing to tell Santos anything. He even threatened to have her executed, but this didn't frighten her. In final desperation, he literally threw her and the two men out of his home.

However, he wasn't finished. Early on the morning of August 13—the date of the fourth visit of the Lady—he sped toward Fatima in his car.

At the Cova approximately 18,000 people waited for the children. But they never arrived. At noon lightning flashed out of a clear, blue sky and thunder rolled. A small white cloud was seen floating over the holm-oak tree, but it soon disappeared. According to all indications, the Lady had arrived, found the children missing, and

left. The people wanted to know what had happened to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco.

The Administrator alone had the answer.

Shortly before the children were to leave for the Cova, Santos arrived in front of Ti Marto's house. By now he knew there were three children involved, and when he found them at Ti Marto's, he offered to take them to the Cova in his car.

Children Threatened

When the children refused his offer, he told them Father Ferreira wanted to question them immediately, and that unless they accepted his offer, they could not see the priest and still get to the Cova in time to meet the Lady.

Actually, he was telling the truth. The priest did want to see them. But instead of taking them to the Cova, when the priest had finished with them, Santos whisked them away to Ourem.

For three days he kept them prisoner; part of the time in his home, part of the time in the district jail. He tried every trick he knew to get them to tell him the Lady's secret message, but he got absolutely nowhere.

By the third day he had had enough. He called in his guards and ordered them to prepare a cauldron of boiling oil in an outer chamber. Then he notified the children that unless they talked, they would be thrown into the kettle.

Little Jacinta, badly frightened, was dragged away first. Next went Francisco, and finally Lucia. But

instead of screaming for mercy, they prayed, and the Administrator knew he was defeated.

Instead of harming them, he put them into his car and had them returned to their families. It was August 15, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into Heaven.

Four days later, while the children, heartbroken at having missed the Lady's visit, were grazing their sheep at a place called Valinhos, she appeared to them again. She repeated her requests for the daily Rosary, penance and sacrifice. And she told the children that because of the Administrator's actions, the miracle promised for October would not be as striking as it otherwise would have been.

By September 13, news of the apparitions had spread through the entire country and spilled over the borders. There was no holding the people. They filled the homes of the children, begging them to request cures of the Lady and to ask her hundreds of questions.

Crowds Followed

The children often hid so they could be alone with their thoughts and their Rosaries, but to no avail. No matter where they went, someone always found them, and the questions started all over again.

On September 13 — the day of the fifth visit — there were almost 30,000 people in the Cova. They were an orderly group, most of them hoping for something special to happen. But nothing out of the ordinary took place.

The Lady once again stressed the necessity of saying the Rosary

to bring about the end of the war. Then suddenly, white roses began to fall from the sky, but before any could reach the earth, they faded away. Already miraculous things for all to see were starting to take place in the hills of Portugal.

One sentence describes what happened in this section of the world on the days immediately preceding October 13 — date of the scheduled miracle. "All roads led to Fatima."

Slept On Ground

Thousands walked from the most distant villages. Others came on horseback, some in ox-drawn carts. All carried their meals and slept on the ground at night, because there were no hotels or restaurants. The sick, the crippled, the blind also came. They prayed for a cure.

But it wasn't only the believers who came. Among the 70,000 gathered in the Cova that day, there were thousands of atheists, scoffers and skeptics, who wanted to be on hand to make sure the children didn't pull a fake miracle.

There were some who even threatened violence if the whole affair turned out to be a hoax. The elements also seemed to frown on the gathering. In the night of October 12 it started to rain and it continued until noon the next day.

O DIA, a secular newspaper of Lisbon — one of many with reporters at the scene — had this to say of the eve of the miracle:

"All night long and into the early morning a light, persistent rain fell. It soaked the fields, soddened the air and chilled to the

bone the men, women and children and the beasts plodding their way to the hill of the miracle. The rain kept falling, a soft, unending drizzle. Drops trickled down the women's skirts of coarse wool or striped cotton, making them heavy as lead. Water dripped from the caps and broad-brimmed hats of the men... The bare feet of the women and the hobnailed shoes of the men sloshed in the wide pools of the muddy roads. They seemed not to notice the rain."

By noon the ground in the Cova was a veritable quagmire. A sea of umbrellas covered the crowd, yet, when little Jacinta suddenly cried, "Put down your umbrellas," the people obeyed and stood patiently in the rain.

Noon arrived, but nothing happened. A rumble of resentment rolled through the crowd. There had been no miracle.

Matters were almost out of hand, when Lucia looked toward the leaden sky and exclaimed, "Our Lady is coming."

A hush fell over the crowd.

"What do you want of me?" Lucia asked the Lady. Fine rain fell on her upturned face, but she didn't seem to notice.

"Lady Of The Rosary"

"*I want you,*" the Lady answered, "*to tell them to build a chapel here in my honor. I AM THE LADY OF THE ROSARY! Let them continue to say the Rosary every day. The war is going to end.*"

Then the Lady grew more stern. "*People must amend their lives, ask pardon for their sins and not offend*

Our Lord any more, for He is already too much offended."

With this pronouncement she opened her hands, and wonderful things began to happen.



The rain suddenly stopped and the clouds parted like giant curtains opening on a gigantic stage. The sun, hidden until now, shone like a ball of white fire against a background of beautiful blue.

Despite its intensity and splendor, the people were able to gaze at it without the least discomfort. For several seconds nothing happened. Then as people watched, the shining disc began to spin.

Round and round it went like a giant pin-wheel. Its pace was sickening, and when it seemed that it would spin off its axis, it stopped. But not for long.

Again it started to whirl. Round and round it went, faster and faster. A crimson border appeared around its edges, and blood-red streamers started to feel their way

across the sky until the entire heavens were filled with fiery fingers of light.

The people, the animals, the trees, the earth — all were red. Then the color started to change — red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. All the colors of the spectrum were revealed.

Three times the strange phenomenon was repeated. Then the sun seemed to shudder, and started falling from the sky.

Nearer and nearer it came, staggering "drunkenly" as it neared the earth. "It's the end of the world," shrieked one woman.

Cries of terror went up from everyone. Many, who had come to jeer, were on their faces in the mud, grovelling before the might of Heaven. Others were on their knees crying to God for mercy. And some, too frightened to speak, simply knelt or lay in the mud waiting for the end.

There were not many in the Cova who didn't pray that day. And the prayer on the lips of most was an act of sorrow for their sins. Like people on their death-beds, regardless of their attitude toward God up to that moment, they now were sorry, and prayed for another chance to prove it.

For nearly ten minutes the miracle continued. Then the sun started to climb again, and finally resumed its normal position. Only now the people in the Cova couldn't look at it any longer. It was dazzling bright; the ordinary noontime sun of any ordinary day.

The miracle of Fatima had taken place as promised.

WAS FATIMA A CATHOLIC HOAX?

When the story of Fatima spread throughout the world, there were many people—among them Catholic priests and laymen—who could not believe so incredible a story. Quite a few skeptics even went so far as to say the story was a Catholic fabrication, and the miracle a gigantic hoax.

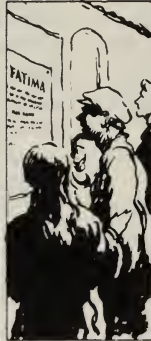
Yet, could Fatima really be a hoax? Consider these facts and decide for yourself.

1. *The crowd.*

Seventy-thousand people saw the same things happen on October 13, 1917. If Fatima wasn't supernatural—there can't be a natural explanation—then all those people were victims of mass hypnotism or hallucination. But this argument doesn't carry much weight.

As noted before, there were thousands in that vast crowd whose purpose was to make sure the children didn't pull a fake miracle. Among these was Avelino De Almeida, managing editor of *O Seculo*, the largest newspaper in Lisbon.

Almeida, a Freemason, made no secret of his dislike for priests, miracles and Catholics in general.



But he was a newspaperman—one of the best in Portugal—and the story of the impending miracle had created so much interest that he couldn't ignore it. He went to the Cova. However, no one—certainly not a Catholic visionary—was going to make him think he saw something which didn't actually

take place. And no one was going to hypnotize him.

When he left the Cova on the evening of October 13, he was still cynical, but his views had undergone a change. Writing in *O Seculo*, he reported the miracle as "a spectacle unique and incredible if one had not been a witness to it..."

He further reported, "Certainly beyond all cosmic laws were the sudden tremblings and movements of the sun, dancing as it were, in typical language of the peasants, before the astonished multitude, who gazed in awe..."

"It remains for those competent to pronounce on the *danse macabre* of the sun, which today, at Fatima, has made hosannas burst from the breasts of the faithful and naturally has impressed—so witnesses worthy of belief assure me—even free-

thinkers and other persons not at all interested in religious matters, who have come to this once famous countryside."

Here is printed proof from a self-acknowledged skeptic that something unusual took place in the Cova.

Another newspaper, *O Ordem*, went even further into the physical details of the miracle. "The sun," it reported, "sometimes surrounded with crimson flames, at other times aureoled with yellow and red, at still other times seemed to revolve with a very rapid movement of rotation, still again seeming to detach itself from the sky to approach the earth and to radiate strong heat."

Thousands Of Witnesses

Further proof against any mass hypnotism theory can be found in reports of people in villages as far from Fatima as forty kilometers. Even at this distance, many witnessed the dance of the sun and its plunge toward earth.

2. *A second miracle:*

In any official report on the events of Fatima you can find the story of a second unexplainable event that day. A few minutes before the sun started to dance, it was still drizzling rain. The people were soaked and the ground was a pool of mud. Into this filth fell tens of thousands of people, when the sun-miracle was at its peak. Actually there wasn't anyone who wasn't wet and dirty. Yet, when the sun resumed its place in the sky, *the clothing of everyone was clean and dry.*

Even the most severe critic can't explain away this phenomenon by natural causes, or lay the mass dry-cleaning job to hypnotism of any sort.

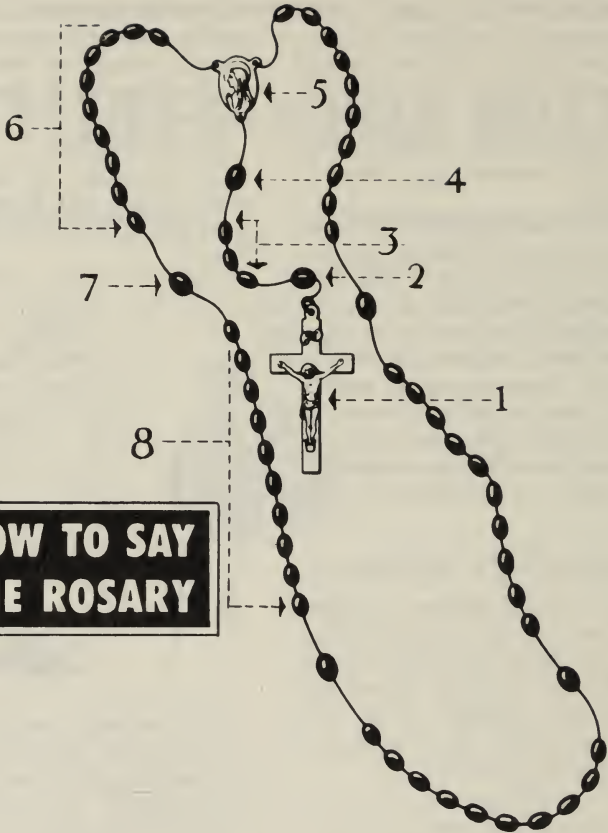
3. *The children:*

It's incredible to believe that Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco could perpetrate a hoax on so large a scale.



It is certainly possible that a child of ten or nine or seven could be talked into trying to fool someone, especially if the chief instigator were some person in authority. A child might even go so far as to dream up a beautiful Lady, who tells them she is from another world.

The average child today isn't averse to rocket ships, spacemen and phantoms in the night. However, if any group were to dream up an imaginary superman, who requests them to return to a certain location for six consecutive months, would they possibly pass up a party just to continue their deception?



**HOW TO SAY
THE ROSARY**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. "The Apostles' Creed"..... | 6. Ten "Hail Marys".....
Picture in your mind the
Mystery recalled |
| 2. "Our Father....." | |
| 3. Three "Hail Marys"..... | 7. "Glory be to the Father....."
Recall the Second Mystery
"Our Father....." |
| 4. "Glory be to the Father....." | |
| 5. Recall the First Mystery
"Our Father....." | 8. Ten "Hail Marys".....
(continue as above until
5 Mysteries are said) |

Prayers of the Rosary

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS —

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

APOSTLES CREED —

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. *I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Amen.*

OUR FATHER —

Our Father, Who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

HAIL MARY —

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER —

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. *As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

THE FATIMA PRAYER (to be said after each decade of the Rosary)

"O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of Thy Mercy."

On the other hand, the children of Fatima passed up the biggest celebration in Portugal to go to the Cova. If they had dreamed up their story, it would have been just as simple for them to dream up an additional apparition to release them so they could attend the festival of St. Anthony. They could have used a second lie to protect the first.

This fact also stands out. These children had no formal schooling, yet they spoke of Russia as being a threat to future world peace. It is doubtful that they ever heard of Russia before the apparitions, and they had no reasons for saying that Russia would someday menace the world. As noted before, in 1917 Russia was a badly beaten nation.



Yet the children reported that the Lady had said, *"If my requests are not granted, Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of*

the Church. The good will be martyred... various nations will be destroyed."

This statement has certainly come true, and is becoming more so every day. In this year, 1953, Russia rules more than six hundred million people—about sixty per cent of the world's population.

The balance of the prediction about Russia—provoking wars, persecuting religion, martyring the good—needs no comment. The daily newspapers supply the facts.

Finally, in considering the children, we must remember their temperaments. Jacinta, for example, could never have kept the deception a secret. She told her mother everything. It was this childish trust that led her to break her promise to Lucia and Francisco, and reveal their secret—the first visit of the Lady.

A Quiet Child

Francisco, on the other hand, was quiet and retiring. He preferred his own company as much as possible, and disliked the crowds and publicity even more than the two girls. It is hard to believe he would start something that would draw so much attention to himself.

Lucia, too, was quiet. So much so, in fact, that many of her relatives shied away from her company. The children of the village, though, loved her and would sit for hours listening to Lucia as she retold stories of the Bible.

This ability might prove a detriment to anyone trying to prove the events in Fatima. Lucia had the

background to make up such a story. But she didn't have the ability to dream up anything so far-reaching as the prediction about Russia.

Not Clever Children

By present-day standards she was ignorant. She knew no more about



history than the average person knows about the theory of relativity. She did not learn to read and write until after the final apparition.

If she had wanted to attract attention, she would have stayed within the bounds of her knowledge—religion and nothing more.

4. *The children's families:*

Both families were below the level of today's middle class. They could be called poor. If Fatima had been a hoax of the children, then they would have shown no scruples about taking the gifts and money that many offered them. They took

nothing. To this day, their families are of moderate circumstances. Material prosperity has come to Fatima, but it has passed them by.

5. *Attitude of the Catholic Church:*

The Catholic Church is very cautious and wary of apparitions. In 1917 particularly, she wanted no part of apparitions in Portugal, because at the time the Church there was being persecuted by an anti-Catholic government.

Before the miracle of the sun, Father Ferreira often said: "Fatima doesn't seem like a revelation from Heaven to me." And his views were shared by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, who went so far at one time as to forbid the priests under his jurisdiction to mention the apparitions under penalty of excommunication.

Up to the time of the apparitions, his churches had been seized in the larger cities, hundreds of priests, nuns and others exiled and his future position was very precarious. At the slightest provocation, he knew, the churches that still remained open would be padlocked and the rest of his priests and their assistants ousted.

Another Reason

Fighting for survival in Portugal, the Catholic Church simply could not stand unfavorable publicity.

6. *The sentence of death:*

The Administrator of Ourem represented a definite threat to the children and their families. Yet the three stuck to their story, and refused to divulge the Lady's secret,

even in the face of threatened death.

In fact, as Francisco was dragged from the Administrator's office to the vat of boiling oil, he cried, "What do we care if you kill us? We'll go right to Heaven." What child—or adult for that matter—would persist in telling a lie if the truth could save him?

7. *The predictions:*

Besides the prediction about Russia, the children also told of others the Lady had made. Here is what has happened so far:

Prediction A: "*The war is going to end very soon...*"

Thirteen months after the miracle of the sun, the "war to end all wars" ended in an armistice on November 11, 1918.

Prediction B: "*Jacinta and Francisco are going to die very soon, but you (Lucia) must remain here on earth...*"

Entirely abnormal were the reactions of Jacinta and Francisco to this announcement. The average child would shrink from the thought of death in the immediate future. Yet the thought of imminent death made Jacinta and her brother "radiantly happy." They were going to the home of the beautiful Lady.

On one occasion, a group of women questioned little Francisco about his future desires. They asked him if he wanted to be a soldier, a carpenter, a doctor?

"No," he replied.

"Then you want to be a priest."

"No," said Francisco, "I don't want to be anything. I just want to die and go to Heaven." And

that's exactly what he did. In January, 1919, the little boy contracted influenza.



Wanted To Die

For several weeks he lay in bed, too ill to move. Then he rallied for a short time and made two requests. First, he wanted to go to the Cova once more. It would take the mind of a poet and the heart of a saint to imagine what this little boy thought as he stood for the last time before the holm-oak tree and gazed at the spot where the beautiful Lady had appeared, promising she would take him to Heaven soon.

His second request—made in April—was that he be allowed to receive his First Communion. The parish priest came and prepared him. Little Francisco had scarcely strength to breathe. Yet the next morning when the priest arrived, he was sitting up in bed, waiting to receive his Jesus in Holy Communion. It was his first Communion and also his last.

The next morning his godmother found him dying. Feebly he beckoned her over to his side, and as she leaned over his thin lips, she heard his last words: "Please, godmother, forgive me for any offense or displeasure I have caused you and ask God to bless me."

Then he died. It was April, 1919. He was eleven years old.



A few months later, his sister, Jacinta, also came down with influenza. Specialists, called in to try to save her life, even went so far as to perform a painful chest operation, but to no avail. Jacinta grew worse with the passing weeks.

While she lay ill, this little girl said many remarkable things. Many of these her nurse recorded. Here are some of them:

"Sins Of Flesh"

"More souls go to Hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason."

"Ask people to plead for peace through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the Lord has confided the peace of the world to her."

"The Blessed Mother can no longer restrain the hand of Her Divine Son from striking the world

with just punishment for its many crimes."

She also spoke of many marriages not being good—they "are not of God," and of certain fashions that "will be introduced that will offend Our Lord very much."

But the strangest of all the things she said concerned her own death. "Our Lady told me," she reported one day, "that I am going to Lisbon to another hospital, and that I will die all alone."

Six weeks later she was moved to Lisbon to be nearer the specialists, who were trying to save her life. Then one afternoon she asked one of the special nurses, who sat with her day and night, if she could see a priest.

"I Die Tonight"



At eight o'clock that evening the priest arrived, and when she asked if she could receive her First Communion, he heard her confession and promised to bring her the Holy Eucharist the following morning.

"But, Father," she said, "that will be too late. I'm going to die this very night."

The priest consulted with the doctors, who saw no immediate danger. So he stuck to his decision to return the following morning.

However, at 10:30 that evening, little Jacinta took a turn for the worse. Her nurse, seeing what was happening, rushed out to find a doctor. When she returned the little girl was dead. She had died far from her relatives and friends, without anyone around, in a strange hospital room. She died alone.

It was February 20, 1920. Jacinta was nine years old.

Lucia In Convent

A short time later, Lucia entered a convent, where she still lives today; Sister Maria das Dores. She is treated no differently than the other nuns, and expects no different treatment.

It was while in the convent that the last known prediction of Fatima finally came true. In 1917 Lucia had reported that the Lady said, *"If people do not stop offending God, a second and worse war will begin during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illuminated by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign that God gives you, that He is going to punish the world for its many crimes by means of war, hunger..."*

On the night of January 25, 1938, the skies over part of the world were lit up with a crimson glow that seemed to be a reflection of the fires of Hell. Scientists said the glow could have been "a most

unusual *aurora borealis*," but they admitted they were not certain.

The *New York Times* the following morning carried reports of the phenomenon from England, France, Bermuda, Canada and the United States under the heading, "Aurora Borealis Startles Europe; People Flee in Fear." A sub-head read, "Britons Thought Windsor Castle Ablaze — Scots See Ill Omen — Snow-clad Swiss Alps Glow — Short-Wave Radio Halts."

Excerpts from the reports stated "From 6:30 to 8:30 the people of London watched two magnificent arcs rising in the east and west... The phenomenon was seen as far south as Vienna, and in Holland..."

"The lights were seen clearly in Italy, Spain and even Gibraltar... (they) spread fear in parts of Portugal and Lower Australia, while thousands of Britons were brought running into the streets in wonderment."

"The lights brought thousands of telephone calls to Swiss and French authorities asking whether it was a fire, war, or the end of the world."

"The Sign"

Sister Lucia saw the "Aurora Borealis" and said it was the sign from Heaven. Whether it was or not, the fact remains that three months later — shortly before the death of Pius XI — Hitler's armies marched into Austria, lighting the fuse of the powder keg, which exploded into the most disastrous war in the history of the world.

In the face of such evidence, can anyone believe that Fatima was just a hoax?

Do We Need This Peace Plan?

The story of Fatima received little attention until 1942. Since then, millions of words have been written and spoken about it and world-wide interest has been created by it.

Many sophisticated people, however, upon hearing the amazing story of Fatima, scoff in disbelief or smile condescendingly and say that the warnings given by Mary do not apply to us. Peace, they seem to think, is purely a matter of military power. Security, in their view, is chiefly an economic question. And they ignore the fact that evidences of moral decay which afflicted the once-mighty Roman Empire before its fall.

The scientific knowledge and mechanical genius of our times are, certainly, vastly superior to those of earlier and ancient societies. But are we any better morally and spiritually? Is the rampant materialism, secularism and paganism of our times any better, or any different, than the same evils of other times? Can peace treaties and international police forces preserve friendly relations among men and



nations, when the whole question of human right and justice rests upon moral ethics and spiritual convictions?

Even the most practical materialists concede that the family is the cornerstone of the solid, healthy society. Yet one out of nearly every three marriages winds up in

divorce. As a result, vast numbers of children become victims of broken homes. Some are shunted into boarding schools, or orphans' homes. And some are forced to pick up their knowledge of morality from "the corner gang" instead of their parents.

The effects upon family life could not be more disastrous than if they had been deliberately planned. Many enter into marriage thoughtlessly, without consideration of the spiritual aspects involved. Others listen to the immoral advice of birth control clinics and regulate the number of their children by an economic yardstick, or by personal convenience. Young married people are encouraged to limit the size of their family...in defiance of the natural law of God...and the so-called "Planned Parenthood" so-

cieties which advocate such immorality, solicit and receive the financial support of well-meaning people who should know better but apparently do not.

The sins committed in Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19) are regarded by righteous people as a horrible example. But are those sins any worse than those being committed today? Was the flouting of God's laws of morality any more flagrant, any more rampant, then than it is now?

Sins Of The Flesh

As she lay on her death bed, little Jacinta said: "More souls go to hell for sins of the flesh (lust) than for any other reason." Yet our modern age excuses such immorality as just a way of learning "the facts of life," or "sowing wild oats." Perhaps God will not destroy our cities as He did Sodom and Gomorrah for such immorality, but are not they who flout God in this way destroying themselves?

In our times, as in all others, there are vast numbers of thoroughly moral people who seek in all ways to live according to God's will. But there is certainly no room for complacency. For there are also vast numbers who seem to have a total disregard not only for the laws laid down by God, but for those designed by society for its own protection.

Nearly every type of crime is on the increase. Sex crimes, juvenile delinquency and immorality have risen alarmingly. Crime, in fact, costs our society more money each year than it costs to run all of the

elementary and secondary schools in the United States. A major crime every 18 seconds... 5,000 every day... was the shocking total in 1950.

"It is a shocking truth," wrote Dr. Martha M. Eliot, chief of the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Federal Security Agency, recently, "that about a million children are now getting into trouble with the law each year."

J. Edgar Hoover said: "The attitude of too many people is that God is not necessary in our way of life, and that morality is purely an old-fashioned notion."

Even more alarming is the warning of an Idaho police officer published in *Collier's*: "Unless parents and our courts wake up soon and take a more realistic view of this menace, we may one day reap a harvest of crime that will shake the country to its very foundation."

"Money, material possessions, fame and power," says Mary Fabyan Windeat, "have become the 'god' worshipped by millions of Americans today—a man's success in life being measured by what he has, not by what he does."

Evils Of The Day

Doctors say that abortions in the United States alone average 3,000 a day. Drunkenness costs the nation a billion dollars a year. Three suicides occur every hour—about 22,000 a year. One out of every ten persons needs mental treatment of some kind. Mental disorders are a characteristic of our generation.

Commenting on this, the distinguished psychiatrist, Dr. C. G.

Jung, says: "...among all my patients in the second half of life ...every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers, and none of them has been really cured who did not regain his religious outlook."

Our Sick World

In other words, the world is sick — mentally and morally — because men have lost sight of God. Until we find Him again, and bring peace into our own hearts, how can we expect to bring peace to the world?

"This people," Our Lord said (Matt. 15: 8) "honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

Can we honestly say that these words do not fit us? There are 70 million people in the United States alone of no religious affiliation. How many millions elsewhere we cannot say. "In God we trust" is a motto we are proud to quote, yet God's name is seldom mentioned in the public schools of the United States. But on every newsstand... and in "literature" coming into our homes... innocent children and impressionable youth are constantly exposed to lurid art and writings which glamorize and excuse im-

morality in countless and artful ways.

"Behind an ever-widening iron curtain," says Monsignor William C. McGrath, "enslaved millions look to America as the last hope of freedom while the lights go out again all over the world. Should America go down what... is there left to withstand the steady encroachment of an ever-mounting Red tide? America is already morally sick unto death, and all the atom bombs or supersonic planes under Heaven will not avail to save her if men do not turn back to God."

Must Not Offend

This, in different words, was the warning given by Our Lady of Fatima as a prelude to the miracle of the sun. "People," she said, "must amend their lives, ask pardon for their sins, and not offend Our Lord any more, for He is already too much offended."

Are we ceasing to offend? Are we turning back to God? Have we any right to feel smugly complacent...and deserving of divine blessing and protection? Do we need the peace plan from Heaven? You cannot answer these questions for everybody, but you can for yourself. What do YOU think?

"God grant we may not be standing in Judgment when for the first time we discover that the Rosary — Our Blessed Mother's own gift, the layman's breviary, the hope of the world, the requirement for peace — is Joyful in prospect, Sorrowful in neglect, and Glorious in effect."

FATHER CONROY.

THE WORLD IN PERIL



Several years ago a school teacher asked the pupils in her class what they wanted to be when they grew up. In answering the question, little Willie expressed the sentiment of millions of people.

"Please, teacher," he said, "When I grow up, I want to be alive."

Willie might today be any one of thousands of American boys peering over the top of a foxhole in Korea, watching through haggard eyes and wondering at just what moment death would come for him out of these unfriendly mountains.

Something definitely is wrong. Ever since the day the Versailles Peace Treaty was signed, the world in general has struggled for peace. Through the years of depression and wars, our own leaders have constantly reminded us that peace, like prosperity, was "just around the corner." The empty echo of their optimism has been drowned by the soft voice of a beautiful Lady coming from the hills in Portugal in 1917: *"If my requests are granted, there will be peace. If not, Russia will over-run the world,*

provoking wars... persecuting... martyring... various nations will be annihilated."

Even if we do not believe a single word of the Fatima story, we cannot deny that events in the world since 1917 seem to indicate we are heading for disaster. Here is the record:

1919: Communists take control of Russia.

1922: Fascists take over Italy.

1933: Nazis gain power in Germany.

1936: Civil War in Spain, accompanied by violent persecution of religion. (Russia, instigator of the war, tests her weapons in preparation for World War II.)

1938: Hitler invades Austria, striking the match that will soon envelop the world in the flames of war.

1939: Germany starts all-out war.

1941: Pearl Harbor bombed.

1945: Atom bombs destroy Hiroshima and Nagasaki, proving that man now has it in his power to destroy himself. Russia takes over Kurile Islands, and sets up a "People's Republic" in Mongolia.

1946: Albania, Roumania, and Bulgaria fall to Communists. Tito,

Stalin's stooge—crushes Yugoslavia.

1948: Manchuria and many small European nations succumb to Communism.

1949: Most violent persecutions since days of Nero start behind Iron Curtain.

1950: Communists complete rape of China, and go to work on Tibet.

1951: Korea; American boys once more dying on foreign soil; Russia testing her weapons for World War III.

1952: Over 100,000 American casualties in Korea. New evidence of Communism in America revealed.

1953 and the future ? ? ? ? ?

Professor Toynbee in his *Study of History* said: "The worst that can happen is extermination." He, apparently, knew what he was talking about. On February 12, 1950, three scientists, among them Professor Albert Einstein, spoke out against the decision to build a hydrogen bomb, warning that its use would mean the destruction of mankind. And on January 20, 1953 President Eisenhower said in his inaugural address: "Science seems about to confer upon us its final gift; the power to erase human life from the earth."

Justified Fear

If these men stood alone in their fear, we might be skeptical. But their voice is only one of a multitude. Many political and military writers agree that 1955 will be the last year for the world to prepare itself against Communism. Others say we don't have nearly that long.

What, then, can we do? Since our human leaders haven't given us

peace, the only sensible thing that remains is to give Mary, the Mother of Christ, a chance. It will not hurt us to try her peace plan from Heaven.

It is particularly apropos for the American people to turn to her in their greatest trouble. Unfortunately, many non-Catholics can't bring themselves to look upon her with understanding. While they agree that she, as the Mother of Christ, has greater influence with Him than we, they will not accept the doctrine of the virgin birth, and therefore, they will not accept her.

America — And Mary

This is hard to understand. No one doubts that Christ had the power to raise Lazarus from the dead (John 11: 38-44). If then He had this power over death, it was certainly within His power to start a Life in the womb of His Mother without the help of man.

America has always belonged to Mary. The oldest historical document ever found in America — the Kensington Stone found in Minnesota in 1898 — bears this prayer, "Hail Virgin Mary, save us from evil." The inscription is dated 1362, one hundred and thirty years before Columbus discovered America in a ship bearing Mary's name.

Since 1846 the United States has been under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without original sin. And there is no dearth of material to prove that Mary is accepted in America.

Writing in *St. Joseph Magazine* (May, 1948) Father Daniel A.

Lord, S.J., says, "In a predominately non-Catholic country, the 'grand old name' of Mary, or one of its variants, is the most popular of all girls' names. More than sixty cities and towns are named for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thirty-eight cathedrals and 3114 parish churches are dedicated to her... Two universities, six colleges for men, thirty-nine colleges for women, five hundred high schools and academies and thousands of grammar schools are named for her..."

"In no other country in the world is there a more sincere and devoted affection for Mary than that which marks (the month of) May in the United States..."

When Christ mounted His last pulpit — the cross — in the cathedral of Golgotha on the first Good Friday, He delivered the greatest sermon of all time — His seven last words.

First, He asked His Father to forgive His executioners (Luke 23: 34). If the murderers of the Son of God could be forgiven, then so can we. Next, He allowed a thief to enter Heaven because he asked for forgiveness. Heaven is also within reach of all of us.

Then Christ looked down at His Mother and said, "Woman, behold Thy Son." And to John, He said, "Behold thy mother." (John 19: 26-27). In His dying moments He broke the last bond that tied Him to earth — He gave up His mother. He gave her, through John who remained unnamed, to be the mother of the human race. To gain us as her children, she had to lose Him. It was a poor exchange. But she accepted.

This is the mother who said, "*If my requests are granted, Russia will be converted and there will be peace...*"

The Rosary . . .

ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO: "*I rely almost entirely upon the Rosary for the conversion and sanctification of my people.*"

POPE PIUS XI: "*If you desire peace in your hearts, your homes and your country, assemble every evening to recite the Rosary.*"

POPE PIUS XII: "*It is above all in the bosom of the family that we desire the custom of the Holy Rosary to be everywhere adopted, religiously preserved and ever more intensely practiced...*"

"*While running your fingers over the beads of the Rosary, do not forget those who languish miserably in prison camps, jails and concentration camps...*"

"*We do not hesitate to affirm again publicly that we put great confidence in the Holy Rosary for the healing of evils which afflict our times.*" ENCYCLICAL LETTER ON THE ROSARY, September 15, 1951.

THE PEACE PLAN AT WORK

On the morning of June 28, 1787, Benjamin Franklin stood before the Constitutional Convention assembly in Philadelphia and delivered one of the most memorable addresses of his life. For five weeks the members had struggled to write a constitution without much success. Franklin had a solution.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have lived a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth... that God governs in the affairs of men ...

"I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business ..."

His suggestion was approved and the best constitution ever drafted by man was drawn up.

Now, nearly two centuries later, his conviction "that God governs in the affairs of men" stands more firmly than ever before. The peace plan from Heaven calls for nothing more than letting God govern our daily lives.



Perhaps this seems like a strange way to combat Communism with its cancerous creed and its mighty armies. However, Communism is not the basic trouble in the world today.

Writes Don Sharkey in his book, *The Woman Shall Conquer* "... we must realize that the basic trouble

of the world is not Communism or Socialism or secularism or international aggression. These things are but symptoms of the dread disease that has stricken humanity. That disease is sin. It will do us no good attacking the symptoms. We must go after the germ itself."

Yes, it is sin, and sin alone that is causing all the trouble in the world. Recently Pope Pius XII said: "The greatest sin of our generation is that it has lost all sense of sin." The Protestant Bishops of America said practically the same thing. And as little Jacinta lay on her deathbed, she said, "Wars are a punishment from God for sin."

Seriously sick as the world is, can we hope to escape without serious consequence? Yes, until disaster strikes, there is always hope.

When God decided to avenge

Himself on the people of Ninevah for their wickedness (Jonas 3), He first sent a prophet to warn them that unless they changed their lives and repented, they and their city would be destroyed. The people listened to the prophet and were spared.



Similarly, God warned Abraham in advance that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, but that they would be spared if he could find only ten just men. Abraham could not find ten men willing to listen to the warning, and the twin cities were consumed "by fire from Heaven" (Genesis 18).

Today the world has been warned again; this time by the Mother of Christ, who has given us a blueprint to cure our ills before they bring on death. Her plans calls for penance and reparation, the daily Rosary, the five first Saturdays, and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Let's examine each point briefly, and see how easily we can fit them into our lives.

1. Penance And Reparation

Noah Webster says penance is "self-imposed suffering, as an expression of contrition for sin." Our Lady of Fatima defined it the same way. She told Lucia that the penance Her Son demanded was for men to give up their easy lives of sin, ask pardon for those sins, and finally amend their lives.

In every walk of life there are people who blaspheme, who profane the Sabbath, reject authority, trample human rights, prostitute marriage, cheat, lie, steal, connive, smear and slander.

Unfortunately, too many do not believe themselves guilty of any of these faults. In the dim light of human intellect, they feel free from all sin. Like the Pharisee in the Temple, they subconsciously say, "Oh, God, I thank Thee that I am not like the rest of men..."

The people they destroy to reach their goal in life, the under-handed methods they use to crush a business rival, their racial and religious bigotry, their intolerance with subordinates, their slander and defamation of "friends" and neighbors, the pampering of their carnal appetites, mean nothing to them. All that counts is being "big" in the eyes of the world, and a "success" in society and business.

What most of us need in our lives is a moral revolution; a re-evaluation of ourselves in the sight of God. When we see ourselves as He sees us, we will realize how destitute we are in spiritual wealth. Then like the Publican, we will

strike our breasts and murmur, "Have pity on me, a sinner."

After seeing ourselves as God sees us, we must make amends for our sins of the past. Fortunately, this need be nothing so drastic as sackcloth and ashes.

The simple sacrifice required of all of us (the Lady told Lucia) is to fulfill the duties of our station in life to the best of our ability. We must make the sacrifice necessary to avoid sin and the occasion of sin in everything we do. We must respect the rights of others, accept the authority of our superiors, "play fair" in our business dealings, lock our eyes and ears and tongues against the faults of those around us, and restore the dignity of marriage to its proper place.

In other words, we must keep the Commandments and offer up the little trials and disappointments of the day as little sacrifices in reparation for our faults. We must accept whatever suffering God sends us as little splinters of the Cross.

When we finally do this, we will be fulfilling the first requirement of the peace plan from Heaven.

2. The Daily Rosary

The Rosary is, of course, a Catholic form of prayer. Yet it can be used by people of any faith, as its prime object is the same for all — prayer to God.

(For those not familiar with the Rosary devotion, all they need do is write for a free pamphlet which explains how this devotion is performed.)

When the Lady appeared to

Lucia on one occasion, she said: "Offer your prayers to me as penance." Then in every one of her apparitions at Fatima she repeated the plea: "Pray the Rosary every day."

Many people do not realize the power of this simple devotion. A striking example is the story of the battle of Lepanto.

In the sixteenth century, the Turks threatened Christianity just as Communism threatens the world today. Their mighty fleets roamed the Mediterranean, plundering cities, destroying churches, killing men, dragging women off to the harems and putting children up for sale in the slave marts. They seemed invincible.

When everything seemed lost, Pope Pius V asked the people of Europe to join him in a Rosary



Crusade. On the morning of October 7, 1571, the Christian fleet — greatly outnumbered — met the Turkish armada. The former literally went into battle with their Rosaries in one hand and their swords in the other. And history records that one of the greatest

military upsets in the history of the world took place that day.

Coincidence? Perhaps! But all religions teach that "greater things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of."

If anyone stops for just a moment and considers the prayers that com-



pose the Rosary, they can not help seeing why this devotion should be regarded so highly.

First there is the Apostles' Creed — a profession of faith and belief in God for all Christians. Second there is the Lord's Prayer, the perfect prayer, since it was given us by Christ Himself. At the end of each decade there is a little prayer that is a simple expression of profound desire for the greater honor and glory of the Blessed Trinity.

And finally there are the fifty-three Hail Mary's. When the time came for God to send His Son into the world, He sent an angel to the little town of Nazareth to a virgin

named Mary. "And when the angel had come to her, he said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women'" (Luke 1:28).

Today these words compose the opening verse of the *Hail Mary*. With them, God started the salvation of the world. Enough of them now might bring about the salvation of our bleeding earth.

It takes only about ten minutes to say the Rosary. Surely that isn't too much time to return to God for the 1440 minutes He gives us daily. It surely isn't too big a price to pay for peace.

Unfortunately, too many of us have no thought for prayer, except in cases of dire emergency. Then we storm Heaven, because we need something. The rest of the time we consider it beneath our dignity to kneel and pray. Yet in the Garden of Gethsemani, Christ knelt and prayed.

Who are we that we should refuse to do likewise?

3. The Five First Saturdays

This devotion, requested as the third point of the peace plan from Heaven, is aimed primarily at the Catholics of the world. Only they can grant the first part of this request, which calls for the Sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months.

However, people of any faith can grant the second part — recitation of the Rosary and an extra fifteen minutes meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation.

When Our Lady made this request known, she attached to it a very special reward. "*All who make the five first Saturdays, I personally will assist at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for salvation.*"

Nothing more need be said about this request. It explains itself.

4. Consecration To The Immaculate Heart Of Mary

Of the four requests, this is the least understood, yet the most important. Anyone granting this request will automatically grant the other three. The consecration can take many forms.

Specifically, this request calls for people to dedicate themselves, their lives and their possessions to Jesus through His Mother. One simple way of doing this is to offer up all our actions, thoughts, deeds and words to Jesus through Mary for the conversion of sinners, in reparation for sin, and for the greater honor and glory and love of God.

Perhaps going to Jesus through Mary seems like a roundabout way of arriving at our true destination — God. But there is wisdom in going to Him through Her. A story can easily illustrate this point.

Many centuries ago there lived a king who loved his subjects very much. However, they seldom paid him any attention, except when they wanted something. Then, on occasions such as this, they would bring him gifts and hope to win his favor.

One day, one of the poorest subjects in the kingdom wanted some-

thing very great, but all he had to offer by way of a gift were a few red apples from a tree that grew outside his window. Now for every apple this peasant could offer, the king had a mountain of gold. In fact, there was nothing that anyone could give him that he did not already have.

The peasant knew this and realized how insignificant the apples were. He knew he could not expect very much if he took them to the king direct. So, being a shrewd man, he went to the king's mother, gave her the apples for her son, and explained what he wished in return.

It was a wise move. The queen took the apples, polished them, placed them on a golden platter and surrounded them with roses. Now the meagre gift was a thing of beauty, and coming from the hands of his mother, they pleased the king very much. He gave the peasant everything he desired, not only because of the gift, but because the peasant showed a trust and love for his mother, whom he also loved.

We are the peasants, Mary is the Mother, Christ is the King. Standing beside His throne, she is always ready to intercede for us with Her Son.

Is it not common sense, in the light of this fact, to offer ourselves to her as her children? Would any king ever allow a child of his mother to want for anything?

What have we to fear? On the day of Judgment, Christ will certainly be more lenient and generous to those who served His

Mother. She will be there beside them in that dread hour to plead their cause. We stand a much greater chance of obtaining eternal happiness if she pleads our case, than if we try to plead it alone.

This, then, is the story of Fatima and the four requests that can bring us peace. Today, more than ever before in history, the three events of May 13, 1917 stand out in the world. On one side is sin, Communism and the other "isms" racing across our planet, destroying everything they touch.

The Road To Peace

On the other side is the Catholic Church, arch-foe of sin and Communism. Here, also, is Mary clearly pointing out the road to peace, and telling us what to expect if we follow our own blind dictates.

Since Communism first reared its ugly head in a little church in Moscow, 600,000,000 people have been ground under its tyranny. Many nations have succumbed. In an excellent exposé of Communism, "*May God Forgive Us,*" the author, Robert H. W. Welch, Jr., says, "Time is running out... the war that Stalin will begin when ready will be totally unlike anything this country or any other great nation has ever faced before."

Yes, time is running out. The day is coming soon when we either will enjoy the fruits of our service

to Jesus through Mary, or we will pay the penalty of our service to sin. Never in the history of mankind has the devil won a battle. His greatest victory — the death of Christ on the cross — was his bitterest defeat.

In the battle now raging in the world — the Mother of God versus Communism — he will lose again. Of this we are certain.

At Fatima

Our Lady said at Fatima, "*In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph, Russia will be converted, and a certain period of peace will be given to the world.*"

This triumph can come soon and easily if all of us are willing to grant the requests Our Lady made. Or it can come only after we have paid the terrible price of our blindness. "*If my requests are not granted, Russia will over-run the world . . . martyring . . . persecuting . . . annihilating . . .*"

These three — martyrdom, persecution, annihilation — will be accompanied by undreamed of bloodshed, terrible suffering and atomic wars in which the greater part of humanity may be wiped off the face of the earth.

How soon this final triumph does take place, then, depends upon how soon enough of us are willing to follow Mary's Peace Plan From Heaven.

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