

# God's Endorsement of the Fatima Message

God does not waste miracles. Throughout salvation history — from Joshua, to Moses, to the twelve Apostles, to the saints of the Catholic Church down through the centuries — God has granted miracles for one overriding purpose: to serve as a divine credential for a witness who invokes the miracle in His name. When God chooses a witness, and then associates an authentic miracle with the testimony of that witness, we know for certain that the witness is worthy of belief. God does not grant miracles to vouch for unreliable witnesses; God does not *choose* unreliable witnesses.

## God Does Not Waste Miracles

No, God does not waste miracles. Much less does God waste a public miracle witnessed by 70,000 people, believers and non-believers alike, which occurred at precisely the moment predicted three months earlier by three witnesses whose testimony had been doubted: Lucia dos Santos (known to the world as Lucy) and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto.<sup>2</sup>

On October 13, 1917, in a humble field known as the

Cova da Iria in Fatima, some 70,000 people assembled to await the happening of a miracle. This in itself is astounding. Never before in salvation history had a visionary predicted three months in advance that a public miracle would occur at a precise time and place. Never before had such a vast crowd assembled to witness a predicted public miracle. Yet that is exactly what happened on this day.

Why this day? Because Lucia dos Santos and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta had been receiving apparitions from “the Lady” on the thirteenth of each month since the previous May. The Lady had been appearing to them above a holm-oak tree in the Cova, and with each apparition the crowds had grown. But doubts about the veracity of the seers had also grown, as well as mockery and persecution of the seers and their families at a time when Portugal was under the control of an anti-Christian, anti-Catholic Masonic political regime.

## The Great Secret

And then, on July 13, 1917, the Lady had shown them something which would terri-

fy them and change them forever, making them into saints who would spend their lives (in the case of Francisco and Jacinta, very brief lives) praying and making sacrifices for sinners.

### **The First Part of the Secret**

As Lucy recounts in testimony the Catholic Church has deemed worthy of belief, the Lady showed them hell:

“She (Our Lady) opened Her hands once more, as She had done during the two previous months. The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls [of the damned] in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in huge fires, without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. (It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me.)

The demons could be distinguished [from the souls of the damned] by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black yet transparent like burning coals.<sup>3</sup> This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, Who had already prepared us by promising, in the first apparition, to take us to Heaven. Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror.”<sup>4</sup>

Having shown the children the fate of the damned, which is considered the first part of the Great Secret of Fatima, the Lady then confided to the children the second part.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Second Part of the Secret**

Everyone, including members of the Vatican apparatus, agrees that the second part of the Secret, as recorded in Sister Lucy’s diaries, is as follows:

“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 what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offend-

ing God, a worse one will break out during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions against the Church and against the Holy Father.

“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the Consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated. In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, which will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world. In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved etc. Do not tell this to anybody. Francisco, yes, you may tell him.”<sup>5</sup>

Basic elements of this as-

tonishing Message are these:

- Many souls, in fact, go to hell because they do not repent of the mortal sins they have committed.
- To save them, God wishes to establish throughout the world the uniquely Catholic devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- This is to be accomplished by consecrating the nation of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (in conjunction with the Communion of Reparation on the first Saturdays of each month, offered in reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary), whereupon Russia will be converted to the Catholic Faith.
- If this is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.
- If it is *not* done, Russia will spread its errors throughout the world. There will be wars, famine, persecutions against the Church, and martyrdom of the good. The Holy Father will have much to suffer. And if Our Lady’s requests are still not obeyed, then various nations will be “annihilated” — that is, the populations of entire nations will be wiped off the face of the earth.
- Nevertheless, Our Lady of Fatima promised: “In the

end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, which will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world."

### **An Urgent Request to Pray the Rosary**

To these things, the Lady added an urgent request that Catholics "Pray the Rosary every day." She also asked that they include the following prayer at the end of each decade: "O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need." In obedience to the Lady's request, and as a testament to the authenticity of Her apparitions at Fatima, the Church included this prayer in the Rosary, and Catholics recite it to this day.

### **The Five First Saturdays Devotion**

The Church has also adopted the First Saturday devotions of Reparation, which the Lady explained thus: "I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the First Saturday of five consecutive months shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep Me company for fifteen minutes

while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to Me."

### **The Third Secret**

We pause here to note in passing (for discussion in a separate booklet) the curious phrase at the end of the first two parts of the Secret: "In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved etc." The incomplete phrase, ending with "etc.", appears in Sister Lucy's fourth memoir of the apparitions. It clearly introduces a heavenly prediction, containing further words of Our Lady not yet published, about the state of adherence to Catholic dogma in the Church at large, distinguished from Portugal in particular, where the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.

Standing alone, the observation about adherence to Catholic dogma in Portugal appears gratuitous and quite senseless, for the phrase does not at all follow logically from the first two parts of the Secret. Every recognized Fatima scholar concluded from this that the phrase represents the beginning of a third part of the Secret — what has come to be known simply as the Third Secret of Fatima.

Sister Lucy was so terrified by the contents of the Third

Secret that even after she was formally ordered by her bishop to write it down in October of 1943, she could not bring herself to do so despite over two months of struggling each day to comply, until the subsequent apparition on January 2, 1944 in which Our Lady assured her that it ought to be done. In consigning the text of the Third Secret to the Bishop of Fatima in a sealed envelope, Sister Lucy made him promise to reveal it to the world at her death or in 1960, whichever came first — but in no event later than 1960. Why 1960? As she would later attest, Our Lady wished it so because the Secret would “be clearer” (*mais claro*) then.

To this day, the Vatican has never revealed the words of the Virgin which clearly follow “In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved etc.” The “etc.” remains a secret. This act of concealment is part and parcel of the campaign by certain Catholic churchmen to bury the Fatima Message. [For proof that the whole Third Secret is not yet released (as of March 2010) read the book, *The Secret Still Hidden*. Also see *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64 and the book, *The Devil’s Final Battle* (especially the second edition) — all available from the addresses on [page 65](#).]

## The Miraculous Confirmation

Having received from Heaven itself a message with obviously profound importance for the Church and all humanity, Lucy knew that she and her cousins needed a divine credential if they were to be believed. During the apparition on July 13, Lucy asked the Lady “to tell us who You are, and to work a miracle, so that everybody will believe that You are appearing to us.” And the Lady replied: “Continue to come here every month. In October I will tell you who I am and what I want, and I will perform a miracle for all to see and believe.”<sup>6</sup> The Lady repeated this promise in further apparitions to Lucy and the other seers in August and again, at the Cova, on September 13.

And so the people had assembled in a great crowd at the Cova on October 13. The apparition began precisely at the hour predicted — noon solar time, or 1:30 p.m. by the clock in Portugal, when the sun was at its highest point in the sky. Lucy suddenly told the people in the crowd to shut their umbrellas in the midst of a drenching rain which had turned the Cova into a sea of mud. She then went into an ecstasy, and the Lady, appearing again, first told Lucy: “I want



**“I want My whole Church to acknowledge that consecration as a Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary so that it may extend its homage later on and put the devotion to this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart.”**

<http://www.fatimacrusader.com/consecration/pdf/consppg8.pdf>

a chapel to be built here in My honor. I am the Lady of the Rosary."

She also stated: "People must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins. They must not offend Our Lord any more for He is already much offended." Sister Lucy notes that as Our Lady spoke these words, She was much sadder than usual.

The Lady is the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, Who will henceforth also be known under the title Our Lady of Fatima, one of many such titles bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin by the Church. (The chapel, of course, was built, and then rebuilt after being blown up on March 6, 1922 by a bomb placed there by Masonic associates of "the Tinsmith," a nickname for the Masonic Mayor of Ourem.)<sup>7</sup>

### **The Miracle of the Sun**

We recount here the testimony of a reporter who cannot possibly be accused of partiality in this matter — and for a good reason! We refer to Avelino de Almeida, the chief editor of *O Seculo*, the large "liberal" anticlerical and Masonic daily newspaper of Lisbon. He writes:

"From the road, where the carriages were crowded together and where hundreds of persons had stayed

for want of sufficient courage to advance across the muddy ground, we saw the huge crowd turn towards the sun which appeared at its zenith, clear of the clouds. It resembled a disc of silver, and it was possible to stare at it without the least discomfort. It did not burn the eyes. It did not blind. We would say that it produced an eclipse. Then a tremendous cry rang out, and the crowd nearest us were heard to shout: 'Miracle! Miracle! ... Marvel! ... Marvel!' Before the dazzled eyes of the people, whose attitude transported us to biblical times, and who, dumbfounded, heads uncovered, contemplated the blue of the sky, the sun trembled, it made strange and abrupt movements, outside of all cosmic laws, 'the sun danced', according to the typical expression of the peasants ..."<sup>8</sup>

Attacked violently by all the anticlerical press, Avelino de Almeida renewed his testimony, fourteen days later, in his review, *Ilustração Portuguesa*. This time he illustrated his account with a dozen photographs of the huge ecstatic crowd, and repeated as a refrain throughout his article: "I saw ... I saw ... I saw." And he concluded: "Miracle, as the

people shouted? Natural phenomenon, as the experts say? For the moment, that does not concern me, I am only saying what I saw... The rest is a matter for Science and the Church."<sup>9</sup>

Saturday, October 13 had begun as a pilgrimage of penance because it had rained the entire preceding night. Now, this "almost sudden change of weather, with the dusty roads transformed into muddy quagmires by a pelting rain, causing to replace abruptly, for a day, the sweetness of autumn with the biting rigors of winter, did not succeed in moving them, to make them give up or despair."<sup>10</sup>

In comparing the numerous accounts of witnesses, we can distinguish the diverse aspects and the result of the astounding phenomena seen by all. For each one of the phenomena, it would be possible to line up many witnesses, whose testimony would constitute an impressive book.

### **Eyewitness Reports**

Here is the first marvelous fact described by one of the innumerable credible eyewitnesses:

"It must have been 1:30 p.m. when there arose at the exact spot where the children were, a column of smoke, thin, fine and bluish, which extended up to

perhaps two meters above their heads, and evaporated at that height. This phenomenon, perfectly visible to the naked eye, lasted for a few seconds. Not having noted how long it had lasted, I cannot say whether it was more or less than a minute. The smoke dissipated abruptly, and after some time, it came back to occur a second time, then a third time ...

"The low and heavy sky had a very dark color, laden with moisture, [which] released an abundant and long lasting rain; during the time of the apparition, the rain stopped totally. Abruptly the sky cleared: The sun triumphantly pierced the thick bed of clouds hiding it until then, and shone intensely." (Dr. Almeida Garrett)<sup>11</sup>

This abrupt change of weather took all the eyewitnesses by surprise:

"It was a day of heavy and continuous rain. But a few minutes before the miracle, it stopped raining." (Alfredo da Silva Santos)

And this testimony from a physician, a man of science, concerning the inexplicable silvering of the sun, allowing it to be viewed directly without harm to the eyes:

"Suddenly I heard the uproar of thousands of

voices, and I saw the whole multitude spread out in that vast space at my feet ... turn their backs to that spot where, until then, all their expectations focused, and look at the sun on the other side ... I turned around, too, toward the point commanding their gazes, and I could see the sun, like a very clear disc, with its sharp edge, which gleamed without hurting the sight ... It could not be confused with the sun seen through a fog (there was no fog at that moment), for it was neither veiled, nor dim. At Fatima, it kept its light and heat, and stood out clearly in the sky, with a sharp edge, like a large gaming table. The most astonishing thing was to be able to stare at the solar disc for a long time, brilliant with light and heat, without hurting the eyes, or damaging the retina." (Dr. Almeida Garrett)<sup>12</sup>

In the same vein this testimony by the editor-in-chief of *O Seculo*:

"And then we witnessed a unique spectacle, an incredible spectacle, unbelievable if you did not witness it. From above the road ... We see the immense crowd turn towards the sun, which appeared at its zenith, clear of the clouds. It looked like

a plate of dull silver, and it was possible to stare at it without the least discomfort. It did not burn the eyes. It did not blind." (Article of October 15, 1917)

And likewise: "The people could look at the sun as we look at the moon." (Maria do Carmo)<sup>13</sup>

One could multiply endlessly the testimonies about the ensuing solar phenomena, witnessed even by the secular editor-in-chief of an anti-clerical newspaper. Consider these:

"It shook and trembled; it seemed like a wheel of fire." (Maria da Capelinha)<sup>14</sup>

"The sun turned like a fire wheel, taking on all the colors of the rainbow." (Maria do Carmo)<sup>15</sup>

"It appeared like a globe of snow turning on itself." (Father Lourenço)<sup>16</sup>

"The pearl-like disc had a giddy motion. This was not the twinkling of a star in all its brilliance. It turned on itself with impetuous speed." (Dr. Almeida Garrett)<sup>17</sup>

"At a certain moment, the sun stopped and then began again to dance, to spin; it stopped again, and began again to dance." (Ti Marto)<sup>18</sup>

"The sun took on all

the colors of the rainbow. Everything assumed those same colors: our faces, our clothes, the earth itself." (Maria do Carmo)<sup>19</sup>

"A light, whose colors changed from one moment to the next, was reflected on the people and on things." (Dr. Pereira Gens)<sup>20</sup>

What happened next constitutes the most terrifying aspect of the Miracle, and one with profound implications for our era, in which man has perfected the ability to destroy the whole world with fire from the sky: the sun appeared to detach itself from the sky and plunge towards the earth.

"We suddenly heard a clamor, like a cry of anguish of that entire crowd. The sun, in fact, keeping its rapid movement of rotation, seemed to free itself from the firmament and blood-red, to plunge towards the earth, threatening to crush us with its fiery mass. Those were some terrifying seconds." (Dr. Almeida Garrett)<sup>21</sup>

"I saw the sun turn and it seemed to descend. It was like a bicycle wheel." (John Carreira)<sup>22</sup>

"The sun began to dance and, at a certain moment, it appeared to detach itself from the firmament and to rush forward on us, like

a fire wheel." (Alfredo da Silva Santos)<sup>23</sup>

"I saw it perfectly descending as if it came to crash on the earth. It seemed to detach itself from the sky and rush toward us. It maintained itself at a short distance above our heads; but that sort of attack was of very short duration ... It seemed very near the people and it continued to turn in the opposite direction." (Maria do Carmo)<sup>24</sup>

"Suddenly, the sun appeared with its circumference well-defined. It came down as if to the height of the clouds and began to whirl giddily upon itself like a captive ball of fire. With some interruptions, this lasted about eight minutes." (Father Pereira da Silva)<sup>25</sup>

"It suddenly seemed to come down in a zig-zag, menacing the earth." (Father Lourenço)<sup>26</sup>

"Seeing the sun falling on us ..." (Father John Gomes)<sup>27</sup>

"Finally, the sun stopped and everybody breathed a sigh of relief ..." (Maria da Capelinha)<sup>28</sup>

"From those thousands of mouths I heard shouts of joy and love to the Most Holy Virgin. And then I believed. I had the certainty of not having been the vic-

tim of a suggestion. I had seen the sun as I would never see it again." (Mario Godinho, an engineer)<sup>29</sup>

Another astonishing fact: all those people, who were for the most part soaked to the bone, verified with joy and amazement that they were completely dry. This fact is attested to in the canonical process for Jacinta and Francisco, who were ultimately beatified on May 13, 2000.

"The moment one would least expect it, our clothes were totally dry." (Maria do Carmo)<sup>30</sup>

"My suit dried in an instant." (John Carreira)<sup>31</sup>

The academician Marques da Cruz testified as follows:

"This enormous multitude was drenched, for it had rained unceasingly since dawn. But — though this may appear incredible — after the great miracle everyone felt comfortable, and found his garments quite dry, a subject of general wonder ... The truth of this fact has been guaranteed with the greatest sincerity by dozens and dozens of persons of absolute trustworthiness, whom I have known intimately from childhood, and who are still alive (1937), as well as by persons from various

districts of the country who were present."<sup>32</sup>

And finally, there were also moral miracles of the conversions of many people. In his book, *Meet the Witnesses*, John Haffert writes:

"The captain of the regiment of soldiers on the mountain that day — with orders to prevent the gathering of the crowd — was converted instantly. Apparently so were hundreds of other unbelievers, as their testimony will show."<sup>33</sup>

"There was an unbeliever there who had spent the morning mocking the 'simpletons' who had gone off to Fatima just to see an ordinary girl. He now seemed paralyzed, his eyes fixed on the sun. He began to tremble from head to foot, and lifting up his arms, fell on his knees in the mud, crying out to God." (Father Lourenço)<sup>34</sup>

"I live eighteen miles from Fatima. And in May of 1917 we were told about the extraordinary apparitions, but the news came to us mixed up with the fantasy of the people. Naturally I did not believe. I sincerely supposed it was only (the) imagination of someone. ... At my mother's request, I went once more to the Cova da Iria in August at the time

of the apparitions. Once more I came back discouraged and disappointed. But that time, something extraordinary happened. My mother, who had had a large tumor in one of her eyes for many years, was cured. The doctors who had attended her said they could not explain such a cure. Still I did not believe in the apparitions. Finally, and again at my mother's request, I went to the Cova da Iria once more on the thirteenth of October. ... In spite of what had happened to my mother, I was disappointed and did not believe in the apparitions. So I sat inside my car. Then all at once I noticed that everybody looked at the sky. Natural curiosity attracted my attention, and I got out of the car and looked at the sky, too. ... From those hundreds of mouths I heard words of belief and of love to the Blessed Virgin. And then I believed." (Mario Godinho, an engineer)<sup>35</sup>

A number of other cases of cures and conversions are documented in, among other places, the following books: *Documentação Crítica de Fátima* and *Fatima from the Beginning*.<sup>36</sup>

To those who would say the miracle was a product of "mass hysteria" at the scene,

God Himself arranged a ready rebuttal: the phenomenon was admired by individuals even 25 miles away, with no one around to inform them what was taking place in Fatima. Perfectly credible witnesses, who were very far from the Cova da Iria, related having seen the unprecedented spectacle of the dance of the sun, exactly like the 70,000 pilgrims gathered around the holm-oak where the Virgin had appeared.<sup>37</sup>

In the small village of Alburitel, situated about ten miles from Fatima, the whole town was able to enjoy the vision of the solar prodigy. The testimony frequently quoted is that of Father Inacio Lourenço, because it is the most detailed. But what he relates having seen, all the villagers, questioned by the investigators, confirmed seeing in exactly the same way.

The witnesses of the event were indeed innumerable, their testimonies agree and we are flooded with the documents they have left us.<sup>38</sup>

In the first place, numerous accounts appeared at once in the Portuguese press. It is noteworthy that the first to provide testimony were the anticlerical reporters. The three articles of Avelino de Almeida — the one of October 13, immediately before the event; the other of October 15, edited

at Vila Nova de Ourem on the evening of the 13th; and a third article of October 29 — merit a special mention. In spite of the jeering tone and Voltairian irony which inspire in part the first article, in spite of the expected anticlerical tones which still appear in the article of the 15th, these texts from a talented reporter, one who besides is honest and conscientious, are historical documents of prime importance.<sup>39</sup> But he was not the only one to relate the facts, for other reporters were present at the Cova da Iria.

Next there were the official investigations. In November 1917, at the request of Bishop de Lima Vidal, who was then directing the diocese of Lisbon, the parish priest of Fatima led his investigation and questioned several witnesses of the parish. Unfortunately, he transcribed only four depositions!

The investigations of the historians fortunately compensated for the negligence of the official investigators. The report of Father Formigao, who obtained from Dr. José Maria de Almeida Garrett, professor at the Faculty of Sciences of Coimbra, a very thorough account, is the most scientific report in our possession.<sup>40</sup> In addition, we have the reports of Father da Fonseca (whose work was done in order to verify the points disputed by Father Dha-

nis,<sup>41</sup> who refused to examine the evidence), Father de Marchi, Canon Barthas, Father Dias Coelho and Father Richard.

In 1977, to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the last apparition, it was still possible to assemble in Fatima more than thirty persons who had been present at the solar prodigy and who could articulate their memories. Thanks to those numerous testimonies, it is possible to reconstruct a precise running commentary, allowing us to relive, hour-by-hour and minute-by-minute, this decisive day, assuredly one of the most important in the history of the world. Indeed, the evidence of the solar miracle on October 13, 1917 was so overwhelming that in 1952 even Hollywood vouched for its authenticity by releasing a classic film (starring Gilbert Roland) entitled *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*, which is still available on videotape today.

### **Beyond Doubt**

Why was this day so important? Because it was the day on which a heavenly Message from the Mother of God was authenticated beyond any reasonable doubt; this message, some 90 years later, stands at the heart of the perilous situation of the Church and the world at this very moment in human history, offering us the only viable way out.