

Fatima is not just a “Private Revelation”

by John Vennari

Note: This is a combination of an edited portion of a *Fatima Challenge* speech and part of a *Fatima Crossfire* answer.

There are those who claim we do not have to believe in Fatima because it is merely a “private revelation”. This is not true.

The revelations at Fatima fall into another category: a higher category. It is a public, prophetic revelation.

This was explained by two highly-respected theologians: Father Joseph de Sainte Marie and Bishop Rudolph Graber. They taught that Fatima is in a higher category than that of private revelation.

First: because the message is a public message to mankind that contains dire warnings of consequences if the message is not heeded;

Second: this message was verified by God with the great Miracle of the Sun witnessed by 70,000 people, and with prophecies that are still being fulfilled;

Third: the Church has pronounced that the Message of Fatima is true: it even now has its own Feast Day, May 13.

Father Joseph de Sainte Marie, the eminent Carmelite theologian (he died in the 1980s), wrote:

“Once the Pope has judged and recognized that a given prophecy is indeed from God, then he must obey – not as obeying the prophet, but as obeying God.”

Likewise, Bishop Rudolph Graber, author of *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time*, said in 1965:

“A careful distinction should be made between personal revelation and those where the message is declared to be for mankind at large. The former can with equanimity be ignored. But the latter must be taken seriously. And Fatima belongs to this category.”

Fatima, thus, is not just a private revelation that we can take or leave. Fatima is in a higher category, that of a public, prophetic revelation that imposes an obligation on the Church and on all Catholics.

“I will perform a Miracle so that all may believe”

St. Thomas Aquinas says that God sends prophets to various ages for specific purposes. Fatima clearly is unique in that it was a public warning given by Our Lady, a public request for our time, verified by the Miracle of the Sun.

We learn the obligation it imposes by reading what Our Lady asked us to do. She asked us to pray the Rosary every day, She asked us to make sacrifices for sinners, She asked us to offer our daily duty as an act of sacrifice, She asked for the Five First Saturdays of reparation, She offered us the Brown Scapular. These are all duties and pious practices that we need to make part of our lives. She verified Her Message with the great Miracle of the Sun on October 13, 1917, witnessed by 70,000 people – even by those whom had come to scoff at the event, and came away dumbfounded by what they saw.

Remember, Our Lady did not say, “I will perform a miracle so that you are free to ignore My message.” She said, “I will perform a miracle so that all may believe.” She said this three times: in July, August and September, 1917.

Her requests place a real ob-

ligation on us, and of course there is also the obligation She places on the Pope to consecrate Russia in union with the world’s bishops to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, according to the exact specifications that Our Lady gave.

For the conversion of Russia, Our Lady asked for such a simple act. She didn’t ask for the Pope to run through coals in his bare feet. She didn’t ask for the bishops to fast for 40 days and 40 nights.

And when we consider the great grace She promised, it would not have been out of place for Our Lady to say that in order to convert Russia and bring about a period of peace to the world, the Pope and all the bishops have to fast for 40 days or perform some heroic, difficult penance. That wouldn’t have been an unreasonable request, but She didn’t even ask for that.

Rather, She requested a simple prayer, a simple consecration, turning over everything to Her, acknowledging that everything should be in Her hands. For the great grace of the conversion of Russia, a little five-minute prayer by the Pope in union with the bishops of the world consecrating specifically Russia and Russia alone is all She asked. **FC**