

XII. Jacinta's Death

Francisco's death left Lucia and Jacinta utterly heartbroken. Though they realized he was happy in Heaven with Our Lord and Our Lady, they missed him. Their three hearts were as one and in losing him, they felt they lost part of their heart. Jacinta particularly was lonely for her brother. She would sit up in bed, her head burning with fever, and remain motionless for hours, her face showing her awful dejection.

"What are you thinking about, Jacinta?" her mother asked.

"I'm thinking of Francisco. How much I would love to see him." Jacinta could not tell everything that was in her thoughts to her mother, though she did confide in Lucia. "I think of Francisco and how I'd love to see him. But I think also of the war that is going to come. So many people will die and so many will go to Hell. Many cities shall be burned to the ground and many priests will be killed. Look, Lucia, I'm going to Heaven. But when you see that night lightened by that strange light, you also run away to Heaven."

"Don't you see it's impossible to run away to Heaven?"

"Yes, you can't do that. But don't be afraid. I'll pray a lot for you in Heaven, and for the Holy Father also, and for Portugal, for the war not to come here and for all the priests."

Jacinta not only prayed, she suffered. The influenza from which she suffered grew worse daily and an abscess formed on her chest. Her mother felt so sad to see her dear little child in such pain but Jacinta always came back with a consoling word. "Don't worry, mother, for I'm going to Heaven. I'll pray a lot for you there. Don't cry. I'm all right." Little soldier that she was, she tried hard to forget her sickness and pains so that she might console her family and offer everything for the conversion of sinners. "We must make many, many sacrifices and pray a lot for sinners," she confided to Lucia, "so that no one shall ever again have to go to that prison of fire where people suffer so much." Jacinta did not let one moment of suffering go to waste. One twinge of pain was of more value to her than all the gold in the world.

A doctor came to her house and advised her parents to take her to the hospital at Ourém where she could get the best professional treatment. Jacinta knew that the best doctors in the world could not cure her. She was willing to go, however, in obedience to Our Lady, because it would give her a greater opportunity to sacrifice herself. Jacinta tried very hard to be courageous about going, but to go to a hospital and live among strangers, without her mother or father or her brothers and sisters was no easy sacrifice. The hardest thing of all, however, would be to say good-bye to Lucia. How could she live without her!

"Lucia," she whispered with tears in her eyes, "if only you could come with me! The hardest thing to me is to have to go without you. Maybe the hospital is a house that is very dark, where we can't see a thing! And I'll be there suffering all alone."

It had to be. Early in June, her good father lifted her frail body out of bed and placed her, as comfortably as possible, upon his little donkey. Together, they set out for the hospital in the town of Ourém.

Jacinta stayed in the hospital for two months under rigorous treatment. Once only did she have visitors, her mother and Lucia. Lucia tells about this visit. "I found her as happy as always to suffer for the love of God and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of sinners and for the Holy Father. That was her ideal. That was all she spoke about."

They remained with Jacinta two days. Senhora Marto had to return to her family and Lucia to hers though it tore their hearts to have to leave Jacinta in this distant hospital alone and among strangers. What made it even worse was the futility of it all. She was not improving, no matter how much the doctors did. The wound on her chest was large, open and continually running. Finally, the doctors agreed she might just as well be at home with her family and they discharged her towards the latter part of August.

“She was all bones,” Father Formigão said, who visited her at home; “it was a shock to see how thin her arms were. She was running a fever all the time. Pneumonia, then tuberculosis and pleurisy ate away her strength. I remembered, as I saw her, that Our Lady had promised Bernadette of Lourdes that she too would not be happy in this world but in the next. I wondered if Our Lady made the same promise to Jacinta.”

One day Jacinta confided to Lucia, “When I’m alone, I get out of bed to say the Angel’s prayer. Now I can’t bow my head to the floor any more because I fall. I say it on my knees.”

When Lucia heard this, she thought she should talk it over with the Pastor of Olival. He advised Lucia to tell Jacinta to say her prayers in bed.

“But will Our Lord like it?” Jacinta asked, still doubtful.

“Yes, He will. Our Lord wants us to do what the priest says.”

“Then it’s all right. I won’t get up again for my prayers.” Jacinta would do what the priest of God advised.

Though she could not kneel to say her prayers, somehow or other, at times, Jacinta had enough strength to take a trip to the Cova da Iria. When winter came, her parents would not hear of her going to the Cova but she prevailed upon them to allow her to go to Mass. She wanted to go every morning, as Lucia did. “Don’t come to Mass,” Lucia tried to counsel her, “it is too much for you. Besides, today isn’t Sunday.”

“That doesn’t matter. I want to go in place of the sinners who don’t go even on Sundays... Look, Lucia, do you know? Our Lord is so sad and Our Lady told us that He must not be offended any more. He is already offended very much and no one pays any attention to it. They keep committing the same sins.”

“Have you performed any other sacrifices, Jacinta?”

“Yes, Lucia. Last night, I was very thirsty, but I did not drink anything. I felt a lot of pain and I offered Our Lord the sacrifice of not turning in bed. This is why I couldn’t sleep. And you, Lucia, have you performed any sacrifices today?” Lucia’s sacrifices were only for Jacinta’s ears.

Lucia tells another story about Jacinta. One day, Jacinta’s mother brought her a glass of milk. “You drink this down, Jacinta; it is good for you.”

“I don’t want it, mother,” she replied, pushing the glass away. Senhora Marto insisted but Jacinta would not give in.

“I don’t know how I am going to make her take anything,” her mother said, as she walked away.

When Senhora Marto had gone, Lucia remonstrated with Jacinta. “How does it happen that you disobey your mother! Aren’t you going to offer that sacrifice to Our Lord?”

Hearing this, Jacinta’s eyes filled with tears of sorrow. She called for her mother and asked to be forgiven. “I’ll take anything you want me to take, mother.” Her mother brought back the glass of milk and Jacinta took it without showing any sign of revulsion. Afterwards, as Lucia was wiping away Jacinta’s tears, the little girl confessed, “If you only knew how hard it was for me to drink it!”

From that time on, though Jacinta felt it increasingly difficult to drink milk or broth

or to eat, she never flinched but tried bravely to take anything her mother gave her. One day, her mother brought in to her with the milk a bunch of grapes. Jacinta loved grapes, and her mother knew it would please her. “No, mother, I don’t want the grapes. Take them away; just give me the milk.” Later she confided to Lucia, “I did want the grapes so much and it was so hard for me to drink that milk. But I preferred to offer a sacrifice.”

Almost every day, on her way home from morning Mass and Communion, Lucia would drop in to visit Jacinta. It was such a great joy to Jacinta — “Lucia,” she asked, “did you receive Communion today?”

“Yes, Jacinta.”

“Then come very close to me for you have Our Lord in your heart. I don’t know how it happens but I feel Our Lord in me and I understand what He says even if I don’t see Him or hear Him. It is so good to be with Him.”

Lucia took from her prayer book a little picture of a chalice and Host. Jacinta took and kissed it so earnestly.

“It’s the Hidden Jesus. I love Him so much. How I’d love to receive Him in church. Don’t you take Communion in Heaven? If we do, I’ll receive Him every day. If the Angel had come to the hospital to bring Communion to me, how happy I would have been.”

Lucia gave her a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She kept it with her all the time, day and night, and would kiss it frequently. “I kiss His Heart. It is the thing I love best. How I would like to have a picture of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Don’t you have any?”

“No, Jacinta, I can’t find any.”

“Soon I shall go to Heaven. You are to stay here to reveal that the Lord wants to establish throughout the world the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When you start to reveal this, don’t hesitate. Tell everyone that Our Lord grants us all graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that all must make their petitions to Her; that the Sacred Heart of Jesus desires that the Immaculate Heart of Mary be venerated at the same time. Tell them that they should all ask for peace from the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as God has placed it in Her hands. Oh, if I could only put in the heart of everyone in the world the fire that is burning in me and makes me love so much the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary.”

Meanwhile, Our Lady did not leave her little patient alone. She visited Jacinta to say that She wanted her to go to another hospital in Lisbon. The little girl could hardly wait to tell Lucia. “Lucia, Our Lady told me that I’m going to go to another hospital in Lisbon and that I’ll never see you again or my parents and that after suffering a great deal, I shall die alone. She said that I should not be afraid since She will come to take me with Her to Heaven.” She reached out her tiny arms to embrace Lucia, saying between sobs, “I will never see you again. Pray a lot for me for I am going to die alone.” The thought crushed the little child.

Once Lucia found her embracing a picture of Our Lady, praying aloud: “My dear little Mother, so I am going to die alone?”

“Why do you worry about dying alone?” Lucia interrupted, hoping to distract her mind and cheer her a bit. “What do you care when Our Lady is going to come for you?”

“It’s true. I don’t care. I don’t know why, but sometimes I forget that She is going to come for me.”

“Take heart, Jacinta. You have only a little while to wait before you go to Heaven. For me...” Lucia’s heart welled up with sorrow at the thought of losing Jacinta so soon.

“Poor thing. Don’t cry, Lucia, I shall pray a lot in Heaven for you. You are going to stay here, but it is Our Lady who wants it.”

“Jacinta, what are you going to do in Heaven?”

“I’m going to love Jesus a lot, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and pray and pray for you, for the Holy Father, my parents, brothers, sisters and for everyone who asked me and for sinners. I love to suffer for the love of Our Lord and Our Lady. They love those who suffer for the conversion of sinners.”

Everyone thought Jacinta was dreaming about going to the hospital in Lisbon. How would she get there? What was the use? Her parents could not afford it. Our Lady, however, had arranged everything.

Some few days after Jacinta announced that she was going to go to Lisbon, an automobile drove up in front of the Marto house. It was Father Formigão with two people, Doctor Eurico Lisboa and his wife. The doctor had heard about the happenings at the Cova da Iria and he wished to visit the holy place and speak with the children.

“Around the middle of January, 1920,” the doctor stated, “we stopped at Santarém to see the Reverend Formigão who could inform us better than anyone else of the events that had taken place at Fatima. We went to the Cova da Iria with him and said the Rosary. Returning to Fatima, we stopped in to see Jacinta. She was pale and thin and walked with great difficulty. Her family was not upset about her condition as the only ambition of Jacinta was to go to Our Lady. I reproached them for not doing all in their power to help the girl. They answered that it was useless as Our Lady wanted to take her away and that she had already been at the hospital at Ourém and nothing could be done. I told them that the will of Our Lady is above human resources and that to make sure that Our Lady really wanted to take her, they should go to all lengths to save her.

“My words disturbed them so they asked the priest for his advice. He confirmed my words. Jacinta came to Lisbon on the second of February, 1920, where she was placed under the care of one of the leading specialists on children’s diseases. The diagnosis was purulent pleurisy of the large left cavity, fistulous osteitis of the seventh and eighth ribs of the same side.”

However, before Jacinta left Fatima for the hospital, she begged her mother to take her once more to the Cova da Iria. “I decided to take Jacinta there on the donkey with the help of one of my friends. The child was so weak that she could not even stand. As we went by the bog of the Carreira, Jacinta got down from the donkey and began to say the Rosary alone. Then she picked some flowers to adorn the little Chapel. When we reached the Cova, we all knelt and she prayed for a while in her own way. After she got up, she said, ‘When Our Lady went away, She passed over those trees and entered Heaven so fast that it seemed as if Her feet were caught in the door.’”

The following day, Jacinta said good-bye to her beloved Lucia. This was the bitterest cross of all for these two children; their hearts were one and it was like taking a sword and cutting their hearts in two. “She kept her arms around me for a long time,” Lucia wrote in her memoirs; “she was crying and saying to me, ‘Never again shall we see each other. Pray a great deal for me for I am going to Heaven. There I will pray a lot for you. Don’t ever tell anyone the secret even if they kill you. Love Jesus a great deal and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Make many sacrifices for sinners.’”

The journey to Lisbon was a sad one for mother and child. Jacinta stayed at the window of the train all the while, admiring the countryside and the people in the villages they passed through. At Santarém, a lady who had heard about Jacinta’s journey came to offer her a box of candy but the child would not touch a piece of it. When they reached Lisbon, some ladies met them and together they called on friends, looking for a place to stay. No one would take a sick child. Jacinta appreciated well the sorrow of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and of Saint Joseph when they went looking for a place to stay in the town of Bethlehem but “there was no room for them in the inn.” Tired and

disappointed, mother and daughter went to the orphanage of Our Lady of the Miracles and asked to be admitted. The Superior, Mother Maria da Purificação Godinho welcomed them with open arms. She had the highest regard for the little girl who had seen Our Lady.

While waiting in the parlor of the orphanage, a wealthy woman approached Jacinta and told the child about the trouble she was having with her eyes. She asked Jacinta to pray that her eyes might become better and she placed a two dollar bill in her hands. Jacinta did not speak and the lady went away discouraged. The child gave the money immediately to the Mother Superior who told her to give it to her mother. "No," Jacinta said, "this is for you. You are having so much trouble with me."

Later, the Superior asked the girl why she did not answer the lady. "Look, my dear Mother, I have prayed much for her. I didn't say anything then as I was afraid I might forget it, I had so many pains."

Senhora Marto remained at the orphanage for a few days to satisfy herself that Jacinta would be well taken care of. The Superior was a real mother to the child; she loved her dearly and Jacinta felt very much at home with all the children. What made the child's stay there especially happy was the fact that there was a chapel there. She was going to live in the same house with Jesus. Just as soon as she was admitted to the Orphanage, Jacinta wanted to be taken to the chapel. Every morning she received Communion. "On some occasions, when I was there," her mother related, "I carried her to the altar rail; while Mother Superior did on other occasions. I remember that she asked me if I would take her to a nearby church to go to Confession. We went before sunrise and on the way back all she could say was, 'what a nice priest; he was so kind. He asked me many things, so many things.' How I wanted to find out what the priest had asked her but Confession is not something for people to talk to each other about."

Jacinta spent every possible moment in the chapel kneeling, or when she could no longer kneel, she sat in the choir, her eyes riveted on the tabernacle. But in her ardent love for Jesus, she could not overlook the little discourtesies of visitors. "She saw some people who did not show proper reverence in the chapel," the Superior mentioned, "and she said to me, 'My dear Mother, don't allow that. They must act before the Blessed Sacrament as is proper. Everyone must be quiet in church; they must not speak. If these poor people knew what is waiting for them!' I went downstairs to speak to the people who were misbehaving in the chapel, but I did not always have success. When I returned, she said, 'What happened?' I told her they would not listen. 'Patience,' she replied, her face showing her sorrow over the irreverences of the people, 'Our Lady is pleased with you. Will you tell the Cardinal? Yes? Our Lady does not want us to talk in church.'"

Often, the Superior would have Jacinta sit by the window which opened upon the park. It pleased the little girl to look at the trees moving in the breeze, to listen to the singing and chirping of the birds; it reminded her so much of Fatima, her parents, and especially of Lucia. Jacinta fell in easily with the other children; there were about twenty-five. She did not talk much, but there was one girl her own age whom she used to preach to at length. "It was funny to listen to her," the Superior remarked. "You must never tell a lie or be lazy, but be very obedient. Do everything well and with patience for the love of Our Lord if you want to go to Heaven!" She spoke with startling authority, as if she herself were not a little child."

"While she was with us, she was visited by Our Lady more than once," the Superior continued. "I remember once going into her room and standing at the foot of her bed. She said to me, her face radiant with beauty, 'Move over, please, dear Mother, because I am expecting Our Lady!' Sometimes it was not Our Lady, but a globe of light, as the one seen at Fatima, for then she would say, 'This time, it was not like up in Fatima, but I knew it was Our Lady.'"

After each visit of Our Lady, Jacinta spoke with wisdom far beyond her age, education or experience. "Who taught you so much?" the Superior once asked her, marveling at her heavenly wisdom and insight.

"Our Lady taught me, but some things I think out myself. I like to think very much." She was so open and truthful in everything she said. The Mother Superior kept an account of all she said.

"Our Lady said that there are many wars and discords in the world. Wars are only punishments for the sins of the world. Our Lady cannot stay the arm of Her Beloved Son upon the world anymore. It is necessary to do penance. If the people amend themselves, Our Lord shall still come to the aid of the world. If they do not amend themselves, punishment shall come."

In explaining this last statement of Jacinta's, the Superior wrote, "Jacinta is referring here to a calamity of which she had spoken privately. Our Lord is filled with anger against the sins and crimes committed in Portugal. A terrible social cataclysm threatens our country and above all, the city of Lisbon. Civil war will break out of a communist or anarchist nature, followed by looting, murder, fires and devastation of every sort. The capital will become the very image of Hell. When the offended Divine Justice shall inflict such a horrible punishment, everyone who can should flee from the city. This calamity, now foreboding, must be disclosed little by little and with discretion. 'Our Lady, how much I pity Her. How much!' the child concluded."

Our Lady had revealed to this little child some terrible catastrophes that were in store for the world. "If people amend their lives," Jacinta said to Mother Godinho, "Our Lord will forgive the world, but if they do not, the punishment will come. If men do not amend their lives, Almighty God will send the world, beginning with Spain, a punishment such as never has been seen." She then spoke of "great world events that were to take place around the year 1940." The thought of these terrible misfortunes that men were bringing upon themselves through their hatred and disobedience to Our Lord and Our Lady filled the child with inconsolable sadness. It pained her more than her illness to realize the wicked way men were treating Jesus and Mary. "Oh, how sorry I am for Our Lady! How sorry!" she sobbed to Mother Godinho.

While Jacinta's mother was still there, Mother Godinho, the Superior, asked her if she would not like her two daughters, Florinda and Teresa, to become nuns. "God help me!" the mother protested, her heart heavy with sorrow over the death of Francisco and the impending death of Jacinta.

Jacinta did not hear her mother's words against the suggestion, but when the Superior came into her room later, the little girl commented, "Our Lady would have liked my sisters to become nuns very much. Mother does not want it and Our Lady will take them soon to Heaven." In fact, shortly after, the two girls died.

"You know, one thing I would love to do before I die would be to visit the Cova da Iria," the Superior once mentioned to Jacinta. It was a long journey and seemingly impossible.

"Don't worry, good Mother, you will go there after my death.

"My dear Mother, the sins that bring most souls to Hell are the sins of the flesh. Certain fashions are going to be introduced which will offend Our Lord very much. Those who serve God should not follow these fashions. The Church has no fashions; Our Lord is always the same. The sins of the world are too great. If only people knew what eternity is, they would do everything to change their lives. People lose their souls because they do not think about the death of Our Lord and do not do penance.

"Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.

"Pray a great deal for governments. Pity those governments which persecute the re-

ligion of Our Lord. If governments left the Church in peace and gave liberty to the Holy Religion, they would be blessed by God.

“My good Mother, do not give yourself to immodest clothes. Run away from riches. Love holy poverty and silence very much. Be very charitable even with those who are unkind. Never criticize others and avoid those who do. Be very patient, for patience brings us to Heaven. Mortifications and sacrifices please Our Lord a great deal.

“Confession is a sacrament of mercy. That is why people should approach the confessional with confidence and joy. Without confession, there is no salvation.

“The Mother of God wants a larger number of virgin souls to bind themselves to Her by the vow of chastity. I would enter a convent with great joy but my joy is greater because I am going to Heaven. To be a religious, one has to be very pure in soul and in body.”

“And do you know what it means to be pure?” the Superior asked.

“I do, yes, I do. To be pure in body means to preserve chastity. To be pure in soul means to avoid sin, not to look at what would be sinful, not to steal, never lie and always tell the truth even when it is hard. Whoever does not fulfil promises made to Our Lady will not be blessed in life.”

The day had to come when Jacinta was taken from the care of Mother Godinho to go to the hospital. This parting meant a great deal to Jacinta, for she loved the Mother very much, but what hurt most was to have to leave Jesus. There was no chapel at the hospital, no one to whom she might go for consolation. Everyone proved to be very kind to her, but who could take the place of Mother Godinho or of Our Lord? Some days, she was very saddened by the worldliness of the visitors, the women dressed in fashionable clothes, often with lowcut dresses. “What is it all for?” she asked Mother Godinho. “If they only knew what eternity is.”

Some visitors were one day discussing in her presence the faults of a certain priest who had been forbidden to say Mass. Jacinta began to weep for sorrow and she said that people should not talk about priests but they should rather pray for them. She herself often prayed for priests and asked others to do the same.

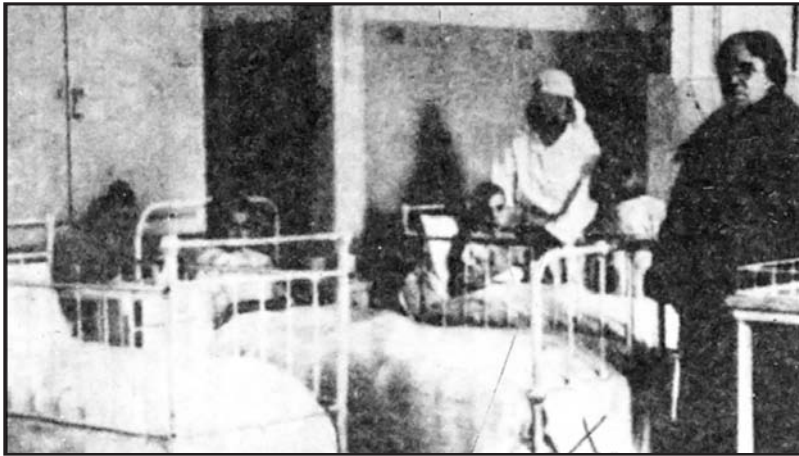
Many doctors came to examine her, their only thought was of science and medicine. They discounted the influence God might have on the condition of a patient. The little girl did not hesitate to set them straight on the matter, pointing out the cause of their frequent failures. “Pity doctors. They have no idea what awaits them. Doctors do not know how to treat their patients with success because they have no love for God.”

One day, a doctor requested her prayers for a special intention. “I will pray for you,” she assured him, “but just remember that you are going to be taken away, and soon.” She told another doctor the same thing about himself and his daughter.

One great joy awaited Jacinta in the hospital. Our Lady saw to it that her father might visit his child, if only for a few hours. He could not stay long because he had left the other children at home sick in bed. It broke his heart to see Jacinta alone in the hospital and to have to leave her, but he was fully convinced that Our Lady was caring for her.

When the doctors first mentioned an operation, Jacinta warned them that it would be useless.

“It is all in vain. Our Lady told me that I am going to die soon.” She even had someone write Lucia informing her of the day and hour of her death. The doctors, however, insisted; and when she was finally taken to the operating room she was found too weak to take gas. Anaesthesia not being then what it is today, the local injection given her by no means took away her pain. Yet she appears to have suffered more from the humiliation of having to expose her body and to place herself into the hands of the strange doctors.



The ward of the hospital of Dona Estefania, Lisbon, where Jacinta stayed from February 2, 1920 until her death on February 20, 1920. Bed No. 38, which she occupied, is second from the left.

They removed two ribs and the doctors appeared hopeful of success, even though the open wound on her chest was the size of a fist. The wound had to be bathed and cleansed often and it was most painful. Jacinta allowed only one moan to escape her lips, "Oh, Our Lady! Oh! Our Lady! Patience. We must suffer to go to Heaven."

Though she suffered so much, she never complained, accepting it with happiness, for she realized

it would help many souls to escape the terrible fire of Hell. "Now You can convert many sinners," she spoke to Our Lord, "for I suffer a great deal, my Jesus."

Our Lady continued to come to visit her often. Four days before her death, she said, "I am not complaining any more. Our Lady has appeared again and said that She was coming for me soon. She took all my pains away."

Doctor Lisboa testified to this. "Her pains disappeared completely. She felt inclined to play and busied herself with looking at a few religious pictures, among which was one of Our Lady of the Sameiro. She said it was the one which most resembled the Lady she had seen. It was given to me later as a souvenir of Jacinta. I was told a few times that the little child wanted to see me to reveal a secret. Busy as I was and hearing that Jacinta was feeling better, I postponed my visit. Unhappily, I did not see her."

Mother Godinho visited Jacinta every day, bringing with her different friends each time. If anyone happened to sit near the bed where Our Lady had stood, Jacinta would protest, "Please move aside for Our Lady stood there."

She was asked if she would not like to see her mother before she died. "My family will not live long and soon we will all meet in Heaven. Our Lady shall appear again but not to me, for I am going to die, of course, as Our Lady told me."

February the twentieth came. Jacinta seemed about the same; she might last a few more days, she might go any moment. About six o'clock in the evening the child said she was not feeling well and she wanted to receive the last rites of the Church. A priest was called, heard her confession and promised to bring her Communion in the morning. Jacinta asked him to bring it immediately but he could see no reason for alarm. She insisted that she was to die shortly. At ten-thirty, she died peacefully without having her wish fulfilled.

A young nurse by the name of Aurora Gomez was the only person with Jacinta at the time of her death. They loved each other dearly and Jacinta called her "Aurorinha." The nurse remained with the child's body all night and in the morning, dressed it in a white First Communion dress with a blue sash, as Jacinta had asked her to, for these were the colors of Our Lady. Doctor Lisboa thought that the Church might in due time officially accept the apparitions of Fatima and so he did not want her body laid away in a common grave. He went to the pastor of the local church and after much persuasion prevailed upon him to allow the casket to be placed in one of the sacristies of the church to await burial.

Jacinta Marto

March 11, 1910 - February 20, 1920.

The news of the child's death spread fast through the city and crowds flocked to the church to see the body. All wanted to touch Rosaries or statues to her body. The pastor would not allow this homage for he said that it belonged only to those saints canonized by the Church. He had the body removed to another room under lock and key. Crowds continued to come, however, and to placate them the undertaker took them into the room in small groups to view the body of the little girl who they were sure was already with Our Lord and Our Lady in Heaven.

The undertaker testified that he never before nor after had a case like Jacinta's. "It seems to me that I can still today see the little angel. Laid in the casket she seemed to be still alive in her full beauty, with rosy cheeks and lips. I have seen many bodies in my business, young and old. Never did a thing of this sort happen to me before nor since. The pleasant aroma that exhaled from her body cannot be explained. The worst unbeliever could not question it... Though the child had been dead three days, the aroma was like a bouquet of flowers."

Considering the serious nature of Jacinta's sickness and the poison that was in the system from the pleurisy, all of which would hasten corruption of the body, we can understand the undertaker's wonderment at this unusual phenomenon when Jacinta's body seemed exempted from this natural law. On the twenty-fourth, the body was placed in a leaden casket sealed in the presence of the authorities and some ladies, and transferred to the family vault of a generous-hearted man from Ourém. Mother Godinho accompanied the body and thus was enabled to visit Fatima as Jacinta promised she would.

Ti Marto was at the station to meet the body. "When I saw so many people around the little casket of my Jacinta, it was all so nice, I burst into tears at the sight, just like a little child. I never cried so much in all my life. 'Nothing helped you,' I sobbed, 'nothing would cure you. You stayed here for two months, then you went to Lisbon... There you died alone, all alone...'"

Fifteen years later, on September 12, 1935, the Bishop of Leiria commanded that her body be transferred to the cemetery of Fatima where the bodies of Jacinta and Francisco were to be placed in the same tomb, built especially for the two children. When Jacinta's casket was opened on this occasion, her little body was still whole and incorrupt. She and Francisco had gone home to rest in the Heart of Jesus and Mary to console Them and to pray for the conversion of sinners, for the Holy Father, for priests, and for all who ask their prayerful assistance.



When the tomb of Jacinta was opened in 1951 her body was found practically incorrupt. Her remains are also entombed in the transept of the basilica at the Cova da Iria.