



Vox Populi
11 May 2023

Saturday is the fifth week of Easter and it is also the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima, also known as Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Fatima.

Between May 13 and October 13, 1917, three Portuguese children—Francisco and Jacinta Marto and their cousin Lucia dos Santos—received apparitions of Our Lady at Cova da Iria near Fatima, a city 177 kilometres north of Lisbon.

Mary asked the children to pray the rosary for world peace, for the end of World War I, for sinners, and for the conversion of Russia. Mary gave the children three secrets. Following the deaths of Francisco and Jacinta in 1919 and 1920 respectively, Lucia revealed the first secret in 1927. It concerned devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The second secret was a vision of hell. When Lucia grew up she became a Carmelite nun and died in 2005 at the age of 97.

Pope John Paul II directed the Holy See's Secretary of State to reveal the third secret in 2000; it spoke of a "bishop in white" who was shot by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows into him. Many people linked this vision to the assassination attempt against Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square on May 13, 1981.

The feast of Our Lady of Fatima was approved by the local bishop in 1930; it was added to the Church's worldwide calendar in 2002, three years before the death of Pope John Paul II who was later canonised in 2012.

Our young pilgrims from the Diocese attending World Youth Day in Lisbon later in August will also travel to Fatima with Bishop Anthony Randazzo. They will visit the Marian shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima and the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary. Please keep them in your prayers.