

The Official Newsletter of the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima

Finding God's Call through Our Lady of Fatima's Message

*“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me...
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now, I see.”*

The following is an account of a priest who found his way back to the Catholic faith which began when the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue visited his hometown. Here is Rev. Anthony Batt's own story as he related to the custodians of the statue during their reunion after that meaningful visit two decades later.

“I wandered away from the faith for a long time. But for the very first time in many years I felt like going back to the church. It could probably be out of curiosity when I heard about the miraculous statue coming to my small town. I did not really know what magnetized me to come to see the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. But there is one thing I know for sure: it was the beginning of my new life. It was Our Lady who directed me to a life of faith and hope in Her Son.

*It may have taken some years of discernment and seminary formation, but certainly it was the hands of God through the intercession of Mary which enabled me to respond to this calling. **There is always a specific time when God calls each of us. This specific visit of the IPVS statue was no doubt the occasion of my lifelong conversion and onward to a priestly vocation. I owe my priesthood first to God, then to Our Lady of Fatima.***

Now, it is but fitting to receive and host the IPVS statue in my first assignment as pastor after all those years since I first saw her.



Photo: Rev. Batt welcomes the IPVS as he crowns it in his parish church in Carrolton, OH.

I am grateful for Carl Malburg, whom I have met and talked to 20 years ago at that crucial stage of my life. I have a vivid memory of him carrying the statue and speaking about the importance of prayer, penance and conversion. That changed me forever and I pray that today may be the same occasion for our parishioners: that the seed of the Fatima message be implanted in the hearts of young men and women called to the religious life. May this occasion of “seeing” the Blessed Mother be that finding the Lord's will for us.”

Rev. Anthony Batt is now the pastor of two parishes in Waynesburg and Carrolton, in the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio.



Photo: After two decades, Mr. Carl Malburg, custodian of the IPVS statue meets Rev. Batt again. This time, as a priest and the new pastor of his first parish.

THE TWO HISTORICAL FATIMA STATUES

The apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917 drew thousands of people in the field of Cova da Iria to witness for themselves the news about the “lady dressed in white from heaven” only seen by three shepherd children, the humble visionaries: Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia.

People began to ask more questions as the story unfolded from the visionaries including the Catholic hierarchy, the government, and the public. Since the people did not see nor hear the Blessed Virgin Mary, there was a natural demand not only to satisfy the curious and clarify what happened from May to September and more importantly after the Miracle of the Sun in October “so that all may believe” and put the supernatural phenomenon in its proper perspective.

The Diocese of Leiria almost simultaneously opened a formal investigation while embracing the need to serve the Catholic faithful. The first concrete response of the Church (the faithful) to Virgin Mary was to build a chapel upon Her request through Lucia. The construction began on April 4, 1919. But not until October 13, 1921 when the Mass was celebrated for the first time. Then, two years after that was the official Provision of the Bishop of Leiria to initiate the Canonical Process regarding the apparitions. Hence, a little chapel or the Capelinha came about from the generosity of the people, one particular donor by the name of Maria Carreira who because of this was called Maria de Capelinha. Another generous soul wanted to give part in the growing devotion was Gilberto Fernandes dos Santos, merchant from Torres Novas. Since the chapel was already finished, Maria de Capelinha had suggested that he offer a statue to be placed there instead. This was the crucial beginning of the spread of the devotions to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as She requested and responded to by the lay faithful. From the “Fiat” of Mary at the time of Annunciation to Her apparitions and conversations in Fatima with the three children who willingly said “yes” and to all the donors who had heard and responded to the calls from heaven.

The donor, Gilberto having resolved to donate a statue determined to ask for the advice of his parish priest. One week later the matter was settled. The priest went over to the Fanzeres studio of Braga, which entrusted the work to a young sculptor, Jose Ferreira Thedim. As Maria Carreira recalls, Gilberto returned to Fatima several times with the artist to question the children. Father Formigao, who was very friendly with the families of Ti Marto and Maria Rosa, accompanied them. At this time, Jacinta had not yet left for the hospital at Lisbon. Nevertheless, it was still quite a lot before the work was begun but completed in 1920, May 13 which coincided with the feast of the Ascension. It was decided to take advantage of the concourse of pilgrims to install the new statue in the Capelinha. However, they had not counted on the tyranny of the authorities of the Republic, who would not hear of it. At Torres Novas, the statue was already attracting the curious and people filed into the donor’s house where it was displayed. What would it cause in the Cova da Iria, then? The Administrator of Torres Novas contacted Gilberto and forbade him to transport it to Fatima. For greater security, a group of soldiers guarded the house ... no doubt without any enthusiasm, for this is what happened: “On May 12, the donor’s father yoked together a pair of oxen and began loading the tools and various materials into his cart, as though he was going to work in the fields. He places a chest there. But the soldiers, who saw nothing suspicious in this placid looking team of oxen, let it pass. When the cart was outside the village, some friends who were waiting placed the chest into an automobile and took it over to the parish church in Fatima.” With the authorization of Father Moreira, who was temporarily placed in charge of the parish of Fatima, the statue was blessed by the archpriest of Torres Novas, who at the time was with his family in the hamlet of Montelo, near Fatima.

It was blessed at the Parish Church of Fatima (4km distant from the Shrine and where the Little Shepherds of Fatima were baptized) on May 13, 1920, enthroned in the Little Chapel of Apparitions on June 13, 1920.



Statue at the Shrine by Jose Thedim in 1920
Height: 3 feet 6 inches
Made of Cedar wood from Brazil



International Pilgrim Statue by Jose Thedim in 1947
Height: 3 feet 5 inches
Made of Mahogany wood from Brazil

Ten years later, the Bishop declares the apparition worthy of belief and authorizes the cultus of Our Lady of Fatima. The statue was crowned by Pontifical Legate Cardinal Masela on May 13, 1946. The crown worn by the statue during the great celebrations is a single copy executed in Lisbon, free of charge, by 12 artists, who worked on it for three months. It weighs 1200 grams and it is decorated with 313 pearls and 2679 precious stones. It was donated to the Shrine by a group of Portuguese women on October 13, 1942, in thanksgiving to God for the fact that Portugal didn't take part in World War II. Today, the bullet from John Paul II is encrusted in it. The former Supreme Pontiff donated the bullet that pierced his body during the attempt on his life in Rome, on May 13, 1981, as a sign of gratitude to the Virgin Mary for having saved his life. In his words, he affirmed "that it was a mother's hand that guided the bullet away from my heart."

This is also the same statue which the Pope had brought forth to the Vatican for March 25, 1984 Collegial Consecration of the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Exactly three decades after the apparition and having sculpted the first statue, Mr. Jose Ferreira Thedim spent time with Sister Lucia again in 1947, and this time, carefully designed a new statue with a single tunic, a single mantle "brighter at the edge", as she herself explained, "It would not be with a tassel, but with a golden globe hanging approximately over Our Lady's heart. It should not be with many designs but only with a simple golden line at the edge because the edge of Our Lady's robe was more brilliant. And a great star shone at the hem of her tunic." A slight modification from the 1920 statue by the same artist and the the same visionary, Sister Lucia. According to the artist's son, Mamede Thedim, after the completion of the original pilgrim statue, Jose Thedim knelt for his work which he only did to this one. Sister Lucia remarked after seeing the statue herself for the first time that this one resembles more like Our Lady compared to all the images she had seen but nothing really compares to the beauty of Our Lady. She said that this pilgrim image is the one she liked best. This becomes the image which is famously

called the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue or simply the "Pilgrim Virgin" which Pope Pius XII was later to call the "messenger of her royalty".

Jose Ferreira Thedim, who sculpted the first pilgrim virgin statue of Fatima and the original statue of Our Lady of Fatima that rests on the spot of apparitions in the Cova da Ira has, sometimes been called "the Michelangelo of Portugal." To possess a "Thedim" statue is a rare and priceless treasure. Thedim was born just over 100 years ago, September 17, 1892. He died at the age of 79 in the year, 1971. The name "Thedim" registers in the minds of those well acquainted with Fatima.

He is known for many works. Most famous is the one in the Capelinha, "Little Chapel of Apparitions" at Fatima. Besides early statues of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the very first and original International Pilgrim Virgin Statue Thedim sculptured thousands of statues, including impressions of St. John of God, and Our Lady of Sorrows.

As a young man, he worked on the 'shrine statue', under the Fanzares studio of Braga. As a great master artisan, he later established his own studio of Thedim dedicated to carving Our Lady of Fatima statues which some of them became important as they were blessed and sent by the bishop of Fatima to some countries to be National Pilgrim Virgin Statues.

Some artists have also made their own rendition of Our Lady's apparition over the years. But for simple distinction of thousands of copies of Fatima statues, most people refer to the design of the 1920 statue as the "shrine statue", and the 1947 statue has been widely known as the "pilgrim virgin".

For Quick Reference:

www.pilgrimvirginstatue.com
<http://www.santuario-fatima.pt>
Her Own Words, The Memoirs of Sister Lucia
Novos Documentos de Fátima, Fr. Martins



GENEROSITY AND OPENNESS

Through the generosity of the three shepherd children of Fatima, the message of Our Lady spread throughout the world. This is our “model” in spreading the word and faith to obtain for us the graces we need. To be generous to God : to be open to what comes from God and open in what we share to others - ourselves.

To obtain the peace Mary has promised, She asked us to pray the rosary everyday, sanctify our daily duties, observe the First Five Saturdays, wear the scapular as we consecrate our hearts to Her Immaculate Heart. Isn't this an invitation to be open to God's grace? That is the secret of Mary why She is so full of grace! To give Her whole being, Her soul who proclaims God's Greatness.

The First Letter to Timothy tells us *“to pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Compete well for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called...to instruct those in present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us within all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.”*

Our Catechist Mother teaches us these virtues in Fatima, too. Like the generosity of three souls who willingly sacrificed for the conversion of sinners and for the greater glory of God. We, too, can do a sacrificial offering - by offering the Lord to others. To be generous enough to give up something for a greater good. To give up sin and selfishness. To be open to what is coming in and going out.

Tomorrow is a better world because we have a better people. A people closer to God and far from the darkness of sin. A brighter world because we carry the light of Christ beginning with ourselves, into our homes and community. It is the cloud of sin which darkens our judgment. So we turn away from sin and believe in the gospel. It is our sinfulness that clouds our sight of God. It is through prayer and penance and conversion that takes us back to our relationship with God, the Risen Lord.

We pray that we may have a clear and perfect vision of the Christ. Like Mary sees Her divine Son. That we may respond to God's call first in prayer, then in action.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SORROWFUL AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY *

“O Lord Jesus, Who, on Calvary and in the Holy Eucharist, has shown Thyself to us as the God of love and mercy, kneeling humbly at Thy feet we adore Thee and beg once more for Thy forgiveness and for Thy divine pity...

And remembering that, by Thine own act on Calvary, the human race, represented by Thy beloved disciple John, gained a Mother in the Virgin of Sorrows, we desire to honor the sufferings and woes of our Mother's Heart by devoting ourselves to It in Solemn Consecration.

It is but just, O Mary, that our souls should strive henceforth to venerate Thee with special homage under the title of Thy Sorrowful Heart - a title won by sharing in the whole Passion of Thy Divine Son and thus cooperating in the work of our redemption - a title due to Thee in justice, and dear, we believe, to Jesus, and to Thine own Heart wounded by the Wound in His.

We consecrate, therefore, O Mary, to Thy SORROWFUL AND IMMACULATE HEART, OURSELVES, OUR FAMILIES, OUR COUNTRY AND THOSE WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR ITS HONOR. Have pity upon us; see our tribulations, and the anguish of our hearts in the midst of the mourning and calamities that lay waste the world. Deign, O Mother of God, to obtain mercy for us that, being converted and purified by sorrow, and made strong in faith, we may henceforth be devoted servants of Jesus Christ and of His Church, for whose triumph we pray. O Mary Immaculate, we promise to be faithful clients of Thy Sorrowful Heart. Intercede for us; we beseech thee, with thy Son that, at the very cry of Thy Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, His Divine Power may speedily bring to pass the triumph of right and justice.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have pity upon us.

* Consecration Prayer by Berthe Petit, 1917
Nihil Obstat, Daniel Duivesteihn, S.T.D.
Imprimatur: Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Westminster



Mary, as the Madonna of the World, will play a special role in relieving the combined sorrows of the East and West.
- Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

In the early years of the travels of the Pilgrim Virgin, She has already been performing miracles by drawing people from all over the world to Her Son, Jesus. In our present day, accompanying Our Mother, we share with the missionaries' experiences who have gone before us. In his book, "The World's First Love", Bishop Sheen cannot help but admire the "Madonna of the World" through the travels of the Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Fatima which he preached strongly of Her maternal role in our modern society.

"There is an enthusiastic reception that the Muslims in Africa and India and elsewhere gave to the pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Our missionaries report the most extraordinary reaction of these people through the East. At the edge of Nepal, three hundred Catholics were joined by three thousand Hindus and Muslims, as four elephants carried the statue to the little church for Rosary and Benediction. At Rajkot, which was hardly any faithful, unbelieving ministers

of state and high-ranking government officials came to pay veneration.

At Patna, the Brahman Hindu governor of the province visited the church and prayed before the statue of Our Lady. In one tiny village of Kesra Mec, more than twenty-four thousand people came to see the statue. At Karachi an exception was made by the Muslims to favor Her. Whenever the Christians there hold a procession, they are obliged to cease praying whenever they pass a mosque - but on this occasion they were permitted by the Muslims to pray before any mosque along their way."

According to him, Mary, who appeared in Fatima by God's providence will reconcile the conflicts and terrible wars in our world only if we turn to Her motherly help. It is worth noting, too, that Bishop Sheen took into account some important events in the life of the Pilgrim Virgin. His reports in the late 1940s and early 1950s somehow relates to our own observation in the early 2000s which continues until today as we bring the "messenger of Her

royalty" to the East and to the West and all corners of this world.

Similarly, this is what we saw in Kerala, where Hindu priests in their liturgical robe would come out of their temple to meet and welcome "Our Mother" (as their banners displayed in their front yards). Muslims, too, would come into the Catholic church grounds which they say an exception only to their rules for Mary and Fatima. For in these countries, proselytization is still a crime punishable by law. We were allowed to do our public procession, displaying the Image in public where thousands of people could hear the Rosary in loud speakers and listen to Marian songs. At the end of the tour, the organizers estimated about four and a half million people were reached during the trip which lasted for seventy-five days. In the West, the visits still exceed the expectations of the priests and parishioners where Our Lady goes. There has always been a demand for the statue's visit. No doubt, there's more work to be done.

THE MESSAGE OF FATIMA IN OUR LADY'S OWN WORDS

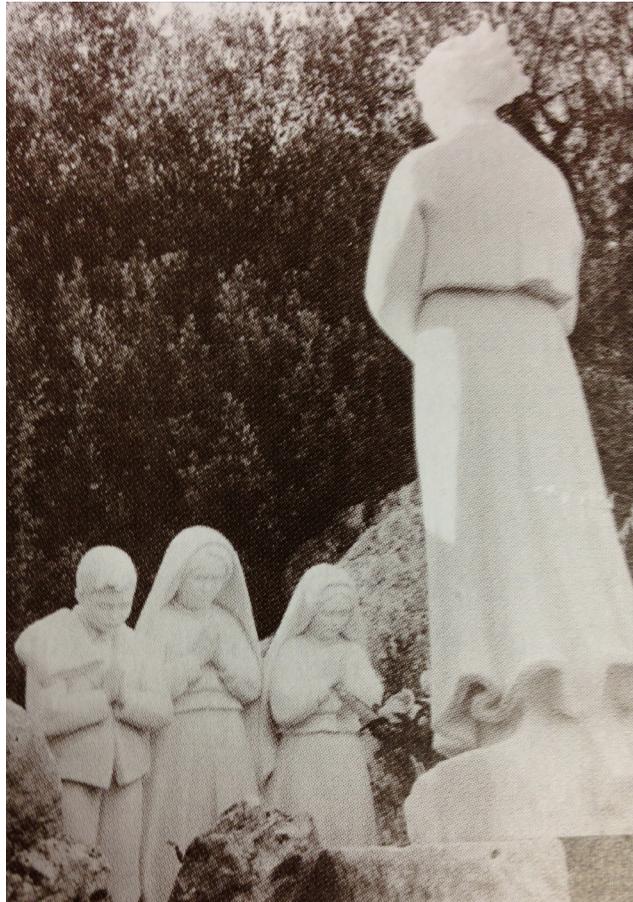
(From John Haffert's last book "To Shake the World")

THE SECOND APPARITION OF THE ANGEL

It was in the summer of 1916 that the angel came a second time while the children were at play. He said: "What are you doing? Pray! Pray much! The Hearts of Jesus and Mary have merciful designs upon you. Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High."

Lucia asked: "How must we sacrifice?" The angel answered: "Make of everything you can a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended and in supplication for the conversion of sinners. You will thus draw down peace upon your country. I am its Guardian Angel, the Angel of Portugal. Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering which the Lord will send you."

Lucia said: "These words were like a light which made us understand Who God is, how He loves us and how much He desires to be loved...and how pleasing sacrifice is to Him and how, on account of it, He grants the grace of conversion to sinners."



THE MEANING

In this second apparition the Angel asks: "What are you doing?" The children were playing. The angel might ask us the same question if he came while we were watching television. He would explain that God now wills that we make of whatever we are doing a sacrifice, something holy. (The word "sacrifice" means "to make holy.") Even the hours before a television set we can offer to God.

"The Hearts of Jesus and Mary have merciful designs on you," the angel adds. Their Love can no longer be contained. They desire to enflame all hearts with love of God.

We are not asked to do something new. We are asked "above all" to accept whatever God may send us in the course of the day, uniting our hearts to the Sacred Hearts Who offered all for us.

OUR OWN NATION

Again, as in the first angelic apparition, the angel identifies himself by his mission rather than his name. He is the Guardian Angel of the nation. Our nation shames its angel before the Face of God with many sins, especially 4,000 innocent babies slaughtered in the wombs of their mothers each day in our beloved country.

It may be too much for us to think of all the sins of the world which cry out to God for Justice. But we can think at least of the sins of our own nation. As the angel tells us, we can offer up the trials of each day in reparation "to draw peace upon your country."

"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love Thee."

*Next Issue of IPVS Newsletter:
"The Third Apparition of the Angel"*

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY – APRIL 7, 2013

During the course of Jesus' revelations to St. Faustina on the Divine Mercy He asked on numerous occasions that a feast day be dedicated to the Divine Mercy and that this feast be celebrated on the Sunday after Easter. The liturgical texts of that day, the 2nd Sunday of Easter, concern the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, the Tribunal of the Divine Mercy, and are thus already suited to the request of Our Lord. This Feast, which had already been granted to the nation of Poland and been celebrated within Vatican City, was granted to the Universal Church by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the canonization of Sr. Faustina on 30 April 2000. In a decree dated 23 May 2000, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments stated that "throughout the world the Second Sunday of Easter will receive the name Divine Mercy Sunday, a perennial invitation to the Christian world to face, with confidence in divine benevolence, the difficulties and trials that mankind will experience in the years to come." These papal acts represent the highest endorsement that the Church can give to a private revelation, an act of papal infallibility proclaiming the certain sanctity of the mystic, and the granting of a universal feast, as requested by Our Lord to St. Faustina.

Concerning the Feast of Mercy Jesus said:

Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. (Diary 300)

I want the image solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter, and I want it to be venerated publicly so that every soul may know about it. (Diary 341)

This Feast emerged from the very depths



of My mercy, and it is confirmed in the vast depths of my tender mercies. (Diary 420)

On one occasion, I heard these words: My daughter, tell the whole world about My inconceivable mercy. I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. **The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.*** [our emphasis] On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. Everything that exists has come forth from the very depths of My most tender mercy. Every soul in its relation to Me will I contemplate My love and mercy throughout eternity. The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of

tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy. (Diary 699)

Yes, the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to absolve yourself from it. (Diary 742)

I want to grant complete pardon to the souls that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on the Feast of My mercy. (Diary 1109)

As you can see the Lord's desire for the Feast includes the solemn, public veneration of the Image of Divine Mercy by the Church, as well as personal acts of veneration and mercy. The great promise for the individual soul is that a devotional act of sacramental penance and Communion will obtain for that soul the plenitude of the divine mercy on the Feast.

"The Cardinal of Krakow, Cardinal Macharski, whose diocese is the center of the spread of the devotion and the sponsor of the Cause of Sr. Faustina, has written that we should use Lent as preparation for the Feast and confess even before Holy Week! So, it is clear that the confessional requirement does not have to be met on the Feast itself. That would be an impossible burden for the clergy if it did. The Communion requirement is easily met that day, however, since it is a day of obligation, being Sunday. We would only need confession again, if received earlier in Lenten or Easter Season, if we were in the state of mortal sin on the Feast.

To find out how you may host the
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Lady of Fatima statues which we do not
keep on hand. You may contact the National
Centre for St. Padre Pio in Barto, PA. They
purchase Pilgrim Virgin statues from Fatima,
Portugal and touch them to the blood and
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nations are also received anonymously. To
each and every one, we thank you most
kindly for your sacrifices and ask Our Lord
and Our Lady to bless you immensely.
(All donations are tax deductible.)

IPVS TOUR CALENDAR 2013

April	Denver, CO
May	Patterson, NJ
June	Milwaukee, WI
August	Australia
September	Cleveland, OH
October	Detroit, MI
November	Harrisburg, PA

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