



Relationship with GOD

More than Just SUNDAY

The Sixth Apparition and the Miracle of the Sun

The sixth apparition of Our Lady of Fátima took place on October 13th, 1917 and offers clear proof of the reality of Mary's appearances as it was confirmed by an unprecedented public miracle, the Miracle of the Sun. More than 70,000 people, including communists and atheists, saw the sun twirl in the sky, throw off colors and descend to earth, contrary to all cosmic laws.

It had rained throughout the night of October 12-13, 1917 soaking the ground as the pilgrims traveled to Fátima by the thousands. By foot, by cart and even by car they made their way down the gentle slope to the place where Our Lady had appeared the prior months.

As for the visionaries, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, they walked to the Cova amid the adulation and skepticism which had followed them since May. Then, the Lady from Heaven appeared as she had said she would.

Lucia asked, "What do you want of me?"

Mary replied, "I want a chapel built here in my honor. I want you to continue saying the Rosary every day. The war will end soon, and the soldiers will return to their homes."

"Yes. Yes. Will you tell me your name?"

"I am the Lady of the Rosary."

"I have many petitions from many people. Will you grant them?"

"Some I shall grant, and others I must deny. People must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins. They must not offend our Lord any more, for He is already too much offended!"

"And is that all you have to ask?"

"There is nothing more."

As the Lady of the Rosary rose toward the east she turned the palms of her hands toward the dark sky. While the rain had stopped, dark clouds continued to obscure the sun, which suddenly burst through them and was seen to be a soft spinning disk of silver.

At this point Lucia shouted, "Look at the sun!"

From this point two distinct apparitions were seen: that of the phenomenon of the sun seen by the 70,000 spectators and what

only Lucia and the other two children saw.

Lucia describes that "After our Lady had disappeared into the immense distance of the firmament, we beheld St. Joseph with the Child Jesus and Our Lady robed in white with a blue mantle, beside the sun. St. Joseph and the Child Jesus seemed to bless the world, for they traced the Sign of the Cross with their hands. When, a little later, this apparition disappeared, I saw Our Lord and Our Lady; it seemed to me to that it was Our Lady of Sorrows. Our Lord appeared to bless the world in the same manner as St. Joseph had done. This apparition also vanished, and I (Lucia alone) saw Our Lady once more, this time resembling Our Lady of Carmel."

This would be the last of the apparitions of Fátima for Jacinta and Francisco. However, for Lucia, Our Lady would return a seventh time in 1920 as she had promised the previous May. At that time Lucia would be praying in the Cova before leaving Fátima for a girls boarding school. The Lady would come to urge her to dedicate herself wholly to God.

As the children viewed the various apparitions of Jesus, Mary and Joseph the crowd witnessed a different phenomena, the now famous miracle of the sun. Among the eye-witnesses who saw the Miracle of the Sun, the events were reported in newspapers around the world, including the New York Times:

From *O Seculo* (a pro-government, anti-clerical, Lisbon paper)
"From the road, where the vehicles were parked and where hundreds of people who had not dared to brave the mud were congregated, one could see the immense multitude turn toward the sun, which appeared free from clouds and in its zenith. It looked like a plaque of dull silver, and it was possible to look at it without the least discomfort.... At that moment a great shout went up, and one could hear the spectators nearest at hand shouting: "A miracle! A miracle!"

Before the astonished eyes of the crowd, eagerly searching the sky, the sun trembled, made sudden incredible movements outside all cosmic laws---the sun "danced" according to the typical expression of the people. Identical scenes were repeated elsewhere."



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From *O Dia (another Lisbon daily, edition of 17 October 1917)*

At one o'clock in the afternoon, the rain stopped... A cry went up from every mouth and people fell on their knees on the muddy ground.... The light turned a beautiful blue, as if it had come through the stained-glass windows of a cathedral, and spread itself over the people who knelt with outstretched hands. The blue faded slowly, and then the light seemed to pass through yellow glass. Yellow stains fell against white handkerchiefs, against the dark skirts of the women. They were repeated on the trees, on the stones and on the serra. People wept and prayed with uncovered heads, in the presence of a miracle they had awaited. The seconds seemed like hours, so vivid were they."

From an eyewitness: **Alfredo da Silva Santos** (Lisbon)

We made our arrangements, and went in three motor cars on the early morning of the 13th. There was a thick mist, and the car which went in front mistook the way so that we were all lost for a time and only arrived at the Cova da Iria at midday by the sun. It was absolutely full of people, but for my part I felt devoid of any religious feeling. When Lucia called out: "Look at the sun!" the whole multitude repeated: "Attention to the sun!" It was a day of incessant drizzle but a few moments before the miracle it stopped raining. I can hardly find words to describe what followed. The sun began to move, and at a certain moment appeared to be detached from the sky and about to hurtle upon us like a wheel of flame. My wife---we had been married only a short time-- fainted, and I was too upset to attend to her, and my brother-in-law, Joao Vassalo, supported her on his arm. I fell on my knees in the mud, oblivious of everything, and when I got up I don't know what I said. I think I began to cry out like the others. An old man with a white beard challenged the atheists to say whether or not something supernatural had occurred.

It is an incredible gift that God sent Mary to us. At the heart of the messages of Fátima is the fact that **"God wishes to establish in the world devotion to [Mary's] Immaculate Heart."** It is God's desire that we honor Our Lady and have a relationship with her because she is our Spiritual Mother. Jesus gave her this role when He was dying on the cross. "When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, 'Woman, behold, your son!' Then He said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'" (John 19:26-27) The disciple represents each one of us. (Catechism paragraphs 501, 2677, 2679)

Since Mary is our Spiritual Mother, this devotion to her Immaculate Heart means that we talk with her like a friend; that we ask for her help in times of need and that we strive to imitate her. This also includes reading about Our Lady so that we can find out more about her. We want to allow her, as our Spiritual Mother, to lead us to Jesus.

To understand how she leads us, it is helpful to think of any good



mother leading her child to what is good: to insist on putting on a coat when it is cold; to go to bed at a decent time; to take a prescription when sick, even when the medicine does not taste good.

Mary came as a good Mother would, with warning of dangers, yes, but even more importantly with messages of special grace from God to enlighten and strengthen us to turn away from sin, which offends God and harms us. Mary is fully aware, that at this time in history, we are in need of placing God at the center of our lives through a commitment to daily prayer, especially the Rosary.

I came to know Mary by reading her messages from a different site of Church-approved apparitions. In learning how to pray the Rosary and ponder the mysteries, I came to love Mary and accepted her as my Spiritual Mother. Through the messages, she also taught the importance of receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a monthly basis. As I frequented confession, I had this sense of being a child that needed to be cleaned up from a long period in my life in which life got busy and I forgot about the importance of this Sacrament of Healing.

In developing this love for Mary, it is interesting what happened to me one day as I entered a church. There was a large statue of Jesus, and in an instant, it seemed that Mary was "gone." I remember being mad at her and thinking in my mind that she was enough for me, as she was such a loving Mother. However, she was leading me to her Son, Jesus. That is her role. It is now many years later, and I am so thankful to Mary for her love, guidance, and prayer for me.

In this final month of the 100th Anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fátima, let us commit to what God asks of us: to develop a devotion to the Mary's Immaculate Heart. In His incredible love for us, He knows what we truly need!

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