



Pastor's Message

May 16, 2020

May 13th, was the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima. There is plentiful information online concerning the apparitions of Our Blessed Mother to the three shepherd children, at the Cova da Iria, of Fatima, Portugal. I recommend reading about the supernatural occurrences which happened there slightly more than a century ago.

One of the three visionaries was a youngster named Lucia dos Santos. Much later in life, she became a Carmelite nun. According to Sr. Lucia, the following is a harrowing description of “the vision of hell” that Our Lady showed her and the other young visionaries, years prior.

“She opened her hands once more, as she had done the two previous months. The rays [of light] appeared to penetrate the earth, and we saw, as it were, a vast sea of fire. Plunged in this fire, we saw the demons and the souls [of the damned]. The latter were like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, having human forms. They were floating about in that conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames which issued from within themselves, together with great clouds of smoke. Now they fell back on every side like sparks in huge fires, without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fright (it must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me). The demons were distinguished [from the souls of the damned] by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black and transparent like burning coals. That vision only lasted for a moment, thanks to our good Heavenly Mother, Who at the first apparition had promised to take us to Heaven. Without that, I think that we would have died of terror and fear.”

After a canonical inquiry, the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima officially declared the visions of Fatima as "worthy of belief" in October 1930. Today, the Catholic Church maintains the same. It has “approved” as worthy of belief the apparitions and messages of Our Lady of Fatima. It encourages pilgrimages to go there.

Indeed, the aforementioned is a description of only one vision. Other visions as described by the visionaries are exceptionally more uplifting, especially Our Lady’s appearance to them! Nevertheless, I share the particular vision for your consideration. Certainly, as we continue to live in a time of pandemic, you may wonder, why this message? True, it is a downer. However, since we do long for the beauty of heaven one day, it is also important not to forget the alternative. The Church holds there is such a nightmarish existence in the afterlife. But, may we never, ever experience it. And, we will not, if we do our best, as often as we can, to follow God’s loving will!

Peace,
Fr. Marc