



Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

September 18, 2017

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

One hundred years ago, at the height of World War I, an extraordinary event took place in a dry and dusty sheep pasture in Portugal. A dazzling light descended from heaven and the Mother of God appeared to three small children. The beautiful Lady conveyed a message of hope, that despite “war, famine and persecutions,” her Immaculate Heart will triumph “and there will be an era of peace.”

In this time of civil unrest, racial strife, political divisions, war, persecution and natural disasters, it may be difficult to believe that peace is possible. Perhaps this is why the apparitions in Fatima concluded with the magnificent miracle of the sun, which appeared to change colors and dance in the sky.

In response to Our Lady’s Fatima message of hope and peace during her apparitions a hundred years ago, the bishops of Pennsylvania will consecrate Pennsylvania to the Mother of God at Saint Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg on September 27, 2017 during our upcoming Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and Provincial meetings. Then each diocese will mark the anniversary on the weekend of October 13–15.

May we seek peace and hope by turning together to Mary, in prayer. All of you—clergy, religious, children, parents, teens, young adults and older adults—are invited to join me in this historic moment when I entrust the Diocese of Pittsburgh to the Virgin Mary on Friday, October 13, 2017, at Saint Paul Seminary, 2900 Noblestown Road, Crafton, PA 15205.

This Consecration to the Virgin Mary and Centennial Celebration of Fatima will begin with a picnic-style dinner from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in O’Connor Hall. The dedication ceremony will begin at 7:00 p.m. with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a candlelight Eucharistic procession outside on the grounds of the seminary (weather permitting). You are welcome to attend any or all of those events.

Remembering the love that the children of Fatima—Saints Francisco and Jacinta and their cousin Lucia—had for the poor, proceeds from the dinner and a freewill offering will benefit the impoverished families cared for at Maternidad de Maria, our diocesan mission in Chimbote, Peru. This hospital, clinic and home-visit program ministers to thousands, and is the only maternity hospital in the area. We will honor Our Lady not only with prayer, but with charity.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh has prayed that our efforts for *On Mission for the Church Alive!* be guided by “the help of our dear Blessed Mother.” Join me then for this exceptional opportunity to gather with Our Lady, “under the mantle of her love!”

Looking forward to our efforts together in being *On Mission for the Church Alive!*, and grateful for our belief that “Nothing is Impossible with God,” I am

Your brother in Christ,

Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

DAZ:jkb

cc: Very Reverend Lawrence A. DiNardo, VG
Very Reverend Joseph M. Mele, VE, PhD
Reverend Monsignor Ronald P. Lengwin, VE

Reverend James R. Gretz
Ms. Judene Indovina
Dr. Patrick M. Joyce