

“Listen to me, daughter; see and bend your ear” (Ps 45:11). Today is the memorial of Our Lady of Fatima. In 1917, the Blessed Mother appeared to three children, Lucia dos Santos and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto. Concerned over mankind’s tendency for war and destruction, the Mother of Our Church asked the children to listen to her and to pray for peace.

104 years ago on the 13th of May, the Blessed Mother appeared before the children brighter than the sun. She carried a rosary in her hand and told them to “Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and an end to the war.”ⁱ In time, Lucia became a Carmelite Nun and devoted her life to prayer ... always encouraging others to pray the Rosary for peace. In 1941, she wrote a book and revealed two of the three secrets of Fatima:

“Our Lady showed us a great sea of fire which seemed to be under the earth. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in a huge fire, without weight or equilibrium, and amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear... This vision lasted but an instant. How can we ever be grateful enough to our kind heavenly Mother, who had already prepared us by promising, in the first Apparition, to take us to heaven.

Otherwise, I think we would have died of fear and terror. We then looked up at Our Lady, who said to us so kindly and so sadly: “You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.”ⁱⁱ

“For one terrible moment, the children were given a vision of hell. They saw the fall of ‘the souls of poor sinners.’ And now they are told why they have been exposed to this moment: “in order to save souls”—to show the way to salvation.”ⁱⁱⁱ

In the second part of the secret, Sr. Lucia wrote that the first World War would end but a greater war would break out unless sinners turned to God. Mary again asked for prayer especially for the consecration of Russia. “I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church.”^{iv}

“The third secret was sent to Pope John XXIII in a sealed envelope in 1959. Pope John Paul II only revealed it in 2000 and said it referred to the 1981 assassination attempt on him.”^v Pope John Paul II believed that he was protected by Our Lady of Fatima on that fateful day of May 13, 1981 when a trained assassin fired a bullet at him from only a few feet away. The Pope survived the attempt on his life, offered forgiveness to his assassin and later on placed the bullet removed from his body into Our Lady of Fatima’s crown.^{vi}

We live in troubling times. Violence is everywhere. Our Lady of Fatima’s message for prayer is ever timely. “Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world.”

And on top of all the violence, we live in fear of the pandemic. On May 1st of this year, Pope Francis asked the human family around the world to pray for an end to the pandemic with a marathon of prayer throughout the month of May. “Most loving Mother, grant that the sense of belonging to one great family, in the awareness of the bond that unites us all, might grow in the world; so that, with a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we might come to the aid of the many people who are poor and the many situations of misery. Encourage firmness in faith, perseverance in service, constancy in prayer.”^{vii} Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

ⁱ catholicnewsagency.com/news/38893/the-modern-miracle-of-fatima

ⁱⁱ catholicnewsagency.com/resource/56397/the-secret-of-fatima

ⁱⁱⁱ Cardinal Ratzinger, CDF catholicnewsagency.com/resource/56398/the-third-part-of-the-secret

^{iv} [Ibid /56397/the-secret-of-fatima](https://catholicnewsagency.com/resource/56397/the-secret-of-fatima)

^v catholicnewsagency.com/news/10363/last-surviving-witness-says-third-fatima-secret-is-fully-revealed

^{vi} [Ibid /38893/the-modern-miracle-of-fatima](https://catholicnewsagency.com/resource/38893/the-modern-miracle-of-fatima)

^{vii} vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-05/pope-opens-marathon-of-prayer-with-rosary-in-vatican-basilica.html