

The Centennial of Our Lady of Fatima: Mary Continues to Speak to the Church

Beginning this May, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia joins with the Universal Church to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Fatima, Portugal. Our Lady's appearances and the messages that she gave were a means by which God called man to prayer, sacrifice, and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

God's Revelation, begun in the Old Testament, was brought to fulfillment in the Life of Christ and the witness born to Him by the Apostles and the New Testament. In this public revelation, God has spoken all that He desires to communicate to man. The apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima are examples of private revelation. Private revelations are helps that God grants to His Church to enable it to live more fully by Christ's definitive revelation in a particular period of history.

"God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart." In Fatima, Our Lady asked specifically for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart, but she also promised that Christians who would turn to her in prayer, especially through the recitation of the rosary, would be granted the grace they need to overcome sin and would be led by her Immaculate Heart to God.

The Practice of Reparation on the First Saturdays. Our Lady of Fatima asked for this devotion specifically to prevent God's punishment upon the sins of the world, and for the conversion of Russia. The First Saturday devotion makes reparation for the offenses committed against Mary's honor by those who reject her Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity, and Divine Motherhood. It also offers reparation for those who reject her spiritual maternity or who outrage her in holy images.

"In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." The unique message of Our Lady of Fatima continues to shape the lives of Christian believers. She promises peace to the world and salvation to sinners through prayer and through the sacrifices that Christians offer to God. The prayers of the children of Fatima are simple yet profound pleas for the conversion of the world that all of us are invited to integrate into our daily prayer life.

To join in the Archdiocesan Fatima celebrations, visit archphila.org/fatima.

