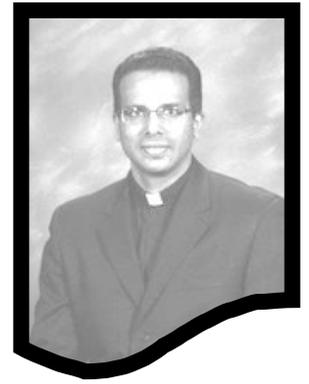




From the Pastor



Celebrating 100 Years of Fatima: Part I

The story of Fatima begins in 1916, when, against the backdrop of the First World War, and a year before the Communist revolution would plunge Russia and later Eastern Europe into six decades of oppression under militant atheistic governments, a resplendent figure appeared to the three children who were in the field tending the family sheep. “I am the Angel of Peace,” said the figure, who appeared to them two more times that year, exhorting them to accept the sufferings as an act of reparation for the sins which offend Him, and to pray constantly for the conversion of sinners.

Then, on the 13th day of the month of Our Lady, May 1917, an apparition of “a woman all in white, more brilliant than the sun” presented itself to the three children saying, “Please don’t be afraid of me, I’m not going to harm you.” Lucia asked her where she came from, and she responded, “I come from Heaven.” In that year, the Mother of God appeared six times to the children. She asked them to pray and devote themselves to the Holy Trinity and to “say the Rosary every day to bring peace to the world and an end to the war.”

She also revealed that the children would suffer, especially from the unbelief of their friends and families, and that the two younger children, Francisco and Jacinta would be taken to Heaven very soon, but that Lucia would live longer in order to spread her message and devotion to the Immaculate Heart.

In the last apparition, the woman revealed her name in response to Lucia’s question: “I am the Lady of the Rosary.” That same day—October 13, 1917—70,000 people had turned out to witness the apparition, following a promise by the woman that she would show the people that the apparitions were true. They saw the miracle of the sun, which left no doubt in their minds about the veracity of the apparitions. By 1930, the Bishop had approved of the apparitions, and they have been approved by the Church as authentic.

The messages Our Lady imparted during the apparitions to the children concerned the violent trials that would afflict the world by means of war, starvation, and the persecution of the Church and the Holy Father in the 20th Century if the world did not make reparation for sins. She exhorted the Church to pray and offer sacrifices to God in order that peace may come upon the world, and that the trials may be averted.

(Please see the 100th Anniversary of Fatima Tour Schedule at St. Thomas Church on page 6.)

—Father Jose