



PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THEME THAT CAN BE DISCERNED FROM THE JUNE AND JULY APPARITIONS TO THE LITTLE SHEPHERDS AT FATIMA IS THE FOCUS ON THE NECESSITY OF A GENUINE DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART. DURING THE JUNE 13 APPARITION, OUR LADY SAID TO LUCIA:

“Jesus wants to use you to make me known and loved. He wishes to establish the devotion to my Immaculate Heart throughout the world. I promise salvation to whoever embraces it; these souls will be dear to God, like flowers put by me to adorn His throne.”

Our Lady told Lucia she would remain on earth for some time in order to fulfill this

mission, rather than be taken to heaven “soon” as Francisco and Jacinta. The Blessed Mother assured Lucia, who was sad about this, that she would never forsake her — “My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.”

We can learn several important things about the Immaculate Heart of Mary from this apparition. First, that GOD wants this devotion — it is HIS Will that it be established; second, that it is a sure means of salvation; and third, that it is a refuge for all who are troubled and a path that will lead them only to God.

During the July apparition, Our Lady emphasized again the necessity of this devotion becoming a worldwide phenomenon. After showing the children the vision of the lost souls in hell, she said, “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.”

Photo Credit: Barn Emmer

The Immaculate Heart Will Lead the World to *J E S U S*

BY DONAL ANTHONY FOLEY

Jesus emphasized later to Lucia, when she was a Dorothean Sister, that He wanted the devotion to the Immaculate Heart placed alongside devotion to His Sacred Heart.

Clearly, Fatima has given a new directive from heaven for our times, as part of God's plan of salvation for the human race. We need to pay attention; it involves us.

From the very beginning of the Fatima events, we find the two Hearts of Jesus and Mary mentioned by the angel who appeared to the children in 1916. After telling them that he was the Angel of Peace and teaching them the Pardon Prayer, he said, "Pray thus. The Hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications."

And before she died, Jacinta reminded Lucia that she would soon be going to heaven but that Lucia would remain on earth to make it known that God wished to establish devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary around the world. She was emphatic about this: "Tell everybody that God grants us graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that people are to ask her for them; and that the Heart of Jesus wants the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be venerated at His side. Tell them also to pray to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for peace since God has entrusted it to her."

The young seer concluded on a personal note: "If I could only put into the hearts of all, the fire that is burning within my own heart, and that makes me love the Hearts of Jesus and Mary so very much!"

These revelations show that devotion to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart is of central importance to the Fatima message — and yet, more than 100 years after the apparitions, if we look around the world, we see that devotion to her Heart is far from being universally practiced.

That is not to say that the devotion is totally neglected; the First Saturday devotion is often practiced in tandem with the First Friday devotion to the Sacred Heart in many churches and by individuals. Also, the Church has placed the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary next to the feast of the Sacred Heart, fulfilling our Lord's request.

What seems to be needed, though, is a deepening of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart if it is to become a worldwide

phenomenon. Perhaps the best way to do that would be for Catholics to adopt the *True Devotion* to Our Lady advocated by St. Louis de Montfort, which does indeed involve the Two Hearts.

This is because the consecration proposed by the saint involves consecrating oneself to Jesus through Mary. It is not an end, but a renewal of one's baptismal vows through which the person is completely consecrated to God. This consecration, though, has to be carried over into daily life as a lived spirit if it is to be effective.

The challenge for those who are devoted to Our Lady of Fatima is, in line with the wishes of God, to propagate the devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart globally. Given the serious condition of the world, it would seem that doing this by means of a more intense personal consecration to Our Lady, following the method of *True Devotion* of St. Louis de Montfort, will become increasingly necessary. Living our consecration daily is how we will witness and evangelize the world, and Jesus will provide the grace and mercy through the Immaculate Heart to bring about conversions. †

EDITOR'S NOTE

Visit www.bluearmy.com/programs to access a FREE series on devotion to the Immaculate Heart with Fr. Hugh Gillespie SMM, along with written materials to accompany your study. Also, learn about our new 33-day Fatima Marian Consecration program.



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