

**THE MIRACULOUS CURE OF LUCY'S MOTHER
AND THE ORIGIN OF A PENITENTIAL PRACTICE AT FATIMA**

In 1919, Maria Rosa [the mother of Lucy of Fatima] fell ill, so gravely "that one day", Lucy wrote, "we thought her to be dying."
 Maria dos Anjos relates: "She had crises of suffocation, and the doctor said that they were heart attacks. We all wept, because we had already lost our father..."

"We, her children," Lucy continues, "gathered around her bed in order to receive her last blessing and kiss the hand of their dying mother. As I was the youngest, I was the last one in line. My poor mother, seeing me, revived a little, and putting her arms around my neck, she sighed, exclaiming: 'My poor daughter! What will become of you without your mother? I am going to die, my heart is torn on your account.' And sobbing bitterly, she squeezed me in her arms more and more tightly. My eldest sister snatched me forcefully from her arms, and leading me into the kitchen, forbade me to return to the sick room. In concluding, she said to me: 'Our mother is dying in pain, because of the sorrows you have caused her.' I knelt down, inclining my head on a bench, and I felt a deep bitterness that I had never experienced previously. I offered to our good God my sacrifice.

"A little later, my two eldest sisters, seeing that there was no longer any hope, came back to me, saying: 'Lucy, if it is true that you saw Our Lady, go now to the Cova da Iria, ask Her to cure our mother. Promise Her what you wish, we will



Pilgrims on their knees in penance, making their way to the Capelinha at Fatima.

do it, and then we will believe.' Without losing a moment, I was on my way."

Maria dos Anjos remembers that it was winter and that it was raining hard. "So as not to be seen," Lucy continues, "I went through paths which cut across fields, reciting my Rosary. I made my request to the Most Holy Virgin. Giving free rein to my grief, I poured out abundant tears and I returned to the house comforted, in the hope that my dearest Heavenly Mother would grant health to my mother on earth. When I entered the house, my mother already felt a little better, and three days later, she could do the housework.

"I had promised the Most Holy Virgin, if She would grant what I asked Her, to go nine days in succession, accompanied by my sisters, to recite the Rosary at the Cova da Iria, and to walk on our knees from the top of the road to the foot of the holm-oak; and on the last day, to take with us nine poor children and afterwards give them a meal..."

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Maria dos Anjos testifies that "the crises disappeared on the spot. She (Maria Rosa) had no more suffocation. She breathed well. Her heart was working better, and soon she was able to get up. She was not completely cured and did not recover all her strength. But afterwards she could still work a great deal, so well that she did not appear a woman of her age.

"We, her daughters, we did not delay in going to the Cova da Iria in order to accomplish the promise that had been made. Nine days in

succession – after supper, because during the day we had to work in order to earn our bread, and also so as not to be noticed – we went on our knees, from the place where the portico is today, as far as the little chapel and we recited the Rosary. Our mother also made the novena, walking behind us."

Inspired by Our Lady, Lucy, with her sisters, had just made a gesture of penance which would soon become familiar to the pilgrims of Fatima: they are seen still today, advancing on their knees, crossing the whole esplanade, as far as the Capelinha. †



THE CRUSADE TRAVELS TO THE BRITISH ISLES



Father Gruner recently returned from an intense trip through the British Isles. In just two short weeks, he and his traveling staff covered more than 1500 miles. While Father Gruner's grueling schedule made it necessary to catch a flight or two during the course of his trip, his staff enjoyed the blue seas of ferry trips between the isles, but these miles didn't go on the odometer!

Arriving first in Glasgow, Father Gruner joined co-speaker Father Paul Leonard Kramer at a conference hosted by Catholic Truth of Scotland. The message of Fatima left attendees exhilarated and inspired. Internet bloggers quickly posted their reactions to the talks:

One reviewer commented, "I think the one thing that we all got from this Conference was the realization that all the evils in the world are linked to Fatima. Fatima corresponds to what is in the Book of Revelation. That's why, along with the unprecedented public miracle of the sun, Fatima

cannot be regarded as a 'private revelation'."

Another responded to the Conference, "It has made me more fervent in my devotion to 'Our Lady of Fatima' in my family Rosary, I also intend for the first time to complete the First Five Saturdays and to do penance regularly."

(The above writer's comment is notable for the expressed resolution 'to do penance regularly.' Most of the time, when we consider the Rosary and the Five First Saturdays, we neglect penance. Of course, Our Lady regards our daily duties done well as a kind of penance. But small sacrifices and self-denials can obtain many graces for ourselves, our friends—for the world.)

A young person found the Conference thrilling: "As I am only thirteen it has been a good experience for me to see two famous priests, Fr. Gruner and Fr. Kramer. I have read many of Fr. Gruner's *Fatima Crusaders* and I never once thought I would meet him. I had a blessing from him also and Fr. Gruner and Fr. Kramer talks have inspired me very much. I would be prepared to join a group to promote the Fatima Message."

The bloggers had many fine reactions to the conference, but that was just the first stop.

After that well-attended event, Father and staff left Glasgow for Ireland. The next few days, Father visited the head of the Fatima office in

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Ireland and spoke to several groups there and in England, before returning home.

What was the general reaction to the Fatima Message?

As in the U.S., the audience was mostly laypeople. One of Father Gruner's talks was at the invitation of a diocesan priest for his church.

Father Gruner saw that there are souls hungry for the truths of the Faith, hungry for the Message of Fatima. It is always just a few, but these few are like sparks in a hayfield.

So keep up your prayers for those confreres in prayer who, like you, desire to serve Our Lady and to love Her requests. A big thank you, too, for your continued support, which helped to make this mission possible. †



HOW THE SAINTS HAVE HONORED OUR LADY

By Father Stefano M. Manelli

We will now give some examples of veneration which the Saints have paid to the Mother of God.

With ardent zeal St. Bernard paid reverence to Our Lady and with his gifted pen he sung Her praises so well that he earned the title "*Mary's minstrel*." His fervor and devotion were such as to keep him occupied all day on Marian feasts, in the interests of Our Lady, so that he forgot everything else, even very important business, such as to reply to urgent letters from the Pope.

St. Francis of Assisi offered so many beautiful acts of veneration to Our Lady as to be beyond counting. Every day he recited the Office of the Blessed Virgin. He prepared for Her feasts with special prayers and penances. He revered Her altars and Her images. He composed praises and prayers to Mary that overflowed with his seraphic warmth and tenderness.

St. Louis Grignion de Montfort was a completely Marian Saint. When he wrote *True*



St. Bernard sung Our Lady's praises so well, he was called "Mary's minstrel".

Devotion to Mary, he became the great teacher of devotion to Our Lady. His whole life was a wonderful example of devotion to the Heavenly Queen. As a boy, every day that he could, he would spend hours before an image of Our Lady

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of Peace. Later, as a man, he never wearied of praying the Rosary, and he preached devotion to Mary all over France.

What shall we say of St. Alphonsus Liguori, author of *The Glories of Mary*, a veritable "monument" of veneration which he constructed for the Queen of Heaven and which will remain forever in the Church? The Saint's profound and sweet veneration is contagiously evident also in his devout Marian hymns and his little work called *Visits to Blessed Mary*, printed in the same volume as his *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, and enhancing it with a Marian fragrance. God only could count the acts of veneration which that Saint paid to the Mother of God every day of his long life.

The holy Curé of Ars, St. John Vianney, who owed his priestly ordination to his tender devotion for Our Lady and his assiduous use of the Holy Rosary, filled his life with love and veneration for Our Lady. When he became a pastor, one of the first things he did was to consecrate his parish to Our Lady and dedicate to Her the first chapel he built. In his frugal bedroom, together with a Crucifix, he kept an image of the Immaculate before which he was often taken up into ecstatic prayer.

These are only a few examples of the veneration paid to Our Lady on the part of some Saints. We could find as many more examples as there are Saints, for it is impossible for a saint not to feel the need of venerating Our Lady. It is a filial need that is lovable and sweet. †

THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary: Peace or joy to Thee; Be well; I congratulate Thee and salute Thee.

Full of grace: Mary was always free from all sin; She had the fullness of grace required by Her dignity as Mother of God; during Her whole lifetime She grew in grace.

The Lord is with Thee: The Lord preserved Thee from sin and enriched Thee with grace, He loves and favors Thee in a special manner.

Blessed art Thou among women: Mary is the most fortunate among women because She was chosen before all to be the Mother of the Messiah.

And blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus: He, Whom She conceived in Her womb, was to be the source of all blessings and gifts to us.

Holy Mary: Being "full of grace," Mary is truly holy.

Mother of God: Since Her Son is God-Man, Mary is the Mother of God.

Pray for us sinners: As Mother of the Head of the Human race, She is also the Mother of each and every one of us, She is interested in us, and

intercedes for us in our struggle against sin.

Now: In our present struggles against the world, the flesh and the devil.

And at the hour of our death: And especially at that critical moment on which our eternal salvation will depend. †



We'd like to hear from YOU! To reach us: Call or write us at
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