

Mary of Nazareth



Mediatrice of All Grace

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In order to be able to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Apparitions of Fatima, by the mandate of Pope Francis, a Jubilee Year, from November 27, 2016, to November 26, 2017, is granted with the inherent

plenary indulgence.

Having concluded the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Holy Father once again gives us an opportunity through a plenary indulgence to cancel our debt due to God to those who fulfil its requirements.

“By a plenary indulgence is meant the remission of the entire temporal punishment due to sin so that no further expiation is required in Purgatory. A partial indulgence commutes only a certain portion of the penalty; and this portion is determined in accordance with the penitential discipline of the Church” (Catholic Encyclopaedia)

We know that sin is an offense against God and has to be remedied through confession (where we get forgiveness of our guilt) and expiation (where we have to repair this trespass through reparation or penance). To put it simply in practical life: If we have offended or committed an injustice against our neighbour, we not only have to acknowledge our trespass, seek forgiveness by remedying the situation but also through grace leave the person in a better situation he first was in. Isn't this what God does to us, if we approach him in a repentant manner?

Two types of Indulgences

- “Plenary” indulgences remit all of the *existing* temporal punishment due for the individual's sins. An individual can only earn one plenary indulgence per day.
- “Partial” indulgences remit only a part of the *existing* punishment.

“An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment due to sin, the guilt of which has been forgiven through sacramental confession. It means a more complete payment of the debt which the sinner owes to God. It's doesn't confer us forgiveness for our sin, but merely cancels out the temporal punishment or debt due to God. Neither does it confer us immunity from temptation or remove the possibility of subsequent lapses into sin. Least of all is an indulgence the purchase of a pardon which secures the buyer's salvation or releases the soul of another from Purgatory.

The Church exercises this remission through the power of the keys, through the application of the superabundant merits of Christ and of the saints, and for some just and reasonable motive.

It differs also from the penitential works undertaken of his own accord by the repentant sinner prayer, fasting, alms-giving in that these are personal and get their value from the merit of him who performs them, whereas an indulgence places at the penitent's disposal the merits of Christ and of the saints, which form the "Treasury" of the Church.

In the Sacrament of Baptism not only is the guilt of sin remitted, but also all the penalties attached to sin. In the Sacrament of Penance the guilt of sin is removed, and with it the eternal punishment due to mortal sin; but there still remains the temporal punishment required by Divine justice, and this requirement must be fulfilled either in the present life or in the world to come, i.e., in Purgatory. An indulgence offers the penitent sinner the means of discharging this debt during his life on earth.” (Catholic Encyclopaedia)

The plenary indulgence of the jubilee to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the Apparitions of Fatima is granted:

A) *To the faithful who visit the Sanctuary of Fatima on a pilgrimage and devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honour of the Virgin Mary, pray the Lord's Prayer, recite the symbol of faith (Creed) and invoke Our Lady of Fatima;*

B) *To pious faithful who visit with devotion an image of Our Lady of Fatima solemnly exposed to public veneration in any temple, oratory or appropriate place, on the days of the Anniversary of apparitions (May 13, 2017); And there devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honour of the Virgin Mary, pray the prayer of Our Father, recite the symbol of faith (Creed) and invoke Our Lady of Fatima;*

C) *To the faithful who, because of their age, illness or other serious cause, are unable to move, if they repent of all their sins and have a firm intention to carry out, as soon as possible, the following three conditions,*

A small image of Our Lady of Fatima, in the days of the apparitions they join spiritually to the jubilee celebrations, offering with trust to merciful God through Mary their prayers and pains, or the sacrifices of their own life.

To obtain a plenary indulgence, the faithful, who are truly penitent and animated by charity, must ritually fulfil the following conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father. Ave Maria!

It follows that the faithful have to abide with at least one of the above conditions that is best suited to their capacity. Without doubt it is within reach of anyone desiring to fulfil the Indulgence provided the person has been through confession, received communion and prayed for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The Church enriched by the treasury of merits of Christ, Mother Mary, the saints and those faithful who offer their sacrifices and prayers in a state of grace is able to draw from these merits to apply it to a penitent sinner availing an Indulgence.

Our Lady came to Fatima a hundred years ago to bring us a message of Peace. There has been no greater saint than Our Lady who has contributed to the treasury of the Church through Her



Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart, a title won by sharing in the whole Passion of Her divine Son and thus co-operating in the work of our redemption.

At Fatima, Our Lady also came to also warn us about the dangers, the evils and errors of Communism. The antidote for these evils that Our Lady came to give us was:

-The Devotion and Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (including the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Pope together with the world's bishops in a solemn public ceremony),

-The First Saturday Devotion consisting of: (1) Confession, (2) Communion, (3) Five decades of the Rosary, (4) Meditation on one or more of the Rosary Mysteries for fifteen minutes, (5) To do all these things in the spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and (6) To observe all these practices on the First Saturday of five consecutive months.

Our Lady's appearances to Iveta at Batim also confirm the Fatima Message. ***“Batim lies in the shadow of Fatima, it is the forerunner of the future in God's Salvific Plan. Know and understand now, these are important moments”*** Our Lady to Iveta on 13th Oct, 2016.

The Messages of Our Lady at Batim also contains a number of warnings. At one of the concluding messages to Iveta On October 13th, 2016, Our Lady speaks in front of the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima that was brought from Fatima, Portugal : ***“Beloved children, now before you is The Mother of God Image for Veneration and understanding that I will protect you in these times and lead you through them. Amen. I Love you dearly, I Am The Mother of God, Mediatrix of All Grace, Co-Redemptrix and Advocate in Heaven, I await to be proclaimed on Earth by your Holy Father, My beloved Chosen Son His Holiness Pope Francis I in union with Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI and all the Bishops and Priests and Religious and you My beloved children known as the laity united in this Solemn Celebration of the fifth dogma, The Immaculate Conception, I Who Am She. Amen.”***

In her earlier messages, Our Lady has promised us a release of a flood of Graces that are needed for these moments that She talks about - once the proclamation of the fifth dogma is made!

Let us wholeheartedly avail of this Indulgence this Centenary year of the Fatima Apparitions and not only console Our Lady and enrich the Spiritual treasury of the Church but also pray for the Intentions of Our Lady for these very times.

Munich: Vespers Services, 10 September, 2006

'THE FAMILY, THE SCHOOL, THE PARISH': THREE PLACES THAT LEAD US TO LIFE

On Sunday afternoon, 10 September, the Holy Father visited the Cathedral of Our Lady in Munich and presided at Vespers. The following is a translation of his Homily, given in German.

Dear First Communicants!
Dear Parents and Teachers!
Dear Brothers and Sisters!



The reading we have just heard is from the final book of the New Testament, the *Book of Revelation*. The seer is helped to lift his eyes upward, towards heaven, and forward, towards the future. But in doing so, he speaks to us about earth, about the present, about our lives.

In the course of our lives, all of us are on a journey, we are travelling towards the future. Naturally, we want to find the right road: to find true life, and not a dead end or a desert. We do not want to end up saying: I took the wrong road, my life is a failure, it went wrong. We want to find joy in life; we want, in the words of Jesus, “to have life in abundance”.

But let us listen to the seer of the Book of Revelation. What has he said to us in this passage which was read to us a moment ago? He is talking about a reconciled world. A world in which people “of every nation, race, people and tongue” (7:9) have come together in joy. And so we ask: “How can this happen? What road do we take to get there?”

Well, first and most important: these people are living with God; God himself has “sheltered them in his tent” (cf. 7:15), as the reading says. So we ask ourselves: “What do we mean by 'God's tent'? Where is it found? How do we get there?”

The seer might be alluding to the first chapter of the *Gospel according to John*, where we read: “The Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us” (1:14). God is not far from us; he is not somewhere out in the universe, somewhere that none of us can go. He has pitched his tent among us: in Jesus he became one of us, flesh and blood just like us. This is his “tent”. And in the Ascension, he did not go somewhere far away from us. His tent, he himself in his Body, remains among us and is one of us. We can call him by Name and

speak at ease with him. He listens to us and, if we are attentive, we can also hear him speaking back.

Let me repeat: In Jesus, it is God who “camps” in our midst. But let me also repeat: Where exactly does this happen? Our reading gives us two answers to this question. It says that the men and women at peace “have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (7:14). To us this sounds very strange.

In his cryptic language, the seer is speaking about Baptism. His words about “the blood of the Lamb” allude to Jesus' love, which he continued to show even up to his violent death. This love, both divine and human, is the bath into which he plunges us at Baptism the bath with which he washes us, cleansing us so that we can be fit for God and capable of living in his company.

The act of Baptism, however, is just a beginning. By walking with Jesus, in faith and in our life in union with him, his love touches us, purifies us and enlightens us. We heard that, in the bath of love, our clothing becomes white. For the ancient world, white was the colour of light. The white robes mean that in faith we become light, we set aside darkness, falsehood and every sort of evil, and we become people of light, fit for God. The baptismal gown, like the First Communion robes that you are wearing, is meant to remind us of this and to tell us: by living as one with Jesus and the community of believers, the Church, you have become a person of light, a person of truth and goodness a person radiant with goodness, the goodness of God himself.

Need for Sunday family Eucharist

The second answer to the question: “Where do we find Jesus?” is also given by the seer in cryptic language. He tells us that the Lamb leads the great multitude of people from every culture and nation to the sources of living water. Without water, there is no life. People who lived near the desert knew this well, and so springs of water became for them the symbol par excellence of life.

The Lamb, Jesus, leads men and women to the sources of life. Among these sources are the Sacred Scriptures, in which God speaks to us and tells us how to live in the right way.

But there is more to these sources: in truth the authentic source is Jesus himself, in whom God gives us his very self. He does this above all in Holy Communion. There we can, as it were, drink directly from the sources of life: he comes to us and makes each of us one with him. We can see how true this is: through the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Communion, a community is formed which spills over all borders and embraces all languages we see it here: there are present Bishops of every language and from throughout the world through

communion the universal Church takes shape, in which God speaks to us and lives among us. This is how we should receive Holy Communion: seeing it as an encounter with Jesus, an encounter with God himself, who leads us to the sources of true life.

Dear parents! I ask you to help your children to grow in faith, I ask you to accompany them on their journey towards First Communion, a journey which continues beyond that day, and to keep accompanying them as they make their way to Jesus and with Jesus. Please, go with your children to church and take part in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration! You will see that this is not time lost; rather, it is the very thing that can keep your family truly united and centred.

Sunday becomes more beautiful, the whole week becomes more beautiful, when you go to Sunday Mass together. And please, pray together at home too: at meals and before going to bed. Prayer does not only bring us nearer to God but also nearer to one another. It is a powerful source of peace and joy. Family life becomes more joyful and expansive whenever God is there and his closeness is experienced in prayer.

Dear catechists and teachers! I urge you to keep alive in the schools the search for God, for that God who in Jesus Christ has made himself visible to us. I know that in our pluralistic world it is no easy thing in schools to bring up the subject of faith. But it is hardly enough for our children and young people to learn technical knowledge and skills alone, and not the criteria that give knowledge and skill their direction and meaning.

Encourage your students not only to raise questions about particular things something good in itself but above all to ask about the why and the wherefore of life as a whole. Help them to realize that any answers that do not finally lead to God are insufficient.

Dear priests and all who assist in parishes! I urge you to do everything possible to make the parish a “spiritual community” for people a great family where we also experience the even greater family of the universal Church, and learn through the liturgy, through catechists and through all the events of parish life to walk together on the way of true life.

These three places of education the family, the school and the parish go together, and they help us to find the way that leads to the sources of life, and truly all of us, dear children, dear parents and dear teachers, want to have “life in abundance”. Amen!



CHRIST'S KINGSHIP -- OUR GATEWAY TO HEAVEN

By Annabelle Mendonca

Though Christ is King, His Kingdom is not of this world. His Kingdom is a spiritual Kingdom diametrically opposed to the kingdoms of this world. To further His Kingdom He has no human means of any kind at His disposal – no weapons, no money, no political support, no war strategy . . . He spends most of His time among the poor, the fishermen, peasants, publicans and sinners – those rejected by so-called good society. He preaches a doctrine that is exclusively religious and moral, composed of everything that the various philosophies have rejected. What is termed ‘evil’ for the world, for Jesus it is ‘good’ and vice-versa. Poverty, humility, mourning/weeping, submission and silent suffering of insult and injury – this the world considers evil, but these are His weapons to overcome the world. The acquisition of wealth, honour, dominion over others, spells happiness to the world, but in the Kingdom of Christ these represent total loss or a serious danger. The subjects of His Kingdom must look upon this life not as a permanent dwelling but only as a runway, from which to take off for the flight toward our permanent abode.

In the Sacred Scriptures too there are frequent references to Christ’s Kingship. Christ was first represented to Mary as King when the angel visited her and said, “And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father” (Lk 1:32). Later, towards the end of His life on this earth, Jesus Christ in the face of death, spoke to Pilate who was judging Him, “Thou has said it, I am a king . . . , although my kingdom is not of this world” (Jn 18:37). To uphold this title of Kingship He accepted death, and on the cross was nailed the inscription ‘Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews’.

Yes, Christ is King, but what sort of a King? He Himself said that His Kingship was not of this world. He won His great victory over the world wearing on His head a crown not of glittering diamonds but of sharp piercing thorns. He wielded a sceptre that was not made of precious gold but fashioned out of a hollow reed, thrust into His hand in derision and mockery. His throne was not draped with tapestry and bedecked with jewels, but was a rough and rugged cross of hard wood upon which He hung bleeding and stretched for three hours in an agony that opened for us the gates of heaven.

We were redeemed, St Paul reminds us, not with corruptible things such as gold and silver but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled. But this redemption of the human race by Christ was, at the same time, a conquest over Satan, a decisive victory over the powers of sin, evil and death. Moreover, Jesus Christ is King because He is the head of the Church. Head of the Mystical Body, and as the Head the source and fountain of all grace, for from Him flows that supernatural life-giving virtue that helps sinful men to rise from the mire of misery and vice and enables them to climb the heights of virtue and holiness.

Yes, Jesus Christ is a king who can rescue us from the clutches of sin, loneliness and despair; He can set us free from the claws of bitterness and hatred. He can transform our lives, we only have to surrender ourselves totally and allow Him to take control. He is the greatest source of goodness, light and hope in this dark world of ours. He is a king who can open our minds to a new way of life. Our task is to allow His Kingdom to intensify and grow in our souls. We truly honour Christ as King when we allow His Kingdom to hold sway over us – the Kingdom of truth and of life, the kingdom of grace and holiness, the kingdom of justice, love and peace.

THE GREAT ADDRESS HE NEVER GAVE

By Fr. Raymond J de Souza

Taken from *Catholic Herald* dated 13th May 2016

When St. John Paul was shot in St. Peter's Square before the general audience on May 13 1981, his text for the day was consequently left undelivered. It has been on the Vatican website in Italian for some time, but the good folks at Aleteia have put an English translation online for the 35th anniversary of that historic day.



It is striking to read that text now, heightened by the extraordinary significance May 13 would assume in the life of the saint, as Our Lady of Fatima became a leitmotif of his pontificate, especially regarding the defeat of communism.

The text is best remembered for two initiatives that John Paul launched as a follow-up to the 1980 synod of bishops on the family the previous autumn. In that audience, the pope was to announce the creation of the Pontifical Council for the Family, as well as a new International Institute of Studies on Marriage and the Family. The institute would be housed at the Pontifical Lateran University the pope's university in Rome.

Before long, the marriage and family institute would be multiplied all over the world, and would eventually take John Paul's name. The theological work it has produced on marriage, family and the theology of the body over three decades is one of the major legacies of John Paul's pontificate.

Those were the fruits of the 1980 family synod, which have recently been allowed to wither. Undoing the 1981 post-synodal exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, was the main thrust of the Kasper party during the two-year synod process, an effort which ultimately failed, but only just. The Pontifical Council for the Family is soon to be abolished as a separate Vatican department, to go back to what it was before John Paul, part of a larger department of the laity. Despite the intense focus on questions of the family in Rome, the work of the John Paul II institutes was sidelined in recent years.

Yet that May 13, 1981 address was not principally about the family. It was dedicated to social doctrine, as May 15, 1891 was the publication date of *Rerum Novarum*, the landmark encyclical which Pius XII would call the “magna carta” of the Church's social doctrine, her teaching about culture, politics and economics.

“I emphasise a date which deserves to be written in golden letters in the history of the modern Church: May 15, 1891,” John Paul intended to say. “It has

in fact been 90 years since my predecessor, Leo XIII, published the foundational social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which was not only a vigorous and heartfelt condemnation of the 'unmerited misery' in which workers then lived, after the first period of implementation of the industrial machine in the field of enterprise, but especially laid the foundations for a just solution to the serious problems of human coexistence which fall under the name of 'social issues'.”

The Church had addressed social issues since the Acts of the Apostles, but “Pope Leo XIII is credited with having first sought to give them an organic and synthetic character”.

John Paul added: “The Church is called by her vocation to be everywhere the faithful guardian of human dignity, the mother of the oppressed and marginalised, the Church of the weak and the poor”. Having lived his adult life under totalitarian atheism, Karol Wojtyla intended for his papacy to be a guardian of human dignity, especially in the field that touches nearly every aspect of life work and economics.

In 1981 delayed for a few months by the assassination attempt John Paul would publish the first of three social encyclicals, *Laborem Exercens*, on the dignity of work. He would thus give the Church's social doctrine a distinctive anthropological flavour. He meditated deeply upon Genesis, and the vocation to work, in a complement to his teaching in the theology of the body on what Genesis taught about sex and love.

Laborem Exercens treated work not as something extrinsic to man, which he simply did, but as something by which he both expressed and shaped his personality. It was a lofty vision of human work, contrasted with the rather depersonalised vision of workers offered by communism.

Ten years later, for the 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, John Paul would issue *Centesimus Annus*, the great masterpiece of magisterial reflection on the free society. The anthropological reflections on work are extended to the entire economic sphere, in which man is called to exercise his freedom and creativity in cooperation and solidarity with others. It remains the richest treatment of the subject in the papal magisterium to date and on its 25th anniversary it deserves to be re-read.

May 13, 1981. The assassination attempt, the care for the family, the defence of the dignity of workers, the promotion of the free society of virtue it was the whole pontificate in one afternoon.

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TAKE TIME TO LIVE

“I shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”



H u m a n relationships thrive on c a r i n g , sharing/bearing and mutual appreciation. We rely on our loved ones, our friends and those closest to us, for moral support and encouragement. Is it not true that we feel happy when we are appreciated? In this, as in other things, what we send out comes back to us, for life is like a boomerang: what we

are, what we do, comes back to us. When we give our best to the world, when we send out warmth, love and appreciation -- it all comes back to us.

There are many various occasions in life which call for celebration -- special events like a birth or a wedding in the family, anniversaries, promotions, a new home, etc. But , let us not forget that each and every day is filled with numerous things that deserve our appreciation and gratitude. If only we would pause, reflect and consider life’s countless blessings, we would realize how much there is to be appreciated in life!

Let us appreciate nature! The blue sky above us, the greenery which is fast disappearing, the magnificent hills and waterfalls, the vast seas and life-giving/generating rivers, and the beauty and grandeur of woods and forests. If the sight of blue skies fills you with joy, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice for your soul is alive!

Let us appreciate each day as a blessing from God! Many tend to take things for granted -- our life that is a great gift, our good health which is a blessing, our family which is precious and the joy and love that comes to us from all who care. Yes, we need to appreciate all the beauty and warmth which we so often ignore

or are blind to see.

Above all we need to appreciate people! Human relationships need to be nurtured -- our family and friends are “pillars of strength”, they are always there to support us in good times and bad. When problems arise and troubles keep mounting, it is people who are nearest that bear the brunt of our stress. We are often courteous, polite and kind to perfect strangers, but rude and brusque to our own family members. Many relationships suffer from sheer neglect and indifference -- Even love has a shelf life!

There is nothing like warmth, love and appreciation to revitalize relationships! ”Take time to live -- because the world has so much to give!” All of us need to take time to live. To appreciate the good things and wonderful people around us. This is sure to bring us, and them, a great deal of happiness. There is a world of beauty and charm around us -- and we are blind to see it, because we lack the quality of appreciation.

George Mathew Adams said, ‘He who appreciates another enriches himself far more than the one whom he praises. To praise is an investment in one’s own happiness. The poorest human being has something to give that the richest could not buy.’

Let us be thankful for the year gone by, with all its joys, troubles, anxieties and blessings and look forward to a New Year with new vision and hope for a better future.

Annabelle Mendonca

Dates to Remember - FEBRUARY 2017

- 1st - St. Brigid of Ireland
- 2nd - Presentation of the Lord/World Day of Consecrated Life
- 3rd - First Friday/St. Blaise
- 4th - **First Saturday**/St. John de Britto
- 6th - St. Gonsalo Garcia
- 7th - Blessed Pius IX
- 11th - Our Lady of Lourdes/World Day of the Sick
- 14th - Ss. Cyril & Methodius
- 20th - Blessed Jacinta & Francisco Marto
- 22nd - The Chair of St. Peter
- 26th - **WAF Meet (World Apostolate Meet, Panjim, Goa)**
- 27th - St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows

JOSEPH VAZ AND THE VIRGIN MARY

Taken from Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Patriarch Filipe Neri Ferrao

The Mother of Jesus became, in a special way at the foot of the Cross, the mother of those who believed in her Son and who wished to follow Him. Joseph Vaz had a special love for this very same Mother, and surrendered his life to her. He adopted for his life the lofty Christian values that he saw in her life. And, in imitating Mary, who became the model disciple of Jesus and the twinkling star of the proclamation of the Good News, he became to all a shining witness to Jesus.

Joseph Vaz, Slave of Mary

Joseph Vaz had, from early childhood, a predilection for Mary. After he was ordained priest, on August 5, 1677, kneeling in front of the main altar in the old Church of Sancoale, dedicated to Our Lady of Health, Joseph Vaz wrote his well-known *Letter of Bondage* and surrendered to Mary his whole life as a willing slave. While ending this letter, he expressed his wish that, if he would sign with the blood from his heart: so deep was his love for his love for the Blessed Virgin.



A disciple of Christ is His servant (2 Cor. 11:23; Rom. 1:1). The disciples of Jesus are challenged to proclaim the Kingdom of God, not arrogantly or with might, but as humble servants (Lk. 17:10). By acknowledging the lordship of God in her whole life, Mary became His humble 'handmaid' (Lk. 1:38, 48). So, in her pilgrimage of faith, she surrendered her whole life to God alone by always being obedient to Him. Mary is the model of the Church. In the likeness of Mary, it is important that the Church, in her mission, be obedient to God's Word, so that she may learn to look at all the events from His perspective.

All of us, in the Church, are called for a task. Our life needs to be worthy of this call. Whatever our task may be, let us accomplish it in humility and with

responsibility, after the example of Mary and of Joseph Vaz. Adopting the culture of appreciating the value of the work done by others, let us keep encouraging others to work with ever increasing enthusiasm.

Joseph Vaz, Surrendering, like Mary, his Life to God

A loyal servant fulfil not his but his master's will. While doing this, he has to face lots of difficulties. Keeping Mary as his model, Joseph Vaz recognized the will of God as he went on to proclaim the Good News, following the mandate of Jesus. He longed to go to Sri Lanka. When he revealed his intentions to his superiors, they asked him to go, not to Sri Lanka, but to Kanara. Convinced that God reveals His will through superiors, he went to Kanara. As he was getting ready to carry forward God's work in Kandy, he was accused of being a spy of the Portuguese Government and imprisoned. He saw God's will in this. And this indeed became for him an opportunity to learn Sinhalese and to be God's instrument in the miracle of rain. In this way, he got more facilities to proclaim Jesus more effectively.

Each step of Mary's life witnesses fully to the will and the plan of God (Lk. 1:38). In her faithfulness to God's will, she faces many challenges with a great spirit of faith (Lk. 2:41-52; Mt. 2:13-15). Her humble life is a way for every Christian to accept the Father's will and to grow in holiness. Mary always accompanied Jesus with love and very closely as he worked to fulfil his Father's will. If Jesus experienced her praises and loyalty in good times (Jn. 2:1-11), he had her courage and consoling presence in times of sorrow (Jn. 19:25-27).

Our intelligence always falls short of perceiving and reflecting on the infinite thoughts and works of God. Joseph Vaz is an inspiration for every moment of our life, particularly in moments of sorrow and difficulty, when we become confused and our faith becomes shaky!

Joseph Vaz, Propagator of Mary's Devotion

When preaching in Tamil or Sinhalese, Joseph Vaz would be filled with emotion and, in tears, propose, again and again, to his audience, the meditation on the passion of Jesus and on the sorrows of Our Lady. The rosary beads were his unfailing companions, always and everywhere.

He propagated the devotion to Mary so that everyone, but especially the Sri Lankan brothers and sisters, might avail themselves of the loving protection and

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'God wishes to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world. If what I say is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.'

HOW DO I START THE FIRST SATURDAYS?

On July 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared for the third time to the three children of Fatima and showed them the vision of hell. In this vision Our Lady said that *'God wishes to establish in the world devotion'* to Her Immaculate Heart and that She would come to *ask for the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays*...



What Do I Have to Do?

The devotion of First Saturdays, as requested by Our Lady of Fatima, carries with it the assurance of salvation. However, to derive profit from such a great promise of Our Lady, the devotion must be properly understood and duly performed. The requirements as stipulated by Our Lady are as follows:

(1) Confession, (2) Communion, (3) Five decades of the Rosary, (4) Meditation on one or more of the Rosary Mysteries for fifteen minutes, (5) To do all these things in the spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and (6) To observe all these practices on the First Saturday of five consecutive months.

The idea of the Five First Saturdays is obviously to make us persevere in the devotional acts for these Saturdays and overcome initial difficulties. Once this is done, Our Lady knows that the person would become devoted to Her Immaculate Heart and persist in practicing such devotion on all First Saturdays, working thereby for personal self-reform and for the salvation of others. Our Lady has assured us that She will obtain salvation for all those who observe the First Saturdays for five consecutive months in accordance with Her conditions.

THE FATIMA PRAYERS

PARDON PRAYER: My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee.

ANGEL'S PRAYER: O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg the conversion of poor sinners.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament!

SACRIFICE PRAYER: O Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

DECADE PRAYER: O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.

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company of Mary. He built in that country churches, chapels and prayer houses dedicated to Our Lady. Catholics would gather in those places to pray the rosary, sing litanies as well as celebrate feasts in honour of our Blessed Mother.

Human progress cannot be fruitful without God's grace and a relationship with Him (Jn. 15:4). Our Blessed Mother intercedes continuously for us so that we may merit this heavenly grace and remain under her protection during our earthly journey. Jesus founded the Church as His own body. Mary, being the Mother of Jesus, develops special ties

with the Church. If she has kept company to the early Church by praying together with the Apostles (Acts. 1:14), now, in her heavenly glory, she offers us her protection through her unceasing intercessory prayer.

The Rosary is a simple, but a special and important prayer, through which we receive fruits of holiness. Let us say it with more devotion and faithfulness in our homes and thus experience her special presence. Let the domiciliary visit of her statue be an occasion to strengthen unity in our homes and in our neighbourhoods. By offering, in season and out of season, our loving service to all, but specially to the sick, the weak and the sorrowing, let us spread the perfume of her virtues around us. By placing the life of Joseph Vaz before our eyes, let the devotion to Our Lady grow in our hearts and spread in the Church.

In conformity with the directives of Pope Urban VIII, we have no intention of anticipating the judgement of the Holy Apostolic See and of the Church on Apparitions, reported by us, but not yet recognized; indeed, we submit to, and accept; her final decision without reservation.

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