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the Ecumenical Friends
da Associação Ecuménica

Newsletter No. 24



of Fatima Association
Amigos de Fátima

October 2013



An Icon of Our Lady of Fatima

**The 2014 May Pilgrimage to Fatima
celebrating the 97th anniversary of
the First apparitions of Our lady in 1917
will be**

**Thursday 8th May to Thursday 15th May
led by the Bishop of Fulham
further details from**

Fr Gray 01723 340 107 and Fr Stevens 020 8854 0461



**The 2015 May Pilgrimage to Fatima
celebrating
the 98th anniversary of
the First apparitions of
Our lady in 1917
will be**

**Thursday 7th May
to Thursday 14th May
further details from**

**Fr Gray 01723 340 107
and Fr Stevens 020 8854 0461**

**The 2017 May Pilgrimage to Fatima
celebrating the 100th anniversary of
the First apparitions of
Our lady in 1917
will be**

**Tuesday 9th May
to Tuesday 16th May
led by the Bishop of Fulham
and the Bishop of Richborough
further details from**

**Fr Gray 01723 340 107 and
Fr Stevens 020 8854 0461**



THE DANCING SUN PHOTOGRAPHED DURING
THE 2012 PILGRIMAGE





THE PRIEST DIRECTOR'S LETTER.

Father Gray writes:

The May 2012 pilgrimage, was led by Bishop Jonathan Baker (formally of Ebbsfleet and now Fulham) and the 2012 pilgrimage led by Bishop Norman Banks of Richborough. Our Association (EFFA) continues to support financially the Vida e Paz Community for its work amongst those caught up in drug addiction.

Each May our pilgrimage is spread over 7 days. For the celebrations on the 13th our bishops and clergy are welcomed as 'Ecumenical Visitors' and invited to join in the great procession from the Capelinha to the Basilica steps where we are seated with the concelebrating priests (2 or 3 hundred of them) immediately behind the presiding cardinal - and the image of Our Lady of Fatima. A wonderful and privileged occasion. To look out to half a million people was something not to be forgotten.

A glorious day by the sea at Nazare often features in our pilgrimage programme - some go out to lunch - some go for a paddle in the sea - one bishop is known to have gone for a swim - some pilgrims wander off with their packed lunches. Mass is said each day - either in the Vida e Paz chapel - other days in chapels in the Sanctuary or the Verbo Divino chapel or the Sao Paula chapel.

Recent discussions have drawn comparisons with Walsingham and Lourdes. Walsingham being national - Lourdes being international - for Fatima - a term which seems to be coming into vogue is "global" - drawing people from Germany, Italy, Poland, Ireland, and many countries from beyond what once was the Berlin Wall. Shrines of Fatima can be found in many eastern countries, including Russia, China and Japan to mention three such places. Yes, 'Global' seems to be the right description for this place which Pope John called 'the Altar of the world'. A week in Fatima is packed with (real) religion and fun with so many fellow (catholic) Christians and is an experience of some great worth. Nothing is ever the same again. To have such fun together as a group does a lot to help us overcome the ecclesiastical difficulties we have in our own country.

Next years pilgrimage will be from Thursday 8th to Thursday 15th May 2014 and will be led by Bishop Jonathan of Fulham. Details from Father Gray. Don't be one of those

people who say "I've never been to Fatima". To make such a claim is to say you have never lived!! Come and see, and see what Our Lady of Fatima does for you.

Father C Malcolm Gray
Priest Director



Mary Unites Christians,
says Cardinal Walter Kasper.

Devotion to the Virgin Mary has an essential role in ecumenical dialogue and the journey to full and visible unity among Christians. Mary is an essential part of the ecumenical movement though this topic is neither common nor obvious among ecumenists. Marian devotion is fully shared with the Orthodox Church but also existed at the time of the Reformation.

Luther fervently venerated Mary during his whole life, professing her, with the ancient creeds and Councils of the Church of the first millennium, as Virgin and Mother of God. He was only critical of some practices, which he considered abuses and exaggerations. The same happened with the English reformers. Thanks to a renewed reading and meditation of sacred Scripture, we observe a slow but decisive change. In this regard, he mentioned several joint statements of Catholics and Lutherans that point in this direction. Mary is not absent but present in ecumenical dialogue." "Churches have made progress in their approach on the doctrine of Our Lady. Our Lady no longer divides us, but reconciles and unites us in Christ her Son."

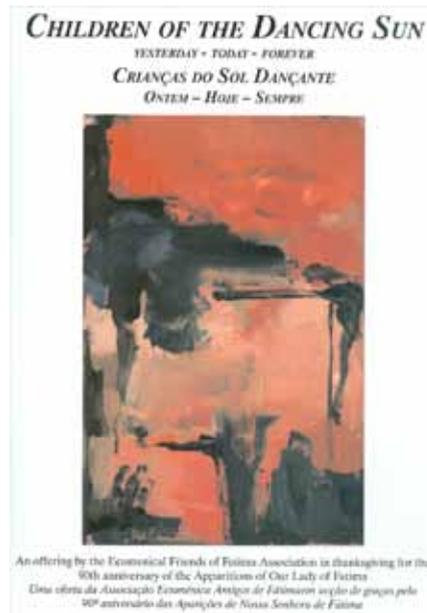
Cardinal Kasper expressed the hope that Our Lady would help Catholics and Anglicans overcome recently heightened tensions in dialogue. The Anglican Communion has moved closer to the episcopal ordination of

women and it faces dissent within the communion regarding the ordination of practicing homosexuals, but there is reason to hope that Our Lady will help us overcome the present difficulties in our relations, so that with the help of God we will be able to continue our common ecumenical pilgrimage.

Cardinal Kasper referred to Mary as model of the Church, chosen by God from all eternity. He also noted the issue of salvation by divine grace and not by ones' own merits, clarifying that this is a point that no longer divides Christians.

Cardinal Kasper asserted that division among Christians arises because our love and faith have weakened and every time that the thinking of the world and its parameters stain the Church, the unity of the Church is endangered. But Mary, who he called an "example of a disciple," does not lead toward what pleases everyone, but to the foot of the cross. Let us take her as an example, and in this way we will take steps forward in our ecumenical pilgrimage."

Cardinal Kasper referred to the question of the veneration of the Virgin and the saints, an issue that still causes difficulties among Protestants and Anglicans. However, as any mother would intercede for her children, and as every mother, after her death would intercede in heaven and from heaven, Mary also accompanies the Church on her pilgrimage, also on the road toward unity.



Minutes of last AGM meeting (part ii)

EFFA AGM (PART 11) Saturday
28th September 2013

The Annual General Meeting (part 2)
held on Saturday 28th September 2013
at the Ancient Parish Church of S. Nicholas, Plumstead

1 Welcome. The the Priest Director welcomed all present

2 Apologies for absence were received from : The Ven. Father Bernard Holdridge and Fathers John Pitchford, Philip Corbett, William Davage, Tim Bugby, Alan Cochrane, and Mrs Rosina Cochrane. Mrs Helen Lewis, Mrs Ellen Moore, Mr and Mrs Richard North, Mr Paul Pangrace

3 Appointment of Clerk to the Meeting. Fr John Cornish was appointed to act in this capacity.

4 Report from the AGM Part 1, Fatima May 2013.

Much has already been said about the May 2013 pilgrimage (see Newsletter Number 23).

Perhaps its needless to say that we received the usual warm welcome at the Sao Paulo Seminary/Pension, a welcome that has been consistent since 1994 and so next May we might well celebrate a 20 year association and friendship with the Marian Fathers.

Bishop Norman Banks at a meeting with Bishop Antonio and Father Carlos spoke of his involvement with the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, as Vicar of Walsingham.

This led Bishop Antonio to suggest that there might be an ecumenical (Anglican/Roman Catholic) preparation for the centenary celebrations in (May) 2017. Bishop Antonio did say he would need time to consider his proposal and so we await to hear from him on this matter. Needless to say that Bishop Antonio has much to exercise his mind on many other matters connected with the centenary as well as caring for the many pastoral needs of his diocese but this proposal is one that we should all welcome and look forward to sharing in such a venture.

At the meeting with Bishop Antonio, Father Carlos and Bishop Norman Banks, I did mention how Bishop Brian Master (formally Bishop of Edmonton under whom I served) always had "a little list" about this, that and many other things and that I have taken a leaf out of his book (so to speak) and have a number of "little lists" - for future bookings in 2014 - 2015 - 2016 AND 2017. Yes, I am taking bookings already for each of those years. 2017 will of course be a major event in the life of this "global" shrine and we must be part of it and prepare for it even now.

Happily, I am sure, we can be sure of a welcome once again at the Sao Paulo - but we do need to plan early to ensure air tickets that will enable us to

be there at a time suitable to all our requirements.

The new “Tangney/Mancunia” tours organisation seems to be working well and they have already booked 24 air tickets for May (2014) next year. To safeguard and secure those seats we need to book now. Date for your diary : 2014 pilgrimage is from May 8th - 15th.

10 single rooms and 10 twin rooms are on hold We need to fill them all - if not more!

I have booking forms already at hand - - and don't forget

“If you haven't been to Fatima (for the 12th/13th) you have never lived.

Rule 9 of our Constitution states :

Members (of EFFA) should ideally aim to make an annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima. Where this is not possible a spiritual pilgrimage should be made annually, and a pilgrimage to the Shrine should be at least once in every three years, unless a dispensation has been granted by the Priest Director.

This rule is an “ideal” and not possible for everyone to adhere to. Priests, Religious and Laity can still be a member of EFFA supporting its aims - praying for the reunion of Christendom sharing in our ‘apostolate’ for the Vida e Paz community and its work of rehabilitation of those caught up with drug abuse praying for the conversion of sinners and praying for each other.

As we love Our Lady, Mary, Mother of God, so we respond to her message delivered to three little children almost 100 years ago and share in this global witness to the truths of the Gospel.

5 Business to be considered by the Rule of the Constitution.

(a) Consider any matters from the AGM (part 1). there were no matters to consider

(b) Financial Report. Mrs Joan Hooton presented the accounts (1st July 2012 - 30th June 2013) previously circulated were approved and adopted by the meeting.

The Treasurer asked that outstanding subscription be paid as soon as possible. Mrs Hooton was thanked for managing our financial affairs so diligently.

(c) Report from the Cells. There was nothing to report.

(d) Consider any matters referred from the Priest Directors Council There was nothing to report.

(e) Consider any other business There was no other business.

6 Priest Director : Future Pilgrimages and Festivals.

(a) Father Philip Corbett is to write an article on Fatima to encourage more priests, religious and laity to come on EFFA pilgrimages to Fatima.

(b) Regarding the future of the AGM (part 1 and part 2) and the Annual Festivals to be considered by the Priest Directors Council.

(c) Thanks were expressed to Mr Michael Johnson for his continuing work in setting up our new web site (www. effa.org.uk). Our old web site has now been discontinued.

Father Gray thanked Father Andrew Stevens and the people of S. Nicholas for their warm and generous hospitality and, without waiting for an answer, suggested that we might return next year!

Father Andrew Stevens together with Bishop Jonathan Baker thanked Father Gray for all his hard and diligent work on behalf of EFFA. This was echoed by all present.

7 Closure of AGM (part ii) 2013 The meeting closed at 3pm for Procession of Our Lady, Rosary and Benediction.

Father John Cornish



Our Lady Undoer of Knots

To show us the mission granted to the Virgin Mary by Her Son, an artist Johann Melchior Georg Schmittner painted Mary Undoer of Knots with great grace. Since 1700, his painting has been venerated in the Church of St. Peter in Perlack, Augsburg, Germany. It was originally inspired by a meditation of Saint Irenaeus (Bishop of Lyon and martyred in 202) based on the parallel made by Saint Paul between Adam and Christ. Saint Irenaeus, in turn, made a comparison between Eve and Mary, saying: "Eve, by her disobedience, tied the knot of disgrace for the human race; whereas Mary, by her obedience, undid it".

But what are these knots?

There are the problems and struggles we face for which we do not see any solution ... knots of discord in your family, lack of understanding between parents and children, disrespect, violence, the knots of deep hurts between husband and wife, the absence of peace and joy at home. There are also the knots of anguish and despair of separated couples, the dissolution of the family, the knots of a drug addict son or daughter, sick or separated from home or God, knots of alcoholism, the practice of abortion, depression, unemployment, fear, solitude... Ah, the knots of our life! How they suffocate the soul, beat us down and betray the heart's joy and separate us from God.

Day after day, more and more Christians kneel to pray to Her as soon as they meet the Mother of the Fair Love. Many families have become reconciled! Many diseases have been healed! Many spouses have returned to the Church! Many jobs have been given! Many conversions have taken place! Many Catholics have been on their knees praying and giving thanks for graces received from our sweet Mother. For that reason, Mary Who undoes the knots, Who was chosen by God to crush the evil with Her feet, comes to us to reveal Herself. She comes to provide jobs, good health, to reconcile families, because She wants to undo the knots of our sins which dominate our lives, so that – as sons of the King – we can receive the promises reserved for us from eternity. She comes with promises of victory, peace, blessings and reconciliation.

Then, free from our knots – filled with happiness, we can be a testimony of the Divine Power in this world, like pieces of God's heart or small bottles of perfume exhaling mercy and love to our neighbour. Like ambassadors of Jesus Christ and the Virgin of the fair love, we can rescue those who cry without any consolation, those who are lonely, tied with knots, who have no God, no Father nor Mother.

Mother of the Rising Sun, Immaculate, our Advocate, Helper in moments of affliction, Mother of God and made by Him our Mother, this is how Mary, Undoer of Knots is presented. Above all, She comes as the Queen of Mercy, the one who knows all about us, who has compassion for us and hurries to rescue us, praying for each one of us to Her beloved Jesus.



Prayer to Mary, Undoer of Knots

Virgin Mary, Mother of fair love, Mother who never refuses to come to the aid of a child in need, Mother whose hands never cease to serve your beloved children because they are moved by the divine love and immense mercy that exists in your heart, cast your compassionate eyes upon me and see the snarl of knots that exist in my life.

You know very well how desperate I am, my pain, and how I am bound by these knots.

Mary, Mother to whom God entrusted the undoing of the knots in the lives of his children, I entrust into your hands the ribbon of my life.

No one, not even the Evil One himself, can take it away from your precious care. In your hands there is no knot that cannot be undone.

Powerful Mother, by your grace and intercessory power with Your Son and My Liberator, Jesus, take into your hands today this knot.

[Mention your request here]

I beg you to undo it for the glory of God, once for all. You are my hope.

O my Lady, you are the only consolation God gives me, the fortification of my feeble strength, the enrichment of my destitution, and, with Christ, the freedom from my chains.

Hear my plea.

Keep me, guide me, protect me, O safe refuge!

Mary, Undoer of Knots, pray for me.



CHRISTMAS SOLDIER

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS
HE LIVED ALL ALONE,
IN A ONE BEDROOM HOUSE,
MADE OF PLASTER AND STONE.

I HAD COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY,
WITH PRESENTS TO GIVE,
AND TO SEE JUST WHO,
IN THIS HOME, DID LIVE.

I LOOKED ALL ABOUT,
A STRANGE SIGHT I DID SEE,
NO TINSEL, NO PRESENTS,
NOT EVEN A TREE.

NO STOCKING BY MANTLE,
JUST BOOTS FILLED WITH SAND,
ON THE WALL HUNG PICTURES,
OF FAR DISTANT LANDS.

WITH MEDALS AND BADGES,
AWARDS OF ALL KINDS,
A SOBER THOUGHT,
CAME THROUGH MY MIND.

FOR THIS HOUSE WAS DIFFERENT,
IT WAS DARK AND DREARY,
I FOUND THE HOME OF A SOLDIER,
ONCE I COULD SEE CLEARLY.

THE SOLDIER LAY SLEEPING,
SILENT, ALONE,
CURLLED UP ON THE FLOOR,
IN THIS ONE BEDROOM HOME.

THE FACE WAS SO GENTLE,
THE ROOM IN DISORDER,
NOT HOW I PICTURED,
A TRUE SOLDIER.

WAS THIS THE HERO,
OF WHOM I'D JUST READ?
CURLLED UP ON A PONCHO,
THE FLOOR FOR A BED?

I REALISED THE FAMILIES,
THAT I SAW THIS NIGHT,
OWED THEIR LIVES TO THESE SOLDIERS,
WHO WERE WILLING TO FIGHT.

SOON ROUND THE WORLD,
THE CHILDREN WOULD PLAY,
AND GROWN UPS WOULD CELEBRATE,
A BRIGHT CHRISTMAS DAY.

THEY ALL ENJOYED FREEDOM,
EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR,
BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIERS,
LIKE THE ONE LYING HERE.

I COULDN'T HELP WONDER,
HOW MANY LAY ALONE,
ON A COLD CHRISTMAS EVE,
IN A LAND FAR FROM HOME.

THE VERY THOUGHT BROUGHT,
A TEAR TO MY EYE,
I DROPPED TO MY KNEES,
AND STARTED TO CRY.

THE SOLDIER AWAKENED,
AND I HEARD A ROUGH VOICE,
"SANTA DON'T CRY,
THIS LIFE IS MY CHOICE;

I FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,
I DON'T ASK FOR MORE,
MY LIFE IS MY GOD,
MY COUNTRY, MY CORPS.."

THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER,
AND DRIFTED TO SLEEP,
I COULDN'T CONTROL IT,
CONTINUED TO WEEP.

I KEPT WATCH FOR HOURS,
SO SILENT AND STILL,
AND WE BOTH SHIVERED,
FROM THE COLD NIGHT'S CHILL.

I DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE,
ON THAT COLD, DARK, NIGHT,
THIS GUARDIAN OF HONOUR,
SO WILLING TO FIGHT.

THEN THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER,
WITH A VOICE SOFT AND PURE,
WHISPERED, "CARRY ON SANTA,
IT'S CHRISTMAS DAY, ALL IS SECURE."

ONE LOOK AT MY WATCH,
AND I KNEW HE WAS RIGHT.
"MERRY CHRISTMAS MY FRIEND,
AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT."

*This poem was written by a Peacekeeping soldier
stationed overseas.*

CHRISTMAS 2013

Christmas comes to people in every circumstance of life - - at work - at home - away from home - - in the midst of family celebrations - in isolation - to people who are alone - and to people who are lonely - - it comes to people in hospital - in prison - in refugee camps - - .

Many people find Christmas in the romance and glitter - - a time of fun and delight in family rituals.

Many find Christmas in the frenzied burst of shopping for food and gifts - others endure it all in loneliness and despair.

In Bethlehem, over 2000 years ago, things were much the same. The town was full of people in every condition and circumstance - some were reveling in the prime of life - - others were suffering.

Unlike today, as the people of Bethlehem live in trapped prison like conditions - virtually no one was anticipating the great event that was to happen on that first Christmas night - - that unprepared for - - and unannounced event - - -except that by the choir of angels.

In a stable on the outskirts of the town - - Jesus was born. Our Saviour became one with the human race. Not even with the great Old Testament

leaders had God intervened in earthly affairs in such a personal and direct way.

Taking on our human form in all its weaknesses - the Son of God came amongst us to die for the sins of the world. He came amongst us for all people - - whatever their condition. For those who felt that God was distant and aloof - He came to heal their sense of alienation.

For those who craved for food to satisfy divine hunger - He came as the true Bread of the Eucharist. For all the wounded - the sick - for those addicted to sin - He came to forgive and to heal. To those snared by cynicism or unbelief - He came to bring faith.

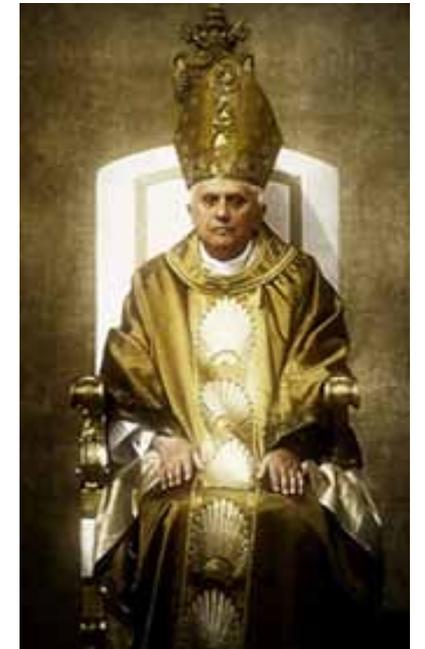
To Christians everywhere - Jesus will always be "Emmanuel" - "God with us" Jesus has brought hope to a despairing world by enabling us to know God the Father in a personal and intimate way.

Throughout the wonderful season of Christmas let us each resolve to set aside some time from our pursuits to ponder the evidence of God's great love for all his people.

To all those who see no meaning in their suffering - - to all those who face an uncertain and seemingly hopeless future - - let us share that blessed news that in Jesus - - -

in this Child of Bethlehem who became the Christ of the Cross of suffering, pain and death, "this Emmanuel" - -this God who came into our midst to share every fibre of our life and being, is God - - God who is with us - God who is with them - - and they - like us are never without him.

You and I must ensure that Jesus Christ and His teaching and His life style is proclaimed and witnessed to for He alone is necessary if there is to be peace on earth. May the feast of Christmas bring us the certainty that He is always with us and may we and the whole of mankind have a blessed, peaceful and happy Christmas.



**THREE POPES WHO HAVE LOVED OUR
LADY PAUL VI, JOHN PAUL II,
BENEDICT XVI**

By Antonio Gaspari

The pontificates of Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, and the Church's study of Mary during the Second Vatican Council, have brought about a renewed and reinvigorated Mariology in our times, says the president of the Marianum Pontifical Theological Faculty.

Father Salvatore Perrella addressed the 23rd International Marian Mariological Congress, presenting the personal contribution that the Bishops of Rome have made to the deepening of the Marian doctrine of Vatican II, promulgated particularly in Chapter 8 of the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium. According to Father Perrella, "The Council chose Mary as collaborator, Mother to the messianic work of the Son and her subordinate but effective salvific function" because "Mary's living of the faith is singular and intimately related to the uniqueness of the mystery of Christ, she has a particular form of being in Christ, because of this Mary is Mother of the Church."

The Council wished to stress that Mary is never an alternative to Christ; that devotion to Mary is integrated in the vision of faith that means recognising the singularity of her role and of her way of being with Jesus Christ.

Counting the Marian documents, interventions, and messages published by

the Pontiffs there is considerable growth. There were 25 written by 56 by Leo XIII, 37 by Pius X, 30 by Benedict XV, 309 by Pius XI, 470 by Pius XII, 501 by John XXIII, 315 by Paul VI, and 1,600 by John Paul II.

In the course of the closing address of Vatican II in 1964, Paul VI said "It is the first time that a Council presents such a vast synthesis of Catholic doctrine on the place that Mary Most Holy occupies in the mystery of Christ and of the Church. Knowledge of true Catholic doctrine on Mary, will always constitute a key for the exact understanding of the mystery of Christ and of the Church".

In the Apostolic Exhortation Signum magnum, Paul VI said that piety towards Mary is, for the Church, "an indisputable and unbreakable duty to the Mother of the Son of God. It is an altogether singular devotion, required and founded on her theological prerogatives, attested by biblical texts, by the holy Fathers and by Lumen Gentium by which the Virgin is honoured with special devotion, especially liturgical". In regard to Blessed Pope John Paul II, Father Perrella said he was the doctor Marianus of our time because "in his intense and notable teaching the Virgin was one of the most recurring and loved topics."

The then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, today Pope Benedict XVI, stressed that "in the Mother of the Redeemer and in Mariology itself all the topics of the faith are found."

In conclusion it is said that the years of the pontificates of Paul VI, of John Paul II and now of Benedict XVI, and, in a particular way, in guiding the doctrine of chapter 8 of Lumen Gentium, the Church with her teaching and theology have "re-motivated and renewed Mariology in a convincing way." "Chapter 8 of Lumen Gentium has integrated Mary of Nazareth in the mystery of the Trinitarian God of Christ beginning with the Word of faith taking into due account the living Tradition of the Church, being careful to propose a doctrine that does not make dissension grow but inspires consensus and fraternal dialogue, in charity and truth, between the Church, Churches and the Christian confessions." Mary has been present since the beginning of Christianity because of her person and her role and significance for the faith and for the life of faith, she has "become an indelible part of Christianity. May the Virgin Mary influence culture, modifying, purifying and enriching it.



**A day when two great places
of Christian worship meet**

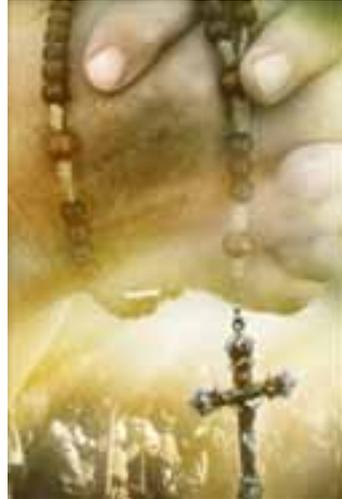
Saturday 22nd February 2014

THE PROGRAMME

- 10.50 am The image of Our Lady of Walsingham will arrive at the West Door of the CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, GUILDFORD
- SUNG EUCHARIST
Celebrant and Preacher:
Bishop Lindsay Urwin OGS
Administrator of the Shrine
- LUNCH Pilgrims may wish to bring a picnic lunch. The Cathedral Refectory will be open for hot lunches and snacks.
- 4.05 pm SPRINKLING with water from the Well at Walsingham and HEALING MINISTRIES
- 7.30 pm BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

ALL ARE WELCOME!

God Says to Pray the Rosary
Pray the Rosary, says God,
And do not worry if fools tell you that
It is an old-fashioned devotion, bound to be abandoned.
This prayer, believe me,
Is a ray of light from the Gospel.
Nothing will ever change this prayer.
What delights me in the Rosary, says God.
“Is how simple and humble it is,
Just as my Son was, as my Mother was”.
Pray the Rosary and you will find at your side
The whole company of the Gospel gathered:
The poor widow who never went to school,
The repentant publican who forgot his catechism,
The frightened adulteress whom people wanted to stone,
All the crippled saved by their faith,
And the dear old shepherds,
such as those of Bethlehem,
Who found my Son and his Mother...
Pray the Rosary, says God,
“Your prayer must roll, roll,
and keep rolling,
Like the beads of the Rosary
between your fingers
Then, when it is my will, I assure you,
You will receive plentiful nourishment,
Which will strengthen your heart
and cheer your soul”.



Charles Péguy



WHO ARE THE ECUMENICAL FRIENDS OF FÁTIMA?

The Ecumenical Friends of Fátima Association was inaugurated and consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima on Tuesday, 15th May 2001 by the Right Reverend Edwin Barnes, Bishop of Richborough and first Episcopal President of The Association, in the presence of His Excellency Serafim de Sousa Ferreira e Silva, Bishop of Leiria-Fátima.

The Ecumenical Friends of Fátima Association

- * promotes the worship of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through encouraging devotion to the Most Holy Virgin especially under her title of Our Lady of Fátima.

- * works for the re-union of all Christians under the patronage of Mary, Mother of the Church.

- * organises pilgrimages to the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima in Portugal.

- * supports local festivals in dioceses and parishes in honour of Our Lady of Fátima.

- * encourages personal prayer amongst its members to Our Lady of Fátima, the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

BELONGING TO EFFA

Membership is open to all those who accept the traditional catholic understanding of the three-fold ministry and the seven sacraments.

Members form a Living Rosary. At present there are 97 members.

EFFA AND THE VIDA E PAZ COMMUNITY

The Comunidade Vida e Paz (the Community of Life and Peace) runs a centre just outside Fátima for the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

From its outset, the founding members of EFFA did not want it just to be a pious club but wanted a serious social and practical commitment as well. This was discussed with Bishop Seraphim, and he suggested we could support this charity which is one of his own favourite charities in Fátima. After an exploratory visit, the members on pilgrimage that year (2002) were really impressed by the work that was being done by the Community, and decided to adopt it as the practical expression of EFFA's apostolate.

Each year we make a practical contribution to the life of the community, and support it with our prayers. So far donations have totalled just under £8,000. Sometimes this has been spent simply to help with the day-to-day running costs of the community, sometimes it has gone towards special projects.

In 2004 our gift went towards the Community's Apartment of Reinsertion, (a Half-Way House) in the city of Leiria (about 25 kms from Fatima). It gives them the opportunity to experience "real life" once again, but having the Centre totally supportive in the background.

In 2007 the Community applied our donation towards a new sculpture - a massive figure of Our Lady which stands on the porch of the chapel and dominates the main piazza and entrance to the Centre. In 2008, the money contributed to re-paving the garden area in front of the chapel. This year's contribution will be put towards updating their computer system.

Every pilgrimage enjoys the privilege of saying mass in the Centre's chapel, which lies at the heart of the community. The Centre is concerned with the body, soul and spirit of its residents. At the entrance to the Chapel there is large ceramic roundel which highlights the three aspects of the community's life: "compassion", "adoration" and "evangelisation".

- * Compassion is seen within the community as people are weaned off drug dependency.

- * Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is becoming a real part of the day to day life in the community chapel.

- * Evangelism takes the form of teaching the faith, simply because that is part of that wholeness of life meant for everyone.

In such a spirit of prayer with and for each other lies our strength and the depth of our commitment to the call of Our Lady to make sacrifices for the sake of others.

It is in this spirit that the Ecumenical Friends of Fátima Association is both-honoured and humbled to be able

support the work of the Comunidade Vida e Paz at Fátima.
Further information from
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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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To the greater glory of God an association of laity, deacons, priests, bishops and religious was inaugurated and consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima on Tuesday, 15th May 2001.

The aim of the Association is to promote the worship of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through encouraging devotion to the Most Holy Virgin especially under her title of Our Lady of Fatima and to work for the re-union of all Christians under the patronage of Mary, mother of the Church.

Members keep a rule of life which includes the daily recitation of at least one decade of the Rosary and the regular use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Priest members of the Association should, wherever possible, offer Mass for the Association on or about the 13th of the month.

By prayer and its best endeavours the Association supports the cause for the canonisation of the Seers of Fatima.



In response to Our Lady of Fatima's call for sacrifices to be made for the sake of others and after consultation with the then Bishop of Leiria-Fatima it was agreed to support prayerfully and financially the Vida e Paz community in Fatima in their work of rehabilitating those caught up in drug abuse.

Annual English Festival in 2014 will take place at
The Parish Church of S. Nicholas, Plumstead.
Further details and date to folow.
Parish priest Fr Andrew Stevens 020 8854 0461



**THE PRIEST DIRECTOR AND THE COUNCIL OF THE ECUMENICAL FRIENDS
WISHES ALL MEMBERS THE CONTINUED PEACE AND BLESSING OF THE
BIRTH OF THE CHRIST CHILD**