

www.ffa.org.uk

the Ecumenical Friends
da Associação Ecuménica

Newsletter No. 23



of Fatima Association
Amigos de Fátima

May 2013



The 13th May EFFA Pilgrimage 2013

**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:

How many angels can dance on the head of a pin? has been used many times as a dismissal of medieval angelology in particular, and of scholasticism in general.

The saying serves as a metaphor for wasting time debating topics of no practical value, or questions whose answers hold no intellectual consequence. That certain renowned medieval scholars considered similar questions is clear. Saint Thomas Aquinas, discusses this as far back as 1270, and there is a 17th-century reference in William Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants, where he accuses unnamed scholastics of debating "Whether a Million of Angels may not fit upon a needle's point?" The early modern version in English (usually a needle, rather than a pin) dates back at least to a tract The Reasons of the Christian Religion, by a Richard Baxter In 1667.

But, what's all this (nonsense) about?

Well putting aside the question "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" a more practical question is:

**"How many "T Shirts"
can fit into an A4 padded envelope?"**

Yes, this is a serious question addressed to all members of EFFA because it has come to our attention that the Vida e Paz Community which we support financially every year, is in need of "T Shirts" for the residents of the community.

"T Shirts" of any colour - and design - of a "L" size would be gratefully received. And so dare we ask our members (and anyone else who would like to support this appeal) to be an angel (so to speak) and scour the charity shops in your area, the local Pound Shops and supermarkets for "L" T Shirts to put into an A4 padded envelope and then send them for the 70 men resident direct to

**Vida e Paz Community
Centro de Fatima
Moimento
2495 Fatima
Portugal**

As you will see on our Living Rosary Rota on the 12th and 13th of each month we pray for the Director, and the staff and residents present and past.

Can we link our prayer with the mystery's of the Rosary - the Scourging and the Agony - to give this practical support for what we know to be a worthy cause.

**"How many "T Shirts"
can fit into an A4 padded envelope?"**

**The Ecumenical Friends of Fatima
Association (effa)**

Minutes of Part One of the 13th Annual General Meeting held in the Sao Paulo Chapel on Wednesday 15th May 2013.

The Annual General Meeting (Part One) of the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association was held on Wednesday the 15th May, 2013 in the Sao Paulo Seminary.

1. There were apologies from Father Alan and Rosina Cochrane, Father Paul Andrew, Father John Pitchford, Mrs Brenda Williamson, Father Timothy Bugby and the Venerable Bernard Holdridge. 15 members of the Association were present and 9 observers.

2 The minutes of the previous AGM (part 1 and part 2 as published in the Newsletters 21 and 22) were approved and received.

3 There were no matters arising.

4 Elections The following we re-elected

(1) President he Right Reverend the Bishop of Fulham, Bishop Jonathan Baker was re-elected nem com

(2) Priest Director The Bishop of Richborough, the Right Reverend Norman Banks took the chair for this election and Father C. Malcolm Gray was re-elected nem com.

(3) Vice Presidents His Excellency Antonio Augusto dos Santos Marto, Bishop of Leiria and Fatima

His Excellency Serafim de Sousa Ferreira e Silver Apostolic Administrator (formally Bishop of Leiria and Fatima)

The Reverend Father Carlos Cabecinhas Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima Father Francis Yowowski. of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception at the S. Paulo Marianos were re-elected nem com

Father Jovanete Vieira also of the of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception at the S. Paulo Marianos was invited to be a Vice-president (Constitution number 8) was pleased to accept the invitation and the meeting welcomed him nem con.

**Part Two of the AGM
will be held at S. Nicholas Plumstead
on Saturday 28th September 2013
commencing with Mass at 12 noon.**

The Pilgrimage in 2014 will from Thursday 8th till Thursday 15th May.

Booking forms will be available in the early Autumn of this year

*Father John Cornish
Minute Secretary*



OUR LADY OF FATIMA PILGRIMAGE MAY 2013 BISHOP NORMAN WRITES:

My first encounter with devotion to Our Lady of Fatima happened late one night on the Holy Mile in Walsingham. I was driving along, deep in my own thoughts when out the darkness appeared several young women each carrying a large, and obviously heavy image of Our Lady of Fatima. Well, it was Walsingham, Assumptiontide and the Travellers had decided that year to honour Our Lady's Feast in larger numbers than usual, so anything was possible! I remember asking myself why they had chosen an image from Fatima above all other image of Our Lady to carry through the lanes of Walsingham from the Shrine to their campsite. It took a dozen years or so for me to find the answer, as I responded to an invitation from the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association to join them on their pilgrimage to Portugal's National Shrine.

That first morning in Fatima brought me no nearer to an answer. Having visited several Marian Shrines over the years, there seemed nothing particularly inspiring about this modern town, nor the shrine itself. A fairly ordinary basilica at one end of the large square and a modern church at the other. While at the side, rather tucked away, the small chapel - the Capelinha - which was built by the local folk on the site of the apparitions.

And at rosary that first evening, as the crowd began to gather, I wondered why I needed to be in Fatima where the pattern was little different to what I was used to in Walsingham except for a much larger number of people sharing in the devotion. I have to admit it took a couple of days, with perhaps a little bit of resistance on my behalf, before I began to understand.

To understand that Fatima makes no effort to explain or justify itself. It simply is! Three children had an encounter with Our Lady They received a message which to the best of their ability they shared with others, and the place of their encounter has become holy ground. Everything else is incidental. So the new church is functional, more concerned with seating nine thousand people than being an architectural marvel and the piazza remains vast and stark since it is simply there to accommodate up to half a million pilgrims. It is the message which matters. Daily conversion, prayer and a collective responsibility for all people both the departed as well as the living.

And so as the week unfolded, with a daily Mass and evening Rosary, and as the crowds began to gather for the annual celebration of the first apparition on 13 May, I spent the free time available to read the story of Fatima in Lucia's own words. The story of three little shepherds, of Jacinta, Francesco and Lucia, of their simple faith and courage, of their struggle to be believed, and of their faithfulness.

Francesco was only five years old when Our Lady appeared. His cousin Lucia remembered even then how he would sing and play his flute as he perched on a rock while watching the sheep.

His favourite song began,

I love God in heaven, I love him too on earth. I love the flowers of the fields I love the sheep on the mountains. I am a poor shepherd boy, I always pray to Mary; in the midst of my flock I am like the sun at noon. Together with my lambs I learn to skip and jump; I am the joy of the serra, and the lily of the vale.

Thousands, upon thousands of people, both from Portugal and from across the world recognizing their need for daily conversion and offering prayer for others, gathering in Fatima for the commemoration and this year I was privileged to be one of them. And of course once the square was full, once the solemn liturgy began, once the image began to process through the crowds, it all made sense.

The words of T S Eliot kept coming back to me over and over again:
*'You are not here to verify, Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity
Or carry report. You are here to kneel
Where prayer has been valid'
And where prayer remains valid ...
And prayer is more than an order of words, the conscious occupation
Of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying. And what the dead had no speech for, when living, They can tell you, being dead: the communication
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living. Here (is) the intersection of the timeless moment...'*

I will return to Fatima. If for no other reason than that it is there and that I recognise I need it.

To keep me humble in my faith. To challenge me in my life. And to strengthen me in the knowing that I am part of a praying community both now and after my death. Our Lady Mary entrusted her message to three little shepherds in a remote village in rural Portugal. It is in that choosing as much as the message itself that we experience both challenge and comfort.

May Our Lady of Fatima pray for us and encourage us in our faith. Amen.



**PRIEST DIRECTOR'S REPORT (FOR AGM)
FATIMA MAY 2013**

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, the then President of the Argentine Bishops Conference told Bishop Gregory Venables the Anglican Bishop of Argentina, Primate of the Province of the Southern Cone, 'that the Anglican Church was important to Christian Unity - and that the Church needs us'. Whilst this was said in the context of a private conversation (but leaked and then published in *The Tablet* 23.3.2013) the Cardinal was saying quite honestly "we want you to be you" and "I (the Cardinal) personally appreciate Anglicans as you are. I see no need for you to stop being Anglicans". Bishop Venables has said that Cardinal Bergoglio would be an ecumenical and pastoral Pope as he had been during his ministry in Argentina.

The Anglican Church (properly called the "Anglican Communion") is a collection of world wide Churches of which the Church of England (the Mother Church - so to speak) is but one of many but not necessarily seen as a model to follow. Indeed the secularisation not just of our country but the Church as well must be of great concern to other Churches of our Communion.

The book "We don't do God" by George Carey (a former Archbishop of Canterbury) and his son Andrew (a freelance journalist) makes for sleepless nights as the Church faces secularisation, legal structures that militate against us and religious illiteracy. It informs us just how much we have to fight for the faith of our Church within our so called democracy.

Recently I received a publication called "Centro" which promotes Christian Unity in a divided world containing news from the Anglican Centre in Rome. Its front

page, under the heading "Chief among you, servants of the servants of God" speaks of Pope Francis under the heading of "Serving with love" and of Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury under the heading "Heeding the call of Jesus" appears elsewhere in this our 23rd issue of the Newsletter of the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association (EFFA).

The Anglican Roman Catholic Committee (formally the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) has recently met at Canterbury Cathedral in a context of prayer and worship. The members set in train a programme of work for the next five years. Evangelisation in the context of an increasingly secular society was the key theme. How our two churches can bear joint witness in the area of public affairs (on issues such as the common good as well as other social and ethical questions) will also form part of the agenda.

In addition, English ARC will seek to inform members of both churches about ecumenical progress already made over the last fifty years, emphasising what our churches have in common, and to encourage spiritual ecumenism, which involves joint prayer and worship (liturgies of the word).

It will also engage with the developing work of the third Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). English ARC will report to the joint meetings of English Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, which happen every two years. At the end of its five-year programme, it will produce a report for our churches on the work it has undertaken.

English ARC, comprises ten Roman Catholic and ten Anglican members, with the General Secretary of Churches Together in England as an observer. It is chaired by the Archbishop of Birmingham, the Most Revd Bernard Longley, and the Bishop of Truro, the Rt Revd Tim Thornton.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham has said, 'I look forward to working with the members of English ARC to find new paths towards the unity for which Our Lord prayed.'

The Anglican Bishop of Truro said 'I am excited by the commitment of English ARC's new members and the prospect of a programme of work which will make a difference to our churches and their common witness both nationally and at the local level'.

There is a children's hymn which comes to my mind . . .

"Jesus bids us shine" It goes like this .

**Jesus bids us shine, With a pure, clear light,
Like a little candle, Burning in the night.
In this world is darkness, So let us shine--
You in your small corner, And I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine, First of all for Him;
Well He sees and knows it, If our light grows dim;
He looks down from heaven, To see us shine--
You in your small corner, And I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine, Then, for all around
Many kinds of darkness In this world are found -
Sin, and want, and sorrow; So we must shine,
You in your small corner, And I in mine.**

Yes, words of a by gone age yet the words 'darkness, sin and want and sorrow' sum up our society and remind us of our call to be lights in our world today. Pope Francis speaks of 'serving with love' and Archbishop Justin speaks of 'heeding the call of Jesus' highlighting the need for us all to be true lights of Christ in our world, in our

world today. Pope Francis speaks of 'serving with love' and Archbishop Justin speaks of 'heeding the call of Jesus' highlighting the need for us all to be true lights of Christ in our world, in our neighbourhood, in our homes and in our Church communities.

ARCIC and its successor ARC strive to find ways for our churches to be united in the historic faith of the Church so fulfilling the prayer of Jesus that we might all be one as he and the Father are one.

As members of the 'Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association' (EFFA) we have a commitment to pray and meditate on the mysteries of Christ's life, death and resurrection. We have a commitment to pray for each other and our friends in Fatima and for the many known and unknown who need our prayers today.

We also have a commitment to support our brethren at the Vida e Paz community seeking to be restored to wholeness of life as they cease to depend on drugs and enjoy restoration to wholeness of life.

In our love for Fatima and its message and the joy of being present at the worship offered daily in this place, we need to remember to make that message of Fatima known at home - where we live, work and have our leisure and encourage others to join with us on pilgrimage.

Next year, our 2014 pilgrimage will be from Thursday 8th to Thursday 15th May and will be led by Bishop Jonathan Baker, Bishop of Fulham and President of our Association.

Three years on (2017) will be the great celebrations of the Centenary of the Apparitions. In the space of 100 years the

Cove da Iria has been transformed from a place for grazing sheep into a great place of pilgrimage of global proportions which Pope John Paul II called “the altar of the world”. We as Anglicans, yes, in ‘our small corner’ are privileged to have a place in all this, and for which we are truly thankful.

On the 90th anniversary of the Apparitions, the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association produced the booklet *Children of the Dancing Sun - yesterday - today - forever* which described “our” genealogy - how we came into being as an Association and why. As we look forward to the 100th anniversary of the Apparitions we need to consider how we can mark this occasions from ‘our small corner’. The centenary is not so far away and so we must give some thought to what we will do. Meanwhile we need to begin taking bookings for the pilgrimage of May 2017 so that we can have a share in what will be an occasion of a life time.

Bishop Norman Banks, the Bishop of Richborough, was a new and welcome pilgrim with us and we are truly grateful for his presence with us and for his for his very helpful and instructive homilies at Mass each day.

A very encouraging meeting took place on Saturday 11th May with Bishop Norman, myself and Bishop Antonio (Bishop of Leiria and Fatima) and Father Carlos, Rector of the Shrine (Father Stevens was midway across the Atlantic!). During our meeting Bishop Antonio felt Our Lady may be calling for some Anglican/Catholic joint preparation for the forthcoming centenary in 2017 and that we must give some thought as to how this might be brought about.

Once again EFFA was welcomed by the shrine as ‘ecumenical visitors’ and Bishop Norman and our priests were given seats in the sanctuary in the midst of 37 bishops and 290 priests. We looked over a congregation of some some 300,000 people. It was a great privilege and joy to be present this year on the historical occasion of the Consecration of the Papal ministry of Pope Francis to Our Lady of Fatima. The words of consecration (in Portuguese!!) and other related information appear elsewhere in this newsletter (in English!!).

Finally, I would remind you that each one of us must take back to England the message of Fatima - live it - pray the rosary - and encourage others to come to this “altar of the world” as Pope John Paul II named it and have constantly in our minds and our prayers the prayer of Jesus - John 17.v. 21

“Father, may they all be one just as you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

and say to others, as I do,

**“If you haven’t been to Fatima
(for the 13th) you have never lived!!”**

Father C. Malcolm Gray.
Flat 7 Dulverton Hall
Esplanade Scarborough
North Yorkshire YO11 2AR

e mail address frmng.upnorth@btinternet.com

01723 340 107 (in house line) and / or
01723 351 432 (bt line)
mobile 07721 664 178



MASS CELEBRATED IN THE SAN PAULO



AND AT VIDA E PAZ



THE CLERGY IN THE CHAPEL OF THE VIDA E PAZ COMMUNITY



PRESENTATION OF THE EFFA OFFERING TO VIDA E PAZ

Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis



THE SEA, THE SEA..



THE BISHOP



ONE OF THOSE LADIES WHO SELL NUTS.

Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis

da Associação Ecuménica Amigos de Fátima

**“THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION TO OUR
LADY OF FATIMA OF THE MINISTRY OF
POPE FRANCIS”**

Fatima, May 13, 2013

Most Holy Virgin,

1. 1. We, the Bishops of Portugal and this multitude of pilgrims, are at Your feet in this Cova da Iria, on this 96th anniversary of Your first apparition to the Little Shepherds, in order to fulfil the desire of Pope Francis, clearly expressed, to consecrate to You, Virgin of Fatima, his Ministry of Bishop of Rome and Universal Pastor. Thus, we consecrate to You, Our Lady, You Who are the Mother of the Church, the Ministry of the new Pope; please fill his heart with the tenderness of God, which like no one else You Yourself experienced, so that he may embrace all men and women of our time with the love of Your Son Jesus Christ. Today's mankind needs to feel loved by God and by the Church. Only feeling loved she will overcome the temptation of violence, of materialism, of forgetting God, of losing the direction towards a new world, where love will reign. Please grant Pope Francis the gift of discernment in order to be able to identify the ways to renew the Church; give him courage to follow, without hesitation, the ways suggested by the Holy Spirit; support him during the difficult hours of suffering; help him overcome, in charity, the trials he'll encounter while renewing the Church. Please always be at his side, whispering to his ear those words well known to You: "I am the Handmaid of the Lord; be it done onto Me according to Thy Word!"

1. 2. The ways of renewing the Church lead us to the rediscovery of the timeliness of the Message You left with the Little Shepherds: the demand that we convert to God,

Who has been so much offended, because we have forgotten Him. Conversion is always a return to the Love of God. God forgives because He loves us. That is why His love is called mercy. The Church, protected by Your maternal solicitude and guided by this Pastor, ought to stand up evermore as a place of conversion and pardon, because in her the truth is always expressed in charity. You have pointed out prayer as the decisive way towards conversion. Please teach the Church, of which You are a member and the model, to be, more and more, a people praying in union with the Holy Father - the first of this people to pray - and also in union with the former Pope, His Holiness Benedict XVI, who chose the way of silent prayer, challenging the Church to embrace the ways of prayer.

1. 3. In Your Message to the Little Shepherds here at Cova da Iria, You highlighted the Ministry of the Pope, the "Bishop dressed in white". Three of the last Popes came as pilgrims to Your Shrine. Only You, Our Lady, in Your maternal love for the entire Church, can put into the heart of Pope Francis the desire to come to this Shrine as a pilgrim. This is not something one can ask for other reasons; only the silent complicity between You and him will make him feel attracted to this pilgrimage, being certain that he will be in the company of millions of believers willing to hear once again Your Message. Here, on this Altar of the world, he will be able to bless all mankind and make today's world feel that God loves all the men and women of our time, that the Church also loves them and that You, Mother of the Redeemer, lead them with tenderness through the ways of Salvation.

+ JOSÉ, Cardinal-Patriarch
President of the Bishops Conference
of Portugal

Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis

the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association

**ABOUT THE CONSECRATION OF FRANCIS'
PONTIFICATE TO OUR LADY OF FATIMA**

*Cardinal of Lisbon Asks Mary to Help Pope
in Renewing the Church*

Pope Francis' pontificate was consecrated Monday to the protection of the Virgin Mary, during a Mass held at the Shrine of Fatima. The Mass was celebrated at the shrine by the cardinal patriarch of Lisbon, José da Cruz Policarpo, together with 37 bishops and 290 priests, and attended by some 300,000 people. An international pilgrimage took place on Sunday, May 12 and Monday, May 13, on the occasion of the 96th anniversary of the first Marian apparition to the visionaries, the little shepherds Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco. At the end of the Mass, and after the consecration of the pontificate, the bishop of Leiria-Fatima, Antonio Marto, read a message that Pope Francis sent to bless the thousands of pilgrims crowded in the esplanade, reported the newspaper *Jornal de Noticias*.

"The Holy Father expressed his pleasure over the initiative and his profound gratitude for the realisation of his wish, in union of prayer with all the pilgrims of Fatima, to whom he grants his heartfelt Apostolic Blessing," said the cardinal. The message was sent by the Apostolic Nunciature in Portugal, to Cardinal Policarpo, indicated the Portuguese newspaper, adding that "the cardinal patriarch of Lisbon asked Our Lady of Fatima during the consecration of the pontificate, to help Francis renew the Catholic Church."

Close to 570,000 people went to the Fatima Shrine for the feast day celebrations - 300,000 on Sunday and 270,000 on Monday. Among the pilgrims attending the event, more than 37,000 walked from different points of the country. Over the two days, more than 26 tons of candles melted

in the candleholders of the shrine, reported Lusitania agency.

The Shrine's press office told that Archbishop Orani João Tempesta of Rio de Janeiro indicated that: "As we all know, the consecration carried out here in Cova da Iria is an act of extreme importance for the Holy Church. His Holiness Pope Francis asked the Lord Cardinal patriarch of Lisbon, José Policarpo, to consecrate to Our Lady of Fatima his pontificate, which began two months ago."

The archbishop added that the act reveals "the Pope's special affection for Fatima" and is of very great importance for those of us present "as we feel included in this consecration." We are happy and comforted, added the cardinal, by "the special attention and solicitude that the popes of the last 50 years have shown for this blessed land, becoming pilgrims to Cova da Iria to come here to ask Our Lady of the Rosary for protection for the Church and peace for the world."

"Now Pope Francis, in continuity with his predecessors, consecrates the Petrine ministry to the Lady of the Rosary of Fatima," concluded the cardinal. On Sunday night, during the candle procession, Archbishop Tempesta consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima the World Youth Day, which will be held in Rio de Janeiro from July 23-28, and he reiterated the invitation "to young people of all ages" to take part in the meeting in Brazil.

Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis



**MOST REV. ANTÓNIO MARTO
BISHOP OF LEIRIA-FATIMA**

The memorable date of the Centennial of the Apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima is fast approaching on the horizon of time. 2017 will, without a doubt, be a Jubilee Year, as required by the importance of the event. And a first question comes right away to our mind: what does it mean to celebrate the Centennial of the Apparitions?

One Hundred years later: memory and prophecy

Above all, it is a historical occasion in which we will express our praise and gratitude to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for this particular sign of benevolence from His love, through Mary, towards a humanity longing to get up from the abyss. In fact, in the words of John Paul II, from amongst the signs of the times in the XX century “Fatima stands out, helping us see the hand of God, provident guide and patient and compassionate Father of this XX century.

One hundred years represent already a long pilgrimage through time, which invites us to “recall”, as Moses used to urge his people to do: “Remember how for forty years the Lord, your God, has led all you’re journeying in the desert...”

So, you must realize that the Lord, your God, disciplines you even as a man disciplines his son” (Deut 8, 2.5). It is an invitation for the people of Israel to reread its past and discover in it God’s providence and the love with which the Lord led it through difficult ways.

These words are for us today: Remember the way the Lord made you travel throughout these one hundred years, how He was close to you through the message of the Lady from Heaven and Her maternal protection.

The celebration of the Centennial is not only a historical recollection. It is, above all, an occasion to be conscious that the appeal of Our Lady at Fatima didn’t echo in vain; that Her message continues to exercise a beneficial influence today, and will continue in the future, in the journey of the Church and in the history of mankind.

“He who thought that the prophetic mission of Fatima was finished would be mistaken. Here is alive that design of God questioning mankind since the beginning: «Where is your brother Abel? ... Your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the soil” (Gen 4, 9-10).

This whole variety of motivations shows that the commemoration of the Centennial of the Apparitions is not only a set of events and celebrations held in 2017. Like all great events, this one also requires a worthy preparation. It is for that purpose that we received a strong incentive from the words of Pope Benedict XVI during his homily in Fatima: “Another seven years and you will return here to celebrate the Centennial of the first visit of the Lady “from Heaven”, Who came as a Teacher Who leads the little seers to the intimate knowledge of the Trinitarian Love and to savour God Himself

as the most beautiful thing in the existence of man. (...) May the seven years separating us from the Centennial of the Apparitions hurry up the announced triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the greater glory of the Most Holy Trinity”.

SEVEN LIGHTS FOR OUR WAY

In these words of the Holy Father we find traced the horizon of time and even the perspective regarding the preparation the celebration of the Centennial. To that end, the Shrine has elaborated a program lasting seven years, inspired in the biblical symbolism of number seven.

In the Bible this number means totality and plenitude. In the context of the Centennial, it suggests to us that the program ought to embrace the totality of the message.

Besides that, it recalls to us, more concretely, a very meaningful icon of the Ancient Testament: the famous sacred candelabrum, with seven arms and seven lamps burning, placed in the “Holy of Holies” in the Temple of Jerusalem. According to some scholars, it symbolizes the burning bush in which the holiness and the voice of God manifested themselves to Moses, on Mount Horeb; according to others, it represents the seven days of creation and of history, having at the centre the Sabbath as the sign of the Covenant.

In any case, the candelabrum (menorah, in Hebrew) is the symbol of the presence of God, Light constantly illuminating His people, the way He illuminated it throughout the forty years through the desert. It becomes a permanent invitation to walk in God’s light, in the presence of God Who conducts history and protects His people,

and to live in hope, born of faith, which provides the energy needed to overcome all probations. It invites us also to burn before the “Holy of Holies” by means of constant prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

God’s light irradiates in order to keep burning in us the light of the heart and the light of the face. A heart full of light shines, above all, by the splendour of one’s look, capable of lighting the whole face. Having in mind the entire richness and beauty of the symbolism of the candelabrum, we can take it as an icon of the seven years of preparation for the Centennial of the Apparitions.

The meditation on the Message of Fatima illuminates several aspects of faith, several experiences of Christian living and several vicissitudes of history. Taking into account these aspects, a theological committee tried to articulate an itinerary around seven great themes, thus constructing a kind of spiritual candelabrum in order to help us illuminate the scenarios of the world and those of the human heart with the light of the Message.

The seven themes are seven lights for our spiritual way in order to advance with Mary and with the Little Shepherds towards the Beauty of God and the triumph of His merciful love that saves the world, symbolized in the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The first light of this spiritual candelabrum is the Beauty of the Face of God, of His Trinitarian Love, to which the Little Shepherds were introduced by the Angel and the hands of Our Lady, thus stirring up in them the enchantment, the taste and the joy of the presence of God, which were translated into adoration. “We were burning in that

light that is God and weren't consumed by it. How wonderful is God!!!"; "I like God so much!" – Francisco exclaimed. In the biblical symbolism of the candelabrum, the light of adoration feeds all the other lights. It is the central flame from which all the others get light.

The second light to light up is that of God the Saviour Who calls us to collaborate with the history of salvation and with the mystery of redemption of the world in Christ. This flame gets fed by means of our faith commitment, as Mary did. "Example and incentive are the Little Shepherds, who made of their lives an offering to God and a share with the others for the love of God" (Benedict XVI).

The third light is that in which we can contemplate the faithful God of the Promise and of Hope, Who throughout history comforts His people, giving it courage and confidence, as He did to Mary: "Be not afraid!" It is precisely of hope that the message Our Lady left us in Fatima is full of", inviting men to trust God. "Faith in God opens to man the horizon of a sure hope that doesn't disappoints us; points to a solid fundament on which to support, without fear, life itself; asks for abandonment, full of trust, in the hands of the Love who supports the world" (Benedict XVI).

Along this line of thought surges the fourth light which makes shine the compassionate God Who leans over the sufferings of mankind, the power of His mercy, greater than our own hearts and stronger than the power of sin and evil. "Mary, in appearing to the three Little Shepherds, opened, in the world, a privileged space for us to find the divine mercy that heals and saves" (Benedict XVI). She "helped the Little Shepherds to open their hearts to the universal-

ity of love" (Benedict XVI), to compassion and reparation, as forces of resistance to the banalization of evil and as collaboration in the renovation of the world.

The fifth light is the splendor of the holiness of God which irradiates towards us from the face of Christ and of which Mary is mirror and teacher. This holiness is offered to us as experience of communion with Christ, in solidarity with the members of the Body of Christ and in the Communion of Saints, which the Church is. It invites us to give "the high measure of holiness" to the Christian life, fed specially by prayer. "The Message of Fatima is not, substantially, a private devotion, but rather a fundamental response, that is, permanent conversion, penance, prayer and the three theological virtues: faith, hope and charity" (Benedict XVI).

The sixth light leads us to open up to God, plenitude of life, offered up, from now on, in Christ: "I came so that they may have life". This flame is fed, in a special way, by the celebration of the gifts and blessings granted to us by God, in true Christian joy, in the conscience of the eternal value of our lives and our walk through this Earth. "At Fatima, the Holy Virgin invites everyone to consider the Earth as the place of our pilgrimage towards the definitive homeland, Heaven" (Benedict XVI).

Finally, our spiritual candelabrum gets completed with the seventh light: a contemplative and inspiring look at the beauty of Her Who was chosen by the God of the Covenant to fulfill a unique mission in the history of salvation: to be the Mother of the Redeemer, the Ark of the New Covenant, the Mother of the Church. Mary lends us eyes and heart to contemplate the love of God and His mercy, as forces and divine

limits against the power of evil in the world. Thus happened at Fatima, when She presented Herself as Lady of the Rosary, as a Mother who, through Her Immaculate Heart, speaks heart to heart to Her children and brings to them a demanding but comforting message of peace and leaves them with a promise: "At the end, My Immaculate Heart shall triumph". Holy Father Benedict XVI says: "After all, the Lord is stronger than evil and Our Lady is, for us, the visible guarantee of the goodness of God, Who has always the last word in history".

I thank the members of the theological committee for the elaboration of this thematic itinerary (program) and conclude this introduction with the same wish of Benedict XVI in Fatima: "May the seven years separating us from the Centennial of the Apparitions hurry up the announced triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the greater glory of the Most Holy Trinity".



THE FIRST 3



STATIONS OF THE CROSS



AT THE RECINTO ALTAR



FATIMA



THE BASILICA CHURCH



THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS



THE HIGH CROSS

Father Gray reflects on:

MANCUNIA TRAVEL - THE END OF AN ERA!

At the inspiration of a Mr Gerry McDonald Mancunia Travel came into being and at some point the management/ownership was shared with a Miss Monica Byrne. It was Mancunia Travel that first brought me to Fatima in 1985 and it has done so every year since.

My first encounter with Gerry McDonald was when he was ‘our courier’ on a pilgrimage made to Malta in the summer of 1987. It rained most of that week and I have not been back since! Gerry took me out to lunch one day and explained that he was with us not just to be our courier but because he wanted to know what Anglicans did by way of worship on pilgrimage. He had a particular reason for wanting to know . . . he had three daughters who on their marriage would bring an end to the ‘McDonald’ line . . . but one daughter was engaged to a young man - an Anglican at an Anglican theological college who had the surname of McDonald - thereby which the family name would be continued - albeit it in Anglican form. And so Gerry wanted to see first hand how we behaved at the altar. He said he was not disappointed. Sadly he died on 10th July 1988.

Miss Monica Byrne remained at the helm and the friendship that began in 1985 continued till her retirement after which Mr Desmond Deignan took over the ownership/management of Mancunia Travel. Monica died 1st July 2012 and I have a very picturesque vision of her entry into the realms of heaven and her reunion with Gerry!

Monica (as she insisted I should call her)

did all in her power to encourage the ecumenical links we forged with Mancunia Travel. Monica was a powerful lady - formidable - but with a heart of gold. I remember the annual reunion in the autumn of 2000 when I (and Father Andrew Stevens) were told we would judge the fancy dress competition - and what fun that was! One lady appeared as the Vicar of Dibley - and Monica directed us not to include the lady in question in our decisions! Maureen Clarkson and Pauline Lloyd were the first two winners - we were allowed to choose our favourites!

Mancunia Travel over the years used a number of different hotels in Fatima but for whatever reason in 1994 the Sao Paulo Pension (ran by the Polish Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception) was chosen and has been used by us (EFFA) for the past 19 years. How the choice of the Sao Paulo was made we don’t know but I can only feel it was Divine Providence that took us there.

I don’t suppose many users of Mancunia Travel would know of Monica’s ecumenical links with us but we certainly value all she and Gerry in former days have done for us.

So, the end of an era, but hopefully in the new “Mancunia with Tangney Tours” we will find the same ecumenical warmth that we have enjoyed over the past 27 years. Desmond, on his 60th birthday will enter into the realms of retirement but will hold a “consultancy” capacity to ensure that the Mancunia Travel programme continues to run smoothly and that the Mancunia legacy is maintained. Based in Manchester Des with Mary Doyle, who has also been a tremendous help and support to us, will man the “Mancunia Desk”

da Associação Ecuménica Amigos de Fátima

in the office of the new Mancunia with Tangney Tours.

Pray for Monica and Gerry. The world of pilgrimage has benefitted greatly from their work and devotion and commitment to the well being of pilgrims and pray also for the well being of the new "Mancunia with Tangney Tours".

**THE BASILICA CHURCH THROUGH
AN ARCH.**



**THE SANDS AT NAZARE!
COME ON IN THE SEA IS**



Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis

the Ecumenical Friends of Fatima Association

CONTACT INFORMATION

THE PRIEST DIRECTOR

Fr C. Malcolm Gray SSC
priestdirector@effa.org.uk

EDITOR OF THE NEWSLETTER

Fr Andrew Stevens SSC
S. Nicholas Vicarage
64 Purrett Road
Plumstead
SE18 1JP
effaeditor@effa.org.uk
020 8854 0461

SECRETARY

Fr John Cornish

The Treasurer

Mrs Joan Hooton

treasurer@effa.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Mr Reg Martin

effamembership@effa.org.uk

CONSTITUTION SECRETARY

Fr John Cornish

constitution@effa.org.uk

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.

Regina Sacratissimi Rossarii Fatimea, Ora pro Nobis

Annual English Festival September 28th 2013

At S. Nicholas Plumstead SE18 1JH London
Solemn Concelebrated Pontifical Mass, with Homily,
12:00noon

Lunch 1:00pm
*(there will be a charge for lunch,
please email Fr Stevens
frandrew@dircon.co.uk
to reserve your place.)*

AGM 1:45pm

2:30 Rosary of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,
Procession of the Image of Our Lady of Fatima,
Solemn Pontifical Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.
Tea and depart.



**THE PRIEST DIRECTOR AND THE COUNCIL OF THE ECUMENICAL FRIENDS
WISHES ALL MEMBERS THE CONTINUED PEACE AND BLESSING OF THE
RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**