

# FATIMA FOR TODAY

## The Urgent Marian Message of Hope

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1. Church tradition describes Mary as the New Eve. While Eve fell and led her children into sin, Mary took on the mantle of “mother of all living” (Gn 3:20) and through her example and intercession leads her children into full union with God. (*Fatima for Today*, 2–4)

***Looking at the life of Mary in Scripture, what are some examples she gives us for living a Christian life? In what way has she assisted you, or someone you know, in growing closer to her Son?***

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2. When Our Lady came to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco, each of them interacted with her in distinct ways. Lucia enjoyed the most interaction with Our Lady, being able to not only see and hear her but also speak with her. Jacinta saw and heard Mary but did not speak with her, while Francisco neither heard nor spoke with her but only saw our Lady. Yet, all three were transformed and dedicated themselves to the mission entrusted to them by Our Lady. In a similar way, each of us experiences prayer differently. (*Fatima for Today*, 13)

***Is your prayer life more like Lucia’s, Jacinta’s, or Francisco’s? In what ways have you experienced transformation from your personal prayer, and how does this help you to implement God’s plan for your life?***

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3. In 1 Corinthians 1:27, St. Paul tells his readers, “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.” At Fatima, God entrusted his message to three young and simple children—a message he intended for the entire world. (*Fatima for Today*, 13–18)

***Why would God choose such seemingly “weak” messengers—children with no authority or standing—rather than intelligent, vigorous, eloquent men and women? What are some other examples in Church history of God choosing the “weak” to do his work or spread his message in the world?***

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4. Before the apparitions of Our Lady, an angel appeared to the children to prepare them. In the first apparition, he taught them the Pardon Prayer: “My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You! I ask pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You.” This prayer offers the “four fundamental actions we must do in order to have a relationship with God.” (*Fatima for Today*, 22–24)

***What are these four actions? What are some specific things that you can do to put them into practice?***

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5. During the July apparition, Our Lady taught the children to pray for the salvation of others. She also exhorted them to commit to this work: “Sacrifice yourselves for sinners, and say many times, especially whenever you make any sacrifice: 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.” (*Fatima for Today*, 56–58)

***Why is it important to sacrifice and pray for others, and why should we be concerned about the salvation of others? Are there family members or friends for whom you could sacrifice and pray?***

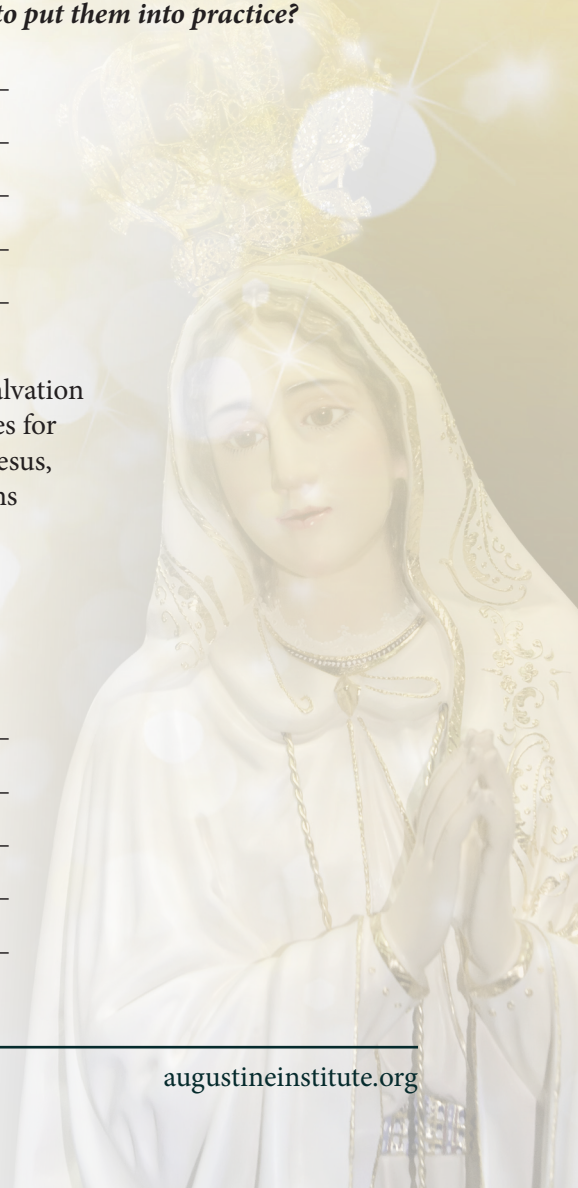
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6. During this same July apparition, the visionaries saw an angel with a flaming sword, threatening to set the whole world aflame, but the fire died down through the intervention of Mary. Our Lady's intervention is capable of preventing war and destruction. Throughout history, people have prayed the Rosary for the sake of this intervention, such as during the Battle of Lepanto and in Austria after World War II. (*Fatima for Today*, 78–80)

***What other stories have you heard about the miraculous help of the Rosary? How has the Rosary helped you or someone you know in times of trouble?***

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7. Pope St. John Paul II, a staunch advocate for the essential role of family in society, once said, “As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live.” During the October Apparition, the Holy Family appeared and gave a message to strengthen Christian family life. (*Fatima for Today*, 110–112)

***What forces are attacking the Christian family today? How can the Church and individuals further the importance of family life in society?***

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8. During the first apparition, Our Lady asked the children, “Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings he wills to send you?” In the following months and years, the children did indeed suffer. Their family, friends, and neighbors mocked, threatened, and even imprisoned them. Through it all, they remained steadfast and “bore these sufferings with supernatural grace.” (*Fatima for Today*, 44–45, 180–181, 186–187)

***Why does God allow—and even ask—his followers to endure suffering? Is there any purpose to suffering in our life?***

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9. Throughout her apparitions, Our Lady warned of the dangers of Communism and materialism and asked for a special consecration of Russia. Studies have shown that during the twentieth century, ninety-four million people died because of Communism. (*Fatima for Today*, 71–73, 194–195)

***Why has Communist ideology been so destructive? How have some of its doctrines affected modern thought?***

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