

The Angel of Peace 1916 : The first children's Holy Hour



The story of Fatima really begins in the spring of 1916 when the Angel of Peace appeared to three shepherd children near their home in the mountain village of Fatima in Portugal. Lucia (aged nine), cousin of Francisco (aged eight) and Jacinta (aged six) were tending their sheep when it began to rain so they ran to a nearby cave to shelter and to eat their lunch.

When the rain stopped and they came out to play a game, a strong wind shook the treetops. On looking up the children saw a brilliant light which then changed into the figure of a dazzling young man dressed in white. He said **"Do not be afraid! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me"**

On kneeling down the angel touched his forehead to the ground and he asked the children to repeat the following prayer three times:

"My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You! I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You."

The children were deeply moved by the apparition of the angel and his message. The presence of God had made itself felt so intensely that they did not even speak to each other about it for some time and then decided not to tell anyone about the extraordinary event. Afterwards they continued to repeat this action of prostration, touching their foreheads to the ground, while praying the "Pardon Prayer" which the angel had taught them.

The angel appeared again in the summer of 1916 while the children were playing and they were at once both enraptured and astonished. He said **"What are you doing? Pray! Pray much! The Hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs upon you. Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High"**. Lucia asked how to do this and the angel replied, **"Make of everything you can a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended and in supplication for the conversion of sinners. You will thus draw down peace upon your country. I am its Guardian Angel, the Angel of Portugal. Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering which the Lord will send you."**

One autumn day in 1916 when the children were on their knees praying, the Angel of Peace appeared before them for a third time. He held a golden chalice with the Eucharistic Host above it. Bright red drops of the precious Blood of Jesus fell from the Host into the chalice. Then, while the Host was suspended in midair, the angel bowed down pressing his forehead to the ground and asked the children to repeat the following prayer three times:

“O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore You profoundly and I offer You 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 with which He himself is offended. And through the infinite merits of His Most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of You the conversion of poor sinners.”

The angel then gave the Sacred Host to Lucia and the Precious Blood to Francisco and Jacinta and he said:

“Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men! Make reparation for their crimes and console your God!”

The angel bowed deeply, prayed the prayer to the Holy Trinity three times and he then disappeared. The children were in a state of holy bliss, sensing the presence of God so strongly and filling them with such happiness that they lost all sense of time and place. They had experienced the real presence of Christ in the form of bread and wine and they began to understand that God’s love often met with man’s ingratitude. In their childlike simplicity and sincerity they wanted to console the Heart of Jesus.

