

Fatima, the Consecration and the First Saturday Devotion

Christians have always honored the Blessed Virgin on Saturdays because of her constant faith in Jesus on that first Holy Saturday before the Resurrection.



Fatima (photo: Bernardo Ferreira / Pixabay/CC0)

John Preiss. May 13, 2021

The first mention of the consecration of Russia was part of the secret the Mother of Jesus revealed to the three shepherd children on July 13, 1917. At that time, she foretold terrible suffering for the whole world, including war, hunger, and persecution of the Church and the Holy Father. To prevent these punishments, Our Lady asked for the consecration of Russia and the Communion of reparation on First Saturdays. Otherwise, she warned, the errors of Russia would spread throughout the world. At that time, the Russian Communist Revolution had just begun.

The consecration and its significance for the world, however, can be understood only in light of the final apparition of Our Lady to Lucia on June 13, 1929, during her time in Tuy, Spain.

This “last” apparition is important for two reasons. First, the vision in itself provided a summary of the essentials of our Catholic faith. Secondly, Our Lady’s concluding words concern the future of the world. Namely, Mary’s instruction to Sister Lucia was clear: “The moment has come when God asks the Holy Father, in union with all the bishops of the world, to make the Consecration of Russia to my Heart, promising to save it by this means.”

During the decades after 1917, with the Bolshevik revolution, the evils of an atheistic system spread worldwide. We now understand this was because the world had not been consecrated as Mary had asked. She had promised: “In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me and it will be converted, and a time of peace will be conceded to the world.” Sadly, it would be many decades before the consecration was made correctly in 1984. So it was done late and Russia had spread its errors throughout the world. This is why from 1929 to 1984 the drastic changes to our society with atheistic communism had occurred. The world was in need of being consecrated.

Many still feel that the consecration of Russia is needed because the word “Russia” wasn’t specifically used in the final consecration. This is a misconception and has brought much division in a message that promotes unity and peace. The cause of this division has taken away the power of the message that will bring forth the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This message has so many parts and the consecration by John Paul II has been accepted by Our Lady, according to Sister Lucia. After the March 25, 1984, consecration, the papal nuncio of Lisbon went to Coimbra to see Sister Lucia at her monastery. She told him, “Our Lady has accepted it.”

Consecration has been accepted, so what now?

The evil one in different situations will use something good and then use it against us. I have been working many years in promoting the message given to us by Our Lady and have dealt with so much adversity, and this challenge stems from whether or not the consecration has been accepted or not.

What tends to occur is that it causes division among good people. It has caused an extreme focus on the consecration and not on the message. The consecration is not going to save any of us. To consecrate something means to declare an action. So to consecrate is to declare that the *message* set forth by Our Lady to those three little shepherds should be applied in our lives.

If the Holy Father decides to do another consecration, that is fine, but it doesn't mean that the next day everything will be perfect and that peace will reign. Our goal should be to focus on the next part of the message — the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The triumph is the message, and the five First Saturdays is the key to get us where we need to be spiritually.

The First Saturday devotion focuses on the nucleus of our Catholic faith: Confession, Adoration, Rosary and the Eucharist. I simply call it the C.A.R.E. Program. Our Lady has given us this special message that will ultimately lead us closer to Jesus. Fatima begins with the Eucharist and ends with the Eucharist.

What is the First Saturday Devotion?

The First Saturday Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was first mentioned by Our Lady of Fatima on July 13, 1917. After showing the three children a vision of hell she said, "You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. ... I shall come to ask for ... the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays..."

Eight years later, on Dec. 10, 1925, Mary and the Child Jesus appeared to Lucia, the sole surviving Fatima visionary, at a convent in Pontevedra, Spain. Our Lady rested her hand on Lucia's shoulder, revealing a heart encircled by thorns.

The Child Jesus said, "Have compassion on the heart of your most holy Mother, covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation..."

Conditions

Our Lady spoke next, saying: “Look, my daughter, at my heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for 15 minutes while meditating on 15 mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.”

Why Five Saturdays?

Christians have always honored the Blessed Virgin on Saturday because of her constant faith in Jesus on that first Holy Saturday before the Resurrection.

Five first Saturdays of reparation were requested to atone for the five ways in which people offend the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

1. attacks upon Mary’s Immaculate Conception
2. attacks against her Perpetual Virginitly
3. attacks upon her Divine Maternity and the refusal to accept her as the Mother of all mankind
4. for those who try to publicly implant in children's hearts indifference, contempt and even hatred of this Immaculate Mother
5. for those who insult her directly in her sacred images.

May Our Lady help us to live out this message of hope in our daily lives and that we encourage others, especially our parish priests, to do the same.