

The Little Shepherds: Jacinta



Born: 11 June 1908; Aljustrel, Portugal
Baptised: 20 June in parish church, Fatima
Family: Brother of Jacinta; cousin of Lucia
Hobbies: Games; dancing
Died: 4 April 1919
Beatified: By Pope John Paul II, 13 May 2000
Canonised: By Pope Francis, 13 May 2017

"We must pray very much, to save souls from hell. So many go there. Why doesn't Our Lady show hell to sinners? If they saw it, they would not sin ..."

When Jacinta saw the vision of hell during the July apparition and heard Our Lady say **"Pray for sinners, many go to Hell because there is no one to pray for them"**, she was horrified! She could not bear the thought of anyone going to Hell. For the next four years, Jacinta developed a burning love for God and the Eucharist and for the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She had a great compassion for the souls of others and for human suffering in all its forms. She devoted the rest of her life to pleasing God and Our Lady and to do everything she could to sacrifice herself to free souls from the fires of hell. In other words, Jacinta offered up many penances and sufferings. She frequently gave up her lunch and snacks to feed children who were poorer than herself.

Lucia writes in her memoirs how Jacinta never tired of telling Our Lord and Our Lady how much she loved them. She even said, **"I have a fire in my chest but it doesn't burn me."**

In 1918, Jacinta became ill with influenza and bronchial pneumonia as well as an abscess on her lung. She joyfully accepted her suffering, saying that it was a new opportunity to suffer for the conversion of sinners and the salvation of souls. Jacinta was hospitalised for two months during which time she was mostly alone. She talked happily about being able to suffer for the love of God, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the conversion of sinners and the Holy Father. As she showed no improvement, Jacinta was sent home. Our Lady appeared to her and told her that she would go to a second hospital in Lisbon where she would die alone. However, Our Lady reassured Jacinta, telling her not to be afraid because she would take her to heaven.

Jacinta's health grew worse. An ulcerous sore developed on her chest and she was no longer able to eat or drink. Her tiny frame became skeleton-like. Jacinta was admitted to the Lisbon hospital where she received more specialised treatment and care from one of the most prominent specialists of children's diseases. She was diagnosed with tuberculosis and suffered a great deal from the disease. On 20 February, 1920, Our Lady kept her promise and took Jacinta to heaven.