

The Little Shepherds: Lucia



Born: 28 March 1907

Baptised: Aljustrel, Fatima

Family: 5 sisters, 1 brother; cousin to Francisco and Jacinta

Hobbies: Singing; dancing; playing with her cousins

Died: 13 February 2005, 97 years of age

Beatified: By Pope John Paul II

Canonised: Awaiting canonisation

Lucia dos Santos was ten years of age when Our Lady appeared to her and her two cousins, Francisco (aged 9) and Jacinta (aged 7). She was the youngest in a family of seven but at ten years of age she was the oldest of the three shepherd children who witnessed the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary from May – October 1917. Lucia was given a very special role during the apparitions as Our Lady spoke only to her and gave her a message which was only to be revealed at a future date.

Lucia was a normal, ordinary child, who enjoyed the playful activities of children, like her cousins Jacinta and Francisco. She was an affectionate girl and loved being with the other children. She was particularly helpful to her mother in looking after them. Lucia loved dressing up during the many religious festivals held in the village and loved the occasions for their fun and the dancing. Lucia was a charismatic personality. One of her earlier companions recalls, **"Lucia was a lot of fun and we loved to be with her because she was always so pleasant. We did whatever she told us to do. She was very wise, and she could sing and dance very well; and with her we could spend our whole day singing and dancing ..."** ("The True Story of Fatima" John de Marchi, I.M.C.).

After the apparitions, Lucia's life was to change for ever. When writing about the Angel of Peace in her memoirs she revealed that **"The words of the Angel were like a light that made us realize who God was, how He loved us and wanted to be loved; the value of sacrifice, to what degree it pleased Him, and how it was rewarded with the conversion of sinners. From that moment, we began to offer to the Lord everything that mortified us, without trying to find any other ways of mortification or penance than passing hour after hour, bowed to the ground, repeating the prayer that the Angel had taught us."**