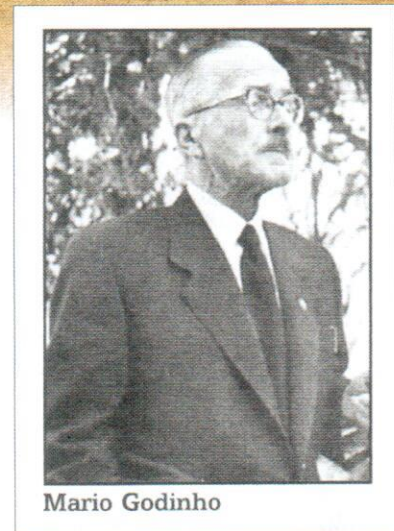


A Look Back...



Mario Godinho

The October Miracle and an Unbeliever

Mario Godinho was a member of a distinguished Portuguese family. An engineer from Vila do Paco, he went to Fatima in 1917 simply because he had an automobile that

could get his mother and family members there because they believed in the supernatural events taking place. Godinho did not believe in the apparitions and supposed them to be children's fantasy. However, after witnessing the Miracle of the Sun on October 13, 1917, he, too believed, and provided this lengthy disposition to John Haffert in 1960, who was seeking testimonies from the witnesses:

"I am now sixty-seven years old. At this age there are no more earthly illusions; at this age one lives with his eyes on eternity. When Our Lady came I was twenty-five. That was the age of the illusions. It was difficult to me then to think of the supernatural world. We lived at that time in Portugal, in a difficult religious and political period.

I live eighteen miles from Fatima. And in May of 1917 we were told about the extraordinary apparitions, but the news came to us mixed up with the fantasy of the people. Naturally I did not believe.

But my mother (who was a saintly woman) believed from the beginning and asked me to take her in my car to Cova da Iria on the 13th of June. By a poor and miserable road in our Peugeot, after many difficulties, we managed to get there. Below the road, in a depression of the ground, we saw some dozens of people. We

left the car, jumped over some stones, and met the three shepherds who had lighted candles in their hands. Other people like us were waiting for the apparition. In front of the children there was a little holm-oak tree. They said that on that holm-oak Our Lady would appear.



We talked to the children, pointed to our car parked on the road, and told them to meet us afterward there. So they did, and we took them home where we asked them many questions. I came back to my own home very disappointed and sincerely convinced that the poor children were mistaken. I dared not tell my friends of my going to Cova da Iria. I would have been considered a simpleton.

So I suppose I was the first driver to take a car to the Cova da Iria. Some years later I saw my car in some pictures about the apparitions. I would have been ashamed should anyone have discovered that I was the owner of that car, the first to go to the place of the apparitions. This is why I never told anybody what I saw. You are the first to know of my experience.

I suppose I was also the first to take a photo of the little shepherds, and one of the first to make a formal interrogation of the little children. In later months my family and I learned other details of the apparitions from the mouth of Lucia, who spent two or three days with us, and once or twice was among persons we hired to pick olives.

At my mother's request, I went once more to Cova da Iria in August at the time of the apparitions. Once more I came back discouraged and disappointed. But that time, something extraordinary happened. My mother, who had had a large tumor in one of her eyes for many years, was cured. The doctors who had at-



"I saw that sun as I never saw it again."

tended her said they could not explain such a cure.

Still, I did not believe in the apparitions.

Finally, and again at my mother's request, I went to Cova da Iria once more on the 13th of October. Now there were at the Cova hundreds upon hundreds of people, and many kinds of vehicles. There was general commotion.

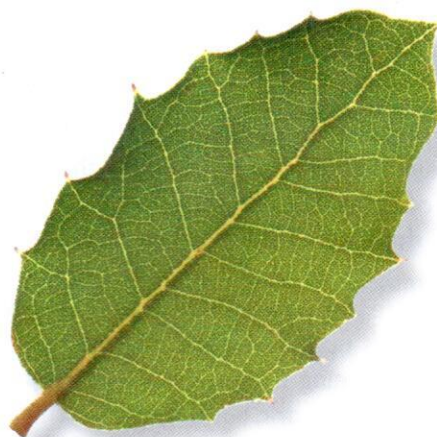
In spite of what had happened to my mother, I was disappointed and did not believe in the apparitions. So I sat inside my car. Then all at once I noticed that everybody looked at the sky. Natural curiosity attracted my attention, and I got out of the car and looked at the sky, too.

I saw in a clear area of the sky (where one should not be able to stare at the sun) the very sun. It was like a disc of smoked glass illuminated behind and turning over itself, giving us the impression that it was coming down over our heads. I could then see the sun more easily than I can see the moon on a full moon night. From those hundreds of mouths I heard words of belief and of love to the Blessed Virgin. And then I believed. I was sure I had not been the victim of suggestion. I saw that sun as I never saw it again.

Finally, I might add, that the little holm-oak was soon shredded by the faithful who went to the Cova. Among these faithful was my mother who got some leaves of the little tree. Two of these leaves still had drops of can-

dle grease from the candles lighted by the three seers. I had the honor of sending one of these leaves to the Holy Father through His Eminence, Cardinal Cerejeria, Patriarch of Lisbon.

From that holm-tree I have still one leaf I carefully keep and have carried with myself in my purse for forty-two years.



And this is what I saw concerning the apparitions. Since then I have seen my mother, brother, father and my wife die...I am old, full of sorrow, waiting for my hour to join those who flew to God."

(Source: *Meet the Witnesses of the Miracle of the Sun*, pgs. 55-59)