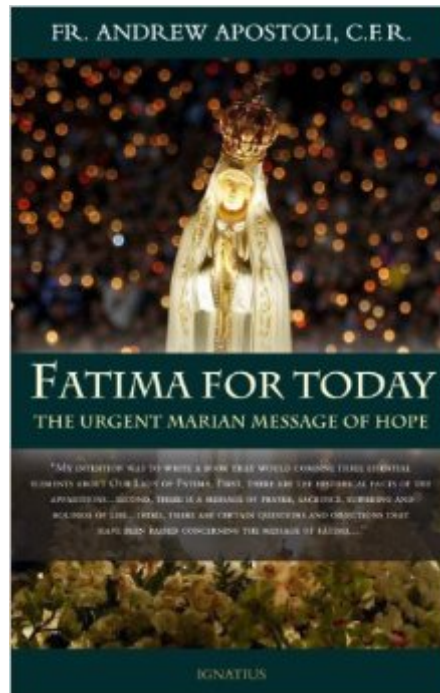


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# Fatima For Today: The Urgent Marian Message Of Hope



## Synopsis

Though the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima took place almost a hundred years ago, Our Lady's call to prayer and penance for the salvation of souls and peace in the world is as relevant now as when first delivered to three Portuguese peasant children in 1917. At the peak of the First World War, Our Lady warned of another worldwide conflict, the rise and spread of Communism, and a terrible persecution of the Church unless people repented of their sins and returned to God. She also requested devotion to her Immaculate Heart and a special consecration of Russia. Much of what Our Lady of Fatima said was revealed soon after her appearances, but the third and final "secret", which was not a message but a prophetic vision seen by the children, was not unveiled by the Vatican until 2000. Pope John Paul II, who read the third secret while recovering from the attempt upon his life in 1981, believed the vision signified the sufferings the Church had endured in the twentieth century. Because of the prophetic nature of her messages, Our Lady of Fatima has been the subject of much controversy and speculation. In this book, Father Andrew Apostoli carefully analyzes the events that took place in Fatima and clears up lingering questions and doubts about their meaning. He also challenges the reader to hear anew the call of Our Lady to prayer and sacrifice, for the world is ever in need of generous hearts willing to make reparation for those in danger of losing their way to God.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Miracle of the Sun at Fatima on October 13, 1917 is the only miracle witnessed by more than 70,000 people, reported in the secular press and accurately predicted as to time and date so far as I

know. Pope John Paul II attributed his survival of the May 13, 1981 attempt on his life to the intercession of Our Lady. May 13, 1917 was the first of Our Lady's apparitions to the children ages 10, 9 and 7. Yet many people have never heard of the Miracle of the Sun, the warnings, predictions and requests made by Our Lady to make ourselves more pleasing to God and avoid His loving discipline. What does God have to do to get our attention? We should share this book and the Fatima events with as many people as we can.

I have just finished Fr. Apostoli's wonderful book on Fatima and I would recommend it to every Catholic. Our Lady's requests at Fatima are simple and can be carried out by anyone. As I read the book I couldn't help but wonder what our world would be like today if more people had heeded her message and warnings from the beginning.

Before I became Catholic three years ago, I had never heard a single thing about Fatima. But now I hear it mentioned all the time. Here's the basic background: In 1917, three young children were visited six times by Mary in Fatima, Portugal. Through her appearances and messages, Our Mother asked the children for increased prayer, devotion, and repentance on behalf of the world. She also reinforced the primacy of the Rosary and provided three 'secrets'--three prophetic visions that unfolded over time. Now I know that may seem unbelievable at first glance, as it did to me when I first discovered it. But there's one more twist that may cause you to reconsider. At the climax of the visions, in order to prove their authenticity to skeptics, Mary induced "The Miracle of the Sun", an unexplained phenomenon witnessed by 80,000 people--including many atheists--some more than ten miles away. The sun appeared as an "opaque, spinning disc in the sky" and "careened to earth in a zig-zag pattern", striking terror in most witnesses. That's the basic outline, but a new book by Fr. Andrew Apostoli titled *Fatima for Today: The Urgent Marian Message of Hope* (Ignatius Press, hardcover, 288 pages) goes much deeper and has positioned itself to be the best introduction to all things Fatima. In the book, Apostoli breaks down each of Mary's messages and explores their significance for our own time. He also covers many different interpretations of the messages from popes, saints, and theologians over the past century. In fact, Pope Benedict XVI's own interpretation, which he wrote while heading the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is included in the book's Appendix in full. Interestingly, Fr. Apostoli is not only a Fatima expert but also the vice-postulator for the saintly Cause of Archbishop Fulton Sheen, one of my great heroes. In this book, Apostoli highlights many of Sheen's own thoughts on Fatima including one of his most insightful connections. Sheen always surmised that Fatima would eventually act as a great bridge

between Christians and Muslims. Portugal is a predominantly Muslim country. Yet this greatest modern miracle--a Christian miracle--happened there. Quoting Sheen, Apostoli explains that Fatima, before it was a town, was the name of the daughter of Muhammad, the founder of Islam. It was also the name of a Muslim princess in Portugal who converted to Catholicism, which is how the town got its name. According to Sheen, these connections are important. That Our Lady appeared in the only village in Portugal that bears a Muslim name is a sign of hope that through her, many Muslims will convert to Christ. If you're interested in the Fatima visions, the controversial 'three secrets', or the significance and meaning of Mary's messages, *Fatima for Today: The Urgent Marian Message of Hope* provides a great overview. It's very well-written and I recommend it as the premier one-stop guide to Fatima.

I've done a lot of reading and writing about Mary over the last few years, and of course I've learned about Our Lady of Fatima. When I was researching Our Lady of Fatima a couple of years ago, I discovered the EWTN mini-site on her and was enchanted. I read many articles, wrote some of my own, and pretty much left it at that. In other words, the message of Fatima was lost on me. I realize that now. I thought she was beautiful, found the tale enchanting and riveting, and had a dearth of material to write and write and write. But did she inspire real change in me? Maybe she did. I've been praying a daily rosary for some time (though not always because I want to, mind you, but because I have to), and maybe it's the influence of all my reading and studying about Mary. I can now say, though, thanks to the help of Fr. Andrew Apostoli's new book *Fatima for Today: The Urgent Marian Message of Hope* that I have taken the Fatima message to heart. It's hard not to. Not only does Fr. Apostoli share the facts, but he delves into background that makes the facts relevant to me today, now, here. He transforms the three visionaries--Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco--from saintly figures in a holy card into real people who struggled and yet courageously gave as Mary asked them to. Though I consider myself overdue for a good novel (I try to pepper my nonfiction reading with fiction in at least a 2-to-1 ratio), I found reading *Fatima for Today* to be invigorating and a page-turner. Good storytelling will do that to me, I guess, whether in the pages of a novel or in a well-written account of a Marian apparition. The other night, one of the ones where I was up countless times and feeling bleary about five minutes into the first sleep interruption, I found myself praying for the reparation of sinners and for the triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart. In the midst of praying it, I had a moment of wonder. Where did THAT come from? I wondered. And then I remembered: Fr. Apostoli covers in depth just what it means and why it should be something we all do in a knee-jerk, devoted, all-the-time way. The messages of Fatima aren't restrained to a time and

place. In fact, they're more applicable to us today than they've ever been! Do you find yourself wondering (or even worrying) about conflicts with Muslims and Christians? Are you interested (or even anxious) about the growing secularization of our formerly Christian culture? Is there an intention (or 17) that have you floored and desperate? This book outlines, brilliantly, the message of Fatima and how it matters to YOU, to ME, to each of us. It gives purpose to our prayers, explains the first Saturday devotion so clearly I can probably teach it to others now, and, in general, is a handbook we should all read and reference as we dive into the most important praying we can do.

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