THE ROSARY AND BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE
BY LAGOS ARCHDIOCESE

[HISTORY & SPIRITUALITY]

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TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
QUEEN OF THE MOST
HOLY ROSARY

THE TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER ONE:
CATHOLIC FAITH, MARIAN DEVOTION AND BIBLICAL RELATIONS
[PAGE 1 – 29].
i. The use of Image in the Block Rosary Crusade
ii. Is Mary the Mother of God?
iii. More facts about Purgatory
iv. Why should we honour Virgin Mary?
v. Is Mary ever Virgin? What about the other brothers and Sisters of Jesus?
vi. The Identity of Mary at the Crucifixion Scene

CHAPTER TWO:
THE FATIMA APPARITION, ROSARY AND BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE.
[PAGE 30 - 96].
i. The fall of Man and His Redemption
ii. Preparatory visits of the Angel
iii. Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima
iv. The great Solar Prodigy
v. Block Rosary Crusade
vi. Brief Biography of the three little children of Fatima
vii. Homily of His Holiness Pope John Paul 11 on the beatification of Francisco and Jacinta on 13th May 2000
viii. History of Block Rosary Crusade in Nigeria and Lagos Archdiocese
ix. The Rosary and Block Rosary Crusade

CHAPTER THREE: THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE
[PAGE 97 - 169]
i. The Message Proper
ii. The Rosary
iii. Rosary and Fatima Apparition
iv. Victory of the Rosary
v. Prayers of the Rosary
vi. The Origin of the Rosary
vii. Rosary meditation and the Marvelous Results
viii. The fifteen promises of Blessed Virgin Mary to Christians who recite the Rosary devoutly
ix. Daily Sacrifice for Sinners
x. Communion of Reparation
xi. First Saturday Devotion Routine and other Prayers
xii. Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
xiii. The Steady Wearing of the Brown scapular of Mount Carmel and sabbatine privilege
xiv. The Ten Principal Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary
xv. Method of praying the Rosary in the Block Rosary Crusade

CHAPTER FOUR: GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE [PAGE 170 - 182].
i. The constitution of Block Rosary Crusade
ii. Objective of the Society, Spirit and membership
iii. Who can be a Member?
iv. Who is a member?
v. Various organs of the Block Rosary Crusade
vi. Is this not a Tribal Society?
vii. Block Rosary Crusade a Unique Society

CHAPTER FIVE: REFLECTIONS AND ADMONITIONS [PAGE 183 - 208].
i. One Hundred Flaming and Motivating Speeches
ii. The Tears of an Innocent Child
iii. Some guidelines to good membership
   - Disrespect to Leaders
     - Disregard or under-rating of our members
     - Tracing faults and mistakes
     - Un-useful publicity
     - Lack of concentration
iv. Secret cults in our educational sector
v. Re-examination of our Membership

CHAPTER SIX: HISTORY OF PARISHES [PAGE 208 - 219].

CHAPTER SEVEN: VARIOUS MARIAN PRAYERS AND INVOCATIONS [PAGE 220 - 229].

FORWARD

One truth that must be accepted is that the Block Rosary Crusade has grown from the initial perception of a few critics that it is limited to only certain category of people, a geographical section, tribe or operational base to embrace all the geographical inhabitation of man, encompassing people of various age and status with different religious teaching or belief.
Despite her enormous acceptance, she still remains very enigmatic to her critics who are yet to draw the curtain of their position and embrace the monumental change that has taken place in the Block Rosary Crusade. It is our firm belief that the lucidity of elements contain in this work will not only resolve the puzzles about the crusade but also expose some mysteries of the Christian faith with regards to the Catholic teaching or belief.

However, coming to this height is no mean task, there were ups and downs. No time is more auspicious than now, to bring to light the causes and effects of the adversities produced in the course of time and mechanisms that have replaced them including personae and achievements.

Meanwhile, this work will guide the new converts or entrants of the Block Rosary Crusade to understand the modus operandi of the crusade and also enlighten the derailing members about the true teaching of the message of Fatima with regards to Prayer, Penance and Sacrifice. Furthermore, it will also be a veritable tool for the faithful who want to understand more of their Catholic faith.

BRO. AUGUSTINE I. IMOH
NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE NIGERIA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book, “THE ROSARY AND BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE BY LAGOS ARCHDIOCESE” is an asset of inestimable value to any Catholic that may come across it. It will remain a precious object of joy to the entire members of Block Rosary Crusade for marvelous work performed in the Great Jubilee Year 2000.

Consequently, we are ever grateful to God Almighty through Our Blessed Mother, Virgin Mary for bringing into focus the idea of publishing this book in the minds of the Archdiocesan Council Executive Members and, at the same time bringing the good work to accomplishment. Glory be to Jesus, unto life everlasting. Amen.

We wish to acknowledge with profound gratitude the efforts of many that contributed in several ways to make the publication a success. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the various Parishes, individual members of the Block Rosary Crusade and also non-members who forwarded materials of different forms that resulted to the magnificent quality of this Marian book. In a very special way, we thank the President of Lagos Archdiocesan Council of Block Rosary Crusade, Bro. Callistus Okafor, the National President, Bro. Augustine I. Imoh, Bro. F. Nwenyi, Bro. Vincent M. Darah, Bro. Stephen Ogwai, Year 2000 Silver Jubilee Anniversary Committee members for contributing immensely. A big thanks goes to Mr. Kenneth Onu, Mrs. Emilia Osuagwu and Miss Julie Nwachukwu for typing the Manuscripts. We thank Oblate Eusebius Oguizu for helping us with relevant information concerning Block Rosary Crusade in Nigeria.

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We pray that Our Blessed Mother, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary will continue to intercede for us now and to the hour of our death. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, the members of the Block Rosary Crusade are the most ardent dovetees of our Mother Mary through the recitation of the Holy Rosary. Who are these people and what is the meaning of the prayer of the Rosary they pray? You can find out only inside this book.

There is yet to be any story in the history of the world more moving than the wonderful story of the birth, public life, death and resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ. St. Augustine, one of the great Saints of the Church, says quite emphatically that there is no spiritual exercise more fruitful or more useful to our salvation than continually turning our thoughts to the suffering of our Lord. In the Rosary, we have the mysteries of our salvation summarized. The Rosary with its meditation on the birth, public life, passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ is certainly most pleasing to our Lord himself and is a very successful means of obtaining all graces. Of all prayers, the Rosary is one of the most beautiful and richest in blessing. The Rosary is a powerful spiritual weapon. Through the Rosary, we come to love our Lord and our Lady, the Blessed Virgin, more and more. In the Rosary, we relive the gospel story of the joys and sorrows and glory, which made up the life of our Lord and our Mother Mary.

In the Church, devotion to our Mother Mary is taken very seriously. The Block Rosary Crusade is at the top of the ladder among the very few groups that bring this devotion to the fore, more bravely and publicly. Through this group, we have a great insight on the importance of our devotion to Mary. The Mother of God Almighty is very pleased to have people gather together in prayer. He expressly recommended prayer to his apostles and disciples by promising that whenever two or three are gathered together in His name He would be there in their midst (cf. Matt. 18:20). The Block Rosary Crusade members come together in prayer as a group not only in the name of our Lord but also in the name of His Mother, Mary. In this way, the group is in the forefront of those emphasizing the need to honour our Lord’s Mother and at the same time rely on the power of her intercession in our daily prayers. And this they do bravely, devotedly and PUBLICLY. “In his book on the Rosary, Pope Gregory X111 says very clearly that we must believe (in pious faith) that the public prayers and processions of the members of the confraternity of the Holy Rosary were largely responsible for the great victory over the Turkish Navy at Lepanto which Almighty God granted to Christians on the first Sunday of October, 1517. In France, when King Louis the Just, was blessing La Rochelle, where the revolutionary heretics had their stronghold, he wrote his mother to beg her to have public prayers offered for a victorious outcome. The Queen’s-Mother decided to have the Rosary recited publicly in Paris. It was begun on May 20th 1628. Both the Queen’s-Mother and the reigning Queen attended the recitation of the Rosary together with the Duke of Orleans, Cardinal de La Rochefoucault and Cardinal de Berulle, as well as other prelates. The court turned out in full force as well as a large proportion of the general populace. The Archbishop used to read the meditations on the mysteries aloud and then begin the Our Father and Hail Mary's of each decade while the congregation made up of religious and lay folk answered him. At the end of the Rosary a Statue of the Blessed Mother was solemnly carried in procession while the litany of Our Lady was sung. This devotion was kept up with admirable favor every Saturday and resulted in a manifest blessing from heaven: for on All Saints’ Day of the same year the King defeated the English at the Island of Re and made his triumphant entry into La Rochelle. This goes to show the great power of public prayer.
Finally, when people say the Rosary together it is afar more formidable than one said privately, because in this public prayer it is an army set in battle array. The devil can often overcome the prayer of an Individual, but if this prayer is joined to that of other Christians, the devil has much more trouble in getting the best of it. It is very easy to break a single stick, but if you join it to others to make a bundle it cannot be broken. “In union there is strength”. Soldiers join together in any army to overcome their enemies; wicked people often get together for parties of debauchery and dancing, and evil spirits join forces in order to make us lose our souls. So why then, should not Christian join forces to have Jesus Christ present with them when they pray, to appease Almighty God’s anger, to draw down His grace and mercy upon us, and to frustrate and overcome the devil and his angels more forcefully? (Culled from The Secret of the Rosary by St. Louis De Mont fort).

Dear Reader, we cannot underestimate the force of our prayers through Mary. During the wedding at Cana in Galilee, as recorded in Join’s gospel, it was at the prompting of His Mother that the Son (Jesus), Son of God obliged the request (intercession) of the Mother to provide wine for the couple and guests. We must never therefore fail to understand that through Mary our Mother our prayers, requests are always granted and our needs always provided.

The life of the three children at Fatima teaches us the importance of prayer, penance and sacrifice. (cf. page 38 inside). Some highlights of materials we also find in this book include: The Guiding Principles of Block Rosary Crusade, Meaning of Consecration, reasons why we wear the Scapular, some detailed explanation of the Fatima message, and lots more. This book is one that you will not drop until you have read the last page – very rich, comprehensive, interesting and educative. Enjoy it!

REV. FR. JOACHIM OCHIBILI
CHAPLAIN
Lagos Archdiocesan Council of Block Rosary Crusade
CHAPTER ONE
CATHOLIC FAITH, MARIAN DEVOTION AND BIBLICAL RELATIONS

THE USES OF IMAGES OR STATUES IN THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE
The Catholic Church all over the world has so many religious practices that make her so different from other (so called) churches. And it is our responsibilities to know all these, because we are the future hope of the Church.

A young man once said to his religious father,: “Sir, I don’t need to learn all these doctrines of the Church any more, after all I have been baptized, I have received my 1st Holy Communion and have been confirmed. What else do I need all these doctrines for?” It is good we know all these teachings of the Church for they will help us a lot in our struggles toward eternity.

There are so many Christian doctrines and religious practices, which the Catholic Church teaches which, are not accepted by other denominations, even though these were handed down to us by the early Christians. It was during the reformation led by Martin Luther of Germany in the sixteenth century that all these controversies about certain doctrines of the Catholic Church were ignited. They kept on saying that these doctrines were not rooted in the scriptures.

Among these Christian doctrines are (a) Purgatory (b) Devotion to Mary (c) The holy Rosary (d) Praying through the saints (e) The use of images in the Church (f) Infant baptism (g) Confession to Priest, etc.

We will focus our discussions on one of these, namely, “the use of Images”. For this directly concern the entire members of the Church and Block Rosary Crusade society in particular.

What is an Image? An image is the figure of a person or anything made or carved with wood, stone, etc. A picture too can be regarded as an image.

Virtually in all Catholic churches throughout the world we do see images of many saints, which we popularly call statues. Now, does it mean we worship images in the Catholic Church? The answer will soon emerge.

Some Christians when trying to explain this subject make it so difficult for people to know the truth. They persist in saying that God Almighty disapproved the making of images, backing up their argument with the following Bible passages: Deuteronomy 5: 7-9, Exodus 20: 3-5, etc. In these chapters, God is telling us not to make any idol nor make any image to be worshipped as god. And we in the Catholic Church do not make idols nor worship them. What we have in our churches are the images of the holy people of God, in other words known as statues. God did not condemn the Making of images rather He condemned the serving, worshipping, or regarding them as gods. In the history of creation, God said, “come let us make man in our own IMAGE and likeness” Gen. 1: 26.

He is the Almighty and can never contradict Himself. In some passages of the scriptures, He ordered the making of certain images, which undoubtedly was for a purpose. Let us trace one of the popular events which took place in those days in the history of the Israelites as recorded in the book of Numbers Chapter 21: 6-9. If God had condemned totally the making of images, would He have told Moses to make the bronze serpent? Again it is good to note that during the public life of our Lord
Jesus Christ, he did not condemn totally the making of images rather, he referred to it saying, “As Moses raised the serpent in the desert so will the son of man be raised so that all that believe in him will never perish (John 3: 14-15).

The statues or images you see in the Catholic Church and in most of our small groups called societies are not gods, they are there for special purposes. Some are there to remind us of the kind of holy life the fellow lived while on earth. Some are there too to remind us of the kind of sufferings and death endured by the fellow during life for the love of Christ, etc. Keeping these in our minds, we too are moved by their faith and are encouraged by their perseverance. Thus we can carry our day to day crosses following Jesus without complaint, in the sense that many people have successfully done so in the past. We don’t know these holy people physically when they were living on earth, but seeing their statues or images, much information about their holy lives flash through our minds.

As we based our discussions on images, let us remember that holy pictures are not exempted, for they too are images as well. Without these objects, it would have been very difficult for many people to really understand the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. We read them from the Bible, certainly, but all these paintings and statues draw the message closer to our minds with clearer meanings.

We should note well that when praying in front of a statue or a holy picture, our prayers are not being directed to these images because they are not living things in themselves. We should always refer our prayers to that person in heaven whose image we keep before us. Therefore, we Catholics have the right to say our prayers in front of the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Virgin Mary, the saints and those of the holy Angels, provided these images or paintings have been blessed by the Church.

These images serve as instruments to bring to our memories some past events, they help us to know more of the great men and women who served God during their own days. Had there been no religious images, many scriptural lessons and teaching would have seemed to be ordinary stories today. There is no way we can rule off the use of images in the Church, for they have some good roles to play, at least they create certain good impressions in our minds. Know it now that to make an image of holy persons is not a sin. We too have our own images or pictures at home, which we made by ourselves or was made for us with our consent. Even all these people who criticize the making or use of images keep and cherish their own pictures and those of their loved ones at home, forgetting that pictures too are images. They claim that they don’t place these pictures of theirs on the altar or to the place of prayers. But that is not the case. The question is why did they make their own “IMAGES” at all, where by they claim that the Bible condemns it? They should avoid taking photographs, appearing in the television, nor allow themselves to be recorded in video cassettes, or else they are guilty of making images.

It is good we know that the Catholic Church can never mislead her children. She as mother can never make mistake when defining a doctrine, which is to be followed by all her children. Jesus Christ gave her the following power and authority. “Whatever you bind on earth is bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth is loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16: 19). So the Church with this authority tells us that to have an image of a holy person within our place of worship is not a sin, whether in the church, at home, or in our religious society meetings. Remember that God our Father manifests many things in our lives through these holy objects.
The Catholic Church is not one of these newly founded churches, therefore, there is no need doubting the authenticity of her teaching. All these lessons you read this day are not newly invented teachings, they have been there for about two thousand years now. And many people have practiced them the way you are being taught now and have made heaven. So if we practice what we are being taught in the Catholic Church, we too will surely enter heaven.

Let us take the following passages, Exodus 25: 18-22. In this passage God our Father commanded Moses once again to “MAKE”, this time around not a bronze serpent, but Cherubim (that is Angel). This is the same God our Father whom so many people are quoting or misquoting over the issue of images. It is good you know that the Catholic Church does not just wake up any day and proclaim any teaching without the approval of heaven. Therefore, do not mind anyone who speaks against the use of these images, he may perhaps be speaking out of ignorance, demonstrating the extent of hatred he has for the Catholic Church or may be intentionally doing so to win you over. Beware!

Memorize the following points before moving further. Aaron molded an image of a calf, and said, “behold, thy God, oh Israel [Exodus” 32: 1-4). To this God was not pleased with it and so, certain punishments were meted for that action. Later, on the same journey, Moses made a bronze serpent for the same Israelites and God was not angry, even though the serpent is naturally more dangerous than the calf. Why is it so? After all the two men who where involved in the making of those images were both leaders of the Israelites community and both reputable men before God. But why did their images failed to receive the same considerations before God? It is because the first image being the calf was made to be worshipped as god while the second one being the bronze serpent was not made to be worshipped or served as god but a remedy for injury.

It is good to note that many years later, the remnant of the children of Israel began to worship this bronze serpent due to the great healing which their forefathers received from it, and so, God was not pleased thus he moved King Hezekieh to destroy it (2 Kings 18: 4). Jeroboham a one-time king of Israel made certain images to be worshipped by his subjects and mounted them in two major cities of his kingdom. God condemned his action because he made the images to be served and worshipped as gods (1 King 12: 28).

Let us read the following texts, 1 King 6: 1, 14: 23-27. This chapter may sound very strange to your ears, but it has been there in your Bible, and certainly, the content was quite understood. King Solomon was not instructed by God to make these images unlike he did for Moses. Rather, Solomon made them out of his own freewill and placed them permanently in the house of worship. God saw these images of angels made by the king but did not command the king to remove them from the temple, but he said, “my heart will be here forever” (1 King 9 1-3). If making of image is an abomination or totally condemned by God, he would not have condone the action of King Solomon. He would have ordered him to remove these images of angels from the place of worship before dedication. But that was not his reaction, he would have manifested through other means to make known his displeasure over the images, which King Solomon made but that was not the case. Rather he appreciated the handwork of the King, the way he built and decorated the temple, and promised to grant all their prayers whenever his name is invoked there in the temple.

Therefore, the Block Rosary Crusade and other societies in the Catholic Church should not have any biased mind when using the crucifix, holy pictures, images or statues of the holy people of God on our altars, no matter what others say provided they have been blessed by a Catholic Priest.
Even after being blessed by the priest, it still remains an image (or a sacramental) but not a god, and we neither worship them nor have any regard for them as gods.

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IS MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD?

INTRODUCTION

Every new self proclaimed church leader will only feel that he has made a point when he is able to attack one thing or the other in the Catholic Church but the stubborn truth is that Catholicism has done everything for Christendom except the protest element.

Ordinarily, one will consider it a waste of one’s time reacting to criticism of the Church’s doctrines particularly the one on MARY NOT MOTHER OF GOD. But for the interest of many of our young people who may be misled following false interpretation of the bible by some attackers of the Holy Mother Church as most readers would tend to, could make them and their likes continue propagating a bizarre, reasoning. In order to ensure clarity, all references herein are taken from the Holy Bible “King James Version,” Red-letter edition.

BIBLE AND DOCTRINE

All who argue the Church’s doctrines often make the usual seeming good start by referring to the book of Revelation 22: 18-19. Let us first look at the text.

“Vs. 18: For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plaques that are written in this book”.

“Vs. 19: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the tree of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things that are written in this book”.

What is being referred to as – This book in the above context is not the Holy Bible but the book of Revelation, simple. It even states in the verse by saying, “the words of the book of this prophecy”. It may be those people do not know that the Bible is a compilation of several books. If that is the case, please they should use this opportunity to know. They normally quote that “The Bible is the only authentic and authorized companion of Christianity. Anything and/or theory outside it, is heresy and accursed, quoting Gal. 1:8-9 to buttress their point. Again let us look at it:

Vs. 8: But though we or an angel from heaven preaches any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Vs. 9: As we said before, so say I now again, if any preach other gospel, unto you than that ye have received. Let him be accursed.

It may interest you to know that in this situation, St Paul was writing to the Galatians. The ”We” in both 8 and 9 refers to the apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ.

He, St. Paul, is advising/warning the Galatians to concentrate on the teaching they have received from them [the apostles and disciples]. These two verses cannot be referring to the Holy Bible, which had not even been compiled at the time this Epistle of Paul was written.
It is interesting though that the attackers of Catholic Church borrow this to supplant it with “Anything outside the Bible is heresy and accursed”. Here again their interpretation is faulty because the Bible tells us that not all that…Jesus did could be contained in this compilation – [i.e.] the Bible. John 21:26 states “And there are also many other things which Jesus Christ did, the one which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written”. Going further to the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians 2:15 it is said…”Therefore brethren stand fast and hold the Traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or by our epistle”.

The subject matter being discussed is heresy. You can therefore see that Christianity includes what is written in the Bible, as well as oral discourse transcending from the Apostles and Disciples. Both are referred to as tradition and need not necessarily be written.

The Lord at the great commission said: “Go ye therefore and make disciple of all the nations… and teaching them to observe all that I commanded you”…Matt. 28:19-20. Before his death, the Lord told the Apostles in John 16:12-13 “…But when the spirit comes… He will lead you into all truth, He will bring to your remembrance all that I have told you and teach the things to come”.

It is important, however, to warn against any insinuation that by these statement the Bible is not complete. It has enough information to carry us to any level of understanding of the word of God as given to us by Jesus Christ.

IS MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD?

This question is not so much on Mary as on Jesus. The question should rather be “Is Jesus Christ God?” Yes! Jesus Christ is God and Mary is the Mother of God, not because of her own merit but because of Jesus whom she conceived by the Holy Spirit, As God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God who had no earthly father. St. Joseph was his putative [foster] father. The separated brethren and their likes who attack the Holy Catholic Church being mere men cannot then assume the role of telling us what is logical and illogical with God. God has found it logical to create Mary and it was God who granted that Mary should conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit. It was this same Spirit that prompted Elizabeth to acknowledge Mary as the Mother of the Lord {Luke 1:43}. The Lord is used synonymously with the word God in the scriptures and so anyone who proclaims Mary as the Mother of God like Elizabeth, is merely responding to the motions of the Holy Spirit.

Many are they that claim that Mary is not the Mother of God. In proving this, they go as far as saying that Jesus is not God. Quoting the statement of one of the attackers of Mary’s motherhood of God published on page 23 of the Sunday guardian of June, 2nd 1999 by Mr. Joseph B. Akalusi, he said, “At the time the word was made flesh, He [Jesus] ceases to be God the creator and became man and was conceived and born by Virgin Mary, as Jesus Christ”. This is total false preaching.

This reasoning is erroneous because it denies the unity and Trinity of God; the divinity of Jesus Christ, perfect God and perfect man. The title granted Mary says more about her Son than it does about her.

The mystery of Mary is so intertwined with the mystery of the Being of Christ that the denial of Christ’s humanity involves the denial of Mary’s motherhood of God. There is only one person in
Christ and that is the person of God the son. Virgin Mary is the Mother of this Person, from the moment this Person took our nature in her womb.

It is funny and rather incorrect when narrow-minded and scripturally bankrupt person says “throughout the Bible, Christ is consistently and variously referred to as the Son of God, son of man and son of David’.

Jesus is the Son of God; the same son who is eternally begotten of the Father and who after the incarnation started to live among us in human flesh. He ascended into heaven with his real flesh and blood, the body he had before and after the resurrection, although his body was glorious.

While on earth, he was truly man and truly God because He declared that he was God, the only begotten Son of God, of the same Nature as the Father. The prophets foretold the divinity of Christ when it was written, “for unto us a child is given and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” {Isaiah 9:6}. In fulfillment of the Prophecies, Jesus proved his divinity by His life, teaching, miracles, and above all His resurrection. The scriptures bore witness ” The Father and I are one – John 10:30; “That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father – John 5:23 “Before Abraham was, I am – John 8:58”. This is the true God and eternal life – 2John 1:20”. In John 14:7 and 9 the bible says if ye had known Me, ye should have known the Father also and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him”… He that hath seen the Father, for the Father is in Me and I in Him. Also, read Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:22.

Talking about Jesus as man, and descendant of David, Jesus said, “It is written, the Lord said to my Lord, sit here at my right until I have made your enemies my footstool, if David calls him Lord, how can he be a descendant of David?” [Luke 20:41-44]. The Jews precisely became intent on killing Him because He made himself God’s equal – John 5:18, while in John 10:33, the Jews fetched stones to kill Him because He claimed to be God. Christ solemnly proclaimed His divinity when He was being charged Mark 14:61-62, and for this reason He was sentenced to death. He carried out Divine acts while on earth, He taught with great authority [Mark 1:22-27]. Jesus had power over nature [Mark 4:37-41] over sickness [Matt. 4:23-24, Luke 7:11-17, John 11:11 -] and power to forgive sins [Mark 2:5-12]. His fulfillment of Messianic Prophecies [Isaiah 52:13-53, Psalm 21 [22] and His awareness that He is doing these [Mark 15:34] and also by His rising from the dead. He manifests His Divinity to the highest level.

Mr. Akalusi says: “the logic is totally flawed and cannot be correct if Mary after being created by God now becomes His Mother, it is like the potter making a pot out of clay and the pot turns around to say that it produced the potter”. This comparison actually displays ignorance of attributes of God. How can he liken creation by God to pot making and even stretched it further to the point where a clay pot will speak. He did admit the Blessed Trinity but then contradict his reasoning by saying that Christ whom he admitted is God in heaven is not known as Christ in heaven. This strange reasoning of his can only make sense if he can demonstrate concretely of having been there [heaven] where he discovered that Christ is not known as Christ over there, then ordinary common sense shows that if he believes in God through the teaching of His Son Jesus Christ, and who has taught that He is the way, the truth and the life, he cannot doubt that Jesus is God both in Heaven, on earth and indeed everywhere. However, we find it difficult to understand peoples’ inability to comprehend how Jesus Christ can be both man and God at the same time. However, since they have been able to know that there is something called the Blessed Trinity [Matt. 28:19], all they need now is to know that any of the three that made up the Trinity is a full and complete God. The distinctions only come into play
when we attempt to perceive their functions. Therefore whenever we call Jesus, we are calling God who is everywhere.

People do quote Luke 1:28-32 after which they say that “There is nothing to suggest remotely that Jesus shall be God. Nothing also suggests that this salutation meant for Mary’s consumption only, be made for public consumption and be recited daily by followers of Christ on daily basis”. This now sounds like someone who does not see rather than one who does not understand. The verse 28 started and ends with this sentence- “blessed are thou amongst women” further down the chapter, verse 32 states “he shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest” and verse 33 emphasizes further. “And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there shall be no end”. It is absolutely important to put it [to these people] that only God can reign forever and verse 35 puts the finality by saying “therefore also, that Holy Child which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

That again is part of the derivative of the second position in the Holy Trinity. Going further to verse 41 and 42 it is stated as follows: Vs. 41 - And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. Vs. 42 – And she spoke out with a loud voice and said, Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. The important thing here is that Elizabeth as a matter of fact was filled with the Holy Ghost and whatever she said thereafter was inspired by God. She simply regurgitated what the Angel Gabriel “Sent by God” had said earlier and one expects that the repetition of “Among women” could not have been meant only for Mary’s consumption.

It is evident throughout the scriptures that God tolerates no rivals, yet it is written as spoken by Jesus “when I am lifted up, I will draw all men to myself” [John 12:32] and “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me” [Matt: 28:18]. Therefore to introduce any form of distinction between the Word and Jesus Christ is Contrary to Christian faith. St. John clearly states that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was made flesh and It dwelt among us” [John 1:1-2 and 14]. Nestorius, the Bishop of Constantinople in the 5th Century subscribed to this doctrine of separation between Jesus Christ the man and Jesus Christ the God.

The Council of Ephesus [AD. 431] condemned this teaching and taught that in Christ, there is only one person, the Divine person, which has assumed a human nature. The unity of these Divine Persons Father, Son and Holy Ghost is called the HYPOSTATIC UNION. This same Council of Ephesus proclaimed Mary as “Mother of God a Theotokos” and not just “Mother of Christ – Chritokos”. Despite these factors, nobody has ever claimed Mary to be Omnipotent. Catholics do not worship or adore Mary but honour her because she and she only is the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God Himself and the second Person in the Blessed Trinity. After all, it is written “for behold from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed” [Luke 1:48]. It is amazing that some people quarrel over the honour given to the Mother of our Saviour but I am sure they will pull down a mountain if someone disparages their own mother. Besides, James 5:14-16 advises us to pray for one another. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. If the Bible demands that we pray for one another and we believe that God will hear the prayers, I wonder why they think it is wrong to ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to intercede for us. By calling her Blessed, it is already an admission of her being righteous while on earth and her intercession therefore would have great power in its effects.

[ff….: John 2:1-5] They don’t see why Cathedrals should be named after her. This suggests that they may never understand the sense in honouring anyone for that matter. If universities, Airports, Stadia, streets and etc. can be named after our fellow men, what more of the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Living God – the Virgin of whom the scriptures says “ on your right stands the Queen in garments of Gold”
[psalm 45:9] and again “The Woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars” [RV. 12:1]. The quotations being given in an attempt to discredit the Motherhood of Mary, in Luke 11:27-28 and Mark 3:32 are in reality the highest compliment Jesus paid to His Mother. For Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it. Mary is truly blessed for non-heard and responded affirmatively and unchangeably to the Word of God like she did. If whosoever does the will of God is the mother, sister and brother of Jesus, none has done this as lovingly as Mary did and so Jesus requests and implies emulation of Mary’s virtues.

Mary is not worshipped in the Catholic Church but she is honoured, an imitation of God who honoured her first by giving her that singular privilege of being the Mother of the Redeemer. The fourth commandment of God binds us to honour our father and mother and we can be sure that Jesus Christ have been exemplary in keeping the commandments Himself [Luke 2:52]. Mary indeed is the Mother of God and the Mother of all those who believe in God and the Mother of all those who believe in God through Jesus Christ and His teachings [Rev. 12:17]. Mary as the universal Church profess is “Daughter of God the Father”, Mother of God the Son and Spouse of the Holy Spirit” [Luke 1:35]. All Christians know and believe that she is the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Mighty God, and the Everlasting Father. There should, therefore, be no room in trying to extricate Jesus Christ from God either in heaven, on earth or else where.

I will like to leave the following quotation from Pope Alexander 111 – “ A little learning is a dangerous thing. Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring. Their shallow draught intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again”. An essay on criticism.

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MORE FACTS ABOUT PURGATORY

This is another teaching of the Catholic Church, which in fact is very disturbing to many other denominations and hard to assimilate. Namely, the teaching about Purgatory. What is purgatory and what description can we offer in affirmative?

It is a place where souls suffer for a while, [not forever] for temporal punishments due to sin, after its guilt has been forgiven. It is a place where departed souls are cleansed or purified from their minor dirties, before they could enter heaven.

Note well that those souls guilty of mortal [or serious] sins wouldn’t be opportune to pass through purgatory nor benefit from its purifying power. Purgatory is for all those who as at the moment of death, are guilty of light sins, popularly known as venial sins. Again, this place of purgatory is also for all those who have not made full penance and satisfaction for their sins committed during lifetime, even though the sins might have been confessed and absolved.

This doctrine concerning purgatory means nothing to other denominations, to some it means foolishness and to others, it is a clear sign of ignorance of the word of God on the side of those who justify the existence of such a fearful place. But to us Catholics, it is the manifestation of God’s mercy and another way of satisfying Divine Justice, which pre-ordained that nothing defiled shall enter heaven [ Rev.21: 27 ]

In the years past, people criticize vehemently this preaching about purgatory, claiming that it wasn’t visibly affirmed in the scripture. But presently, some of these critics have begun to realize that the doctrine is deeply rooted in the scripture, and more over, the Church has many other practicable points to substantiate their claim.
The flames of purgatory, as you may like to know, are as terrible and painful as those of hell fire. The great difference between these suffering arenas is that those in purgatory has a hope of survival and freedom. The anguish may be prolonged, but one thing is certain, the sufferings lasts not forever but for a while. They are sure of being released at the expiration of their sentences, to join their fellow elect in heaven. Know this fact and memorize it, “A day spent in that Divine prison yard [Purgatory] is more severe and painful than one hundred years of great agony spent here on earth.”

A young man once said, “Let me keep struggling as little as I could, at least to enter purgatory”. Such might be the choice or hope of the vast number of people, but in honesty, it is a statement motivated by typical ignorance. It is like building on the straw. No one should plan or hope to go through the fires of purgatory, lest the fellow end up in a more regrettable place of suffering, [hell fire]. We should always plan to achieve heaven. Any number of sin we have committed in life has separate punishment awaiting them, and must be atoned for, either:

[1] In this life by good contrition, good and sincere confession, full satisfaction for those sins, and partaking in some other good works and prayers so as to gain more indulgences. Or [2] In the life to come, through the purifying flames of purgatory, That is if the sins are venial and not deadly. But in the case of one guilty of mortal or deadly sin, and have neglected to do much as per repentance and penance in order to be cleansed during life, hell fire is certainly the last dwelling place for such persons, for there is no other remedy. They can’t be opportuned to go through purgatory for there is no mark of heaven left in them. They have lost the Divine Grace, which is the life of God in our soul.

The Bible relates the story of the rich man and Lazarus. How the rich man later languished in hell fire due to the way and manner he fashioned and spent his life on earth. [cf. Luke 16:19-23]. We all believe that if he had amended his life style and begged for Divine Mercy and forgiveness, and improved his attitudes towards the poor, the story of his fate would not have ended thus.

The scripture also told the story of how King David was punished for taking another man’s wife [cf. 2 Samuel 12:1-13]. He showed remorse for the deadly act and pleaded for mercy. He received forgiveness quite alright, but not without sever punishment. That is another means of confirming the above statement, that each sin we commit has certain punishments due for it, even after having been confessed, and must be paid for either willingly or other wise. There is no repentance in the grave, nor after death. That is why we are being called upon to seek for the black substance while is daylight. To make amend in our mode of living while it would still be valuable. For when we might have breathed our last, we no longer have any personal say or ability, it is then only our deeds, while on earth [either just or sinful] that would serve as a moving force or guide, carrying and directing us to where we should be immediately after judgment. For it has been appointed unto man once to die but after this judgment [Heb. 9:27].

Here we want to extent our discussion to a wider scope in order to establish the fact that there is a temporal place of suffering after death called PURGATORY, by tabling the following instances: -

What happens, in a situation where one is judged after death and found wanting, the fellow being guilty of sin but not deadly kind. At this point, it is very clear that for the fact that he is guilty, he can’t enter heaven. But at the same time, the guilt are not the type that can lead one to everlasting punishment, in the sense that the volume of the guilt wasn’t capable of killing the soul, it only dented or sported it. And this fellow in question hasn’t got the alternative choice of coming back to life to make amends.
How do we reconcile the above instances? It sounds like a story, but it is more than a mere story, because it has to do with the supernatural, enlightening our minds. God is the architect, the maker and the sole owner of heaven and earth and he knows the way he made them. We would not be mistaking to say that he knew how many temporal resting or awaiting places he has caused to exist within his great structures. But the few it has pleased Him to reveal to us His creatures, are the ones we talk about. Heaven or hell are the places of lasting habitations, but there are other temporal places of aboard, which serve to house people for a time and for a purpose, but has not got the charge to hold people for eternity.

Let us further our emphasis in justification of such other places of temporal aboard [which is not only purgatory, this time around]. Before Jesus came to the world in human form, the scriptures testified to the fact that there have been men who lived justly in the days of old in accordance to the will of the Almighty and have died. Even though we couldn’t name them all, it is very necessary to point out but a few, beginning with: - Enoch [Gen. 5:22-24], Noah [Gen. 6:9-10], Abraham [Gen. 14:6], Job [Job 1:1], Samuel [1 Sam. 3:19-21], David etc. These men, having died long ago, were not in hell fire, because their conduct during life have not merited eternal suffering, nor were they in heaven because no one has opened the gate of heaven for them.

Jesus Christ said, “No one has ever gone up to heaven except the son of man who came down from heaven” [John 3:13]. This is to substantiate the fact that these departed just men were still at the place of temporal aboard even at the time of Christ, until his crucifixion and death, which brought about great changes in the history and fate of mankind as well as in the souls of those departed just men, [Matthew 27:50-53].

What prompted these analyses is the fact that we want all to know that purgatory exists. It is a reality that many people go through it in order to be purified by its fires and thus become more spiritually glittering before entering into heaven. It is true also that many Christians reject the teaching about purgatory, claiming that it is not their portion. Such would not prevent anyone from going through its fires as long as the fellow still has some minor sports in his soul at the period of death, no matter the religion or denomination, for purgatory is not meant for any particular race or religion, rather, the place is for souls who are worthy of heaven but has some minor faults.

St. John the Apostle said, “If you see your brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray to God who will give him life. This applies to those sins, which do not lead to death. But there are sins, which lead to death, and I do not say that you should pray to God about that. All wrong doing is sin, but there is sin which does not lead to death” [1 John 5:16-17]. With these passages the matter is settled and concluded. The truth about the reality or the existence of purgatory eventually is established.

There is sin, which does not lead to death. And death here means spiritual and not physical nor bodily. Therefore, when one dies physically but is guilty of that sin which does not lead to spiritual death, where would his soul go to spend eternity?

We want to conclude this matter by reminding ourselves that we can avoid purgatory in many ways, especially

1. By avoiding sins, even the smallest ones.
2. Being truly sorry for our past sins and performing some penances for them.
3. Making good confession whenever we mistakenly fall into sin [even venial sins] and stop believing that there are certain sins which don’t matter, for each has its own due punishment.
4. Doing good works and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
5. Partaking in some willful mortification, allowing ourselves to go through some self imposed pains with the intention of appeasing the Lord for our sins, and thus, reducing our already accumulated stay in purgatory.
6. We should say frequently with meditation those prayers of the Church that have more indulgences attached. E.g. The Holy Rosary, The Station of the Cross, The Divine Mercy Prayer, etc.
7. Going to Mass regularly, with devotion and concentration.

There are so many other ways by which we may gain the remission of the temporal punishments due to our sins. Let us strive on our own to know more of these avenues by which we can reduce our due punishments, and begin immediately to exploit them.

Above all, we should strive hard to gain “plenary indulgence”. This is the total wiping away of all the temporal punishments due to our sins. And how can we gain this? It is by adding the three conditions stipulated by the Church at the day of the good work or few days before or after the performance of the good work.

The recitations of the indulgence prayers are part of the good works. And what are the three conditions? They are: -

1. Sacramental confession
2. Holy Communion
3. Prayers for Pope’s intention, which can be one our father, one Hail Mary, and a Glory be to the Father. More information, on how to gain indulgences can also be obtained in pages 44 to 45 of the Catholic Simple Prayer Book.

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WHY SHOULD WE HONOUR VIRGIN MARY?
“The Virgin Mary should be honoured because the most Blessed Trinity honoured her”. In apparition to Ven Mary of Agreda [1602-1665] a Franciscan Nun and a mystical writer in Spain, the Holy Trinity revealed the privileges that the Virgin Mary enjoys in virtue of her participation in her majesty. As a mark of honour, the three Divine persons placed the head of Mary a crown of unmatched splendor while saying “My beloved, Thou shall be the Lady and sovereign of the Seraphim, of all ministering spirits, the angels and of the entire universe of creatures. In thy hand, we place influences of the heaven and do thou distribute them according to thy will and our own will shall be at thy disposal for the execution of thy wishes. We make Thee the treasurer of our goods, of our grace for distribution; nothing do we wish to be given which does not pass through thy hands; and nothing do we wish to deny which thou wishes to concede to men”.

Yes indeed Mary should be honoured.
[1] Christians express their faith in their prayers. One of the oldest and universal prayers is the Apostles Creed. In it we express our faith.”I believe in Jesus Christ conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary”. Mary’s name is enshrined in this prayer forever, and it is recited by all Christians.

To remember is to honour.
One of the oldest prayer said in honour of Mary is the prayer composed in the 4th Century “We fly to thy patronage Oh Holy Mother of God despise not our prayers in our necessities, but ever deliver us from all dangers, Oh glorious and Blessed Virgin Mary”.

The fathers of the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus recited this prayer in 431AD as the council’s prayer for Mary’s help. It was at that council that the Bishops of the Church defined the doctrine that Mary is the Mother of God. Nestorius held that there were two persons in Jesus. The Council upholds the teaching that there was only one person in Jesus, and that …Mary was “Theotokos” i.e. the God bearer. St. Patrick preached the same doctrine in Ireland when he came the following year 432AD to preach to the pagan Irish. Pope John Paul the II used the same word “Theotokos” in University of Ibadan when he spoke to the intellectuals in 1982. So the catholic tradition continues. The word was a Greek word coming from the council of Ephesus in 431AD which was held in Greek Language.

Hail Mary is another traditional prayer which goes back to the bible when the Angel Gabriel greeted Mary - Lk. 1:28. Hail Holy Queen; Mother of Mercy … is another ancient prayer, which refers to Mary as “Our life, our sweetness and our hope”. The early Fathers of the Church referred to Mary in the 2nd century as the new Eve. They said, what Eve lost through lack of faith, pride and disobedience, Mary won back by her faith, humility and obedience. “Death through Eve, and life through Mary”.

All the saints were noted for their devotion to Mary. From St. Luke and John, to St. Patrick, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Dominic and St. Bernard who composed the prayer “Memorare” Remember O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of that any one ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession and was left unaided [forsaken]… “In the creed, we say: I believe in the communion of saints … “It means that we can help each other, both the saints in heaven and the faithful on earth. Therefore since Mary is Queen of all the saints, surely She can help us. As she pleaded for the married couple at the marriage feast at Cana where Jesus worked his first miracle - Jn. 2:1-11, so also will She plead for us who seek her help.

The Magnificat is Mary’s prayer of thanks to God. It is also a prophecy – “Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed “[Lk. 1:48] Anytime we say Blessed are Thou amongst women…. We make the word of that prophecy come true. Every generation including our own shall honour Mary by calling her Blessed.

[2] God honoured Mary by choosing her among all the women in the world and prepared her to become the mother of His Son Jesus. God had the Power to choose an Immaculate Mother for His Son. He sent Archangel Gabriel and told him what to say and how to conduct himself in Mary’s presence. God did not send some small Piccan angel. This showed the importance of the message and the importance of the person to whom the message is sent.

[3] Angel Gabriel honoured Mary. He delivered his message with respect and reverence – “Hail full of grace, the Lord is with Thee…. ” [Lk. 1: 26-38].

[4] John the Baptist honoured Mary – when he heard Mary’s greeting, he leaped for joy in his mother’s womb. Just as King David danced before the Ark of the covenant …[Lk. 1:44; 2 Sam. 6:12-14]. Mary is called the Ark of the covenant. She like the Ark of the old covenant, is a sign of God’s presence, protection and blessing. As the cloud overshadowed the Ark to symbolize God’s Presence, so the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and she conceived Jesus, the Son of God.
St. Joseph honoured Mary – Mt. 1:18-25, he took her as God directed, cared for her and provided for her.

Jesus honoured Mary [Lk. 2:51] He went down to Nazareth and was subject to them ”He worked his first miracle at the request of Mary. Like a good son, he kept the 4th commandment…”Honour thy Father and thy Mother”.

All the saints honoured Mary – There is no saint who had not a great love for devotion to Mary. All great missionaries had a great love for Mary and for her Rosary. Through reflection on the events of the life of Jesus in the mysteries of the Rosary, we came to know Jesus better.

Saint Francis Xevier used to place a statue of Mary at the foot of the Cross-, whenever he was preaching.

Saint Bernadette {whom Our Lady appeared to at Lourdes} spread devotion to the rosary as a means of conquering sin and Satan and as an honour to Mary.

To honour the Virgin Mary, the Church holds on to the following four doctrines:

1. That She is truly the Mother of God
2. That She remained a Virgin forever – that is before the birth of Jesus and after the birth of Jesus – [Ever Virgin] [Virgin and Mother].
3. That her life began and ended Immaculate.
4. That her body did not corrupt, She was taken up to heaven after her life on earth..[the Assumption].

Mary Mother of God: - This basic truth about Mary was defined at the Council of Ephesus in 431AD. If you honour my mother, you honour me. If you honour Mary, You honour Jesus and vice versa. If you insult my mother you insult me. Mary has been hailed as Mother of God in the prayers of the Church for over 1550 years. For example, the prayer, “We fly to thy patronage was composed in the 4th century.

Mary remained a Virgin forever: - She had no inter-course with any man. She had no other child or children except Jesus Christ. She remained always a virgin. Refers to as EAST GATE IN EZEKIEL 43:4. The dazzling light passed through the east gate and went into the temple … EZEKIEL 44:1-2. The man led me to the outer gate at the East Side of the temple area. The gate was closed, and the Lord said to me “this gate will stay closed and will never be opened. No human being is allowed to use it, because I, the LORD GOD of Israel, have entered through it. It is to remain closed” This was the teaching of St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine and has been the firm faith of the Church ever since. The brothers and sisters of Jesus mentioned in Mk. 6 refer to his cousins.

The Immaculate Conception: - While always held as a doctrine in the Catholic Church, was not defined until 1854AD by Pope Pius IX. Four years afterwards at Lourdes, Mary appeared to St. Bernadette, when asked 'who are you? She replied: “I am the Immaculate Conception. And this put God’s seal on the doctrine.

In the 4th century, Duns Scotus taught that Mary had been redeemed in the perfect way of all. God preserved her free from the stain or original sin. From the first moment of her conception in her mother’s womb, and because of the foreseen merits of the sacrificial death and resurrection of her Son Jesus
[4] The Assumption: - Taking into accounts all the teaching of the scripture and the long tradition of the Church, Pope Pius XII defined this dogma in 1950AD.

[5] Mary is the mother and model of the Church: - Mary is our mother and so we must honour her. By her free consent to become the mother of the head of the Church… [Christ the Lord], Mary became the mother of the members as well. No mother ever gives birth merely to the head but rather delivers both head and the whole body. This was formally made known by Christ himself when hanging on the cross at Calvary. Mother behold thy Son, Son behold thy Mother… [Jn. 19:26-27].

Let us therefore give honour to whom honour is due.

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IS MARY EVER VIRGIN?

WHAT ABOUT THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF JESUS?

Catholics believe and strongly profess that Mary was a Virgin before she was engaged to Joseph, that she continued to be a Virgin even as she carried Jesus in her womb, and that she remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus. But the following Bible passages constantly refer to the brothers and sisters of Jesus:

1. Mark 3:32- “A crowd was sitting round Jesus, and they said to him, ‘Look, your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, and they want you.’”
2. Mark 6:3- “Isn’t he the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters living here?”
3. Matthew 13:55- the same as Mark 6:3
4. Luke 8:19- “Jesus’ mother and brothers came to him, but were unable to join him because of the crowd.”
5. John 2:12- “After this, Jesus and his mother, brothers and disciples went to Capernaum and stayed there a few days.”
6. John 7:3- “So Jesus’ brothers said to him, ‘leave this place and go to Judaea…’”
7. 1 Cor. 9:5- “Haven’t I the right to follow the example of other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Peter, by taking a Christian wife with me in my travels?”
8. Galatians 1:19- “I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord’s brother.”
9. Matthew 12:46- “Jesus was still talking to the people when his mother and brothers arrived.” On what grounds then do Catholics claim that Mary had no other children after Jesus?

DISCUSSION OF THE CASE.

To determine whether or not Mary had other children after the birth of Jesus, we shall examine two factors:

i. The biblical meaning of the Greek word adelphos – “brother”;
ii. The identity of the Mary at crucifixion scene.

THE BIBLICAL MEANING OF ADELPHOS

The primary meaning of adelphos, “brother,” in both the Old and New Testaments is son of the same parents, either father and mother or of the same father and different mother [Gen. 27:6;28:2]. In a
wider sense it signifies a person of common ancestry and relationship, for example, a person from the same extended family, the same clan, or tribe. We take a few examples.

- In Genesis 13:8, Abram called Lot his adelphos, but we know that they were not from the same father and mother. Lot was only the nephew [Gen. 12:5].

* In Genesis 29:12 Jacob says to Rachel, “I am your father’s adelphos, the son of Rebecca” Later in the same chapter, verse 14 Laban says to Jacob, Yes, indeed, you are my own flesh and blood. Of course, we know that Jacob and Laban were not from the same parents. Laban was the uncle of Jacob [Gen. 29:10].

* In Mark 6:17 Philip is called the adelphos of Herod. In reality, Philip was the step-brother of Herod, but not his brother from the same father and mother.

* In Numbers 16:9-10 the whole clan of Levites is referred to as “brothers.” The term adelphos is even extended to members of the same race or nation. In Dt. 15:12 the Jewish race address themselves as brothers. In Dt. 23:7 the citizens of a kindred nation are called brothers. “Do not despise the Edomites; they are your relatives [adelphos].”

In the New Testament co-believers are also called brothers about 160 times. Take for example in Galatians 1:11; 4:12, 28, Paul calls fellow believers his brothers: “Let me tell you, brothers….” “I beg you, my brothers, be like me;”

“Now, you my brothers…” Certainly all the Christians in Galatia were not born of the same parents with Paul. Yet, he calls all of them “brothers”. Jesus also stated on many occasions that whoever does the Will of His Father is His own brother [Mt. 12: 50; Mk. 3: 35; Lk. 8: 21].

In Genesis 9: 5, Matthew 5: 22 and 18: 35, the word adelphos signifies a fellow human being. In these passages there are warnings against violence and anger. Adelphos also is a term of polite address, especially of one king to another. “So they wrapped sackcloth round their waists and ropes round their necks, went to Ahab and said, ‘Your servant Benhadad pleads with you for his life.’ Ahab answered, Is he still alive? Good! He’s like a brother to me!” [1 kings 20: 32].

In our own African context, we know that people with a claim to one ancestor, call each other brothers and sisters. People from the same town or the same local government area even call one another brothers and sisters when they are in a foreign land. An outsider normally asks, “Are you from the same parents? And the answer always is, “No, we are just from the same area.”

From the foregoing exposition we can see that the biblical meaning of the term adelphos is twofold. First, it refers to people from the same parents; second, it means a relative, a tribe’s man, a co-believer, or a neighbour. What applies to adelphos [brother] applies also to adelphos [sister]. The question arises, in what sense is the term “brothers” and “sisters” applied to Jesus?

“THE IDENTITY OF THE MARY AT THE CRUCIFIXION SCENE”
We begin by asking the question, who is this Mary called the mother of James and Joseph at the crucifixion scene in Mark 15: 40? Is she the same Mary whom Jesus called his mother at the crucifixion scene in John 19: 25? Once we can establish the identity of this Mary, then we shall be able to determine whether or not Mary, the Mother of Jesus, had other children after Jesus.
First, let us look at the three specific passages where this Mary is mentioned:

* In Mk.15: 40, Mark gives a list of women who look on the cross from a distance. Among the women are “Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, and Salome”.

* Matt.27: 56 lists the same group of women but with some modifications: “Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the wife of Zebedee.”

* In Jn.19: 25 we see another set of women, “His Mother [Mary], His Mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene”.

Now, who is this Mary that is constantly referred to in the three texts? Is Mary the mother of James and Joseph the same person as Mary the Mother of Jesus? Or are there two Marys?

To ascertain the identity of this Mary we shall proceed by a process of elimination. First, Mary Magdalene is the same woman in the three texts. Second, Salome in the Marcan list is identified by bible scholars as the wife of Zebedee in the Matthean list and also as the sister of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in the Johanine list. Third, Bible scholars also identify Mary the mother of James and Joseph of the Marcan and Matthean list as Mary the wife of Clopas of the Johanine list.

Following our process of elimination the woman that remains is Mary the Mother of Jesus. Therefore Mary the mother of James and Joseph is not the same person as Mary the Mother of Jesus. “It is unlikely that Mark would knowingly describe the Mother of the Crucified Jesus [called ‘His Mother’ in Mk.3: 31] simply as the mother of James and Joseph” [Mary in the New Testament p.70]

CONCLUSION

Having ascertained the biblical meaning of the term adelphos, and having identified the Mary at the crucifixion scene in Mk.15: 40 we shall now draw some conclusions.

First, there is no direct or explicit testimony in the bible that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus. Second, from the question which Mary put to the Angel Gabriel in Lk.1: 34 “How can this be because I am a virgin?” It can be inferred that she had resolved to remain perpetually a virgin on the ground of a special divine enlightenment.

Third, the fact that the dying Jesus entrusted His Mother to the care and protection of the beloved disciple John in Jn.19: 26, presupposes that Mary had no other children.

Fourth, from the passage Lk.2: 7 which reads, “she gave birth to her first son……,” it cannot be concluded that Mary had more children after Jesus. After all, among the Jews an only son was also known as “first born son” since the “first born” had special privileges and duties.

Fifth, the “brothers and sisters of Jesus” referred to in the bible are not the children of Mary. They are just close relatives of Jesus, brothers and sisters in the wider sense. Characteristically, the bible never calls them “children of Mary;” not even one passage in the bible refers to them as “sons or daughters of Mary”. Commenting on Mtt.12: 46 the Jerusalem Bible states, “Not Mary’s children but near relations, cousins perhaps, which both Hebrew and Aramaic style ‘brother’.”
Therefore we can affirm that Mary had no other children after the birth of Jesus. She remained perpetually virgin.

CULLED - ANSWER FROM THE BIBLE TO THE FIVE MOST CONTROVERSAL QUESTIONS ABOUT MARY BY REV. FR. JOE CHUKS ATADO

CHAPTER TWO
THE FATIMA APPARITION, ROSARY AND BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE.

Salvation of man has been the sole pursuit of all ages. Out of love, God created man. Out of justice, He condemned man, and out of mercy, He redeemed man. Is man conscious of the LOVE, JUSTICE and MERCY of GOD?

What is the essence of man’s being? Is it not to know, love and serve Him as to be happy with him forever? Man is on a pilgrimage here on earth and would eventually get back home. “Man, remember your creator now! While you can, before the silver cord of life snaps, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the cistern; and the dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit returns to God who gave it, who would judge man for everything he does, including every hidden thing, good or bad. Hence, man, fear God and obey His commandments for this is your entire duty” [Ecclesiastes 12].

Why then does man live as if there is no God? Man has allowed himself to be recaptured by his mortal enemy despite his redemption. Man has allowed the evil one to degenerate the topmost level of his soul [the eminence of the spirit, the point, or the summit as theologians would call it] to the sensitive part. Man has no longer natural love for sovereign goodness. Man does not know God by celestial light and does no longer love Him, his Creator with supernatural love. Man has allowed sin to reduce him to the level of animal. He no longer has remorse. Man delights in what he ought to be ashamed of. Man is blinded to the point of being incapable of seeing error! The principle fault being that he has abandoned prayer, he has in this way become estranged from God and without God, everything is lacking. Man you have one life to live and it is your good works that will speak for you. This one life you've is borrowed from God and must be accountable for it. If you do well you reap it. If you do badly you also reap it.

Jesus have mercy on us, Virgin Mary help us!

Christ our Saviour, being the Eternal high Priest and while at the same time the victim, has offered for us the only acceptable sacrifice to His Father [Who is one with Him] for our redemption. This suffice to say that every other thing is less than an atom in comparison with the victim, Our Lord and our God, and the sacrifice being the ONLY acceptable one to God, declared every other one null and void and inconsequential.

THE FALL OF MAN AND HIS REDEMPTION

After creating all things God made Adam in His own image and likeness. God gave Adam dominion over all things. Then God looked over all that He had made and it was excellent in every way. That is, it was good. He gave Adam, Eve as a helpmate. Satan through Eve turned Adam to disobey the will of God. Hence the nature of Adam that was higher than that of Satan was subjected to the power of Satan and therefore debased him under Satan. Man ran short of the glory of God. Consequently God
chased man out of His presence. Man ought to suffer eternally with Satan in hell. Was God going to abandon man He created in His image and likeness? Out of His mercy He promised reconciliation. “I will put enmity between you and the woman between your seed and her seed. She will crush your heel and you will strike her heel” [Gen. 3:15]. For the reconciliation, a sacrifice is needed and a perfect one indeed. Would offering the blood of Isaac have reconciled the world and God? No! it was no use he being under Satan, as everybody had fallen under Satan, could not redeem the world. The only person who will reconcile the world will be somebody who will be at the head of creation just as Adam was. But in this case, the person must be sinless and higher than Adam and Satan. But Satan [Lucifer] was the highest angel in heaven before his fall, therefore, none is greater than Satan except God. It becomes necessary for Him to come for the Salvation of man.

At the fullness of time when God wanted to reconcile us to Himself, He fulfilled His promise and sent the Woman Who was the enemy of Satan and Her Fruit that is, MARY and JESUS. They were sinless, Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb” [Luke, 1:42] Mary was immaculately conceived in order to give birth to perfection. They came strictly for the salvation of man. As Eve was a helpmate of Adam in the fall of man, Mary was sent as a helpmate of Jesus in the redemption of man. Jesus played the part of Adam and not that of Eve as well. The helpmate of Jesus was standing beside him during that great sacrifice on the tree of Calvary just as Adam and his helpmate betrayed us on the tree of paradise.

Just as Eve was the mother of all men [Gen. 3:20], So is Mary the mother of the redeemed world [Jn. 19:26-27]. And just as Adam was the father of all men, so is Jesus Christ the father of all the redeemed [Jn. 8:38, 41]. Because He is also God, He owns everything and everybody. To enter into the redeemed world, one has only to be born again, that is, baptized [Jn. 3:1-6, Mk. 16:16; Rom. 6:3-4, Col. 2:10-12] and to stay there one has only to obey the will of God i.e. keep God’s commandments. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, [Jn 3:6]. When we were given birth by our earthly mother, we assume the nature of our sinful parents Adam and Eve. When we receive the sacrament of baptism, we are reborn by the operation of the Holy Spirit, our old evil nature [of Adam and Eve] is put to death, being buried, rises to live in the new nature of our spiritual parents, Jesus Christ our Father the new Adam and Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother the new Eve.

Jesus Christ being one with the Father is now sitting on His Throne. The Blessed Virgin Mary, being of Immaculate Conception, lived a stainless life, knowing no-corruption neither inherited nor contacted, was received in bodily form into heaven [Assumption]. Having listened and kept the commandments of God perfectly, she was crowned Queen of heaven and earth. Next to her Divine Son, the first born of creation she reigns [Ps. 45:9]

By the virtue of our baptism, we are adopted children of God our Father and the Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother. [Who has occupied the position lost by Lucifer]. Is the ancient serpent, the evil one, happy about all these? No! Hence he becomes angry with the Blessed Virgin Mary and declares war against the rest of Her offspring [Rev. 12]. He roams about the world seeking souls to ruin. He keeps deceiving the children of God to go back to their old sinful nature.

APPARITION.

Grammatically apparition means an appearance, something that appears, especially something remarkable or unexpected.
In our corporal life, we have father and mother, when ever our misbehaviour aroused the anger of our father, if we have a loving and caring mother who loves and cares for our father and would never want him offended and who as well loves and cares for us and would never want us to face the consequences of our misdeeds, she would always middle when ever our father threatens to deal with us for our misdeeds. She would let us know the gravity of what we did; the effect of it on our father; and on us too. She would advise us on how best to reach out to make amend and get back into the favour of our father while she would also beg our father to be patient with us. No loving and caring mother would ever relent in working to see that none of her children suffers.

Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven [Our Lords Prayer]. In our spiritual life, Jesus is our Father and Mary is our Mother. Let us remember what the devil said to Almighty God our Father. He said that he would raise his throne higher than that of the Most High, and that he would wage war against God. God said, “I will put enmity, between thee and the woman, between Her seed and thy seed; She will crush thy head with Her heel” [Gen. 3:15].

Take a look at what is happening in the world today. What do we see? We see a deluge of sin, world infected by immorality, lies, hatred and blasphemy. Satan is waging a decisive war against Mary our Mother by deceiving us the rest of her offspring [cf. Rev. 12: 17] to keep disobeying the commandments of God so that he would trap us in his throne of eternal damnation. God forbid!

The Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother, however, will always assist us in even the most difficult trials. She will always continue the battle She has been waging ever since Her conception. This every day we can say: “Today the head of the ancient serpent was crushed by Her”. So we the children of God have offended God our Father so much that when ever He wants to visit the world with His justice, our loving and caring Mother Mary would always remind God of his love, pleads for his mercy while She comes to earth to warn and tell us Her children through the Church the mystical body of Her Son Jesus Christ Our Lord and our God to make reparation for our offences against our Father and to turn away from our mortal enemy. The devil is now fighting more furiously. Our loving and caring Mother Mary being troubled at the wicked destruction of the deceiver keeps frequenting the earth to urge us to God in the recent times. Few of the reported cases are the miraculous medal 1830; Our Lady of Victories 1817; Salette 1846; Lourdes 1858; Pontmain 1871; Fatima 1917; Marienfried 1946 and so on. The Church recognizes some of these as authentic while others are still under scrutiny. NOTE! The apparitions are NEVER imposed as DOGMAS. The Church does not preach the importance of Mary the Mother of Christ because of her repeated appearances on earth. The Church is rather giving Her, Her rightful position as co-helper in the work of redemption. If She is coming then, She is coming out of Her own free will, out of Her love and care for you and I. Her appearances are all for our own benefit. But even if it is discovered today that She never came, the position She occupies in the history of redemption will still go for her. So if you do not believe in Her appearances, believe in what the bible says about Her honourable position. “Henceforth, all generations will call me blessed” [Lk. 1:48]. And more so, what the Mother Church says about her life on earth. If you are not one of those who call Her Blessed like the inspired Elizabeth, then be quick to switch over.

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FATIMA APPARITIONS

PREPARATORY VISIT OF THE ANGEL TO THE LITTLE SEERS.

Before the great apparitions of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima, the three children had begun to receive the unexpected visit of an angel who prepared them for their future mission.
FIRST APPARITION OF THE ANGEL

Towards the end of spring, 1916, the three future seers of Fatima were tending their sheep one day on the slopes of the hill of Cabecco called Casa Velha. Towards midday, drizzle began to fall. Seeking shelter, the three little children, climbed the slope, followed by their sheep. They entered for the first time the cave that was to become so sacred. The rain stopped but they spent the day in the cave. They had their lunch and after the Rosary, started to play jacks. A short while, a violent gust of wind shook the trees, which made them, raise their heads to see what was happening for the day was serene. There above the trees towards the East, they saw coming towards them a light whiter than snow. It was the form of a young man, transparent, more brilliant than a crystal pierced by the rays of the sun. As he approached they were able to distinguish his features: A young man of fourteen to sixteen years of age, and of a supper human beauty. The children were so surprised and half absorbed that they could not utter one word. He got to them and said: “Fear not! I am the Angel of Peace. Pray with me! Then kneeling and placing his forehead on the ground he said three times: “My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you, I beg pardon, for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love you” He repeated this pray three times. He arose and said: “Pray thus. The Holy hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplications”

The Angel disappeared and the awareness of the supernatural was so intense that for a long space of time they remained there in the same position in which he left them, unaware of their very existence, repeating that same prayer over and over again. “We felt the presence of God so intensely, so intimately, that we dared not speak even to each other. The next day we felt ourselves still enveloped by that atmosphere. His words remained so deeply imprinted on us. From this day onward we often remained prostrate for long hours in the Angels attitude repeating this prayer until sometimes we feel exhausted” Said Lucia.

Children being children, the spell did wear off and it was not long before they went back to their daily round of playing singing and dancing. One notable effect remained however, which seemed to fit in with the events that followed. The three little cousins were content to spend all their time together.

SECOND APPARITION OF THE ANGEL

On another occasion, in the month of July or August, 1916, the children were playing together near the well in Lucia’s Garden when the same Angel suddenly appeared and said to them: “What are you doing? Pray! Pray a great deal! The hearts of Jesus and Mary have designs of Mercy for you! Offer continually to the Most High prayers and sacrifices!” But how are we to sacrifice ourselves? “Lucia” asked? “Offer up everything within your power as a sacrifice to the Lord in an act of reparation for the sins by which he is offended; and of supplication for the conversion of sinners. Thus invoke peace upon our country. I am her Guardian Angel; the Angel of Portugal. Above all, accept and bear with submission the sufferings that the Lord may send you” Burning with curiosity, Francisco who only saw the Angel but did not hear him wanted to know what the Angel had spoken to Lucia and Jacinta. He was told to wait till tomorrow for they could not speak then. The next day Lucia managed to attend to the many questions posed by Francisco. The children became more meditative.

“Those words”, writes Lucia, “engraved themselves on our minds like a living 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. Henceforth 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”.
THIRD APPARITION OF THE ANGEL

Two or three months latter the children had once more led their sheep to the hill of Cabecco. After dinner they retired to the cave to say the Rosary and spend a part of the afternoon reciting the Angle’s prayer. They had already, recited this prayer several times, when they were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light. Rising they saw the Angel who held in his hands a Chalice, surmounted by a Host from which drops of Blood fell into the chalice…. Leaving the chalice and Host suspended in mid-air, the Angel prostrated beside the children and made them recite three times the following prayer. “Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore you profoundly. I offer you the Most Precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the Tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg for the conversion of poor sinners”

The Angel then arose, and holding the chalice and the Host again, he gave the Host to Lucia and the contents of the Chalice to Jacinta and Francisco, while he said: “Receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Make reparation for their sins and console your God”

Prostrating himself once more as if in thanksgiving, the Angel said again three times the prayer, “Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit etc…”

The full meaning of this vision unfolded slowly and astonishingly to their young minds. Their whole being became absorbed by a new strange, yet happy feeling of the inward presence of God. They kept silence for some time. Francisco was the first to break it. He had not heard the Angel speak and was anxious to learn everything. “Lucia,” he said “I know that the Angel gave you Holy Communion. But what did he give to me and Jacinta?” “The same; it was Holy Communion” Jacinta replied at once overflowing with joy “did you not see that it was the Blood that dropped from the Host?” “I felt that God was within me.” He agrees, “but I did not know how.” The Children remained prostrated in adoration, repeating over and over again the inspired, heart stirring first and second prayers of the Angel.

Intimately seized by a deep supernatural recollection, they remained, thus absorbed in prayer, and strangers to the exterior world -----And during these long hours of prayer in the cave, their thirty sheep tended themselves all alone in a mysterious fashion. At last, Francisco seeing that night was approaching invited his companions to return home with the flock.

What is the meaning of these extraordinary visits of the Angel, whose reality is guaranteed for us by the authentic documents published at Fatima and Rome? It is evident”, says Fr. Fonseca, “that they were but a preparation and an orientation. They prepared for the great apparition of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917 and they directed the prayer of the three children against the future assaults of the great modern pagan movements, which profess “not to believe, nor adore, nor hope nor love.”

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APPARITION OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA “THE QUEEN OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY.”

This historic event of our time happened in 1917 at Portugal a country in Europe. Our Lady appeared six consecutive times to three little shepherds hailed from the little hamlet of Aljustrel, in the parish of Fatima. They were Jacinta Marto, a little girl of seven, Francisco Marto her brother, aged nine, and their cousin Lucia dos Santos aged ten. These little mountain shepherds could neither read nor write, but being brought up in a Christian manner they could pray and had learned their catechism assiduously. Lucia had made her first Holy Communion. Their parents possessed at Cova da Iria, two miles from their home, a small piece of land on which grew some evergreen oaks.
THE FIRST APPARITION [SUNDAY, MAY 13TH 1917]

On that faithful day 13th of May, 1917, being Sunday the three little shepherds attended the first Mass [as they never fail to attend Mass on Sundays] “The Mass of the Souls,” as they used to say then, for it was a Mass celebrated for the souls in Purgatory, which was a treasured devotion in the piety of the Portuguese. After returning home early in the morning, they left at once to feed their flocks. As a place of pasture, Lucia write, ‘we had chosen that day by chance, or rather according to a plan of Divine Providence, the property belonging to my parents, called Cova da Iria. For that, we had to pass through an uncultivated terrain, which doubled the length of our long road.

Hearing the Angelus bell from the steeple of Fatima the three little shepherds knelt down and recited the Rosary together. After the Rosary they decided to build a “Little house” which might shelter them on stormy days. Little thinking of the symbolism of their childish actions, they chose for their fragile edifice the very spot where the majestic Basilica of Our Lady of Fatima now stands.

The little architects were thus engaged at their building when they were suddenly interrupted by a blinding flash of lightning. They looked anxiously at the sky. Not a single cloud veiled the brilliance of the midday sun. Fearing however, that a storm might be brewing on the other side of the hill, they drove their sheep before them and hastily descended the slope. Halfway down they saw a second flash brighter even than the first. They went still further. Then on reaching the foot of the slope opposite the site of the present chapel of the apparition, they stopped, surprised and dazzled by a wonderful apparition.

Two paces away, on the foliage of an evergreen oak, they saw a “Beautiful Lady”, all luminous and more resplendent than the sun. With a gesture of motherly kindness, the Apparition reassured them. “Fear not. I shall do you no harm” And so they remained there in ecstasy contemplating it. After some minutes of ecstatic silence, Lucia ventures to ask. “Where do you come from?” “I come from Heaven!” replied the Lady. “From Heaven! And why have you come here?” “I have come to ask you to come here for six months in succession on the thirteenth of each month, at this same hour. In the month of October, I shall tell you who I am and what I want” “Could you tell me if the war will end soon?” “I cannot tell you that” replied the Lady, “Until I have told you what I want.” Gaining confidence Lucia continues: “You come from Heaven! What about me shall I go to heaven?” “Yes, you will go to heaven”. “And Jacinta?” “Jacinta also.” “And Francisco?” The Apparition turns towards the little fellow and looks at him with an expression of kindness and motherly reproach. “He will go also but he must say many Rosaries.”

Though Francisco, like Lucia and Jacinta, was immersed in the glorious light of the splendor that shone from the Lady, he was not seeing the Lady. Neither could he hear the Lady’s voice though he could hear Lucia talking, when he heard Lucia mention his name, he became more interested in the mysterious conversation. “I don’t see anything Lucia”, said Francisco, “throw a stone at it see if it is real!” he suggested. “Throw a stone at the Lady? Never!” Instead Lucia in surprise asked the Lady. “How is it that Francisco does not see you?” “Tell him to recite the Rosary and he will see me”.

Lucia did so, and Francisco took his Rosary quickly from his pocket to do as the Lady said. Before he finished the first decade the Lady became visible to him with almost blinding splendor. Francisco still preoccupied that their sheep may have run down the hill and would damage other neighbor’s garden, suggested to go and attend to them. Lucia reassured him saying, “Look here! It is not necessary! The Lady says that they will not eat the peas as you fear!” “What do you mean the sheep won’t eat
chickpeas” “Never mind, Francisco!. The Lady knows”. At these words, Francisco relaxed and trusted the Lady.

Then Lucia remembered to ask about two young girls who had died not long before. They had been friends of hers and used to go to her house to learn how to weave with her older sisters.

“How’re Maria de las Nieves in heaven?” “Yes, she is”. She had been around 16 years old. “And Amelia?” “Where”? “She will be in purgatory until the end of the world.” Amelia had died at around 18 or 20 years old and was by no means a scandalous Christian.

Then the Lady asked them a favour, “Would you like to offer yourselves to God to make sacrifices and to accept willingly all the sufferings it may please him to send you, in order to make reparation for so many sins, which offend the Divine Majesty, to obtain the conversion of sinners and to make amends for all the blasphemies and offences committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary?” “Yes, we would like that very much.” Answers Lucia in the name of all three. With a gesture the Lady shows how much their generosity pleases her. Then she adds: “You will soon have much to suffer, but the grace of God will help you, and give you the strength you need”.

“It was in pronouncing those last words [the grace of God, etc as contained in the document of 1941] that our Lady opened Her hands for the first time and communicated to us as by a reflection which emanated from them, a light so intense that penetrating our heart and even to the depths of our soul, it made us see ourselves in God, who was this light, more clearly than we see ourselves in the best mirrors” says Lucia.

“Then moved by an interior impulse, which was communicated to us, we fell on our knees and we fervently repeated: “Oh Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee. My God, My God, I love Thee in the Most Holy Sacrament”.

Again the Lady spoke to them, “say the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war. “Can you tell me whether the war will last a long time, or if it will soon end?” asked Lucia.

“I cannot tell you yet, as I have not yet told you what I want”.

“Then the Lady began to rise serenely, going up toward the east she disappeared in the immensity of the sky. The light, which surrounded Her, seemed to open a path for Her among the stars and for this reason we said sometimes that we had seen Heaven opening”.

“The Lady of apparition”, Lucia affirmed, “seems to be from fifteen to eighteen years of age. Her dress was of a very pure snow-whiteness. Her veil, which covered her head and most of her body, was embroidered with gold. Her face with an incomparable nobility had something of the supernatural and Divine; She seemed serene and grave, was shaded in sorrow. From Her hands joined at the height of the chest, was hanging a beautiful Rosary with beads like white ermine, resembling pearls and terminating with a crucifix. Her whole person, surrounded by a splendor more brilliant than the sun, radiated clusters of light, and especially Her face is of a beauty impossible to describe and incomparably superior to any human beauty”.
Though after the first apparition, the little seers resolved not to relate it to any one because no one would believe them. But the little heart of Jacinta could not conceal the joyful news for long. She did not hesitate to jump the news on her mother Maria Rosa when she returned in the evening of that day. Whether they believe or not she insisted and obtained the daily recitation of the Rosary in her family. The little Jacinta became a fearless apostle in the bosom of her family. In this manner the children did not only learn to recite the Rosary from the apparition themselves but to make everybody recite it also. The news of this mysterious apparition was not slow in spreading.

WEDNESDAY June, 13th being the day of the second apparition, was the feast of the patron Saint of the Parish of Fatima St. Anthony, and contrary to the village Pastor, Reverend Manuel Marques Jerreira’s advice that the children should be allowed to go to Cova da Iria on the 13th June, the mothers of the seers wanted to dissuade them from going to Cova da Iria by persuading them to attend the St. Anthony’s feast instead. But the fearless Jacinta did not give any room for that.

“Mamma”, Jacinta said the previous evening, “do not go to the feast of St. Anthony tomorrow, come instead with us to Cova da Iria to see the Blessed Virgin” “It is useless to go there”, replied the mother, “the Blessed Virgin will not appear to you”. “O yes, yes, she said she would appear and she will certainly do so!” “Then you will not go to the feast of St. Anthony?” enquired Senhora Marto Jacinta’s mother. “No! St. Anthony is not beautiful” “How can you say that he is not beautiful? “This Lady is much, much more beautiful! We shall go first to Cova da Iria, and if the Lady tells us to go to the feast of St. Anthony we shall go”.

Before midday the three children arrived, knelt in the shade of a large oak and recited the Rosary devoutly with about fifty people who betook themselves to Cova da Iria, most of them through curiosity. Just as Francisco and Jacinta were insisting that another Rosary be recited, suddenly Lucia made a gesture of surprise “Look”, she says “that was a flash of lightning, The Lady is coming!” She hurried with her two little cousins down to the tree of the first apparition, and the vision appeared “Madam” says Lucia, “you have made me come here what do you want of me? The heavenly vision asks them to come back on July 13th and to recite the Rosary every day. Then she adds.

“I want you to learn to read, in order that I may be able to tell you what I want”. Lucia intercedes for a sick person recommended to her.

“If he is converted, he will recover in the cause of the year” replied the Lady. “I would like to ask you also to take us to Heaven!, says Lucia. “Yes” Our Lady answered; “I will take Jacinta and Francisco soon. You however are to stay here a longer time. Jesus wants to use you to make me known and loved. He wants to establish the Devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the World. I promise salvation to those who embrace it and God will love their souls as flowers placed by myself to adorn His Throne”.

“Am I going to stay here alone?” Lucia asked full of sadness at the thought of losing her beloved cousins. “No My daughter” Lucia’s eyes filled with tears. “Does this cause you to suffer a great deal? I will never leave you, my Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.”

“It was at the moment when She pronounced these last words that she open her hands and communicated to us for the second time, the reflection of that immense light. In it we saw ourselves as
submerged in God. Jacinta and Francisco appeared to be in the part of the light which elevated itself to Heaven and I in the part which spread itself on the earth.”

“In the palm of the right hand of Our Lady, was a Heart, surrounded by thorns which seemed to pierce it. We understood that it was the Immaculate Heart of Mary outraged by the sins of humanity, which demanded reparation.”

Lucia rose quickly to her feet. Stretching out her arm she cried, “Look, there she goes; there she goes?” Not everyone who had been in the Cova da Iria left immediately after the Litany. Some few remained to ask the children the details of the apparition. The little ones told what they were allowed to tell, but kept the rest to themselves.

Francisco, quite moved by what he had seen, later ask Lucia: “Why did the Virgin have a heart in Her hand radiating out over the world that light as great as God, you, Lucia, were with her, in the light that flowed down to the earth and Jacinta and I in the light that rose up to the sky?”

“Well” answered Lucia, “you, and Jacinta are soon going to go to heaven. I will stay here with the Immaculate Heart of Mary on earth”.

From this day onwards, the apparitions at Cova da Iria became the invariable subject of conversation. As was to be expected, some believed, while others jeered openly, even reproaching the parents of the little seers for not recalling their children to reason.

The children started encountering many difficulties both at home and outside. Though the parents of Francisco and Jacinta did not doubt their children’s sincerity, and in their hearts were inclined to believe in these apparitions, but how justify their conviction before the scoffers? Besides, diabolical influence was always a possibility. Then their mother in annoyance threatened one day to punish them severely if they continued to draw people to Cova da Iria. The fearless Jacinta was well able to defend herself:

“Well, we do not wish you to go to Cova da Iria” she replied. “Those who wish go. We go ourselves and those who do not want to go have only to remain at home! But for those who refuse to believe, the punishment of God awaits them. And be careful, Mamma, for if you yourself do not believe, God might punish you.” At once the storm was averted.

But Lucia’s mother was not so easily disarmed. Persuaded that her daughter was taking part in a wicked hoax, she wished her to retreat publicly. “But Mamma,” replied the girl in tears, “If I have seen, how can you ask me to say I have not seen? Then I should be lying”. Being taken once more to the Pastor of Fatima who wished to question her after each apparition she was so scared that the priest put an end to the interview with these words. “All this does not seem to come from God, since instead of exposing everything simply to her pastor, the child is timid and reticent. It might quite possibly be some mischief of the devil. The truth will come out in time”.

The thought that she might be the plaything of the devil completed the frustration of poor Lucia who revealed her fears to her two little companions. Jacinta bravely reassured her. “No, no” said she, “It is not the devil. The devil according to what is said is very ugly and lives under the earth in hell. This Lady on the contrary, is so beautiful and we have seen her go up to heaven.
The date of the next apparition was approaching; Jacinta and Francisco were the happiest children in
the world. Lucia’s heart, however, was filled with gloom and despair. Though Jacinta’s words revived
her courage but in the hostile atmosphere of her family, her doubts returned very quickly that on July
12th she told her two companions of her decision not to go to the Cova the next day. “We are going!”
they answered her. “The Lady told us to go there.” “I will speak to her”, Jacinta declared breaking into
tears. “Why are you crying?” Lucia asked. “Because you don’t want to go”. “No, I am not going,
Look! If the Lady asks for me, tell her I am not going because I fear she is the devil” and then Lucia,
grief-stricken, hurried away.

On the morning of Friday, July 13th, towards eleven O’clock, Lucia felt herself urged to go to the
heavenly rendezvous. She went to the home of her two cousins whom she found in tears kneeling at
the foot of the bed, reciting the Rosary. “Have you not gone yet?” she asked. “It is time to go”
“Oh!, they replied, “We had not the courage to go without you.”
“Well then, let us go together”.

So, off they went, the three of them walking happily through the crowds of people that jammed the
road to Cova. They could not hurry, because many people stopped them, asking them to speak to our
Lady and ask special favors for them.

At Cova da Iria, the people already gathered were estimated to be from four to five thousand. The
children recited the Rosary kneeling, with the people and the vision appears again.

For joy or rather frightened perhaps by the trials she had undergone, Lucia looked at the Lady without
daring to say a word. But the fearless Jacinta, nudging her said: “Go on Lucia speak! Do you not see
that she is already there and that she wants you to speak?

Thus encouraged, Lucia asked the Lady: “What do you want of me?” “I want you to return here on the
thirteenth of next month,” the Lady said “Continue to say the Rosary everyday in honour of Our Lady
of the Rosary to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war; for she alone can save it”.

Lucia thinking of her mother and the words of the Pastor, wishing to clear up the doubts of people,
spoke again in her own childish manner, “will you please tell us who you are and perform a miracle so
that everyone will believe that you really appear to us?”
“Continue to come here every month. In October, I will perform a miracle all shall see so that they
believe”.

Gaining courage, Lucia then asked her to be so kind as to cure a cripple, to covert a family of Fatima
and to take to heaven a sick person of Atouguia. The Lady answered that if she did not cure the cripple
person, she would give him other means of earning a livelihood but for that, he must recite the Rosary
every day; that the sick person should not be in a hurry to die, that she know better than he did when
she should come to take him; that the other persons’ requests would be granted the following year, but
that they must recite the Rosary.

Then to remind the children of their special vocation and to inspire them to greater favour and courage
for the future the Lady said:
“Sacrifice yourselves for sinners; and say often, especially when you make some sacrifice: O Jesus, it is for love of you, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary”

“As Our Lady spoke these last words, she opened her hands once more, as she had done during the two previous months. The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in the fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers all blackened or banished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in huge fires, without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. [It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me]. The demons could be distinguished by their terrifying and repellent likeness so frightful and unknown animals black and transparent like burning coals”.

In her third Memoir, Lucia added: “that vision lasted only a moment, thanks to our Good Mother of Heaven, who at the first apparition, promised to bring us to Heaven. Without that, I think we would have died of terror and fear”.

Terrified and as if to plead for succor, we looked up at Our Lady, who said to us, so kindly and so sadly: “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. The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that he is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father”.

“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the first Saturdays. If my request are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, the Holy Father will have much to suffer various nations will be annihilated. In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world. In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved; etc… Do not tell this to anybody. Francisco, yes you may tell him,” “When you pray the Rosary, say after each decade: O MY JESUS, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of your mercy!”

After this, there was a moment of silence, and then Lucia’s heart aching to do something heroic for her Lady, once again said to her, in childlike abandon “Don’t you want anything else from me?” “No; today I desire nothing else from you”.

Then, as before our Lady began to ascend towards the East until she vanished into the immensity of the firmament. As soon as the children recovered from the spell of emotions, a ruthless, inquisitive crowd surrounded them, all saying at once, “Lucia, what did the Lady say to make you look so sad?” “It is a secret” she responded.

“Is it something good?” “For some, it is good; for others, it is evil” “Won’t you tell it?” they pressed. “No I cannot tell it. She answered with convincing determination.

The people kept pushing so much that they almost smothered the children. Jacinta’s father, frightened for the safety of his children, perspiration rolling down his face from the excitement of the occasion,
elbowed his way close to the children, picked up Jacinta in his strong arms and sheltering her from the
sun with his hat, started for the road home. Francisco was picked up by a relative while Lucia was
being carried by a very tall man, so tall in fact that Lucia’s mother from where she was hiding with
Jacinta’s mother was distracted from her worry and blurted out. “Oh, what a big man.”

SACRIFICES AND SUFFERINGS.

After this third Apparition of Our Lady the three children yearned more and more to be left alone to
say their prayers and make their sacrifices for Our Lady; but whenever they were seen on the streets
the crowds of people gathered to ask them all sorts of questions about the apparitions. To avoid these
questions, they had to wend their way to their pastures over back roads and deserted lanes. So filled
were they with the thought of pleasing the Lady that nothing else counted, neither singing nor dancing
nor even the flute playing of little Francisco. “What are you thinking about, Jacinta,” Lucia asked one
morning, noticing a cloud of sadness veiling her face. “I am thinking of Hell, and poor sinners. How
sorry I am for the souls that go to Hell…. The people there, alive, burning as wood in the fire…. Lucia,
why is it that Our Lady does not show Hell to sinners? If they saw it, they would not commit any more
sins, so they would not go there”. Lucia, puzzled, could find no word to answer. But Jacinta insisted,
“why did you not tell Our Lady to show Hell to all these people?”

“I forgot,” Lucia admitted.

Jacinta then knelt on the ground, while she raised her folded hands towards Heaven, sighing out the
prayer that the Lady taught them to say”. “O MY JESUS, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of
hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of your mercy”. Lucia and
Francisco both followed suit kneeling as they said the Lady’s prayer with Jacinta. Jacinta, however,
was so engrossed in her prayer, she did not realize that Lucia was praying with her, and she spoke up
“Lucia, Francisco, are you praying with me? We must pray a great deal to save souls from Hell. So
many go there!”

The thought of Hell and the souls suffering in its fire so filled the child’s mind, she could not fathom
the reasons for it. “Lucia”, she went to Lucia in all her problems. “Lucia, What have these people
done to go to Hell?”

“I don’t know! Maybe they sinned by missing Mass on Sunday. Maybe they said ugly words, stole,
swore….” “How easy it was for them to have held their tongues or go to Mass! How sorry I am for
them! If I could only show them Hell…..”

Tired and weary from kneeling so long, they got up and walked to the shade of the large holmoaks to
think some more on the words of their Lady. Francisco spoke up this time: “Why did Our Lady hold
in her hand a heart spreading upon the world that great light that is God? Lucia, you were with Our
Lady in the light that came towards the earth; but Jacinta and I in the light that went up to Heaven.”
You and Jacinta will go to Heaven soon, but I have to stay in the world longer”
“How many years?”
“I don’t know, but for many”
“Was it the Lady who told you?”
“No, but I saw it in that light that she sent into our hearts” “That’s true”. Jacinta spoke up, “I also
saw in that way. I am going to Heaven but you are going to stay here. If Our Lady lets you tell
everyone what Hell is like, so that they won’t sin any more. So many people falling into Hell, so many
people…” “You don’t have to be afraid,” Lucia said, “you are going to Heaven.” “Yes, I shall go: but I want everybody to go there too”.

The cool hours of the morning gave way to the stifling heat of the day. The children burned with thirst, but there was not a drop of water near. Instead of complaining, seven years old Jacinta seemed happy. “How good it is,” she said: “I am thirsty but I offer everything for the conversion of sinners”. Lucia the oldest of them, realized she should look after her cousins, so she went to a nearby house to fetch some water. When she returned, she offered it first to Francisco.

“I don’t want to drink,” the nine-year-old boy said; “I want to suffer for sinners.”

“Jacinta, you drink it”.

“I also want to offer a sacrifice.” So Lucia poured out the water into the hollow of a rock for the sheep to drink and returned the empty jug to the house.

Jacinta however became very weak and was almost fainting. The rhythmic noises of crickets, frogs and insects began to pound in her ears like thunder. Holding her head in her hands, she cried out in utter desperation, “My head aches so. Tell the crickets and frogs to stop”. “Don’t you want to suffer this for sinners?” Lucia asked. “Yes, I do Lucia; let them sing.” “Lucia” Jacinta continued, “the Lady said that her Immaculate Heart shall be your refuge and the way that shall lead you to God. Doesn’t that make you happy? I love her Heart very much”. “I should like to go with you.” Lucia confessed, thinking of the beautiful joys of Heaven. “Lucia, don’t you remember... the Heart of Our Lady encircled by thorns? How pitiful! I am so sorry for her… She asked for the communion of reparation, but how could I do it if I can’t receive communion yet?” Filled with such thoughts the days sped by for these three children.

One time Jacinta was alone near the well, while Lucia and Francisco went to look for some wild honey. All at once a vision of the Pope came before her. Thinking that the others would see everything she did, she called them back, Lucia! Francisco! Did you see the Holy Father?” “I don’t know how it happened.” Jacinta went on. “I saw the Holy Father in a very big house. He was kneeling before a table, holding his face in his hands and he was crying. Outside, there were many people, some were throwing stones at him, others were swearing at him and saying many ugly words to him. How pitiful it was! We must pray a lot for him”.

Another time while they were in the cave of the Cabeco, saying the prayer of the Angel, Jacinta suddenly got up, her eyes filled with tears, “Lucia?”. She sobbed, “don’t you see all those roads and lanes and fields covered with people crying from hunger, without anything to eat? And the Holy Father in a Church praying before the Immaculate Heart of Mary? And all those praying with him?”

As the news of these extraordinary events flashed through the country, arousing curiosity everywhere the number of visitors to Fatima increased daily all wanted to see the Cova da Iria and to speak to the three children.

The Marto family was much more understanding of Jacinta and Francisco than was Lucia’s family of her. They questioned Lucia and ridiculed her even more than outsiders. They made life so unbearable for her. Being a family of ordinary means, her mother in particular made her pay for the loss incurred because of the Cova da Iria events. In which they had a few pieces of land where they raised their vegetables and food, potatoes, corn, beans and olives. So many people that visit the Cova da Iria trampled upon the farm and everything was ruined. Her mother would not spare her for this “when you want to eat, you can go now and ask that Lady?” And her sisters would say, “you should eat only what grows in the Cova da Iria.”
This nagging became so distressing that the poor child hardly dared to pick up a slice of bread to eat.

Meanwhile the ecclesiastical authority feigned ignorance of the events and held itself resolutely aloof.

THE ANTHICLERICAL REACTION.

The enemies of the Church on the contrary understood almost instinctively the capital importance of the religious movement of Fatima.

Since the revolution of 1910, which had driven from Portugal the king, Dom Manuel, the Free thinkers had seized power, expelled all religious from the country, oppressed the secular clergy and were constantly persecuting the Church by impious laws, the avowed aim of all this being the prevention of recruiting among the clergy and the destruction of the Faith. Therefore, as soon as these prodigies of Fatima began to electrify the crowds, they felt that this religious movement threatened to ruin in a day, all the work of dechristianisation that they had been doing for many years. The Grand Orient of Lisbon hastened to make its plan and to launch its attacks.

The attack began with a press campaign, clearly organized, which increased steadily in virulence until the fall of the regime in 1926. The liberalist and impious newspapers began to describe at length the apparition of Fatima, introducing circumstances both false and ridiculous in order to throw discredit on the events. According to the accounts, it was nothing but a “Jesuitical farce,” A sordid exploitation of the people, a money-making affair and a plot to arouse the masses against the “Republican” government. As to the mysterious happenings reported at Fatima, they added that this was all a question of pure suggestion.

The clearest result of this mischievous campaign was to make Fatima known throughout the country and to make many decide to go and judge for themselves.

OPPOSITION FROM THE CIVIL AUTHORITY

The press campaign really prepared the ground for the entirely anticlerical. The village of Fatima belongs to the county of Ourem. The Sub-prefect [Administrator of the Town Council] was Arthur d’Oliveira Santos, son of the local blacksmith, a man with a primary school education, a tinsmith by trade. He had been in politics since his youth. A baptized Catholic, he had abandoned the Church at the age of twenty to join the Masonic Lodge of Lerria, later, he found a lodge at Ourem [“centre of Carbonari” a kind of popular free-thought group] of which he was the head. He published a local newspaper by which he endeavored to undermine the faith of the people in the Church and the Priests. This was enough for the Republic of 1910 to raise him, at the age of twenty-six, to the post of sub-prefect, president of the council of the department and deputy judge of the district. The accumulation of these high offices made of this half-educated tinsmith the most influential and most feared man of the region.

On Saturday, August 11th, the parents of the three little seers were cited by the sub-prefect to appear before him at Ourem with three children. In the morning compadre Antonio and his daughter Lucia went to Ti Martos house so that they would go together with the children. On arriving Lucia’s first question was “Aren’t Jacinta and Francisco going too?” “Why should such little children go there?” Marto replied, “No, I will answer for them”
Although the citizenry of the county did cringe in fear before this all powerful magistrate, but not Ti Marto who feared no one when the good of his children and the good of the Church was threatened, he would stand up boldly before any man in the interest of truth and justice.

Lucia ran to Jacinta’s room to inform her cousin of the summons they had received and how she feared she would be killed. “If they kill you, tell them that Francisco and I are like you and that we want to die too” Jacinta cried. Lucia’s father did not want to take a chance on being late and arousing the anger of the magistrate. He left before Ti Marto. As Lucia rode the donkey along, she thought how different her father was from Ti Marto and her other uncle. “They put themselves in danger to defend their children but my parents turn me over with the greatest indifference so that they can do with me whatever they wish. But patience!” Lucia comforted herself. “I expect to have to suffer more for thy love, O my God, and it is for the conversion of sinners.”

The magistrate submitted Lucia to a long examination, ordering her to reveal the Lady’s “Secrete”, and to promise not to go any more to the place of the apparitions. When the child persisted in her refusal, he threatened the parents and sent them away saying that he knew well how to attain his purpose even if he had to do away with these wicked good-for-nothings.

THE CHILDREN ARE ARRESTED.

Two days later on August 13th, the sub-prefect could see the endless stream of people who passed his window from early morning on their way to the scene of the apparitions. Conquering his feelings of contempt, he got into his carriage and went to Aljustrel, to the home of the little seers.

“I have come to be present also at the apparition”, he declared “like Thomas, I want to see in order to believe”. “You are right”. Said Jacinta’s father. “The best way to decide is to see for yourself”.

The sub-prefect insisted on taking the children in his carriage to Cova da Iria. “No, no,” they cried, “we always go on foot”. “Well,” said he to their parents, “let them go to the Pastor’s house; I shall await them there to ask them a few more questions.”

When the children arrived, the sub-prefect asked the Pastor to question Lucy in his presence, especially about the “secrete”. The Pastor, who was hearing about the secret for the first time, insisted on her telling it to him.

“The Lady has forbidden us to tell it”, replied the girl, “but if you wish I shall ask her today if she will allow me to tell it to the Priest, and if she does, I shall tell it”.

It was wisdom that spoke in the mouth of the child.

“Good,” said the sub-prefect, “These are supernatural things; let us leave them aside. It is time to go to Cova da Iria.”

The children started down the stairs. Meanwhile the carriage was brought right up to the last step, which enabled the sub-prefect to in a moment perfectly decoy the children into it. He kidnapped them. On arriving home, he tried all means to draw the secret from the children but all to no avail. He
pushed them into a room and locked them up. “You won’t leave this room until you tell me the secret” he warned them.

“If they kill us”, Jacinta consoled the other two when they were alone, “it doesn’t matter. We will go straight to Heaven.” On the following morning an old woman came to chat with them and to try to draw the secret from them by surprise, but in vain. They were then taken before the bureau of administration and submitted to a regular cross-examination. They related quite simply the story of apparitions but declared that they could not tell the secret, because the Lady had forbidden them to do so. Tricks, promises and threats were used, but they remained inflexible.

Shortly after noon they were put into the public prison and told they would soon be taken out and burnt alive! Little Jacinta, hardly seven begins to weep. Lucia tries to encourage her. “Jacinta are you weeping?”

“We are going to die without ever again seeing our parents. None of them have come to see us, neither yours nor mine. They don’t care for us anymore. I want to see my mother at least.”
“Don’t weep Jacinta” Francisco interrupted, “Let us offer this sacrifice for sinners.” And joining his hands he say, “O Jesus, it is for love of you, and for the conversion of sinners.” Jacinta still in tears joins her hands in twin and lifting her eyes to heaven - “also for the Holy Father and for the offences committed against the Immaculate of Mary”.

Moved by this scene, the other prisoners interpose:

“But why do you not tell the secret? What does it matter if the Lady has forbidden it?” “O never,” replied Jacinta fearlessly. “We should rather die”.

Occupied as they had been, the children had not yet recited the Rosary. Jacinta then takes out a medal and asks a prisoner to hang it on a nail on the wall. Then kneeling before this improvised alter, they recite the Rosary with all their souls, while the prisoners overcome with emotion fall on their knees. One man still kept his hat on. Francisco got up, and went to him and said, “When we pray, we take our hats off.” The man took it off and dropped it on the floor. Francisco picked it up and laid it on the bench.

THE THREAT OF DEATH

The children were later on that 15th of August taken back to the county house where the Magistrate [Sub-prefect] recourse to a last stratagem. He roughly, get into a terrible rage and shouted at the children: If you will not obey willingly; you will do so by force.” Turning towards a guard he ordered that a huge cauldron of boiling oil be prepared in which to roast them. While the guard has gone to carry out the order, they were shut into a little room. What moments of anguish for the little martyrs, who prepare themselves for the sacrifice! Jacinta was called in first, “The oil is already boiling. Tell the secret…otherwise…” Jacinta, like Our Lord before the judges, remained silent.

“Take her away and throw her into the tank!” Yelled the inquisitor. The guard grabbed her arm swung her around and locked her in another room.

While waiting their turn, Francisco confided to Lucia, “if they kill us, we shall soon be in Heaven. Nothing else counts. I hope that Jacinta does not get scared. I should say a Hail Mary for her”. He took off his cap and said a prayer.
The guard, watching the children, was puzzled at the boy’s behaviour. “What are you saying?” he demanded.

“I am saying one Hail Mary for Jacinta, to give her courage”.

The other guard came back, and led Francisco into the Magistrate’s [Sub-prefect] office. Grabbing hold of the little boy, he shouted, “Spite out the secret. The other one is already burned up; now it’s your turn. Go ahead, out with it”.

“I can’t” he replied, looking calmly into the eyes of this new Nero. “I can’t tell it to anyone”

“You say you can’t. That’s your business. Take him away. He’ll share his sister’s lot.” The boy was taken into the next room, where he found his little sister, safe and happy.

Lucia was convinced that she was next to be thrown into the burning cauldron of oil, she trusted in her Heavenly Mother not to desert her, but to give her the courage to be loyal and courageous even as Francisco and Jacinta were.

Though Lucia did tell the Magistrate some thing of what happened in the visions, even as she had told her parents and the Pastor, she kept the secret part to herself. It was a solemn promise to Our Lady and she would rather die than break it. The Magistrate was not satisfied with this little bit. He wanted to know the secret. After her inquisition, Lucia too was locked in the room where the other two were and how happy they were for their unwavering fidelity to Our Lady.

The Magistrate did not yet give up. The guard came to remind them that soon they would be thrown into the burning oil. The thought of being able to die together for Our Lady made them all the happier. The Magistrate finally admitted, after further fruitless questioning, that he could accomplish nothing.

Surprised at the constancy, in such young persons, the sub-prefect had them mentally examined by a doctor who found nothing abnormal.

The children were taken back to Fatima by the sub-prefect himself in his carriage. He took them to the presbytery. The day was 15th of August. The Church was celebrating the feast of the Assumption. Many people were at the Mass. After the Mass, the people filed out of the church and congregated in the yard as usual on the Holy Day. They were inquisitive of what has become of the little seers. Ti Marto had hardly finished the little information he got about the children, when they were spotted at the rectory balcony. The Magistrate who was still there would have been mobbed if not the timely intervention of Ti Marto and the Pastor whom they falsely suspected of connivance in the arrest of the innocent children.

However it is important to note that the interrogation of the children served one purpose that was providential. Since every thing becomes a matter of official record, the Magistrate unwillingly made the existence of a secret revelation undeniable.

THE FRUSTRATED APPARITION  [MONDAY, AUGUST 13th 1917]

Prior to this day, there was a hoax [a joking deception] spreading through the village that the devil would appear this time at the Cova da Iria to cause the earth to open up and swallow all those who
were there. In spite of the rumor, however, many persons traveled to the holy spot, which the newspapers estimated at eighteen thousand. Among which was Maria de Capelinha - the lady of the little chapel, she gives an eye witness account of what went on.

“I was not afraid, I knew there was nothing evil about the apparition because if there were, the people would not be praying at the Cova. My constant prayer as I walked along was: ‘May Our Lady guide me according to God’s Holy Will.’ The crowd at the Cova on August thirteenth was even larger than in July.

“About eleven O’clock, Lucia’s sister, Maria dos Anjos, came with some candles to light to Our Lady. The people prayed and sang religious hymns around the holmoak. The absence of the children made them very restless. When it became known that the magistrate had kidnapped them, a terrible resentment went through the crowd. There is no telling what it might have turned into, had it not thundered just then. Some thought the thunder came from the road; others thought that it came from the holmoak; but it seemed to me that it came from a distance. It frightened us all and many began to cry fearing they were going to be killed of course, no one was killed.

“Right after the thunder came a flash and immediately, we all noticed a little cloud very white, beautiful and bright, that came and stayed over the holmoak, it stayed a few minutes then rose towards the heavens where it disappeared. Looking about, we noticed a strange sight that we had already seen and would see again. Everyone’s face glowed, rose, red, blue, and all the colours of the rainbows. The trees seemed to have no branches or leaves but were all covered with flowers; every leaf was a flower. The ground was in little squares, each one a different colour. Our clothes seemed to be transformed also into the colours of the rainbow. The two vigil lanterns hanging from the arch over the holy spot appeared to be gold.

“When the signs disappeared, the people seemed to realize that Our Lady had come and not finding the children, had returned to Heaven. They felt that Our Lady was disappointed and hence they were exceedingly upset. Resentment grew in their hearts. They started towards the village, clamoring against the magistrate, the Pastor and anyone they thought might have had anything to do with the arrest of the children.”

Everything had been so beautiful but the sense of frustration at not having the children for the apparition made the people see with the anger and roar out, “Let’s go to Ourem to protest. Let’s go and drench everything with blood. We’ll get hold of the Pastor, for he is just as guilty… And the Regedor, we’ll settle accounts with him.”

Ti Marto, meanwhile, had gone to the Cova da Iria, and when this shouting of the people grew louder and louder, though he considered both the Pastor and the Magistrate guilty he felt inspired to intervene in the tumult.

“Be calm men, be calm.” He shouted with all his might. “Don’t hurt anyone. Whoever deserves punishment will get it. All this is by the power of the one above.”

Indeed, the One above also intervened to preserve for His Mother the name of Fatima forever gracious and unstained as is evidenced by the letter, which the Pastor wrote the following day for the newspapers. It was published a few days later:

“The rumor that I was an accomplice to the sudden kidnapping of the children…. I repel as an unjust and insidious calumny… The Magistrate did not confide the secret of his intentions to me…”
“And if it was providential, for such it was, that the authority succeeded in taking the children away furtively, and without resistance, no less providential was the calming of the spirits, excited by this devilish rumor, for otherwise the parish would have been mourning her Pastor today. Certainly, it was through the Virgin Mother that this snare of the devil did not strike him dead… .

“The authority wanted the children to reveal a secret that they have told to no one… Thousand of witnesses say that the children were not necessary for the Queen of the Angels to manifest her power. They themselves will testify to the extraordinary occurrences, which have now so deeply rooted their belief…. The Virgin Mother does not need the presence of the Pastor to show her kindness, and this itself should explain my absence and apparent indifference regarding a case so marvelous and sublime… .”

THE FOURTH APPARITION AT VALINHOS [Sunday, August 19th 1917]

The little seers did not expect to see the Lady until the thirteenth of the following month. But on Sunday 19th August, the children, according to their custom went to the Cova da Iria after Mass.

They said the Rosary there, then, returned to Aljustrel. After lunch, Lucia, together with Francisco, and his elder brother John, left for a place called Valinhos [the small valleys], to feed their flocks. It was the closest, most glassy pasture, at mid-elevation between Aljustrel and the top of the Cabeco.

The afternoon passed quickly but towards four O’clock Lucia became aware of the signs that always immediately preceded the apparitions of Our Lady: the sudden cooling of the all the paling of the sun, and the typical flash. The children had already been having a wonderful premonition that they were to experience the supernatural again. Now Our Lady was about to come and Jacinta was not there. Lucia called out to John. “Go quickly and get Jacinta Our Lady is coming!”

The boy did not want to go. He too wanted to see Our Lady. “Go fast,” Lucia insisted, “and I will give you four pennies, if you bring Jacinta back with you. Here’s two now and I’ll keep the other two for you. When you return”

John took the pennies and started running home. When he reached his house, he called in, “Mother, Mother, Lucia wants Jacinta!”

“Aren’t the three of you enough for your games?. Can’t you leave her alone for a minute?” The mother answered back.

“Let her come, little mother, they want her there now. See, Lucia gave me two pennies to make sure I would bring her.”

Two pennies! That was a lot of money for little children to give away so easily. “What does she want Jacinta for now?”

John wriggling like an eel, burst out, “Because Lucia has already seen the signs in the skies and she wants Jacinta there in a hurry.”

God be with you; Jacinta is at her god-mother’s house.
John bolted off to get her. There, he whispered the news to Jacinta and together hand in hand they raced over to Valinhos so as not to miss Our Lady. Just as John and Jacinta reached the field, a second flash rent the air. A few moments, later, the brilliant Lady appeared over a holmoak, a slightly taller one than that at the Cova da Iria. The Lady was rewarding the children for their fidelity.

“What do you want of me?” Lucia asked. “I want you to continue to come to the Cova da Iria on the thirteenth and to continue to say the Rosary everyday.”

Lucia then, told Our Lady of her anguish at the unbelief of so many in the reality of her presence. She asked Our Lady if she would be willing to perform a miracle that all might see and believe.

“Yes,” Our Lady answered. “In the last month in October, I shall perform a miracle so that all may believe in my apparition. If they had not taken you to the village, the miracle would have been greater. Saint Joseph will come with the Baby Jesus to give peace to the world. Our Lord also will come to bless the people. Besides “Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Sorrows will come”.

Lucia remembered Senhora da Capelinha’s request and said, “What do you wish us to do with the money and the offering that the people leave at the Cova da Iria?”

“Two litter should be made; you and Jacinta are to carry on with two other girls dressed in white; Francisco is to carry the other with three boys also dressed in white robes. The money placed on the litters is for the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Our Lady of the Rosary must be borne in procession and paid great honour.

Lucia then spoke to Our Lady of the sick who had been recommended to her.

“Yes, I shall cure some of them within the year.” But she went on teaching them to pray rather for the health of souls than of bodies, “Pray! Pray a great deal and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls go to Hell for not having someone to pray, and make sacrifices for them.

The Lady took leave of her little friends and began to rise towards the east, as before, John was disappointed. He tried hard to see Our Lady but had seen nothing. However, he heard something like the hissing of a rocket, when Lucia said, “Jacinta, see Our Lady is going away.” It gave John small consolation.

The three children who had stood by helplessly at the Cova da Iria when the older people stripped the holmoak of its foliage, broke off the small branch which the resplendent robe of Our Lady had touched. John and Lucia stayed at the Valinhos with the sheep while Francisco and Jacinta rushed home with the precious branch to tell their parents of the unexpected visit of Our Lady.

As they passed Lucia’s house, her mother and sister were at the door with some neighbors. “Aunt Maria Rosa” Jacinta cried out with joy, “We saw Our Lady again! It was at the Valinhos!”

“My, what little liars you turned out to be!. As if Our Lady would appear to you wherever you go!”

“But we did see her” Jacinta insisted. “See here, Our Lady had one foot on this twig and the other on that one”.


“Give it to me.  Let me see” Jacinta gave the branch to Lucia’s mother.  The mother’s face showed great surprise as she put the branch to her nose, “What does this smell of!” She said, continuing to smell it.  “It is not perfume, its not incense nor perfumed soap; its not the smell of roses nor anything.  I know but it is a good smell.”  The whole family gathered and each wanted to hold the branch and smell the beautiful odor.  “Leave it here, Jacinta.  Someone will come along who will be able to tell what kind of an odor it is.”  

From that moment, Lucia’s mother and her whole family began to modify their opposition towards the apparitions.  Jacinta then took the branch and hurried home to show it to her own mother and father.  Ti Marto tells of the occasion in his own words.

“I had taken a round of my properties on that day.  After sunset, as I was drawing near my house, a friend of mine met me and said, ‘Ti Marto, the miracle is becoming clearer’”.  

“What do you mean!  I said, not knowing anything about the apparition at Valinhos or the branch.”  

“You know, Our Lady appeared again, just a little while ago, to your children and Lucia at Valinhos.  You can believe it is true.  I want to tell you that your Jacinta has something special.  She had not gone with the others and a boy came to call her.  Our Lady did not appear until she arrived!”  

“I shrugged my shoulders.  I didn’t know what to answer, but I was thinking about what my friend said as I reached the yard of my house.  My wife was not at home.  I went into the kitchen and sat down.  Jacinta came right in with a big smile on her face and a little branch in her hand”.  “Look, father, Our Lady appeared to us again at the Valinhos!”

‘As she came in I sensed a magnificent fragrance which I could not explain.  I stretched out my hands towards the branch, saying, ‘What are you bringing in Jacinta?’  

‘It is the little branch on which Our Lady placed her feet!’  “I smelled it but the odor had gone”.  Our Lady did not have to perform a miracle to prove her case to him.

THE FIFTH APPARITION  [Thursday, September 13th 1917]

The attack of the free thinkers on Fatima had a result quite different from what they had hoped.  After the draconian inquiry by the sub-prefect, and the phenomena observed on August 13th in the children’s absence, hardly anyone doubted the sincerity of the little seers and the reality of the apparitions.  So on September 13th the crowd was larger than ever in spite of the work in the fields at the harvesting season.  Certain observers estimated the crowd gathered at about thirty thousand.  Lucia reported as follows:  “As the hour drew near, Jacinta, Francisco and I started out for Cova da Iria amidst, the multitude.  It was difficult to walk because the roads were full; everyone wanted to see and speak, and basic human respect was nowhere to be found.  Many people from the town, and even ladies and gentlemen of high standing, who managed to break through the crowd around us, knelt down before us, begging us to present their needs to Our Lady.  Others who could not get near, yelled out from afar.  One of them said:

“For the love of God, ask Our Lady to cure my son, who is handicapped!”

Another:

“Have Her cure my son who is blind.”

Another:
“Mine, who is deaf”

“Ask her to bring back my husband and my son from the war;” “still others asked that a sinner be converted, or for health”, “I have got tuberculosis,” etc.

“All the miseries that afflict the human race were represented there. Some shouted at us from rooftops and treetops saying, “Yes” to some and giving a hand to others in order to help them stand, we moved up the hill. Thanks for the help of some men who opened a path for us among the crowd. Now, when I read those beautiful scenes in the New Testament describing the passing of Our Lord through Palestine, I think about our poor roads of Aljustrel, Fatima and Cova da Iria and I thank God, offering Him the faith of our good Portuguese people. And I think that if they could be so humble before three poor children, only because they were blessed with being able to speak with the mother of God, what would they not do if they could see Our Lord in person before them? [Though this has nothing to do with the subject at hand].

Finally, we arrived at Cova de Iria. When we got to the Oak, we began to say the rosary along with the people gathered there. Not long after, we saw the light and just then, Our Lady appeared over the tree”.

“Continue saying the Rosary in order to end the war. In October, I will come with Our Lord, Our Lady of Dolores and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Saint Joseph with the Baby Jesus to bless the world. Your sacrifices have pleased God, but I do not want you to sleep with the rope on, wear it only during the day.”

“They have begged me to ask you many things: to cure the sick, a deaf boy, etc.”

“Yes, some I will cure, but others, no because Our Lord does not trust them”.

That might mean that the sick persons had not the dispositions of faith, contrition and fervour required for a supernatural care. It might also mean that for the salvation of certain souls the cross of illness was more useful than healing.

A simple child had asked Lucia to offer the Lady a little bottle of eau-de-cologne. This she did and the Lady’s answer is worth remembering and meditating upon:

“That is not needed in Heaven.”

After these words the Lady left and Lucia said to the people:

“If you wish to see her, look in that direction”

The children had taken very seriously the words of the Virgin in August when she asked for sacrifices for the sinners. One of the most painful sacrifices was the rope that each wore around the waist. It hurt them so much that Jacinta broke out crying in pain at times. The Virgin told them with motherly like love that they should not wear the rope at night, so they could sleep better. Among the other sacrifices they made were, not eating the afternoon meal, which they gave to the poor. They stopped eating figs and grapes. “At times we would sacrifice by not drinking for a novena or even a month. Once we did this in the middle of August, and the heat was suffocation”. Still the suffering that stemmed from the mission the Virgin had given them was even greater: humiliations, curiosity and unpleasantness; interminable visits and questions, persecution and prison, and finally, Francisco’s
protracted illness and especially, that of Jacinta [who, was visited several times by the Virgin, who warned her that she would die alone after much suffering].

THE SIXTH APPARITION - THE GREAT DAY
[Saturday, October 13th 1917]

October 13th was to be the decisive day. For it was on this day that the Lady had promised:

[I] to say who she was and what she wanted

[ii] to work a great miracle that all might believe in her apparitions. The predictions were now known throughout the country, and all, both believers and scoffers, were thrilled by this bold prediction which promised a great miracle for a definite time and place. It was an easy and effective way of verifying the reality of the apparitions of Fatima. All Portugal awaited, with an understandable curiosity, this conclusive proof of October 13th.

In proportion as the popular enthusiasm for the miracles of Fatima grew, the hostility of the Freethinkers increased. One day three men went to the homes of the children. After an insulting examination they left saying.

“You must make up your minds to tell the secret for otherwise it has been decided to kill you”

“How good that would be!” cried the intrepid Jacinta. “I love Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary so much. We shall go to them more quickly!”

Other visitors spread more sinister rumours that the children and their parents would be brought before the tribunal for seducing the people; that bombs would be placed near the tree to blow it all up, etc.

Frightened by all these threats, Jacinta’s parents thought of sending their children away from Fatima, but they refused saying “It does not matter if we are killed; we shall go to heaven all the sooner”

On October 11th, one Fr. Formigan asked Lucia:

“Do you not fear the anger of the people if the promised miracle is not worked?”

“No,” replied the girl frankly, “I have no fear on that score”

On October 12th, Lucia’s mother, very anxious about these rumours, suggested going to confession so as to be ready for anything.

“If you want to go to confession”, the child answered quietly, “I shall go with you willingly, but I have not the slightest fear. I am sure the Lady will do as she promised”.

In the face of such calm assurance, the mother spoke no more of confession but none of these measures of intimidation and mockery had any effect on the crowd. From the eve, October 12th, all the roads to Fatima were already packed with carriages, bicycles and an immense crowd of pilgrims reciting the Rosary and singing hymns on their way to the site of the apparitions, where they were going to spend the night in the open. It might be called a general mobilization to go and hear the message from
Heaven, and to see the promised miracle, which was to authenticate the message. Though no one knew in what the miracle would consist, each was determined to see it at first hand.

The morning of October 13th was disappointing, for contrary to all expectations, it was wet, gloomy and cold. It seemed as if heaven wished to test the faith and devotion of the pilgrims and to make them merit, by a hard sacrifice, the honor of witnessing the promised miracle. But the bad weather did not check in any way the crowd that gathered from everywhere, even from the extreme limits of the country; while reporters and photographers from the big newspapers were there to get the facts.

The continuous rain had transformed the place of the apparitions, which is a hollow, into a vast mud-pit, and all pilgrims or curious, were drenched to the skin or frozen with the cold. Shortly before midday, an observer estimated the crowd at about seventy thousand.

“We left home fairly soon” reported Lucia, “since we excepted to be delayed along the way. There were multitudes of people [70,000] despite the torrential rain. My mother, fearful that this would be the last day of my life, her heart pieced by the uncertainty of what might happen, wanted to accompany me. On the road, the scenes of the previous month, only even more moving, people knelt down before us humbly and beseechingly in spite of the mud on the road.

When we reached Cova de Iria, next to the Holmoak and following an inner voice, I asked the people to close their umbrellas in order to say the Rosary. They obeyed and in the pelting rain recited the Rosary. Shortly afterwards, Lucia gives a slight start and cries:

“There is the lighting.”

Then raising her hand she adds:

“See, she is coming! She comes! Do you see her?” “Look well my child! Take care not to be mistaken” says her mother who, kneeling beside her, is clearly troubled about the issue of this gripping drama; Lucia no longer hears, she is in ecstasy.

Some pious people, with dedicated attention, have decorated the tree with flowers and ribbons. In acknowledgement of this act of loving homage the Lady places her feet on these ornaments. Meanwhile, the rain has ceased, and the crowd can see a light white cloud, which, like the smoke of incense, forms round the little seers, rises to a height of about fifteen feet, and scatters in the air. This phenomenon occurs three times, as if an invisible priest was there incensing the heavenly apparition liturgically.

Lucia then asks the question the Lady had promised to answer on that day.

“Madam, who are you and what do you want of me?”

“I am Our Lady of the Rosary” answers the Lady; “I want a chapel built here in my honour. Continue to say the Rosary every day. The war is coming to an end and soldiers will soon come home”.

Preoccupied by all the commissions given her by the people, Lucia interrupts:

“I have so many favours to ask you;” The Blessed Virgin answers that she will grant some, but not all, and immediately continues the message:
“Men must amend their lives, and ask pardon for their sins.”
Then, with a look of grief and in a suppliant tone of voice:

“Men must not offend God any more for He is already very much offended”

MULTIPLE VISION

Then taking leave of the little seers, the Blessed Virgin opened her hands which throw beans of light towards the sun at the moment of the commencement of the solar prodigy, of which we shall speak shortly, the children see another apparition which unfolds itself beside the sun in three successive scenes.

They see first the three members of the Holy family in this order: to the right of the sun and more brilliant than it, Our Lady of the Rosary in a white dress and a blue mantle and at the left dressed in red is St. Joseph with the infant Jesus blessing the world. Then Lucia saw at the right of the sun Our Divine Lord as a full-grown man, lovingly blessing the world, and at the left Our Lady of the seven Dolours is replaced by Our Lady of Mount-Carmel, with the scapular in her hand.

It has been asked why the Blessed Virgin who appeared always under the same aspect, had wished on this occasion to appear first with the Holy Family, then as Our Lady of the Seven Dolours, finally as Our Lady of Mount Camel. The usual answer, as we shall see later, is that Our Lady wished, in this manner, to impress more deeply on the minds of the faithful the title of Our Lady of the Rosary which she gave herself at Fatima recalling in the three successive scenes the three sets of mysteries, joyful, sorrowful and glorious, on which we meditate when we recite the Rosary.

THE GREAT SOLAR PRODIGY

“The Sun Dances”.
At the end of the apparition, “The Blessed Virgin opened her hands which threw beans of light on the sun” Instinctively Lucia cried: “Oh! Look at the sun!”

No one was thinking of the sun, which had not appeared all the morning, But at the child’s exclamation, all raised their heads to see what was taking place. Then this vast multitude was able to contemplate at leisure for about twelve minutes, a grand spectacle, stupendous and truly unique.

Immediately the clouds opened wide, exposing an immense surface of blue. In the cloudless area the sun appeared at its zenith, but with a strange aspect. For though not a single cloud veiled it, yet while being very bright, it was not dazzling, and you could look straight at it at will. Everybody looked in surprise at this new kind of eclipse

Suddenly the sun trembles, is shaken, makes some abrupt movements and finally begins to turn giddily on itself like a wheel of fire, casting in all directions, like an enormous lamp, great beams of light. These beams are in turn green, red, blue, violet, etc, and colour in a most fantastic manner the clouds, trees, rocks, the earth, the clothes and faces of this immense crowd, which extends as far as the eye can see. And while the breathless crowd, contemplates this amazing spectacle, the children see beside the sun three scenes already described.

After about four minutes the sun stops. A moment later it resumes a second time its fantastic motion and its fairy-like dance of light and colour such as could never be imagined in the most gorgeous
display of fireworks. Once more after a few minutes, the sun stops its prodigious dance, as if to give the spectators a rest. After a short stop and for the third time, as if to give them an opportunity of examining the facts carefully, the sun takes up again, more varied and colourful than ever, its fantastic display of fireworks, without a doubt the most glorious and most moving that has ever been seen on this earth.

All through these unforgettable twelve minutes, during which this unique and gripping spectacle lasts the enormous multitude is there in suspense, immovable, almost in ecstasy, breathless, contemplating this moving drama, which was seen distinctly within a radius of more than twenty-five miles.

This was the great miracle promised, which took place precisely at the time and place fixed, and which was to compel men to believe in the reality of the apparitions, and to obey the message which Our Lady of the Rosary brought them from heaven.

THE FALL OF THE SUN.

The sight of this wonderful miracle had already well disposed all hearts and excited in them the most noble religious sentiments of lively faith in the power of God, of sincere adoration of His infinite majesty, and of absolute trust in the message of Fatima, so majestically confirmed but all this was, as it were, a preparation for the total renewal of souls.

It was the terrible fall of the sun which was the culminating point of the great miracle, the most awful moment, and the most divinely moving, which finally brought many souls completely back to God by a sincere act of contrition and love.

Indeed in the midst of its crazy dance of fire and colours, like a gigantic wheel which from spinning has swung of its axis, so now the sun leaves its place in the firmament, and fallen from side to side, plunges zigzagging upon the crowd below, sending out a heat increasingly intense, and giving to the spectators a clear impression of the scene at the end of the world foretold in the Gospel, when the sun and the stars will fall in disorder upon the earth.

Then from this terrified crowd there suddenly escapes a terrible cry, an immense shout, betraying the religious terror of souls preparing seriously for death, confessing their faith and asking God pardon for their sins.

“I believe in God the Father Almighty,” cry some. “Hail Mary!” cry others.

“My God mercy!” Implore a large number. Many of the people falling on their knees in the mud, recite in a voice choking with sobs the most sincere act of contrition that has ever comes from their hearts.

Finally, stepping short in its vertiginous fall, the sun climbs back to its place, zigzagging as it had come down, and ends by gradually regaining its usual brilliance set in a limpid sky.

Moving detail: this apocalyptic scene full of majesty and terror ended with a delicate gift, which shows the motherly tenderness of the Heart of Mary for her children. Though all had been drenched to the skin, each now had the pleasant surprise of feeling quite conformable, his clothes being absolutely dry.
It is reported in Holy scripture that when Moses came down from Sinai, his face was still quite radiant with traces of the Divine colloquy. At Fatima also this vast multitude that had just witnessed wonders worthy of Sinai, departed gradually, happy, restrained, recollected, all radiant still from the Divine contact which had just renewed their souls in a baptism of faith, confidence, contrition and love, whose fiery impression will remain forever ineffaceable.

In this wonderful fact already authenticated in the official canonical process is also confirmed by Marquis da Cruz, member of the Academy who made a personal investigation of this point.

FATIMA APPARITION AND BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

Fatima apparition is a visit by Our Heavenly Mother Mary in our time, for our time. It is a message of concern, a practical plan for world peace, a promise of Heaven.

It is Heaven’s interventions to save us from persecution, martyrdom, war, enslavement or annihilation. Above all it’s a way to save our souls from Hell. It is meant for you and I and for all.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and our loving Mother [who does not want God our Father whom we have so much offended be offended anymore and who does not want us to face the consequence of our obstinacy in sin] appeared six times to three shepherd children at Fatima consecutively from May 13th – Oct. 13th ,1917.

She came with a message from God to every man, woman and child of our century. Our Lady of Fatima promised that the whole world would be in peace, and that many souls would go to Heaven if her requests were listened to and obeyed.

She told us that war is a punishment for sin; that God [Our Father] would punish the world for its sin in our time by means of war, hunger, persecution of the Church and persecution of the Holy Father, the Pope, unless we listened to and obeyed the command of God. “What ever He wants you do, do just that” [Jn. 2:5] - The motherly intercession she started when she was here on earth thousands of years ago, she continues in our time now she is still with her Divine Son in Heaven.
The message was given to the Church the mystical Body of Christ Our Lord and our God for propagation. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic church endorsed the Fatima message in 1930. Five successive Popes have publicly indicated their approval of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima and her message.

For the efficacy of this vital, urgent and most important message, a compelling power of circumstances arose, the propagation of this message’. Hence a movement is necessitated. Therefore Block Rosary Crusade was given birth.

BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

Block Rosary Crusade is a movement, society, or Apostolate in the Catholic Church that lives and propagates the urgent message of Our Lady of Fatima. It is a grassroots association that embraces Catholic Priests and Lay people of the type specifically sanctioned by the New Code of Canon Law.
THE CONNOTATION OF THE NAME ‘BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE’.

Block:
At times some people confuse this word ‘Block’ with ‘Bloc’. As it implies in the name, it is a solid ‘mixture of cement, sand and water or a solid piece of wood or stone or other hard substance universally known, especially used to build house or enclosure in which a house stands, also in quarters, barracks, estates etc. It is as well used to demarcate wards.

Rosary:
Rosary is a precious gift from heaven; the summary of the gospel; the means God used to reconcile us with Him; the means of amendment and reconciliation; the prescription of a loving Mother to cure her children of the protracted disease that keeps them away from their loving and merciful Father; the most effective weapon against enemy.

Crusade:
The word ‘Crusade’ is a military expedition against the infidels of the Holy Land; a romantic or enthusiastic enterprises. A campaign against something believed to be bad. An action to recover what is holy captured by the unholy.

Having made the above explanations, we can then conveniently say that Block Rosary Crusade is the gathering of people [adults as well as children] from nearby blocks, houses, streets, wards or villages at a particular open place or compound with the sole aim of using the most effective weapon recommend by Our heavenly Mother, Our Lady of Fatima, the Queen of Peace to recover or recapture the souls lost by sin to our mortal enemy, and bring them back to God our Father for reconciliation. This basic unit where members called ‘Block Rosary Crusaders’ gather daily is called CENTRE.

Block Rosary Crusade, being association of Catholics who fight evil and sin with the Rosary under the auspices of Mary, was founded by Our Lady of the Rosary Herself. In her sixth apparition, Oct. 13th 1917, She declared herself, Our Lady of the Rosary and required a chapel to be built at Cova da Iria in her honour. The chapel was erected for prayer in accordance with the ardent wish of our heavenly mother and it remains the first ever Block Rosary Crusade Centre that existed before it spreads all over the world. Hence Lucia, Blessed Francisco and Blessed Jacinta became the first members of this noble Society.

Our Blessed Lady, all through Her apparition to these our beloved predecessors emphasized the need for praying the Rosary devotedly everyday and making sacrifices for sinners. Hence Block Rosary Crusade does not want to fail our Lady in this regard. Block Rosary Crusade gathers her members daily, come sun, come rain at her various centres at the same time with the sole intention of love of Jesus; conversion of sinners; and to make reparation for the offences committed against the Immaculate Heart of Our Beloved Mother Mary, the ever Virgin. And as well, for preservation of the Catholic faith, as practiced by our forefathers the Apostles; for the good of: our holy father the Pope, all our Bishops, our Priest and Religious, our Parents and Guardians, for all Christian, for the holy souls in purgatory; and for consecration and conversion of Russia, so that peace of God may be brought to the world and the Immaculate Heart of Mary triumphs.

Block Rosary Crusade, being a providential means of restoring the virtue of neighbourliness and charity in places where persons, living side by side in homes or apartments have been nothing more than strangers to each other, concerns herself in bringing this important and vital message of Our Lady among the faithful, among catholic men and women, youths and children, with a view to arousing
everywhere a renewal of the Christian life of Prayer, Penance and Sacrifice. It must be recognized that the family of today needs extraordinary help to solve the ever-growing problems of living and teaching Christian principles to its children in the midst of a de-christianized and often anti-Christian society. Is it not surprising that you do not find Catholics recognizing that there are serious dangers to their souls, their homes, their families, their way of life by remaining indifferent?

Therefore, it is of capital importance for Catholics [Priests and religious men and women] and in fact everybody to join this Block Rosary Crusade. Undoubtedly, there is terrible darkness blotting out the light of truth today, an ascendancy of satanic power that may well be unprecedented in history. Block Rosary Crusade takes a definite stand against the devils partisans in the Church. Block Rosary Crusade is being fortified by Our Lady with the Rosary in order that she [B.R.C] must not let herself be deceived by false doctrines. With the Rosary, Block Rosary Crusade wages war against the diabolical wave that is invading the world. Evil is not only in our decadent world, that plunges into the darkness of error of immorality and pride, evil is also in the Church itself where ‘Judases’ the followers of devil are forging ahead with intrepid audacity. Block Rosary Crusade prays the Rosary tirelessly everyday for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Our beloved Virgin Mother Mary.

Several Bishops and Priests are known to be praying for the success of the Block Rosary Crusade. This is a movement, which helps to fill the most vital, or rather one of the most vital needs of today.

Block Rosary Crusade educates its members on Catholic faith and Doctrines, inculcate in them the spirit of prayer and sanctity, the spirit of love of God and love of neighbour, the spirit of fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom. She strengthens the belief of adults about Our Blessed Virgin Mary and Her Son, God and His love. These sacred obligations are carried out through daily recitation of the Holy Rosary, Bible study, teaching of Catechism, Singing, Studying the lives of the Saints and Biblical Stories, Visitation of homes and hospitals, prisons and handicapped peoples homes, plus other deeds of mercy.

This is a society anyone who loves himself or herself ought to join for inheritance of heavenly pledges because our beloved Mother Mary ever Virgin promises heaven to all who will pray the Rosary devotedly everyday. “They will not smell hell fire,” She says.

Block Rosary Crusade is a free society. The membership is free to all, ranging from Baptized Catholics to non Baptized, Christians of other denominations, faithful of other religious set and to those who do not even believe in God at all!. Provided you would submit to the spirit of Block Rosary Crusade, which is the spirit of love, prayer, and sacrifice, the spirit of Jesus and Mary. In so far you are ready to make the ‘SACRIFICE OF CALVARY’ the apex or aqueduct of your SALVATION. Hence make the renewal, in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass a way of life. Having done this, it is needless to tell you that you have to strive to be a practicing Catholic, strive to live a holy life and to become like the perfect Adam [i.e.] Jesus Christ through the perfect Eve [i.e.] the Blessed Virgin Mary in order to become in God.

NOTE! A True Block Rosary Crusader is he or she who keeps intact and alive in his or her heart and help others to do so, the ‘TRUE CATHOLIC FAITH’, received from our forefathers.
BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE THREE LITTLE CHILDREN OF FATIMA

LUCIA:

Lucia de Jesus dos Santos is the eldest of the three children whom Our Lady appeared to at Fatima and she is the only survivor seers of the apparition in 1917, as of the time this book was first published. She was born on March 22, 1907 and youngest of the seven children of Senhor Antonio dos Santos and His wife, Maria Rosa. Lucia was always healthy, strong and has particular affectionate towards children. She has the gift of holding attention of the other children by her affection and resourcefulness. She dresses fine and dances very well. Lucia was able to receive her First Holy Communion at the age of six instead of ten, as the custom of Fatima then dictated. Lucia communicated to Our Lady throughout the six consecutive apparitions. After the death of Francisco and Jacinta, she felt alone in the world and relied on the consoling words of Our Lady “My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God”.

On 17th June 1921 Lucia left Fatima for the convent School at Vilar de Porto. At the Convent Our Lady continued appearing to her requesting for the Communion of reparation to Her Immaculate Heart on the first Saturday of each month. On December 10th 1925, she appeared to her again with the child Jesus on the same request and she later got permission to reveal the need of reparation and devotion of the First Saturday. At Tuy, Spain, in 1927 while in her chapel, Lucia received permission from heaven to reveal the first two parts of the secret, the vision of hell and the urgent need for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In 1929, also at Tuy, Our Lady appeared to her requesting for the consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart and Lucia made this request known to her confessors; one of them Rev. Francisco Rodrigues, S.J., told her to write it down. From that period to 1939 nothing was done, in 1940, Lucia wrote again to the Bishop of Leiria expressing her regret that the consecration had not been made. On 31st October 1942, the Holy Father together with the Bishops of Lisbon fulfilled the request of Our Lady of Fatima.

Today, Sister Maria Lucia of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart is a Carmelite Nun in the Carmel of Saint Teresa in Coimbra.

FRANCISCO AND JACINTA:

Francisco and Jacinta, the two principals, were Lucia’s first cousins, the eight and night children of the family of Senhor Manuel Marto and his wife Senhora Olimpia Jesus dos Santos. Francisco the youngest boy of the family was born on June 11, 1908 and grew to be a fine looking lad, in disposition much like his father. He loves to play games and it matters little to him whether he won or lost. He loves music and plays flute too. Francisco was absolutely fearless, sometimes wilder and more active than his sister Jacinta and looses patience easily. He loved to contemplate on the world around him; the vastness of the skies, the wonder of the stars and the myriad beauties of nature at sunrise and sunset. Without any agony, with utmost peace, he died on the morning of Friday 14th April 1919 and was buried the following day. On March 13th, 1952 the remains of little Francisco were carried from the Fatima cemetery to be interred in the transept of the great Fatima Basilica.

Jacinta Marto was born on March 11, 1910 nearly two years younger than her brother. She resembled Francisco in features, but differed sharply in temperament. She was a quiet untroublesome infant and grew to be a lovable child. Jacinta took easily to a sense of piety and loves playing. She had a strong devotion to Lucia and loves to be with her all the time because with Lucia, the children will spend their whole day playing, singing and dancing. After much prayer, penance and sacrifices Jacinta died at the
Hospital of Dona Estefania, Lisbon on 20th February 1920 at 10.30pm. The body of Jacinta was examined at first exhumation on September 12, 1935 by Rev. Dr. Luis Fisher. A further exhumation in 1951 again found that Jacinta’s body had not decayed after thirty years in the grave. She and Francisco had gone home to rest in the Heart of Jesus and Mary to console them and to pray for conversion of sinners, for the Holy Father, for priests and for all who ask their prayerful assistance. His Holiness Pope John Paul II beatified them on 13th of May 2000.

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

ON THE BEATIFICATION OF FRANCISCO AND JACINTA MARTO SHEPHERDS OF FATIMA ON SATURDAY, 13TH OF MAY 2000.

“Father, … to you I offer praise; for what you have hidden from the learned and the clever you have revealed to the merest children” {Mt. 11:25}.

With these words, dear brothers and sisters, Jesus praises the heavenly Father for his designs; he knows that no one can come to him unless he is drawn by the Father, for such was your gracious will” {Mt. 11:26}. You were pleased to reveal the kingdom to the merest Children.

According to divine plan, “a woman clothed with sun” {Rev. 12:1} came down from heaven to this earth to visit privileged children of the Father. He speaks to them with a mother’s voice and heart: she asks them to offer themselves as victims of reparation, saying that she was ready to lead them safely to God. And behold, they see a light shining from her maternal hand which penetrates them inwardly, so that they feel immersed in God just as – they explain – a person sees himself in a mirror.

Later Francisco, one of the three privileged children, exclaimed: “we were burning in that light which is God and were not consumed. What is God like? It is impossible to say. In fact we will never be able to tell people”. God: a light that burns without consuming. Moses had the same experience when he saw God in the burning bush; he heard God say that he was concerned about the slavery of his people and had decided to deliver them through him: “I will be with you” {cf. Ex. 3:2-12}. Through to this, those who welcome His presence become dwelling-place and, consequently, a “burning bush” of the Most High.

What most impressed and entirely absorbed Blessed Francisco was God in that immense light which penetrated the inmost depths of the three children. But God told only Francisco “how sad” he was, as he said. One night his father heard him sobbing and asked him why he was crying; his son answered “I was thinking of Jesus who is so sad because of the sins that are committed against him”. He was motivated by one desire - so expressive of how children think – “to console Jesus and make him happy”. A transformation takes place in his life, one we could call radical: a transformation certainly uncommon for children of his age. He devotes himself to an intense spiritual life, expressed in assiduous and fervent prayer, and attains a true form of mystical union with the Lord. This spurs him to a progressive purification of the spirit through the renunciation of his own pleasures and even of innocent childhood games. Francisco bore without complaining the great suffering caused by the illness from which he died. It all seemed him so little to console Jesus: he died with a smile on his lips. Little Francisco had a great desire to atone for the offences of sinners by striving to be good and by offering his sacrifices and prayers. The life of Jacinta, his younger sister by almost two years, was motivated by these same sentiments. “Another portent appeared in heaven; behold a great red dragon” {Rev. 12:3}. These words from the first reading of the Mass make us think of the great struggle between good and evil showing how, when man puts God aside, he cannot achieve happiness, but ends
up destroying himself. How many victims there have been throughout the last century of the second millennium! We remember horrors of the First and Second World Wars and the other wars in so many parts of the world, the concentration and extermination camps, the gulags, ethnic cleansing and persecutions, terrorism, kidnapping, drugs, the attacks on the unborn life and the family.

The message of Fatima is a call to conversion, alerting humanity to have nothing to do with the “dragon” whose “tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth” {Rev. 12:4}. Man’s final goal is heaven, his true home where the heavenly Father awaits everyone with his merciful love.

God does not want anyone to be lost, that is why 2000 years ago he sent his son to earth, “to seek and to save the lost” {Lk. 19:10}. And he saved us by his death on the cross. Let no one empty that Cross of its power! Jesus died and rose from the dead to be “the first-born among many brethren” {Rom. 8:29}.

In her motherly concern, the Blessed Virgin came here to Fatima to ask men and women “to stop offending God. Our Lord, who is already very much offended”. It is a mother’s sorrow that compels her to speak; the destiny of her children is at stake. For this reason she asks the little shepherds: “Pray, pray much and make sacrifices for sinners; many souls go to hell because they have no one to pray and make sacrifices for them”.

Little Jacinta felt and personally experienced our Lady’s anguish, offering herself heroically as a victim for sinners. One day, when she and Francisco had already contacted the illness that forced them to bed, the Virgin Mary came to visit them at home, as the little one recounts: “Our Lady came to see us and said that soon she would come and take Francisco to heaven. And she asked me if I still wanted to convert more sinners. I told her yes”. And when the time came for Francisco to leave, the little girl tells him: “Give my greetings to Our Lord and Our Lady and tell them that I am enduring everything they want for the conversion of sinners. Jacinta had been so deeply moved by the vision of hell during the apparition of 13th July that no mortification or penance seemed too great to save sinners.

She could exclaim with St. Paul: “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of the body, that is, the Church” {col. 1:24}. Last Sunday at the Colosseum in Rome, we commemorated the many witnesses to the faith in the 20th century, recalling the tribulations they suffered through the significant testimonies they left us. An innumerable cloud of courageous witnesses to the faith has left us a precious heritage, which must live on, in the third millennium. Here in Fatima, where these times of tribulation were foretold and our Lady asked for prayer and penance to shorten them, I would like today to thank heaven for the powerful witness shown in all those lives. And once again I would like to celebrate the Lord’s goodness to me when I was saved from death after being gravely wounded on 13th May, 1981. I also express my gratitude to Blessed Jacinta for the sacrifices and prayers offered for the Holy Father, whom she saw suffering greatly.

“Father, to you I offer praise, for you have revealed these things to the merest children”. Today Jesus’ praise takes the solemn form of the beatification of the little shepherds, Francisco and Jacinta. With this rite the Church wishes to put on the candelabrum these two candles which God lit to illuminate humanity in its dark and anxious hours.

THE HISTORY OF BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE IN NIGERIA.
Block Rosary Crusade is an indigenous pious society in the Catholic Church whose main objective is to promulgate the Fatima message of 1917. It was started by Mr. Eusebius Oguizu of Urualla in Ideato North Local Government Area of Imo State through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit with some members in the year 1956 at No. 29 Arondizuogu Street, Aba, later in the year 1958, it was transferred to No. 21 Arondizuogu Street in Ndiegore Catholic Mission (an out station of Christ the King Parish) now our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Aba.

The society was an offshoot of Mr. Oguizu’s C.C.D. work in which he introduced praying the Rosary and reciting the litany of Blessed Virgin Mary after teaching Catechism. Eusebius began the Crusade with twelve children of which only the names of Benedict Ezuma, Theresa Ezuma, Catherine Ezuma, Roseline Okeke, Emmanuel Oguegbu and Victoria Ejor can be vividly remembered. The few adults that joined the society then were Charles Ahanekwu, Simeon Igweze, Joseph Obiorah, Christopher Obi, Matthew Agonsi, Cyril Nwagbo, David Onwusoro and late Michael Okonkwo.

Strange enough, the society at its inception had no name. It could be describe from the way its activities were carried out, teaching of Catechism and praying the Rosary and Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary from street to street and yard to yard every evening. Mr. Eusebius had a little hand bell with which he used to summoned members to prayer. Later on, he got a pamphlet from America in 1958 titled ‘Weekly Block Rosary”, from this he named his movement Block Rosary with the motto: Prayer and Penance” as directed by Our Lady of Fatima in 1917.

THE INITIAL EXPANSION OF THE CRUSADE.

After staying at the centre, 29 Arondizuogu Street for almost a year 1956 to 1957, the group began its initial expansion. Another centre that was opened after 29 Arondizuogu was at No. 44 Ohanku Road now at No. 5 Akunwata Street, Aba in 1958. With the creation of this second centre, there arose the need for some guiding rules for the members. To this effect the two centres held meetings at Mr. Godwin Onwujiobi’s house to bind themselves together and plan a common strategy from 1959 to 1960. From this time onwards, more children, youths and adults became interested in the society and more centres were opened in various streets of the town. Within a short time, the centres numbered thirteen, so the increase in centres and number of people made it impossible to continue holding meetings in private house. The members therefore decided to hold the meeting in our Lady of Lourdes Mission premises. Out of thirteen centres established then, ten were under Our Lady of Lourdes while three were under C.K.C. (8 Akuobu Street, 65 Portharcourt Road, 7B Obohia Road).

The first official election made in Block Rosary Crusade was in 1961 and the following were the officers:

1. Mr. Francis Nwafor President
2. Mr. Eusebius Oguizu Vice President (the founder)
3. Mr. Bede Igwe Secretary
4. Mr. Joseph Obiorah Assistant Secretary, and
5. Late Mr. Christopher Emegwau Treasurer

They were all members of our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Aba. They did marvelous work and made the best out of Block Rosary Crusade through the help of Rev. Fr. T. Watsh, who gave them encouragement in all their doings especially when there was crisis in the Block Rosary Crusade in
In 1962, it was through his help and the order given by His Lordship, Late Rt. Rev. Dr. A.G. Nwedo, C.S.S.P., Bishop of the Diocese that gave the above mentioned officers the courage and strength in defeating all obstacles that came through their way then, and Block Rosary Crusade continued moving smoothly till date. In the same 1962, Block Rosary society began its expansion to other towns and villages. The first place it gained foot was Amawon Oboro in Ikwuano/Umuahia Local Government Area. It was introduced there by Mr. Linus Nwachukwu (a transporter) a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Aba.

In 1965, another administrative body was formed in C.K.C. Delegates were sent from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish to help them in their organization.
Those delegates also conducted election for them of which the following were elected.

Late Mr. Silvernus Onyeji President
Mr. Francis Olisa Vice President
Mr. Michael Okafor now Obijaku Secretary
Mr. Fidelis Ohagwa Assistant Secretary
Mr. Frederick Iwuchukwu Treasurer

This expansion began in earnest in 1967 at the wake of Nigerian crisis. It was at this time that the Block Rosary Crusade spread to many places like Abagana, Nnobi, Urualla, Nnewi, Osina, Ajali, Obodoakwu, Igbere, Ama Okwe-Item, Ezinihitte - Mbaise, Umunkpe, Mbutungwa, Ehime, Obowo, to mention but a few. Through some members who took the risk of spreading the work of God. Aba, the host town of the crusade sent letters and personal encouragement to the newly established centres.

When the war broke out and became intense in 1968, the town became deserted. The members who fled to every nook and crannies of the country established centres wherever they stayed. That was how Block Rosary Crusade spread throughout the whole country and West Africa in general. We regret the death of most of those who championed the spread of the society in those places and died as a result of the war. May they rest in perfect peace. Amen.

After the war, in late 1970, Block Rosary like every other thing in the Eastern States went into a lull because of hardship, fear and military activities. The lull lasted till almost the end of 1971. In 1972, Umuahia Diocesan Block Rosary Crusade (as Aba were under Umuahia by then) were operating on Zonal basis of Aba, Umuahia and Obi (later in the year thought of unification, this led to the formation of a Diocesan committee in which the founder, Mr. Eusebius Oguizu became the President, Mr. Bath Ahamefula, Vice President, Mr. Michael Okafor now Obijaku, Secretary, Mr. Michael Ike, Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Theresa Okere, Treasurer while Mr. Patrick Ekop was the publicity Secretary. This committee requested His Lordship, Late Rt. Rev. Dr. A.G. Nwedo, C.S.S.P., Bishop of the Diocese who was the first Bishop to bring up an indigenous society, to accord the Crusade diocesan recognition by appointing for her, a chaplain. The request was granted and in July 1974, Late Rev. Fr. B.I. Nwolu was officially appointed Chaplain. He left no stone unturned to see that Block Rosary Crusade was built in the way that pleases God. He led Block Rosary Crusade from 1974 to 1982.

THE LATER EXPANSION OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

After the formation of Umuahia Diocesan Block Rosary Crusade in 1972 (the mother Diocese of the Crusade) then, other Dioceses followed by forming their Diocesan Block Rosary Crusade, they include Onitsha Archdiocese, Enugu, Owerri, Portharcourt, Abakaliki, Ikot-Ekpene, Calabar, Ogoja, Awka, Orlu. Okigwe, Ahiara, Aba, Benin, Lagos, Kaduna Diocese etc.
Upon the inauguration of the different Dioceses of the Block Rosary Crusade, the eastern Diocese decided to come together as one body, this led to the formation of Imo-Anambra States Council of Block Rosary Crusade in September 1977, and their first meeting was held on 15th October, 1977. The name was changed to East Ecclesiastical province of Block Rosary Council on 4th December 1977. During the second meeting of the council, two protem Officers were appointed to hold the council. They were Mr. Eusebius Oguizu (founder) and Mr. Marcellinus Kanu as the protem President and Secretary respectively. Later the name was finally changed to Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province of Block Rosary Crusade, and their officers duly elected. Kaduna and Lagos Ecclesiastical Provinces were also formed and their officers duly elected.

The first idea of unification and formation of a National Council of the Block Rosary Crusade was mooted by the Benin Diocese on the 20th of July 1977. To this end, efforts were made by the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province to call the Dioceses for series of meetings, which were rotated and held from 15th to 16th October 1979, starting from Umuahia Diocese moving next to Enugu, Owerri, Onitsha, Abakiliki and finally Ogoja on the 24th of February 1979. They wrote to the Catholic Bishops of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province of their intention to unite the Crusade and make a constitution embracing all the Dioceses in the Province. A letter was received from the Bishops, signed by His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Francis Arinze, Arch Bishop of Onitsha (now cardinal) dated February 15th, 1979, reference BRB/SIA/19/17.

The Bishops considered the organization of the Block Rosary Crusade. Praised its good works, and decided that it is to remain purely diocesan at the moment. There would therefore be no inter-diocesan meetings and further effort was made to write an inter-diocesan constitution, according to the letter received from the Bishops.

On the receipt of this letter, and in obedience to our Bishops, they stopped further inter-diocesan (or provincial) meetings in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province, waiting for a time in the future when the necessity will arise (or when the Bishops will lift their order). Meanwhile meetings were only held under Diocesan levels and the method of prayer stipulated by individual Dioceses.

The second move for unification and formation of a National Council of Block Rosary Crusade came from Lagos, After six years of waiting without hearing from the Bishops. On receiving the circular letter from Lagos Ecclesiastical Province on the 23rd August, 1984, they met the Bishop of Umuahia Diocese, Late Most Rev. Dr. A.G. Nwedo, C.S.S.P. on 1st October, 1984 who instructed them to start by re-organizing a strong Diocesan level after which they could then call for the Provincial level. Furthermore he asked the Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Anthony Nwaogu, who succeeded Rev. Fr. B.I. Nwolu as the Chaplain of Umuahia Diocese to write to the President of Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, Late Most Rev. Dr. G.G. Ganaka on the issue of formation of the National Council of the Block Rosary Crusade in Nigeria.

The idea of unification and formation of a National Council of Block Rosary Crusade was actualized on the 11th of May, 1985, which was the day a new National Lay Apostolate was born which is aimed at propagating the message of our Blessed Lady of Fatima, Portugal in 1917.

The inauguration exercise had representatives from the three Ecclesiastical Provinces in Nigeria viz. Onitsha, Lagos and Kaduna. The council mandated the officers of the Lagos Province to be the protem officers of the National Council of Block Rosary Crusade pending when the elections will be held.
The protem Officers of the National Council were: President Bro. Justin Okonkwo, Vice President, Bro. Peter Ohaeri, Secretary General, Bro. Augustine Imoh, Financial Secretary, Bro. Edwin Offor and Provost, Bro. Peter John.

Those present at the inaugural meeting of the National Council of Block rosary Crusader which was held at St. Paul’s Catholic Church, Ebute Metta, Lagos were:

1. Block Rosary Crusade Council of Lagos Ecclesiastical Province:

Rev. Fr. T. Furlong - Spiritual Director  
Bro. Justin Okonkwo - General President  
Bro. Peter Ohaeri - Vice President  
Bro. Augustine I. Imoh - Assistant General Secretary.  
Edwin Offor - Publicity Secretary  
Sister Cordelia Imoh - Financial Secretary  
Bro. Cyprain Arinze - Assistant Financial Secretary  
Bro. Stephen Onwuka - Provost  
Bro. Benjamin Arinze - Member  
Bro. Herbert Ejeahalaka -  
Bro. Innocent Akwarandu -  
Bro. Tobias Chukwu -  
Bro. John Okoli -  

2. Block Rosary Crusade Council of Kaduna Ecclesiastical Province:

Bro. Felix-Mary Onwuka - General President  
Bro. Michael M. Igbo - General Secretary  

3. Block Rosary Council of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province:

Bro. Godwin Ogbuehi - Vice President, Onitsha Archdiocese  
Bro. Kevin Dibie - Member  
Bro. Ignatus Umeh - Member  
Bro. J.M.C. Ezumezu - General Secretary, Awka Diocese  
Bro. Eusebius Oguizu - General President, Umuahia Diocese (Founder)  
Bro. Bert Aham - Vice President, Umuahia Diocese  
Bro. Eddy I. Onuoha - General Secretary  
Bro. Cyprain Okafor - Member  
Late Bro. Benedict Ibe - General President, Orlu Diocese  
Bro. Chima Iwuchukwu - General Secretary, Orlu Diocese  
Bro. Augustine Obiagwu - General President, Okigwe Diocese  
Bro. Matthew Osuji - Vice President, Okigwe Diocese  
Bro. Donatus Chukwu - General Secretary, Okigwe Diocese  

Rev. Fr. P. Oke, Rev. Brother Joseph, Brother Mike Dike and Stephen Nwafor were among those whose presence graced the meeting.

Some officers of Diocese were absent but though were expected to be in the meeting, they include:
The National Council of the Block Rosary Crusade has ever since then been meeting on a yearly basis on the weekend of after the 1st Sunday of May. The 16th Conference was held in Benin City between 11th and 13th of May 2000. The first elected National President is Brother Sir, Felix – Mary Onwuka who was elected in May 1986. In 1992 Bro. Peter Ohaeri was elected the 2nd National President while Bro. Augustine Imoh was elected the 3rd National President in 1998.

The first National congress of the Block Rosary Crusade was held at St. Patrick Catholic Church Cathedral Akwa in Anambra State with the Theme: “SON BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER” John 19:27. This congress attracted many Rosarians from all over the federation in the then three Provinces.

In the year 1996 the Holy See created six new provinces for Nigeria namely: - Abuja, Benin, Calabar, Ibadan, Jos and Owerri. The national council of the Block Rosary Crusade then instructed that the old provinces should arrange for the proper take off of the new Provincial Councils. In May 1997, the first enlarged National council meeting was held at the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus convent Ikeja Lagos with all the nine provinces present as well as many Chaplains.

In the year 1999 the 2nd National Congress of the Block Rosary Crusade was held at St. Mulumba’s College Jos in Plateau State tagged JOS ’99. The theme of the Congress was “HE HAS SCATTERED THE PROUD IN THE CONCEIT OF THEIR HEART, AND RAISES THE LONELY” Lk 1:52. This congress attracted the largest crowd ever seen in any Block Rosary Crusade gathering as all provinces as well as dioceses were represented. Presently the National Council is planing to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the formation of Block Rosary Crusade in the year 2006 at Aba, Abia State.

The 1991 statistics shows that there are over 3,000 Block Rosary Crusade Centres in Nigeria and with the creation of New Provinces and Dioceses presently, there should be more than 5,000 Block Rosary Centres in Nigeria.

**BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE IN LAGOS ARCHDIOCESE**

The Block Rosary Crusade in the Archdiocese of Lagos has come a long way with towering achievement in the socio-religious life of her members. The genesis of her metamorphosis began just like a family rosary prayer at No. 10 Obanikoro Street, Idumota in 1972. This idea was conceived by one Brother Anthony Dike who used to gather Children in his locality for rosary prayer until he was joined in 1973 by Brother Emmanuel Okoye who had been a Block Rosary Crusade member in the Eastern part of the country. His presence influenced the modus operandi of the Crusade in corroboration with the manner it was being done in the East. However, from its inception, the programmes and prayer routine or order of prayers were carried out in Igbo language.

Rev. Msgr. Christopher cherished the society and was the first priest to welcome Block Rosary Crusade in Lagos Archdiocese at St. Patrick Catholic Church Idumagbo in 1972.

As time lapsed, what was once a flame became a fire and spread to other parts of Lagos Archdiocese. This conflagration of the Crusade caught up the following areas in this respective order: Lagos Island, Ajegunle Apapa and Iponri in Ebute-Metta. They were
respectively inaugurated in their areas and named the General Body of the Block Rosary Crusade. In
their burning zeal to spread the message of Fatima and to bring conversion and brotherliness among
men, the three bodies, thought it very expedient that in order to achieve a strong and viable
organization, resources must be merged through having a common body. Thus, in 1974 the feat was
achieved and was called the Central Body of the Block Rosary Crusade and later rechristianed “Lagos
Archdiocesan Council of the Block Rosary Crusade”.

The Chronological order of the Crusade bodies established in the 70’s is:

1st        Lagos Island  
2nd        Apapa Ajegunle  
3rd        Ebute – Metta  
4th        Surulere  
5th        Maroko  
6th        Orile  
7th        Ikorodu Army Barracks, etc.

Many devoted sons and daughters of Jesus and Mary since the inception of the society have manned
the office of the Block Rosary Crusade in the Archdiocese. Brother Emmanuel Okoye and late Brother
Michael Umeudu were the first President and Secretary from 1974 to 1979. At the expiration of their
tenureship in 1979, a new election was conducted which ushered in Brother Justine Okonkwo and
Brother Augustine I. Imoh as the President and Secretary respectively from 1979 to 1981. It was at this
period that the Block Rosary Crusade Central Body became known as the Lagos Archdiocesan Council
with the entrants of new general bodies. Brother Justine A. O. Okonkwo and Brother Cyriacus Emeka
Onuoha assumed the Presidential and secretarial office of the Diocesan Council of the Crusade from
1981 to 1989. This was followed by the leadership of Bro. Cyprian Arinze and Bro. Augustine I. Imoh
and presently the government of Brother Callistus Okafor and Brother Fidelis-Mary Aneke and their
team pioneering the activities of the Block Rosary Crusade under the Archdiocese.

MOVEMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

The wind of change took the Block Rosary Crusade in Lagos Archdiocese through many turbulent
times. At every period of change, great need of the time warranted radical decision by the presiding
officers. One area that was greatly affected in such decisions was the secretariat. However, such
change was borne out of a sincere spirited effort at keeping the flame aglow.

The secretariat began its movements from No. 10 Obanikoro to St. Patrick’s Idumagbo in 1975 and to
St Mary’s Convent at Broad Street, Lagos. From there, it shifted to St. Paul’s, Ebute-Metta in 1978
and to C.K.C. Illasamaja in late 80’s. Our Lady Queen of Nigeria, Clegg Street, Surulere took the
baton and gave it to St. Agnes, Maryland till date. The Secretariat host the Archdiocesan Council
general meeting while that of Executive meeting still remains at Our Lady Queen of Nigeria.

One of the great achievements of the officers in 1976 was the birth of the Rosary Brigade of Guard
[RBG] now known as Block Rosary Crusade Brigade of Guard [BRCBG] which was introduced by
Bro. Clement-Mary Opara and Bro. Clement Ndukwe of Iganmu Central Body. Since then, BRCBG
has been a force to be reckoned with in the affairs and activities of the Crusade.

Furthermore, in the same vein of succession of officers of the Crusade was the succession of her
Diocesan Chaplains. The first Chaplain in the person of a Rev. Sister from Our Lady of Apostles
Congregation [OLA] and Rev. Fr. Furlong were called spiritual director and directress respectively.
After the duo, the Crusade stayed for years without Chaplain or Spiritual Director. The needs of a
Chaplain became so inevitable that the presiding officers presented the Archbishop of Lagos, Most
Rev. Dr. Anthony O. Okogie, DD with the situation that he gave them the permission to seek for any
priest or religious for his approval. In 1989, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Bello accepted the onerous task of being the Spiritual Director of the Block Rosary Crusade, Lagos Archdiocesan Council which was blessed by His Grace, Archbishop A.O. Okogie. Thereafter, Rev. Fr. Joachin Ochibili succeeded him in 1998.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

THE FAITMA MESSAGE

Having had the detailed account of Fatima event, which necessitated the birth of Block Rosary Crusade, may we explicate the message.

As you know, God in His great love for us, His people, whom He created in the 20th Century, gave us a most extraordinary favor, a grace reserved for our age, by sending His Most Holy Mother Mary to us at Fatima to promise us peace.

She came to three shepherd children to give us this message from God, a message of Hope and the promise that under the leadership of the Blessed Virgin Mary and through Her intercession, the forces of good would win against the forces of evil, and that this victory for God on our behalf over the devil and his followers would take place in our time. We indeed then are most fortunate to be living at this time. Furthermore, we too can participate in this victory. In fact, it will be given as soon as enough of us rally to Our Lady of Fatima’s Peace Crusade.

We know that we cannot demand of God to work a miracle in order to prove that a message comes from Him. St. John the Baptist, who was certainly sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus’ public life, never worked a miracle. We also know from our catholic faith that God does sometimes work miracles and that real miracles worked in favor of God’s message are certain proofs that in fact that message comes from God. Thus, we can prove that the teaching and works of Jesus in fact come from God.

The message of Fatima is very rich in teaching content and certainly offers us great hope and very wise counsel for our troubled century. The story of Fatima and its message are very simple yet very profound. It is certainly a prophetic message for our time; one that we cannot ignore except at our own peril; and one confirmed by a great series of miracles at Fatima.

At Fatima, God, through the intercession of Our Lady, deigned to confirm this EXTREMELY IMPORTANT MESSAGE for the 20th Century by a most stupendous miracle, witnessed by over 70,000 people. Recent studies of the photographs show that over 100,000 people saw the Miracle of the sun at Fatima, a beautiful and moving experience that was apocalyptic in its dimensions. “The Sun and Moon and the Stars will give portents”. [Lk. 21:25] Many people were cured on the day of the miracle and many conversions took place. The event of Fatima is still going on. It will go on until Our Lady’s final victory throughout the world.
Of course final victory is absolutely assured by Our Lady of Fatima as she said, “In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph and a period of peace will be given to mankind!” However, she tells us honestly and openly that the hour that the victory will come depends on us. Jesus and Mary want, much more than we do, that this, true peace will soon come to the world and that all men will live in Peace and Harmony and Justice and Charity all over the earth, as God intended it to be when He created us. However, the Peace of God can only come when good a number of us do what Our Lady of Fatima asks. There is no other route to true peace except by following Our Lady of Fatima’s Peace plan. Moreover, if we ignore God’s Heavenly Mother and Her Message of Love and Her promise of help at this crisis in Human History, then God, at Fatima, warns us that although peace will finally come to the world IT WILL BE AFTER MANY NATIONS ARE COMPLETELY WIPED OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH AND THAT AFTER MANY GOOD PEOPLE ARE MARTYRED AND THAT THE POPE SUFFERS MUCH.

To make this message of Fatima as being propagated by Block Rosary Crusade, very clear to everybody, we have decided to categorize it into two as though it implies.

The message is divided into two, namely: ‘THE SECRET’ and ‘THE REMEDY’ or ‘THE REQUEST’ or ‘THE CONDITIONS OF FATIMA’.

‘THE SECRET’ [THE FIRST PART OF THE FATIMA MESSAGE]
This aspect of the message is tagged secret because it was not meant for immediate consumption of the crowd at the apparition ground.

This part has to do with God’s justice upon mankind that refuse to repent and turn back to God in all sincerity. It was on July 13th 1917, at the third apparition that the Blessed Virgin Mary confided to the children a real secret, forbidding them to tell anyone. The secret consists of three distinct parts intimately connected.

In 1927 at Tuy in the chapel, Lucia received the permission from Heaven to disclose the first and the second secret

1. HELL: [THE FIRST SECRET]
It is the terrifying vision of Hell, which opens the secret of Fatima. Through it, Our Lady leads us at the outset to the essential, to the only thing that counts, our eternity. That first part of the secret is of prime importance. Much more yet than the announcement of famines, wars and persecution, that gripping, agonizing reminder of the eternal Hell which threatens us, is one of the most essential points of the message of Our Lady. It is one of the major truths of our Catholic Faith that the Virgin Mary of Fatima wishes to recall to our apostate, naturalistic and materialistic century, blindly walled in by its earthly horizons.

The Horrible and Very Real Vision.
Let us once more listen to the terrible and realistic account that Sister Lucia traces for us in her memoirs2

“As she spoke these last words, she opened Her hands once more, as she had done the two previous months. The rays [of light] appeared to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire”.
“Plunged in this fire we saw the demons and the souls [the damned]. The latter were like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, having human forms. They were floating about in that conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves, together with great clouds of smoke. Now they fell back on every side like sparks in huge fires without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fright. [It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out as people say they heard me].”

“The demons were distinguished [from the souls of the damned] by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black and transparent like burning coals.

“That vision only lasted for a moment, thanks to our good Heavenly Mother, who at the first apparition had promised to take us to Heaven. Without that, I think that we would have died of terror and fear”.

“Come, blessed of My Father …… 3 “

If by grace, we go to Heaven as full members of the family of God, transformed, divinized and joyous in His Glory, we will be happy forever, in an unspeakable ecstasy. Faith already allows us to glimpse that promised happiness. In Heaven we shall forever enjoy the contemplation full of joy at the beauties and glories of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, of Her maternal embrace and of her smile.

Such is our Catholic Faith, the Divine bliss reserved for the elect. “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire! 4 ….”

If, freely, through our fault, we merit eternal chastisement, what a frightening contrast! It is an eternity of frightful misfortune that would open up for us. There is found only the torment of the terrible “pain of the damned”, and that fire of the wrath of the “jealous God”, scorned in His Infinite Love. Hell is that eternal curse of the angry face of the thrice. Holy God, and that rage of a fire which shall consume His adversaries” 5 who are forever rejected far from Him in the abyss. The “pain of sense” torments the damned and adds, among other horrible sufferings, the tortures of a sensible and mysterious fire, without doubt different from what we know here below, but nevertheless real and most terrible. Hell consists of spiritual and physical fire both exterior and interior. It tortures the soul and the body with atrocious sufferings throughout the whole being and at every moment, without any respite, and forever. There is no hope of it ever ending. The damned human soul is eternally cursed, cast far from God, deprived forever of His presence, of all peace, of all joy, and is always in the blackest despair….

This outline forcefully draws to mind in a very striking and incomparable manner, though in a very sober way, the description of Sister Lucia. If we fully accept her vision of Hell exactly as she described it, then it will deeply engrave in our souls that fear of Hell, so salutary, so Catholic.

The modernist theologians have managed to persuade many people in our times into giving no importance to the dogma and reality of Hell, upon which depends all the rest of our religion.

An Authentic Vision, Fully Truthful.

In such a context of creeping apostasy, the vision of Hell granted to the three children of Fatima takes on a prophetic aspect. Our Lady, by recalling the existence and atrocity of the torments of Hell, wanted to fortify us against the blindness. This is the most terrible blindness there is, because it leads right to the abyss of Hell that person who endeavors in vain to ignore it. And, let us note well, at the end of the horrible vision, Our Lady did not say to the three shepherds. “You have seen a symbol, an
image of eternal damnation which is different, since it is of a purely spiritual order.” No, she simply said to them: “You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go”

When Our Lord, dozens of times in His Gospel, declares to us that Hell is the fire of Gehenna”6 “everlasting fire” 7, “the Hell of fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished”8, “the outer darkness”, “the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”9, it is God - the word, the creator who speaks to us, the Eternal wisdom by whom everything has been made and through whom everything subsists.

If, put aside vague and abstract formulas, he deliberately chose to speak to us in such concrete language, it is because he is most truthful. Those terrifying realities were made by Him in creation precisely because they help us understand here below the mystery of eternal Hell.

Far from leaving us in ignorance about the nature of Hell, God in His immense Goodness willed certain of His creatures to foreshadow the whole truth of it for us. Thus the existence of devouring fire of putrid atmospheres of filthy pestilence, of nauseating stenches, thus He created ferocious beasts, monstrous or filthy, which arouse in us an instinctive fright. The Creator has given us this horror to serve as a sampling a warning.

Thus, it seems clear that the images Jesus in His Gospel and His Holy Mother at Fatima wanted to give us of Hell, for from being distant approximations or vague echoes of reality are, on the contrary its most exact expression. We can say in all truth: “That is Hell! It is at least that!”

“Jacinta was very much impressed by certain things revealed in the secret. It was really like this. This vision of Hell had horrified her to such a degree that all the penance and mortification seemed to her insufficient to achieve saving some souls from Hell… Some people, even pious ones, Lucia notes again, do not like to speak about Hell to their children so as not to frighten them. But God did not hesitate to show it to three children, one of whom was barely seven years old, and He was well aware, I dare say, that she would be horrified by it, to the point of being consumed with flight 10”.

FOOTNOTES.

1. “Nevertheless, in order that the submission of our faith might be in consonant with reason [see Rom. 12.1] God has willed that external proofs of His revelation, namely divine acts and especially miracles and prophecies, should be added to the internal aids given by the Holy Spirit. Since these proofs so excellently display God’s omnipotence and limitless knowledge, they constitute the surest signs of divine revelation, signs that are suitable to everyone’s understanding [see cans. 3-4]. Therefore, not only Moses and the prophets but also, and pre-eminently Christ Our Lord performed many evident miracles and made clear-cut prophecies” [Vatican council one, Denzinger 1790.]

Canon 3. “If anyone says that it is impossible for external signs to render divine revelation credible and that, therefore, men ought to be impelled towards faith only by each one’s internal experience or private inspiration: let him be anathema” [Denzinger, 1812]

Canon 4: “If anyone says that all miracles are impossible and, hence that all accounts of them, even though contained in sacred scripture, should be classed with fables and myths; or that miracles can never be recognized with certainty and that divine origin of the Christian religion cannot be successfully proved by them.” [Vatican Council One, Denzinger 1813]
2. MATERIAL CHASTISEMENTS [THE SECOND SECRET]

During this apparition of 1917, there was the World War 1 [of 1914], which Our Lady assured that it would soon come to an end [which ended as she predicted]. But as per the secret, she warned; “If men do not stop offending the Lord, it will not be long before another and worse one begins; that will be in the reign of Pius XI”1 When you see the night illuminated by an unknown light, know that it is the great sign God is giving you, indicating that the world on account of its innumerable crimes, will soon be punished by war, famine, and persecutions against the Church and the Holy Father.

“If my wishes are not fulfilled,” Our Lady emphasizes the more, then Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, bringing wars and persecution of the Church; the good will be martyred and the Holy Father will have much to suffer; certain nations will be annihilated. But in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she will be converted, and the world will enjoy a period of peace. In Portugal the faith will always be preserved. Remember, you must not tell this to anyone except Francisco.” This part of the secret appears to have been justified or is being justified by events.

After that war, that was during the period of the apparition, another war [world War II] broke up - exactly as Our Lady predicted it”.

“When you see the night lit up by an unknown light, know that it is the great sign which God is giving you, indicating that the world on-account of its innumerable crimes, will soon be punished by war, famine and persecutions against the Church and the Holy Father”.

On 25th-26th January, this ‘strange light2’ appeared and Sr. Lucia cried out.

Though the war proper did not start during the reign of Pius XI but the decisive cause of it took place during his time.

The annexation of Austra in 1938 and invasion of Poland in 1939 ignited the world war II. It lasted until 1945 when America ended3 it by dropping two Atomic Bombs on Japan [at Hiroshima and Nagasaki]. The famine and persecutions against the Church and the Holy Father have been in the increase.

“However, it must be observed that the essential point in the secret is not the war, and its purpose is not the satisfaction of our curiosity, but the eternal salvation of our souls. The secret reminded us in short,
of the great Catholic Truth; that temporal evils are often manifestations of the Divine Justice provoked by the sins of men; and that they are at the same time a merciful call to repentance, without which these temporal misfortunes could become the terrible prelude to eternal evils. It reminds us also of the necessity and efficacy of the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin to obtain the Divine Mercy for us, for the Church and for all souls. 4”

FOOTNOTES:
1. It was during the Pontificate of Pius XI that the terrible Spanish war took place, which was a prelude to the actual World War II. Excluding the soldiers who died on the field of battle, the Spanish Reds massacred cruelly thirteen prelates, seven thousand priests or religious and hundreds of thousands of good Christians, martyred for their faith.
2. The astronomers called the strange light “Aurora Borealia”.
3. The end of the war was as a result of the adherence of the faithful to the adjuration of the Holy Church to say the ROSARY.
4. Rev. Fr. Fonseca’s comment on the secret.

3. SPIRITUAL CHASTISEMENT [THE THIRD SECRET]

Doubtlessly, the Third Secret mainly refers to a spiritual chastisement. Far worse, even more fearsome than famine, war, persecutions, for it concerns souls, their salvation or their perdition.

Given below is the Complete translation of the original Portuguese text of the third part of the secret of Fatima, revealed to the three shepherd children at Cova Da Iria – Fatima on July 13th 1917, and committed to paper by Sr. Lucia on January 3rd 1944:

I write in obedience to You my God, who command me to do so through His excellency the Bishop of Leiria and through Your most Holy Mother and mine.

“After the two parts which I have already explained, at the left of Our Lady and a little above, we saw an angel with a flaming sword in his left hand; flashing it gave out flames that looked as though they would set the world on fire; but they died out in contact with the splendor that Our Lady radiated towards him from her right hand; pointing to the earth with his right hand, the angel cried out in a loud voice: “Penance! Penance!! Penance!!!” And we saw in an immense light that is God: “Something similar to how people appear in a mirror when they pass in front of it. “A Bishop dressed in white we had the impression that it was the Holy Father.” Other bishops, priests, men and women religious going up a steep mountain, at the top of which there was a big Cross of rough hewn trunks as of a cork tree with the bark; before reaching there, the Holy Father passed through a big city, half in ruins and half trembling with halting steps, afflicted with pain and sorrow, he prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on his way; having reached the top of the mountain, on his knees at the foot of the big Cross, he was killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him, and in the same way, there died one after another the other bishops, priests, men and women, religious, and various lay people of different ranks and positions. Beneath the two arms of the Cross, there were two angels, each with a crystal aspersorium in his hand, in which they gathered up the blood of the martyrs and with it sprinkled the souls that were making their way to God.” [Vatican –CW News.com – Monday, June 26, 2000].
THE REMEDY OR THE REQUESTS OR THE CONDITIONS OF FATIMA.[THE SECOND PART OF FATIMA MESSAGE]. Our Lady was made known to us as contained in the part of the Fatima message tagged ‘SECRET’, THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR LOSS OF FAITH AND OBSTINACY IN SIN, She did not leave us at that, rather, she gave us hope of victory over devil. Promised us PEACE and ETERNAL LIFE. Of course, this is not going to come in a platter of gold. There has to be a response from us.

Before she became the Mother of the INCARNATE WORD, God requested of Her and she responded “Let it be unto me according to your word”. Wedding at Cana wine ran out, she requested of Her Son Jesus to give them wine, she did not stop there rather instructed the servants “what ever This My Son wants you do, do just that. Blind obedience to Her, saved the couple what would have been a shameful embarrassment. Instead of giving them money to go and buy wine, Jesus asked them to fill the jars with water. What a contrast to the situation at hand! But they obeyed and the obedience earned them even the best of wine.

By and large, Our Lady has assured us victory. The victory of world peace being the reign of Her Immaculate Heart and Eternal life i.e. being face to face with the Blessed Virgin Mary Our Mother and God Our Father. To achieve this, she recommends to us a remedy [devotion to Her Immaculate Heart]. She requests our total blind obedience to the conditions given by God Our Father.

Nevertheless, she warns us that if the conditions are not fulfilled, we will face a very catastrophic situation and many will loss their soul to eternal hell!

Father Howard Rafferty, O. Carm.: in his interview with Lucia [now Rev. Sr. M. Lucia of the Immaculate Heart] on August 15 1950 stated: “Everyone in America seems to think that there are only four conditions of the Fatima message” Rev. Sr. Lucia answered. “There is one more condition”. Hence, there are five CONDITIONS of Fatima Message and they are as follows:
1. The Daily Recitation of Rosary
2. Daily Sacrifice for sinners
3. Communion of Reparation on the First Saturday of every month
4. Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
5. The steady wearing of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.
These five conditions are in one the Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as requested at Fatima.

Sr. Lucia affirmed, “One could not follow the Message of Fatima unless he fulfilled the five conditions”.

These five conditions are Heaven’s Weapons by the Grace of Almighty God and the intercession of Our Blessed Lady and the Saints, man has been given powerful weapons with which to achieve salvation and protect himself against the “snares and wickedness of the devil” Among these, pride of place must of course be given to the Seven Sacraments, instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ and administered by His Holy Catholic Church. In addition and complimentary to the sacraments, Heaven has also provided mankind with many salutary prayers, practices and sacramentals by which virtue may be augmented and dangers to faith and morals averted.

At Fatima, the Mother of God emphasized the vital importance of these five conditions that are joined indissolubly with each other as a great devotion to Her Immaculate Heart. “To whoever embraces this devotion, I promise salvation, she says, ‘God will cherish those souls, as flowers placed by me to adorn His Throne’.”
1. THE ROSARY

Rosary is the summary work of man’s Redemption. A means that has reinstated man to his original state.

Concurring with our great beloved St. Louis. Maria De Montfort, Rosary is not just a conglomeration of Our Fathers and Hail Marys, but on the contrary, it is a divine summary of the mysteries of the life, passion, death and glory of Jesus and Mary.

The Rosary is a priceless treasure inspired by God, through which all anomalies are normalized, ranging from spiritual to material. For the means of the Rosary, the bush was made possible to burn without being consumed, the eastern passageway, remain closed. Through the means of the Rosary the sickness of Adam that estranged him from his creator was cured, the gate of heaven was opened and man was reconciled with God. The means by which the most essential need of humanity is supplied.

With this means, even the most hardened sinner and the most obstinate heretic are converted. Hence in solidarity with Our Beloved St. Louis Maria De Montfort, may we assure sinners like us that if you say the Rosary faithfully until death in spite of the gravity of your sins “you will receive a never fading crown of glory”. Even if you are on the brink of damnation, even if you have one foot in hell, even if you have sold your soul to the devil as sorcerers do who practice black magic, and even if you are a heretic, as obstinate as devil sooner or later you will be converted and will amend your life and save your soul, if - and mark well what we say - if you say the Holy Rosary devoutly everyday until death for the purpose of knowing the truth and obtaining contrition and pardon for your sins with Rosary, Peace and victory are assured.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ROSARY.

The origin of the Rosary is divine rather than human.

Since the Rosary is the summary of the Christian Faith and prayers, inspired by the tradition of the Holy Church of which the Holy Bible is inclusive, has been treasured in the Church right from Her inception. Being chiefly and in essence composed of the meditation on the life, death and glory of Jesus and Mary, of Our Lord’s prayer and the Angelic Salutation, it was without doubt the first prayer and the first devotion of the faithful and has been in use all through the centuries from the time of the apostles and disciples down to the present. On this, let the critics remain mute.

The Rosary begins with the sign of the Cross that puts in mind of the Blessed Trinity and reminds us that God the Son died for us on the Cross.

The invocation of the Holy Spirit: Christ told his disciples that many other things will be taught to them by the Holy Spirit at the course of time. “I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will speak not on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak and He will declare to you the things that are to come”. Can you then prove that the disciples did not start asking for the spirit of truth immediately after the Ascension of their MASTER?

The Apostles Creed is that summary of what the Apostles and disciples believed and practiced, that we still reaffirm
‘The Our Father, is the prayer taught to the disciples by Our Lord Jesus when they confessed that they do not know how to pray. How then can you convince us that after teaching them this prayer, they abandoned and forgot it?

Or how can you confuse us that the early Church did not reflect often on the Angelic Salutation [Hail Mary] by which the mystery of redemption was announced to the world?

‘The critic’, can you deny that the disciples were not, all the time preoccupied in contemplation of the life, suffering and death, and glory of their MASTER and MISTRESS whom their MASTER gave them the privilege of being their Mother. Fundamentalist, do not ask, where is it in the Bible that the prayers of the Rosary and Rosary in black and white was practiced by the disciples of the early Church. Because you have never asked where it is in the Bible what your name is, what it is and that you have to eat three times a day and other things you do without literally and in black and white seeing them in the Bible. It is a pity that you have completely lost the sight of the following Bible passages: Jn. 20:30-31; 21:25; Jn. 16:12-15; Mt. 16:16-19; Mt. 28:16-20. It will be foolish of anybody to make references to the Bible to reject the Rosary because the word ROSARY is not precisely written in the Bible.

Initially the prayers in the Rosary were not in the present dispensation and were not specifically by the name Rosary. Even when it was arranged in the present form in heaven and brought down to the Holy Church via St. Dominic by Our Lady, it was not called Rosary rather ‘THE PSALTER OF JESUS AND MARY’

In the 13th century when sin and heresy were multiplying indiscriminately and the holy men of the church fought courageously, that heaven proffered an effective solution.

In 1214, however, the Holy Mother Church received the Rosary in its present form and according to the method we use it today. It was given to the church by Saint Dominic a Spanish Monk who was the founder of the Order of Preachers [more commonly known as the Dominicans] and a mighty missionary against heresy. He received it from the Blessed Virgin as a powerful means of converting the Albigensians and other sinners.

The miraculous way in which God gave the world the Angelic Psalter [the Rosary] through St. Dominic in a forest near Toulouse is similar to the way in which God gave His laws to the world through Moses on Mt. Sinai. In order not to miss even the least detail on this, we present the story as is found in the well known book “De Dignitate Psalterii” by Blessed Alan de la Roche: St. Dominic, seeing that the gravity of people’s sins was hindering the conversion of the Albigensians, withdrew into a forest near Toulouse where he prayed unceasingly for three days and three nights. During this time he did nothing but weeping and do harsh penances in order to appease the anger of Almighty God. He disciplined himself so much that his body was lacerated and finally he fell into a coma.

At this point Our Lady appeared to him, accompanied by three angels and she said: “Dear Dominic, do you know which weapon the Blessed Trinity wants to use to reform the world”?

“Oh, my Lady” answered Saint Dominic, “You know far better than I do because next to your Son Jesus Christ you have always been the chief instrument of our salvation”

Then Our Lady replied.
“I want you to know that in this kind of warfare, the battering ram has always been the Angelic Psalter which is the foundation stone of the New Testament. Therefore if you want to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God, preach my Psalter.”

So he arose, comforted and burning with zeal for the conversion of the people in that district, he made straight for the Cathedral. At once unseen angels rang the bells to gather the people together and St. Dominic began to preach.

At the very beginning of his sermon an appalling storm broke out, the earth shook, the sun was darkened, and there was so much thunder and lightning that all were very much afraid. Even greater was their fear when looking at a picture of Our Lady exposed in a prominent place, they saw her raise her arms to heaven three times to call down God’s vengeance upon them if they failed to be converted to amend their lives, and seek the protection of the Holy Mother of God.

God wished by means of these supernatural phenomena, to spread the new devotion of the Holy Rosary and to make it more widely known.

At last, at the prayer of St. Dominic the storm came to an end, and he went on preaching. So fervently and compellingly did he explain the importance and value of the Holy Rosary that almost all the people of Toulouse embraced it and renounced their false beliefs. In a very short time a great improvement was seen in the town; people began leading Christian lives and gave up their former bad habits.

Inspired by the Holy Ghost, instructed by the Blessed Virgin as well as by his own experience, St. Dominic preached the Holy Rosary for the rest of his life. He preached it by his example as well as by his sermons, in cities and in country places, to people of high station, and low, before scholars and the uneducated to Catholics and to heretics.

The confraternity of the Holy Rosary lasted for about a century after the institution by St. Dominic. Owing to the fact that devil did not go to bed. He once again got the hearts of people cold. They neglected the Holy Rosary and relapsed into sin, thus stopped the flow of God’s grace which the Rosary had drawn down upon the world.

Hence, in 1349, the whole of Europe suffered the consequence by terrible plague that nearly claimed the life of all men.

This scourge of God was quickly followed by two others: the heresy of the Flagellates and a tragic schism in 1376.

In 1460 was an eminent theologian, a Dominican Priest from the monastery at Dinan, in Brittany. This priest was Blessed Alan de la Roche who received the honor of re-establishing the Rosary devotion after a special warning from Our Lord.

One day when he was saying Mass, Our Lord, who wished to spur him on to preach the Holy Rosary, spoke to him in the Sacred Host: “How can you crucify me again so soon? Jesus said. “What did you say Lord?” Asked Blessed Alan, horrified. “You crucified Me once before by your sins.” Answered Jesus, “and I would willingly be crucified again rather than have My Father offended by the sins you used to commit. You are crucifying Me again now because you have all the learning and
understanding that you need to preach My Mother’s Rosary, and you are not doing so. If you only did this you could teach many souls the right path and lead them away from sin – but you are not doing it and so you yourself are guilty of the sins that they commit”

This terrible reproach made Blessed Alan solemnly resolve to preach the Rosary unceasingly.

Our Lady too visited him to inspire him to preach the Holy Rosary more and more. As recorded in the Secret of the Rosary. Ever since St. Dominic established the devotion to the Holy Rosary up until the time when Blessed Alan de la Roche re-established it in 1460, it has always been called the Psalter of Jesus and Mary. This is because it has the same number of Angelic Salutations, as there are psalms in the book of the Psalms of David. Since simple and uneducated people are not able to say the Psalm of David, the Rosary is held to be just as fruitful for them as David’s Psalter is for others.

However, the Rosary can be considered to be even more valuable than the latter for three reasons:

Firstly, because the Angelic Psalter bears a nobler fruit, that of the word Incarnate, whereas David’s Psalter only prophesies His coming.
Secondly, just as the real thing is more important than its prefiguration and as the body is more than its shadow, in the same way the Psalter of Our Lady is greater than David’s Psalter which did no more than prefigure it.
And thirdly, because Our Lady’s Psalter [or the Rosary made up of the Our Father and Hail Mary] is the direct work of the Most Blessed Trinity and was not made through a human instrument.

Our Lady’s Psalter or Rosary is divided up into parts of five decades each, for the following special reasons:

1. To honour the three Persons of the Most Blessed Trinity;
2. To honour the life, death and glory of Jesus Christ;
3. To imitate the Church Triumphant, to help the members of the Church Militant and to lessen the pains of the church suffering;
4. To imitate the three groups into which the Psalms divided;
   a. The first being for the purgative life,
   b. The second for the illuminative life
   c. And the third for the unitive life

And, finally, to give us graces, in abundance during our lifetime, peace at death and glory in eternity.

‘The Psalter of Jesus and Mary’ is today known as ‘The Rosary’.

In order not to disparage how this came about, we are contented to cull from the work of St. Louis De Montfort ‘The Secret of the Rosary:

Ever since Blessed Alan de la Roche re-established this devotion the voice of the people, which is the voice of God, called it the Rosary. The word Rosary means “Crown of Roses”, that is to say that every time people say the Rosary devoutly, they place a crown of one hundred and fifty three red roses and sixteen white roses upon the heads of Jesus and Mary. Being heavenly flowers, these roses will never fade or lose their exquisite beauty.
Our Lady has shown her thorough approval of the name Rosary; She has revealed to several people that each time they say a Hail Mary, they are giving Her a beautiful rose and that each complete Rosary makes her a crown of roses.

The well-known Jesuit, Brother Alphonsus Rodriguez, used to say his Rosary with such fervor that he often saw a red rose come out of his mouth at each Our Father and a white rose at each Hail Mary. The red and white roses were equal in beauty and fragrance, the only difference being in their color.

The Chronicles of Saint Francis tell of a young friar who had the praiseworthy habit of saying the Crown of Our Lady [the Rosary] everyday before dinner. One day for some reason or other, he did not manage to say it. The refectory bell had already been rung when he asked the Superior to allow him to say it before coming to the table, and having obtained the permission he withdrew to his cell to pray.

After he had been gone a long time, the Superior sent another Friar to fetch him, and he found him in his room bathed in a heavenly light facing Our Lady who had two angels with her. Beautiful roses kept issuing from his mouth at each Hail Mary; the angel took them one by one, placing them on Our Lady’s head, and she smilingly accepted them.

Finally, two other friars who had been sent to find out what had happened, the first two saw the same lovely scene, and Our Lady did not go away until the whole Rosary had been said.

So the complete Rosary is a large crown of roses out of the Rosary of five decades is a little wreath of flowers or a small crown of heavenly roses, which we place on the heads of Jesus and Mary. The rose is the queen of flowers and so the Rosary is the rose of all devotions and it is therefore the most important one.

As time lapses, people relapsed. Cold shoulder, negligence and lukewarmness towards the devotion of the Rosary became a custom; once again heresy and sin took over.

In the 18th century, the Jansenist heresy that had been condemned twice by the church once again raised its ugly head. This Jansenism was very active in France then. The Jansenists spread an atmosphere of harshness and moral rigorism, claiming that human nature was radically corrupted by original sin. This bad doctrine was opposed to the Catholic teaching that human nature is still essentially good, though fallen, and although it has suffered a darkening of the intellect and weakening of the will. The Jansenists denied that God’s mercy is available to all and they allowed only infrequent reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and only after long and server preparation – with Holy Communion being looked upon as a reward rather than a remedy. Also, they taught that God should always be addressed with fear and trembling. These tenets of Jansenism resembled those of Calvinism.

It was at this period that an inspired missionary priest in France enslaved himself spreading devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This great man was St. Louis Marie Grignon de la Bacheleroie popularly known as St. Louis Marie de Monfort. In contrast to Jansenist heresy, he preached confidence in Mary and union with her Divine Son. His labors were almost miraculously fruitful because he made use of the most effective weapon – The Holy Rosary. He stated that never did a sinner resist after being touched by him with a Rosary.

In this our present time, when hearts of men have grown cold again towards the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our Lady appeared to the three little children of Fatima in 1917 as we have already seen. She came down from heaven to give us once again this inestimable weapon against: the
loss of faith, against the diabolical disorientation that is invading the world, against sin, against the  
wickedness of the devil, against false doctrines, against the plans of communism to spread its disease  
throughout the world etc. and the retribution that might come upon the world if we refuse to make use  
of the weapons she has given to us, of which the Holy Rosary forms the central point.

Numerous saints, Holy men of God and the Popes attributed great importance to this prayer of the  
Rosary. It would be impossible to name all the many great saints who discovered in the Rosary a  
genuine path to growth in holiness. Pope John Paul II is not an exception. He said that Rosary is a  
path of proclamation and increasing knowledge, in which the mystery of Christ is presented again and  
again at different levels of the Christian experience. It’s form is that of a prayerful and contemplative  
presentation, capable of forming Christians according to the heart of Christ.

In his apostolic letter “ROSARIUM VIRGINIS MARIAE”, he goes on to say, “From my youthful  
years, this prayer has held an important place in my spiritual life. I was powerfully reminded of this  
during my recent visit to Poland, and in particular at the shrine of Kalwaria. The Rosary has  
accompanied me in moments of joy and in moments of difficult. To it I have entrusted any number of  
concerns: in it I have always found comfort. Twenty-four years ago, on 29th October 1978, scarcely  
two weeks after my election to the see of Peter, I frankly admitted: The Rosary is my favorite prayer.  
A marvelous prayer! Marvelous in its simplicity and its depth […]. It can be said that Rosary is, in  
some sense a prayer – commentary on the final chapter of the Vatican II Constitution Lumen Gentium,  
a chapter which discusses the wondrous presence of the Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and  
the Church. Against the background of the words Ave Maria the principal event of the life of Jesus  
Christ pass before the eyes of the Soul. They take shape in the complete series of the joyful, sorrowful  
and glorious mysteries, and they put us in living communion with Jesus through – we might say – the  
Heart of His Mother. At the same time, our heart can embrace in the decades of the Rosary all the  
events that make up the lives of individuals, families, nations, the church, and all mankind. Our  
personal concerns and those of our neighbour, especially those who are closest to us, who are dearest  
to us. Thus the simple prayer of the Rosary marks the rhythm of human life.

With these words, dear brothers and sisters, I set the first year of my pontificate with the daily rhythm  
of the Rosary. Today, as I begin the twenty-fifth year of my service as the successor of Peter, I wish to  
do the same. How many graces have I received in these years from the Blessed Virgin through the  
Rosary: Magnificat anima mea Dominum! I wish to lift up my thanks to the Lord in the words of His  
Most Holy Mother under whose protection I placed my Petrine ministry: Totus Tuus!

Pope John Paul II attributes his “legendary saintly lofty height” to the Holy Rosary. Having  
discovered, experienced and witnessed that the Rosary is a genuine path to growth in holiness, he  
burns with the zeal to expose to the entire world the inestimable significance of the Rosary to holiness,  
peace, joy and salvation. He then invited the people of God to “start afresh from Christ” by offering a  
reflection on the Rosary, as a kind of Marian complement and an exhortation to contemplate the face  
of Christ in Union with, and at the school of His Most Holy Mother. Thus he simply puts it this way:  
“To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ. As a way of  
highlighting this invitation, he proclaimed the year from October 2002 to October 2003 the year of the  
Rosary and desired that during the course of this year, the Rosary should be especially emphasized and  
promoted in the various Christian Communities. He affirms that the Rosary, reclaimed in its full  
meaning, goes to the very heart of Christian life; it offers a familiar yet fruitful spiritual and  
educational opportunity for personal contemplation, the formation of the people of God, and the new  
evangelization.
His timeliness of this proposal is evident from a number of considerations. First, the urgent need to counter a certain crisis of the Rosary, which in the present historical and theological context can risk being wrongly devalued and therefore no longer taught to younger generation. There are some who think that the centrality of the liturgy rightly stressed by the second Vatican Ecumenical Council, necessarily entails giving lesser importance to the Rosary. Yet, as Pope Paul VI made clear, not only does this prayer not conflict with liturgy, it sustains it, since it serves as an excellent introduction and a faithful echo of the liturgy, enabling people to participate fully interiorly in it and to reap its fruits in their daily lives.

Perhaps too, there are some who fear that the Rosary is some how unecumenical because of its distinctly Marian character. Yet the Rosary clearly belongs to the kind of veneration of the Mother of God described by the council: a devotion directed to the Christological center of Christian faith, in such a way that “when the Mother is honoured, the Son is duly known, loved and glorified”. If properly revitalized, the Rosary is an aid and certainly not a hindrance to ecumenism!

The most important reason for strongly encouraging the practice of the Rosary by Pope John Paul II is that Rosary represents a most effective means of fostering among the faithful that commitment to the contemplation of the Christian mystery. The Rosary belongs among the finest and most praiseworthy traditions of Christian contemplation developed in the west, it is a typical meditative prayer, corresponding in some way to the “prayer of the heart” or “Jesus prayer” which took root in the soil of the Christian East.

The Rosary, “a compendium of the Gospel”. The Rosary is one of traditional paths of Christian prayer directed to the contemplation of Christ’s face. Pope Paul VI described it in these words: “As a Gospel Prayer, centered on the mystery of redemptive Incarnation, the is a prayer with a clearly Christological Orientation. Its most characteristic element in fact, the litany-like succession of Hail Marys, becomes in itself an unceasing praise of Christ, who is the ultimate object both of the Angel’s announcement and of the greeting of the Mother of John the Baptist: “Blessed is the fruit of your womb” [Lk. 1:42]. We would go further and say that the succession of Hail Mary constitutes the wrap on which is woven the contemplation of the mysteries. The Jesus that each Hail Mary recalls is the same whom the succession of mysteries proposes to us now as the Son of God, now as the Son of the Virgin”.

Of the mysteries of Christ’s life, only a few are indicated by the Rosary in the form that has become generally established with the seal of the Church’s approval. The selection was determined by the origin of the prayer, which was based on the number 150, the number of the Psalms in the Psalter and other reasons as been hinted herein before now.

The prayer of the Rosary was sown and rooted in the 1st millennium, germinated and formed in the 2nd millennium and blossomed and beautified in the 3rd millennium. “I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth ……” says our Lord Jesus Christ [Jn. 16:12-13]. The Spirit of truth has come and is abiding with the Church, unfolding the will of God to God’s people [the Church] as at when due.

The Rosary being “a compendium of the Gospel”, Christological in essence, one would conclude that some aspect is still needed to bring out its Christological depth in the form it was in the 2nd millennium. This was not a mistake or out of forgetfulness. God knows why He keeps something to Himself in order to reveal them to mankind at His own appointed time.
Hence, to bring out fully the Christological depth of the Rosary, it has pleased the Spirit of Truth in our time to inspire our beloved Holy Father Pope John Paul II “the Pope of the Holy Rosary as we might rightly call him, to suitably make an addition to the traditional pattern which, while left to the freedom of individuals and communities could broaden it, to include the mysteries of Christ’s public ministry between His baptism and His passion. In the course of those mysteries we contemplate important aspects of the person of Christ as the definitive revelation of God. Declared beloved Son of the Father at the Baptism in Jordan, Christ is the one who announces the coming of the Kingdom; bears witness to it in His works and proclaim it demands. It is during the years of His public ministry that the mystery of Christ is most evidently a mystery of light. “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world” [Jn. 9:5].

Consequently, for the Rosary to become more fully a “Compendium of the Gospel”, fittingly, he proposed to add following reflection on the Incarnation and the hidden life of Christ [the joyful mysteries] and, before focusing on the sufferings of His passion [the sorrowful mysteries] and the triumph of His Resurrection [the glorious mysteries] a meditation on certain particularly significant moments in His public ministry [the mystery of light]. The addition of these new mysteries without prejudice to any essential aspect of the prayer additional format, is meant to give it fresh life and enkindle renewed interest in the prayer’s place within Christian spirituality as a doorway to the depths of the Heart of Christ, ocean of joy and of light, of suffering and of glory.

So, if you want to save your soul and the souls of your beloved ones, if you love peace and want her to reign on earth, pick up your Rosary. It is never late until you are late.

To St. Dominic, she said, “One day through the Rosary and Scapular I will save the world”.

St. Francis de sales said the greatest method of praying is – Pray the Rosary. St. Thomas Aquinas preached 40 straight days in Rome Italy on just the Hail Mary.

St. John Vianney, patron of priests, was seldom seen without a Rosary in his hand.

“The Rosary is the scourge of the devil” Pope Paul V

Padre Pio the stigmatic priest said: The Rosary is THE WEAPON”

Pope Leo XIII wrote 9 encyclicals on the Rosary.

Pope John XXIII spoke 38 times about Our Lady and the Rosary. He prayed 15 decades daily.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort wrote: “The Rosary is the most powerful weapon to touch the Heart of Jesus. Our Redeemer, who so loves His Mother”.

THE ROSARY AND FATIMA APPARITION.
The Rosary forms the central point of the five conditions of Fatima message as aforementioned. All through the six apparitions, Our Lady instructed, “You must recite your Rosary every day”. Then, indeed, we can say that it is about the Rosary that the great events of Fatima have unfolded themselves; and on October 13th, the heavenly vision formally declared herself “OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY”

On Sunday, 13th May apparition, the “Lady” appeared to the three little children after they had recited Rosary [trained by truly Christian parents, interval recitation of the Rosary has become part of their
life] as if in approval of their practice, with her own Rosary hanging from her waist. To this, Frere Michael de la Santé Trinité wrote: “If she willed to appear at the Cova da Iria holding [the Rosary] in Her hand... it was to show us that it is the surest means because it is the easiest and the humblest, of winning Her Heart and obtaining Her graces”

Francisco who could not see nor hear the mysterious happening was instructed to recite the Rosary. No sooner he started reciting than his spiritual eye opened and everything happening became very visible to him. Our Lady told him that he would go to heaven but must recite many Rosaries. He took no pleasure anymore in doing any other thing than reciting the Rosary.

On July 13th, the apparition insists a third time: “You must recite the Rosary everyday in honour of Our Lady of the Rosary to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war for only she can obtain this.

In order that the world may believe in Her apparitions as requested by Lucia, Our Lady promised to heal sick people recommended to Her, but on condition that they recite the Rosary to that effect. Even the cripple of Atouguia was asked to recite the family Rosary.

It was also during this apparition that Lucia is heard to repeat, as if to retain well what the Lady has first recommended to her. “Yes, she wishes people to recite the Rosary, people must recite the Rosary”

On August 19th, the apparition insists again “You must recite the Rosary everyday”. And earnestly urge the little ones to pray very much for sinners, many of whom go to hell because there is nobody to pray or to offer sacrifice for them!

On September 13th, Our Lady repeats once more. “You must continue to recite the Rosary in honour of Our Lady of the Rosary in order that she may put an end to the war!”
On October 13th finally, the apparition repeats the request of daily Rosary and declares to the world that she is Our Lady of the Rosary who come down to earth in person to exhort men to amend their lives and to say the Rosary everyday”

Our Lady emphasized much on the mysteries by the means of the multiple apparitions during the great solar prodigy. The first scene of The Holy Family, says Rev. Fr. Fonseca, represents to us the joyful mysteries of the infancy of Jesus. The scene of Our Lady of the seven Dolours recalls to our minds the sorrowful mysteries and exhorts us to do penance. Lastly our lady of mount Carmel, with the sabbatine privilege reminds us of the glorious mysteries and of our last end, and exhorts us to avoid hell, to live for heaven and to shorten as much as possible the expiation of purgatory.

Fr. Formigan, who was the first to follow closely the entire course of the events of Fatima, writes: “The Message of Fatima can be summed up in two words: Rosary and Expiation!”

To recite the Rosary devoutly every day, with sincere feelings of penance and reparation: such is the substance and the core of the heavenly message of Fatima.

THE PRAYERS OF THE ROSARY

The prayers of the Rosary are after the Sacred Liturgy of the Eucharist, what unites us the most to God through the richness of the prayers which compose it, all coming from Heaven, dictated by the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.
The Rosary is a Blessed blending of mental and vocal prayer by which we honor and learn to imitate the mysteries and the virtues of the life….. death, passion and glory of Jesus and Mary. Hence the Rosary is made up of two things: MENTAL prayer and VOCAL prayer.

MENTAL PRAYER

Mental part of the Rosary prayer is the meditation of the chief mysteries of the life, death and glory of Jesus Christ and of His Blessed Mother. The Mental part is called the twenty MYSTERIES of the Rosary.

A Mystery is a sacred thing that is difficult to human comprehension. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God and man at one and the same time, hence His works are all sacred and divine. His most worthy Mother the Blessed Virgin is the most perfect and the most pure of God’s creations therefore, all her works are very holy. The works of Our Lord and his Blessed Mother can be rightly called mysteries because they are so full of wonders and all kinds of perfection and deep sublime truths which the Holy Spirit reveals to the humble and simple souls who honor these mysteries.

This Mental part or the Mysteries is the skeleton or the framework of the Rosary.

To Blessed Alan de la Roche [one of the greatest holy men who through the preaching of the Rosary conquered sin and heresy of his times] the Blessed Virgin said “When people say the Angelic Salutations, this prayer is very helpful to them and is a very pleasing tribute to me. But they will do better still and will please me even more if they say these salutations while meditating on the life death and passion of Jesus Christ – for this meditation is the soul of this prayer”

“For, in reality, the Rosary said without meditating on the sacred mysteries of our salvation, agreeing with St. Louis Maria De Montfort, would be almost like a body without a soul: excellent matter but without the form which is meditation – This latter being that which sets it apart from all other devotions.

The Rosary in the form given to the Church through St. Dominic and updated by Pope John Paul II, the lives of Our Lord and Our Lady are divided up into fifteen mysteries, which stand for their virtues and their most important actions. These are the twenty tableaux or pictures whose every detail must rule and inspire our lives.

St. Louis Maria De Montfort in his work ‘the secret of the Rosary’ states that the mysteries are:

1. The flaming torches to guide our steps throughout this earthly life.

2. The shining mirrors which help us to know Jesus and Mary and to know ourselves as well. They will also help light the fire of their love in our hearts.

3. The fiery furnaces, which can consume us, completely in their heavenly flames.

The full Rosary consists of the twenty decades and mysteries. It is divided into four parts namely “the beads” or ”chaplet”[5 decades and mysteries].
THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

The first five decades, “the Joyful Mysteries”, are marked by the joy radiating from the event of the Incarnation. This is clear from the very first mystery, the Annunciation, where Gabriel’s greeting to the Virgin of Nazareth is linked to an invitation to messianic joy: “Rejoice, Mary”. The whole of salvation history, in some sense the entire history of the world, has led up to this greeting. If it is the Father’s plan to unite all things in Christ [cf. Eph 1:10], then the whole of the universe is in some way touched by the divine favour with which the Father looks upon Mary and makes her the Mother of his Son. The whole of humanity, in turn, is embraced by the fiat, which she readily agrees to the will of God.

Exultation is the keynote of the encounter with Elizabeth, where the sound of Mary’s voice and the presence of Christ in her womb cause John to “leap for joy” [cf. Lk. 1:44]. Gladness also fills the scene in Bethlehem, when the birth of the divine Child, the Saviour of the world, is announced by the songs of angels and proclaimed to the shepherds as “news of great joy” [Lk. 2:10].

The final two mysteries, while preserving this climate of joy, already point to the drama yet to come. The presentation in the Temple not only expresses the joy of the Child’s consecration and the ecstasy of the aged Simeon; it also records the prophecy that Christ will be a “sign of contradiction” for Israel and that a sword will pierce his mother’s heart [cf Lk. 2:34-35]. Joy mixed with drama marks the fifth mystery, the finding of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the Temple. Here he appears in his divine wisdom as he listens and raises questions, already in effect one who “teaches”. The revelation of his mystery as the Son wholly dedicated to his Father’s affairs proclaims the radical nature of the Gospel, in which even the closest of human relationships are challenged by the absolute demands of the Kingdom. Mary and Joseph, fearful and anxious, “did not understand” his words [Lk. 2:50].

To meditate upon the “joyful” mysteries, then, is to enter into the ultimate causes and the deepest meaning of Christian joy. It is to focus on the realism of the mystery of the Incarnation and on the obscure on the foreshadowing of the mystery of the saving Passion. Mary leads us to discover the secret of Christian joy, reminding us that Christianity is first and foremost, euangelion, “good news”, which has as its heart and its whole content the persons of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, the one Saviour of the world.

THE MYSTERIES OF LIGHT (LUMINOUS MYSTERIES).

Moving on from the infancy and the hidden life in Nazareth to the public life of Jesus, our contemplation brings us to those mysteries, which may be called in a special way “Mysteries of Light”. Certainly the whole mystery of Christ is a mystery of light. He is the “Light of the world” [Jn 8:12]. Yet this truth emerges in a special way during the years of His public life, when He proclaims the Gospel of the Kingdom. In proposing to the Christian community five significant moments – “Luminous” mysteries – during this phase of Christ’s life, I think that the following can fittingly singled out: [1] His Baptism in the Jordan, [2] His self –manifestation at the wedding of Cana, [3] His proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with His call to conversion, [4] His Transfiguration, and finally, [5] His institution of the Eucharist, as Sacrament expression of Paschal Mystery.

Each of these mysteries is a revelation of the Kingdom now present in the very person of Jesus. The Baptism in the Jordan is first of all a mystery of light. Here, as Christ descends into the waters, the innocent one who became “sin” for our sake [cf. 2cor. 5:21], the havens open wide and the voice of the Father declares Him the beloved Son cf. Mt 3:17 and parallels], while the Spirit descends on Him to
invest with the mission which He is to carry out. Another mystery of light is the first of the signs, given at Cana [cf. Jn 2:1-12], when Christ changes water into wine and opens the hearts of the disciples to faith, thanks to the intervention of Mary, the first among believers. Another mystery of light is the preaching by which Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God, calls to conversion [cf. MK 1:15] and forgives the sins of all who draw near to Him in humble trust [cf. MK 2:3-13; LK 7:47-48]: the inauguration of that ministry of mercy which He continues to exercise until the end of the world, particularly through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which He has entrusted to His Church [cf. Jn 20:22-23]. The mystery of light par excellence is the Transfiguration, traditionally believed to have taken place on Mount Tabor. The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ as the Father commands the astonished Apostles to “listen to Him” [cf. LK 9:35 and to prepare to experience with Him the agony of the passion, so as to come with Him to the joy of the Resurrection and a life transfigured by the Holy Spirit. A final mystery of light is the institution of the Eucharist, in which Christ offers His Body and Blood as Food under the sign of the bread and wine, and testifies “to the end” His love for humanity [Jn 13:1], for whose salvation He will offer Himself in sacrifice.

In these mysteries, apart from the miracle at Cana, the presence of Mary remains in the background. The Gospels make only the briefest reference to Her occasional presence at one moment or other during the preaching of Jesus [cf. Mk 3:31-5; Jn 2:12], and they give no indication that She was present at the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist. Yet the role She assumed at Cana in some way accompanies Christ throughout His ministry. The revelation made directly by the Father at the Baptism in the Jordan and echoed by John the Baptist is placed upon Mary’s lips at Cana, and it becomes the great maternal counsel which Mary addresses to the Church of every age: “Do whatever He tells you” [Jn2:5]. This counsel is a fitting introduction to the words and signs of Christ’s public ministry and informs the Marian foundation of all the mysteries of light”.

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES:

The Gospels give great prominence to the Sorrowful Mysteries of Christ. From the beginning Christian piety, especially during the Lenten devotion of the Way of the Cross, has focused on the individual moments of the passion, realizing that here is found the culmination of the revelation of God’s love and the source of our salvation. The Rosary selects certain moments from the passion, inviting the faithful to contemplate them in their hearts and relive them. The sequence of meditations begins with Gethsemane, where Christ experiences a moment of great anguish before the will of the Father, against which the weakness of the flesh would be tempted to rebel. There Jesus encounters all the temptations and confronts all the sins of humanity, in order to say to the Father: “Not my will but yours be done” [LK 22:42 and parallels]. This “Yes” of Christ reverses the “No” of our first parents in the Garden of Eden. And the cost of this faithfulness to the Father’s will is made clear in the following mysteries: by his scourging, his crowning with thorns, his carrying the Cross and his death on the Cross, the Lord is cast into the most abject suffering: Ecce homo! This abject suffering reveals not only the Love of God but also the meaning of man himself.

Ecce homo: the meaning, origin and fulfillment of man is to be found in Christ, the God who humbles himself out of love “even unto death, death on a cross” [Phil 2:8]. The sorrowful mysteries help the believer to relive the death of Jesus, to stand at the foot of the Cross beside Mary, to enter with Her into the debts of God’s love for man and to experience all its life-giving power.
THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES:

The contemplation of Christ’s face cannot stop at the image of the Crucified One. He is the Risen One! The Rosary has always expressed this knowledge born of faith invited the believer to pass beyond the darkness of the passion in order to gaze upon Christ’s glory in the Resurrection and Ascension. Contemplating the Risen One, Christians rediscover the reasons for their own faith [cf. 1Cor 15:14] and relive the joy not only of those to whom Christ appeared – the Apostles, Mary Magdalene and the disciples on the road to Emmaus – but also the joy of Mary, Who must have had an equally intense experience of the new life of Her glorified Son. In the Ascension, Christ was raised in glory to the right hand of the Father, while Mary herself would be raised to the same glory in the Assumption, enjoying beforehand, by a unique privilege, the destiny reserved for all the just at the resurrection of the dead. Crowned in glory – as she appears in the last glorious mystery – Mary shines forth as Queen of the Angels and Saints, the anticipation and the supreme realization of the eschatological state of the Church.

At the center of this unfolding sequence of the glory of the Son and the Mother, the Rosary sets before us the third glorious mystery, Pentecost, which reveals the face of the Church as a family gathered together with Mary, enlivened by the powerful outpouring of the Spirit and ready for the mission of evangelization. The contemplation of this scene, like that of the other glorious mysteries, ought to lead the faithful to an ever greater appreciation of their new life in Christ, lived in the heart of the Church, a life of which the scene of Pentecost itself is great “icon”. The glorious mysteries thus lead the faithful to greater hope for the eschatological goal towards which they journey as members of the pilgrim People of God in history. This can only impel them to bear courageous witness to that “good news” which gives meaning to their entire existence.

Taken from the Apostolic letter – ROSARIUM VIRGINIS MARIAE of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II.

These are the twenty fragrant flowers of the Mystical Rose Tree; devout souls fly to them like wise bees, so as to gather their nectar and make the honey of a solid devotion.

Our Lady taught saint Dominic this excellent method of praying and ordered him to preach it far and wide so as to reawaken the fervor of Christians and to revive in their hearts a love for Our Blessed Lord.

These mysteries are the most signal results of Our Lord’s love for us and the greatest presents that He could possibly give us, because it is by virtue of such presents that the Blessed Virgin Herself and all the Saints are in their glory in heaven.

A Christian who does not meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary is very ungrateful to our Lord and shows how little he cares for all that Our Divine Savior has suffered to save the world. This attitude seems to show that he knows little or nothing of the life of Jesus Christ and that he has never taken the troubles to find out about him what He did and what He went through in order to save us.

A Christian of this kind ought to fear that having never known Jesus Christ or having put Him out of his mind and heart, He will disown him at the Day of judgment and will say reproachfully, "“man I say to you, I know you not”9.

Let us, then, meditate on the life and sufferings of Our Lord by means of the Holy Rosary; let us learn to know Him well and to be grateful for all His blessing so that, at the Day of judgment, He may number us among His children and his friends.
VOCAL PRAYER

The VOCAL PRAYER part of the Rosary consists in saying twenty decades of the Hail Mary, each decade headed by an Our Father while at the same time meditating on and contemplating the twenty principal virtues which Jesus and Mary practiced in the twenty mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

The Rosary starts with the sign of the cross, which put us in mind of the Blessed Trinity by the words. ‘In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And reminds us that God the Son died for us on the Cross by the very form of the cross which we make upon ourselves.

The invocation of the Holy Spirit, We call upon the Holy Spirit to come and be in us with us and for us.

THE APOSTLES CREED:

The Creed or the symbol of the Apostles, which is still said on the crucifix of the Rosary, is a holy summary of all Christian truths.

By the Apostles Creed we affirm that we believe and practice the same very faith which the Apostles practiced.

On this, we are contented with the explanation of St. Louis Maria De Montfort: “The Creed is a prayer that has great merit because faith is the root foundation and beginning of all Christian virtues, of all eternal virtues and also of all prayers that are pleasing to Almighty God. “He that cometh to God, must believe…”10 Whosoever wishes to come to God must first of all believe and the greater his faith the more merit his prayer will have, the more powerful it will be and the more it will glorify God.

We shall not take time here to explain the Creed word for word but we cannot resist saying that the first few words “I believe in God” are marvelously effective as a means of sanctifying our souls and of putting devils to rout, because these three words contain the acts of the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

It was by saying I believe in God that the saints overcome temptations, especially those against faith, hope or charity – whether they came during their lifetime or at their death. They were also the last words of St. Peter, “Martyr”11 a heretic had cleft his head in two by a cruel blow of his sword and St. Peter was almost at his last gasp, but he somehow managed to trace these words in the sand with his finger before he died.

The Holy Rosary contains many mysteries of Jesus and Mary since faith is the only key, which opens up these mysteries for us we must begin the Rosary by saying the Creed very devoutly, and the stronger our faith the more merit our Rosary will have.

This faith must be lively and informed by charity; in other words, to recite properly the Rosary, it is necessary to be in God’s grace, or at least in quest of it. This faith must be strong and constant, that is, one must not be looking for sensible devotion and spiritual consolation in the recitation of the Rosary; nor should one give it up because his mind is flooded with countless involuntary distractions or one experiences a strange distaste in the soul and an almost continual and oppressive fatigue in the body. Neither feeling, nor consolation, nor sighs, nor transports, nor the continual attention of the imagination are needed: faith and good intentions are quite enough “Faith alone Suffices”12.
OUR FATHER:

The “Our Father” was dictated to us by God the Son Himself and it is a prayer directed towards God the Father. This prayer has a great value above all because of its Author - The Wisdom Incarnate. Our Father contains all the duties we owe to God, the acts of all the virtues and the petitions for our entire spiritual and corporal needs. This prayer touches the Heart of God the Father more because it is a prayer that we learned from His Son than those of our own making which have all our human limitations.

In the prayer, we call God our Father because He is the Father of all Christians, whom He has made his children by Holy Baptism and also the Father of all mankind because He made them all and loves and preserves them all. By saying ‘Our Father, and not my Father, we remind ourselves that we are all brothers and sisters, hence we should not be selfish in our prayer, our prayer and action should be concerned for all others. When we say ‘hallowed be thy name we pray that God may be known, loved and served by all His creatures.

‘Thy Kingdom come! We invite God to come and reign in the hearts of all by His grace in this world, and bring us all hereafter to his heavenly kingdom.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven! By this we submit our entire self to God and ask him to enable us by His grace to do his will in all things as the Blessed do in heaven.

‘Give us this day our daily bread! By this we tell God that without Him we can achieve nothing. Shunning greed, we ask Him to give us daily all that is necessary for soul and body, leaving the morrow in the hands of providence.

‘Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us! The measure you give is the measure you get. This helps us to imitate the mercy of God for if we forgive those who sin against us, God will forgive us our sin as well.

‘Lead us not into temptation! By this, we ask God to give us grace not to yield to temptation.

‘Deliver us from evil! By this, we seek for God’s protection as we ask Him that He may free us from all evil both of soul and body and the evil of sin and also of temporal punishment and everlasting punishment which we know that we have rightly deserved.

Amen. May it be as we have prayed [so be it.]

THE HAIL MARY

The “Hail Mary” in its entirety is so impregnated with a Trinitarian and Eucharistic meaning that no mere creature could ever possibly understand it but Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary can really explain it.

There has never been any event in the whole history that can be equated to the incarnation of the Eternal Word by whom the world was redeemed and peace was restored between God and man.
“Hail Mary” is the beginning and an end. The point that ends the Old Testament and commences the New Testament.

At the fullness of time, when the faith, labour and hope of the patriarchs and prophets were to be accomplished, when the merciful face of God Our Father was to turn towards us, when the WORD that was in the beginning, was with God and was God was to be made flesh for redemption of mankind, the Most Blessed Trinity to this effect authored a complement. The Blessed Virgin Mary Our Mother was chosen even before creation by God as the instrument for this tremendous event and it was put into effect when She was greeted with the complement, ‘the eulogy of Mary’ by Archangel Gabriel, one of the leading princes of the heavenly court who was chosen as ambassador to bear these glad tidings.

The immeasurable value of the ‘Hail Mary’ is due first of all to Our Lady to whom it was addressed, to the purpose of the Incarnation of the Word for which reason this prayer was brought from heaven, and also to the Archangel Gabriel who was the first ever to say it.

It is called the ANGELIC SALUTATION. The first words were dictated by the Father to the Angel when He sent him to announce the mystery of the Incarnation of the word; “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee”. Thou art full of grace because in Thee resides the Fountain of that same grace. It is through Thy union with the Most Holy Trinity that Thou art full of grace. Moved by the Holy Ghost, St. Elizabeth added the latter part: Blessed art Thou among women and Blessed is the fruit of Thy Womb”. If Thou art blessed, it is because Jesus, the fruit of Thy Womb, is blessed. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, the Holy Mother Church gave us the conclusion in the year 431 when she condemned the Nestorian heresy at the council of Ephesus and defined that the Blessed Virgin is truly the Mother of God. At this time she ordered us to pray to Our Lady under this glorious title by saying: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death”.

The Angelic Salutation [The Hail Mary] consists of praise and petition. It is a most concise summary of all that Catholic theology teaches about the Blessed Virgin.

By the Angelic Salutation God became man, a Virgin became the Mother of God, the souls of the just were delivered from Limbo, the gate of heaven was opened, the empty thrones in heaven filled. In addition, sin was forgiven, grace was given to us, sick people were made well, the dead were brought back to life, exiles were brought home, and the anger of the Most Blessed Trinity was appeased and men obtained eternal life. The Angelic Salutation is the new hymn which David foretold was to be sung at the coming of the Messiah: “I will sing a new song to you”. The eternal plan of God which is now fully realized in Christ (Eph. 1: 9) for the life of humanity, was made possible by this New Song – the Angelic Salutation – the ‘Hail Mary’. The messianic hopes of the world have been fulfilled in Christ made possible by this New Song of everlasting victory over evil that estranged humanity from God.

Although this new hymn is in praise of the Mother of God and is sung directly to her nevertheless it greatly glorifies the Most Blessed Trinity because any homage that we pay Our Lady returns inevitably to God who is the cause of all her virtues and perfection. This would not sound strange to us. Naturally, when other people admire your production, it is you that get the happiness, joy, praise, glory and what ever credit that is given to it. When we honor Our Lady, God the Father is glorified because we are honouring the most perfect of His creatures: God the Son is glorified because we are praising His most pure Mother and God the Holy Spirit is glorified because we are lost in admiration at the graces with which He has filled His Spouse.
The Authenticity of this was demonstrated in the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. The latter blessed the former in Her most elevated dignity as Mother of God and Our Lady immediately returned these praises to God by Her beautiful Magnificat. When we praise and bless Our Lady by saying the Angelic Salutation she always passes on these praises to Almighty God. St. Louis Maria De Montfort in his book – ‘The Secret of the Rosary’ states:

One day when Saint Mechtilde was praying and was trying to think of some way in which she could express her love of the Blessed Mother better than she had done before, she fell into ecstasy. Our Lady appeared to her with the Angelic Salutation in flaming letters of gold upon her bosom and said to her:

“My daughter, I want you to know that no one can please me more than by saying the Salutation which the Most Adorable Trinity sent to me and by which He raised Me to the dignity of Mother of God.”

“By the word Ave [which is the name Eve, Eva], I learned that in His infinite power God had preserved me from all sin and its attendant misery which the first woman had been subject to”

“The name Mary which means ‘Lady of light’ shows that God has filled me with wisdom and light like a shining star to light up heaven and earth.”

The words “full of grace” remind me that the Holy Spirit has showered so many graces upon me and that I am able to give these graces in abundance to those who ask for them through Me as Mediatrix”.

“When people say “The Lord is with thee”, they renew the indescribable joy that was mine when the Eternal Word became incarnate in my womb.”

“When you say to Me “Blessed art thou among women” I praised Almighty God’s divine mercy which lifted Me to this exalted plane of happiness.”

“And at the words “blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus”, the whole of heaven rejoices with Me to see my Son Jesus Christ adored and glorified for having saved mankind”.

We should frequently say the Hail Mary to put us in mind of the Incarnation of the Son of God, to honour our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God and as well to ask Her to pray for us sinners at all times, but especially at the hour of our death.

Those who love this divine salutation bear the very special stamp of predestination. Like Saint Elizabeth, they are filled with the Holy Spirit.

The heretics, all of whom are children of the devil and clearly bear the sign of God’s reprobation, have a horror of the Hail Mary. They still say the Our Father but never the Hail Mary; they would rather wear a poisonous snake around their necks than wear a Scapular or carry a Rosary.

Among Catholics those who bear the mark of God’s reprobation think but little of the Rosary [whether that of five decades or fifteen]. They either fail to say it or only say it very quickly and in a lukewarm manner.

Even among Block Rosary Crusaders these reprobates would always get to their centres daily after the Rosary and any time they are there during the Rosary, they became absent minded. These people do not stay long in the Block Rosary Crusade.
Still St. Louis Maria States: The Hail Mary is a blessed dew that falls from heaven upon the souls of the predestinate. It gives them a marvelous spiritual fertility so that they can grow in all virtues. The more the garden of the soul is watered by this prayer, the more enlightened one’s intellect becomes, the more zealous his heart and the stronger his armor against his spiritual enemies.

In which ever heart ‘Hail Mary’ is well sounded, Holy Spirit would always over shadow, Jesus would be incarnated and God the Father would declare “This is my beloved child”.

Who could possibly understand the graces and blessings, which the greeting and tender regard of Our Lady effects in us? From the very first instant that Saint Elizabeth heard the greeting that the Mother of God gave her, she was filled with the Holy Spirit and the child in her womb leaped for joy. If we make ourselves worthy of the greeting and blessings of Our Lady, we shall certainly be filled with graces and a flood of spiritual consolations will come down into our souls.

“Hail Mary is the money with which you can pay your way to Heaven”.
“Whoever that says his or her Rosary devotedly every day shall never smell the gate of hell says Our Lady”.

VICTORY OF THE ROSARY:
There are many private and public testimonies of the power of the Rosary, we would give only two or three world recorded ones.

LEPANTO 1571

A few centuries ago, the Turks were over-running all Europe and seemed on the verge of wiping out Christianity when all seemed lost, Pope St. Pius V Organized a Rosary Crusade. He asked Catholics every where to pray the Rosary to ask Our Lady to deliver them from imminent disaster. When the day of the great battle arrived, the Christian soldiers literally went into battle with swords in one hand and Rosaries in the other. Thus on October 7th, the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, one of the greatest military upsets in all history took place at Lepanto. The little Christian fleet, very greatly outnumbered, defeated the mighty Turkish Armada and Christianity was saved … all through the power of the Rosary.

HIROSHIMA 1945

The Rectory of the Assumption of Our Lady Church in Hiroshima was left standing on August 6, 1945 after the atomic bomb killed 200,000 people in the city. The church next door to the rectory was completely demolished by the atomic blast. There was nothing left standing on the street outside. There was in fact no street outside. All that too, was completely destroyed. Only the rectory stood amidst the surrounding rubble and four Catholic Priests inside survived the first atomic blast. It was because they were living the Message of Our Lady of Fatima that they were saved from certain death. Indeed, Our Lady and Her Rosary are more powerful than even the atomic bomb.

AUSTRIA 1955

In 1955, the Russia armies withdrew out of Austria, without one person being killed and without one shot being fired. It is the only time that the militant Atheistic forces of Marxism have ever peacefully left a country in which they hold power. This victory for the Catholic people of Austria is due to Our
Lady and Her Rosary, because at that time ten percent of the people of Austria were praying the Rosary every day. The Rosary is more powerful than guns or bombs, as we can see from this example of Austria.

Through the power of the Rosary, the forces of militant Atheism gave Austria back its freedom. God has the power to soften any human heart, as scripture says. “The heart of the king is in the hand of God” God, through the intercession of Our Lady and through the prayer of the Holy Rosary softened the hearts of the Russian rulers, and thus they gave Austria back its freedom. Sister Lucia of Fatima has said that there is no problem, either material or moral, national or international, that cannot be solved effectively by the Rosary and our sacrifices.

So, what is it that is your problem that can not be solved? Why not try Our Lady with Her Rosary. Individual daily Rosary is a sure mark of predestination.

Family daily Rosary is highly recommended, for “the family that prays together stays together,” and today our families are threatened with breakup on all sides. And in this regard, Pope St. Pius X said: “The Rosary is the most beautiful and the most rich in graces of all prayers, it is the prayer that touches most the Heart of the Mother of God…and if you wish peace to reign in your homes, recite the family Rosary. “There is no surer means of calling down God’s Blessings upon the family…than the daily recitation of the Rosary”… Pope Pius XII. Particularly today, congregational daily recitation of the Rosary is what any nation and the world as a whole can not do without. “If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, in your country, assemble every evening to recite the Rosary”… Pope Pius IX.

This individual, family, congregational or assembly daily Rosary is what Block Rosary Crusade of Nigeria fosters. One former Head of State of Nigeria wondered why the Nation has not collapsed. Who knows, if not for the daily Rosary of the Block Rosary Crusade of Nigeria that has centres scattered all over villages and streets of the nation.

However, it wouldn’t be an overstatement to say with Pope Leo XIII that, in hearts, families and countries in which the Rosary of Mary retains its ancient honor, the loss of faith through error and vicious ignorance need not be feared”

Oh! How wonderful this country would be if only the faithful Catholics would take serious the activities of the Block Rosary Crusade.

FOOT NOTES:

1. St. Jn. 1:1
2. St. Jn. 2:1-10
3. Exodus 3:2
4. Ezekiel 44:1-3
5. 1 Peter 5:4
6. Rosary gives sight to spiritual blindness
7. Do you want to go to Heaven? Make the recitation of the Holy Rosary a way of life.
8. Father Hubert Schiffer, one of these priests, was in the rectory, which was located only eight blocks from ground zero when the atomic bomb exploded. More than two hundred experts have subsequently studied him, wondering how he could have survived. He answers by pointing to his Rosary. He says
the message of Fatima is linked to the message of Hiroshima; Either we will pray for peace and be spared as Our Lady foretold, or we shall see even the “annihilation of entire nations”

9. Matt. 25: 12
10. 1 Cor. 13:7; Heb. 11: 6
11. St. Peter of Verona, OP 1206 – 1253, was a Dominican priest who fought the heresy courageously and zealously. He had the honor of receiving the habit from the hands of St. Dominic himself. He was appointed Inquisitor for Lombardy and it was in discharging his duties that he gave his life for the faith.
15. Lk. 1: 26 – 37.
17. Lk. 1: 41 – 42.
18. Ps. 33: 3; 144: 9.

THE ROSARY RECITED WITH MEDITATION ON THE MYSTERIES BRINGS ABOUT THE FOLLOWING MARVELOUS RESULTS:

1. It gradually gives us a perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ;
2. It purifies our souls, washing away sin;
3. It gives us Victory over all our enemies;
4. It makes it easy for us to practice virtue;
5. It sets us on fire with love of Our Blessed Lord;
6. It enriches us with graces and merits;
7. It supplies us with what is needed to pay all our debts to God and to our fellow men, and finally, it obtains all kinds of graces for us from Almighty God.

THE FIFTEEN PROMISES OF MARY TO CHRISTIANS WHO RECITE THE ROSARY DEVOUTLY.
1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the rosary shall receive signal graces.
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the rosary.
3. The rosary shall be a powerful armour against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.
4. It will cause virtue and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God; it will withdraw the hearts of men from love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of external things, oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The soul, which recommends itself to me by the recitation of rosary, shall not perish.
6. Whoever shall recite the rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred mysteries shall never be conquered by misfortune. God will not chastise him in his justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just shall remain in the grace of God and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the rosary shall not die without the sacraments of the church.
8. Those who are faithful to recite the rosary shall have during their life and at their death the light of God and the plentitude of his grace; at the moment of death, they shall participate in the merits of the saints in paradise.
9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the rosary.
10. The faithful children of the rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in heaven.
11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the rosary.
12. All those who propagate the holy rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the rosary shall have for intercessors
the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.
14. All who recite the rosary are my sons, and brothers of my only son Jesus Christ.
15. Devotion of my rosary is a great sign of predestination.

[Given to St Dominic and Blessed Alan] Imprimatur: +PATRICK J. HAYES, DD. Archbishop of New
York [Pieta Book page 37.

2. DAILY SACRIFICE FOR SINNERS

This is another condition or request of Fatima Message, which is as important as the rest four.
Regrettably, this condition is not even given any attention by many who relate the Fatima message.
Even Marian devotees do not give much credence to this: yet Our Lady lauded its paramount interest at
Fatima. She asked “Would you like to offer yourselves to God to make sacrifices and to accept
willingly all the sufferings it may please him to send you, in order to make reparation for so many sins,
which offend the Divine Majesty, to obtain the conversion of sinners and to make amends for all the
blasphemies and offences committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary?” When the positive YES
came as the reply she said:

“You will soon have much to suffer but the grace of God will help you and give you the strength you
need”.

Sacrifice: This is doing an act or the presenting of a gift in order to win the favour of God. The
giving up of a valued thing for the sake of another that is more important or more worthy. The thing
offered or given up. To give up a thing in order to achieve something else.

From this definition, something is very outstanding – Intention. There must be an intention for which
you are sacrificing.

This Sacrifice is reparation. That is making amend. An action in compensation for the damages
done by our sins and sins of others demanded by God Our Father whom we have grievously offended.

Thus Our Lady says: “Sacrifice yourselves for sinners and say often, especially when you make
sacrifices: O Jesus, it is for love of you, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the offences
committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary,” that is the intention.
The Sacrifice is an offer: that is expression of willingness to pay for our sins and sins of others.
Hence the Angel of Peace that prepared the little children for the great apparition said:

“Offer up everything within your power as a sacrifice to the Lord in an act of reparation for the sins by
which He is offended; and of supplication for the conversion of sinners...”
The sacrifice is a mortification: That is willingly humiliating yourself greatly. To subdue yourself by
discipline or self-denial. To discipline or suffer your flesh in order to obey your spirit. To make your
flesh became generous. Putting your flesh to death as not to follow its cravings. To infringe injury
and pain to the body.
To this effect, the Fatima seers said; “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”

This SACRIFICE is penance: That is an act performed as an expression of penitence. Penitent is feeling or showing regret that one has done wrong. So this daily sacrifice has to do with amendments and keeping the commandments of God. Hence, foremost the sacrament of reconciliation, that is, confession, is involved.

*1 The Blessed Virgin in all her apparition repeated this same request under different forms. Finally, on October 13th 1917, she insisted a last time saying: “Men must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins.” Then with a more sorrowful air and with a suppliant voice she added: “men must no longer offend Our Lord, Who is already offended too much.”

This request of sacrifice [Penance] does not only demand our repentance for our past sins and to expiate them faithfully, but also to change our lives for the future and to break completely with sin, which grieves God and draws down on us His chastisement.

Commenting on this request of penance, Lucia wrote with emotion: “The part of this last apparition which has remained most deeply imprinted on my heart is the prayer of our heavenly Mother begging us not to offend any more Almighty God, who is already very much offended. What a loving reproach is contained in these words, what tender pleading! Oh! I wish I could make it re-echo throughout the entire world for all the children of our heavenly Mother to hear”

No less touching is Jacinta’s comment in February, 1920, shortly before her death, with what ardour did not this child of ten preach amendment of life not only to sinners but also to faithful souls! How she insisted on flight from sin, the practice of the Christian virtues and penance!

“Oh! She said to the superioress of the Orphanage in Lisbon, “If men only knew what eternity is, how they would make all possible effort to amend their lives! ‘Dear God Mother’ [this is how she addressed the superioress] mortification and sacrifice give great pleasure to Our Divine Lord! Oh! Fly luxury! Fly riches! Love holy poverty! Be very charitable even towards the wicked! Never speak evil of anyone and avoid those who do. Be very patient because patience leads to heaven”.

“Pray much for sinners! Pray much for priest, for Religious, for governments! Priest should occupy themselves only with the affairs of the church! They must be pure, very pure. The disobedience of priests and of religious to their superiors and to the Holy Father offends Our Lord very much! If Government left the church in peace and gave liberty to Our Holy religion, they would be blessed by God”.

“The sins of the world are too great! The sins, which lead most souls to hell, are sins of the flesh! … Oh! Men must do penance! If they amend their lives Our Lord will still pardon the world; but if they do not, the chastisement will come! …” *2
The daily sacrifice request has to do also with charity; loving kindness towards others. Unwillingness to think badly of people or acts. Generosity in giving to the needy. It is by giving that we receive. We should always extend kind gestures to others. We should love as Our Lord and Master loved that made him give His life for us. It is by so doing that the abundant grace of God becomes ours.

Fasting is as well a constituent of this request of sacrifice. Fasting is abstinence from something especially for religious purposes. This fasting is not only abstaining from food or what we eat. It could be in any form. From time to time giving up what gives us pleasure. We can fast on not drinking water or other drinkables, playing less and praying more. It could be talking less or not watching television or listening to music etc.

Of all these explanations, some people will still ask; how can one practice this condition?

Fundamentally, this sacrifice is largely the products of our daily life. The little seers would say “We begin to offer to the Lord everything that mortified us…”

The Angel of Peace would say; “Above all, accept and bear with submission the suffering that the Lord may send you”

Observe faithfully the duties of your state of life. After the third Apparition of Our Lady the three children yearned more and more to be left alone to say their prayers and make their sacrifices for Our Lady. Most of the times when they became very thirsty under the stifling heat of the day, they would offer it for love of Jesus and Mary and for conversion of sinners. At times when it became unbearable, Lucia would go to a nearby house to fetch some water, when she returned and offered it to her little cousins, they would say “We don’t want to drink; we want to suffer for sinners” Lucia would pour out the water into the hollow of a rock for the sheep to drink.

When ever something unpleasant happened to them, they would not betray their feeling rather would offer it up for sinners. When they went through the ordeal of imprisonment and the threat of death, they were even happy and offered it up for sinners and for the intention of the Holy Father the Pope.

Under orders from her superiors many years later Lucia relates the extent of their youthful prayers and sacrifices.

Watching the sheep on the barrenness of the hills, they offered up to God and Our Lady their burning thirst. The children went for days without drinking anything while they were alone in the fields. This was one of their biggest and most difficult sacrifices. Indeed, that summer they went the whole month of August with out water. Lucia tells how one day, as the three of them walked by the pond of Carreira on their way home from Cova da Iria, Jacinta was so overcome with thirst, she was forced to speak out, “Look, I am so thirsty, my head aches so much. I’m going to drink a little of this water” Not that water’ Lucia said. “My mother doesn’t want us to touch that water. People do their washing in it and the animals drink it. It will make us sick. Well go over and ask Aunt Maria dos Anjos to give us a little water”

“No Lucia” Jacinta spoke up, “I don’t want good water. I’ll drink this since I can offer to Our Lord the sacrifice of drinking of this foul water instead of my thirsty” There are lots and lots of ways they lived this condition of daily sacrifice for sinners.

*3 Let us then give a loving welcome to the message of penance [Sacrifice] of Our Lady of Fatima! Let us acknowledge humbly that we have all merited the just chastisement of God. Let us sincerely
ask pardon for our past sins, and with the help of grace, let us set ourselves seriously to the task of reforming our lives.

Let sinners amend their lives and become good Christians by the constant observance of God’s law. Let the good also amend their lives and strive to become better each day. Let the better change and apply themselves ardently to becoming perfect. Let even the perfect change their lives, and aspire with all their souls to that elevated sanctity which consoles God and averts from the world Just chastisement! ....

We admit that it is always foolish to offend God, but it would be a crime still more unintelligible to provoke the Divine anger at a time when the world is afflicted with so much misery and is confronted by so many grave problems. Nay more! The Pope has assured us that the thunderbolt of Divine will strike once again, unless we amend our lives. Let us then renounce resolutely, in a spirit of penance [Sacrifice], all indulgence, all sensuality! In a depraved world gone mad, which continues to seek amusement and dissipation and debases itself with evil, let us prove ourselves true Christians who understand the meaning of her fearful trial through which we are passing, who sanctify their sufferings and do all in their power to merit the pardon and blessing of God.

Let us remember the inhabitants of Nineveh! Let us, like them, sincerely do penance for our sins, and then will happen to us what the Holy Scripture says of them: “God saw that they had turned away from their evil ways! He had mercy with regard to the evil which He had promised to do them, and did not do it!” Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima pray for us! *4

FOOTNOTE *1-2; 3-4: “More about Fatima”.

3. COMMUNION OF REPARATION ON THE FIRST SATURDAYS
[Popularly known Among Block Rosary Crusaders As FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION]

This condition or request of Fatima message appears closely associated with the request of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the principal practices of Devotion for which Our Lady has asked in honor of Her Immaculate Heart. They are not on themselves complete without the rest of other three. Hence, they are indispensable constituent part of the Fatima conditions or requests or remedy of the secret of Fatima. These two bear a marked similarity to the practices in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The concluding sentence of the prayer taught to the ‘seers’ by the Angel of Peace states: “And by the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg for the conversion of poor sinners”

On the second Apparition in 1917 at Fatima Lucia asked Our Lady to take them to heaven and She replied: “Yes, I will take Jacinta and Francisco soon. You however, are to stay here a longer time. Jesus wants to use you to make me known and loved. He wants to establish the Devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world. I promise salvation to those who embrace it and their souls will be loved by God as flowers placed by myself to adorn His throne”.

Am I going to stay here alone? “Lucia asked, full of sadness at the thought of losing her beloved cousins.

“No My Daughter”. Lucia’s eyes filled with tears.
“Does this cause you to suffer a great deal? I will never leave you, my Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God.

“As she said these last words,” Lucia tells, “the Blessed Virgin opened her hands and communicated to us for the second time the reflex of the immense light that enveloped her. We saw ourselves in it, as if submerged in God. Jacinta and Francisco seemed to be on the side that was ascending to Heaven, and I was on the side that was spreading over the earth. There was a Heart before the palm of the right hand of Our Lady, with thorns piercing it. We understood that this was the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so offend by the sins of mankind, desiring reparation.”

During the third Apparition of July, when the children saw in the vision of hell the terrible excruciating sufferings of the souls there, they were terribly frightened, and deathly pale, they raised their eyes to Our Lady for help as Lucia cried out. “Oh…. Our Lady!”

Our Lady explained: “You have seen Hell – where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them God wants to establish throughout the world the devotion to my Immaculate Heart.

“If people will do what I will tell you, many souls will be saved, and there will be peace. The war is going to end.”

“But if they do not stop offending God, another and worse war will break out in the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that is the great sign that God gives you, that He is going to punish the world for its crimes by means of war, hunger, persecution of the church and of the Holy Father.”

“To forestall this, I shall come to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.”

* 0 The Apparition of Pontevedra:
On the evening of Thursday, December 10, after supper, the young postulant Lucia – who was only eighteen years old – returned to her cell.1 There she was visited by Our Lady and the child Jesus as she promised on July Apparition of 1917. Let us listen to her testimony: “On December 10, 1925, the Most Holy Virgin Herself appeared, and beside Her, borne by a luminous cloud, the Child Jesus. The Most Holy Virgin put Her hand on her shoulder and showed her at the same time, a Heart surrounded by thorns which She held in the other Hand. At that same moment, the Child said to her:2 “Have compassion on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Her at every moment, without there being anyone to make an act of reparation in order to take them away.”

“Then the Most Holy Virgin said to her: “See My daughter, My Heart surrounded by thorns which ungrateful men pierce at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least try to console me and say to all those who, for five months, on the first Saturday, confess, receive Holy Communion, recite the Rosary, and keep Me company during fifteen (twenty) minutes while meditating on the fifteen (twenty) mysteries of the Rosary, in a spirit of reparation. I promise to assist them at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for the salvation of their souls.”

Charged with this new mission, the young postulant did everything possible to make known the requests of Our Lady3. She opened up at once to her superior, Mother Magalhaes, who had been won
over to the cause of Fatima and was ready, as far as she was concerned, to conform to the desires of Heaven. Lucia also shared this with the confessor of the house, Fr. Lino Garcia: “He, she relates, ordered me to write down everything which concerned that revelation and to keep the writings which we might need.” But then he waited. Lucy then wrote the account of the event to her confessor of the Asilo de Vilar, Bishop Pereira Lopes, who expressed some reserve and advised waiting. A few days after February 15, Lucia answered the Bishop while revealing to him in detail the sequence of events. Fortunately, this letter has been preserved for us.

Here are some abundant extracts from it.

“My most Reverend Father, I come respectfully to thank you for your gracious letter which you kindly wrote me. When I received it and saw that I was still unable to comply with the wishes of the Holy Virgin, I felt a little sad. But I realized at once that the wishes of the Most Holy Virgin were for me to obey you. I became calm and the next day, when I received Jesus in communion, I read Him your letter and said to Him: “O my Jesus! I, with Thy grace, prayer, mortification and confidence, will do everything obedience permits me and what thou inspire me; the rest is up to Thee”...

“On the 15th, I was very busy with my chores and I scarcely thought of it [the apparition of the preceding December 10] I was about to empty the garbage Can outside the garden. At the same place, several months previously, I had met a child whom I had asked if he knew the Hail Mary. He had replied yes, and I had asked him to say it for me, in order to hear him. But as she would not say it alone, I had recited it three times with him. At the end of the three Hail Marys, I asked him to say it alone. As he remained silent and did not appear capable of saying it alone, I asked him if he knew the church of Saint Mary. He answered yes. I then told him to go there every day and to pray thus “Oh my Heavenly Mother, give me your Child!” I taught him that prayer and departed. Then on February 15, while returning as usual [to empty a garbage can outside of the garden], I found there a child who appeared to me to be the same [as previously], and I then asked him; “Have you asked Our Heavenly Mother for the child Jesus?” “And have you revealed to the world what the Heavenly Mother has asked you?” And saying that, He transformed Himself into a resplendent child. Recognizing then that it was Jesus, I said to Him:

“My Jesus! You know very well what my confessor said to me in the letter I read to you. He said that this vision had to be repeated, there had to be facts permitting us to believe it, and that the Mother Superior alone could not spread this devotion.

- It is true that the Mother Superior, alone can do nothing but with my grace, she can do anything. It is enough that your confessor gives you permission, and that your Superior announce this for it to be believed by the people, even if they do not know who it was revealed to.
- “But my confessor said in his letter that this devotion already exists in the world, because many souls receive Thee every first Saturday of the month in honor of Our Lady and the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary.

* It is true, my daughter, that many souls begin, but few persevere to the very end and those who persevere do it to receive the graces promised. The souls who make the five first Saturdays with fervor and to make reparation to the Heart of your Heavenly Mother, please me more than those who make fifteen, but are lukewarm and indifferent.

* My Jesus! Many souls find it difficult to confess on Saturday. Will you allow a confession within eight days to be valid?
* Yes. It can even be made later on provided that souls are in the state of grace when they receive me on the first Saturday, and that they had the intention of making reparation to the Sacred Heart of Mary.

* My Jesus! And those who forget to form this intention?

* They can form it at the next confession taking advantage of their first opportunity to go to confession

“Right after that He disappeared, without me finding out anything more about Heaven’s desires, up to the present. And as for myself, she continued, it is a flame of Divine Love which is lit in souls so that, sustained in that love, they truly console the Holy Heart of Mary. I at least have the desire to console my dear Heavenly Mother a great deal, while suffering a great deal for Her love.”

“Why Five Saturdays and not nine, or seven, in honor of the sorrows of Our Lady?”

On May 29, 1930, the above question was presented to Lucia by confessor Fr. Goncalves when she was at Tuy. At the night of that same day Lucia was in the chapel with Our Lord [as it was her habit to make a holy hour from eleven in the evening to midnight, especially on Thursday evenings, according to the requests of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le Monial]. She presented the question to Our Lord who revealed:

“My daughter, the reason is simple. There are five types of offences and blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary:”
1. Blasphemies against the Immaculate Conception
2. Blasphemies against Her Perpetual Virginity
3. Blasphemies against Her Divine Maternity in refusing at the same time to recognize Her as the Mother of men.
4. The blasphemies of those who publicly seek to sow in the hearts of children indifference or scorn, or even hatred of this Immaculate Mother.
5. The offenses of those who outrage Her directly in Her holy images.

“Here, My daughter, is the reason why the Immaculate Heart of Mary inspired me to ask for this little act of Reparation…”

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION ROUTINE AND PRAYERS IN THE ORDER OF BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

This practice of the Communion of Reparation must be active, attentive and fervent.

The general intention is to make ‘REPARATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY’

This intention is to be made before performing the following:
1. Go to Confession
2. Hear Mass and receive Holy Communion
3. Recite at least five decades of the Rosary
4. Keep our Lady company for at least twenty minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary.
PRAYERS:

a. The Holy Rosary, Hail Holy Queen, Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel.
b. Meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary while keeping company with our Lady.

THE TWENTY MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY
THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. THE ANNUNCIATION: The Angel Gabriel appears to Mary, announcing she is to be the mother of God.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the Angel Gabriel salutes Our Blessed Lady with the title “Full of Grace” and declares to Her the Incarnation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the Grace of Humility

2. THE VISITATION: Elizabeth greets Mary: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb”.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the Blessed Virgin Mary being told by Angel that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived, went in haste into the Hill country of Judah to visit her [bearing Her Divine Son within her womb] and remained with her three months.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of Fraternal Charity

3. THE NATIVITY: The Blessed Virgin Mary gives birth to the Redeemer of the world.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the Blessed Virgin Mary, when the time for her delivery came, brought forth our Redeemer Jesus Christ at midnight, and laid him in a manger because there was no room in the inn at Bethlehem.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of Spiritual poverty.

4. THE PRESENTATION: The Blessed Virgin Mother presents the child Jesus in the Temple.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the Blessed Virgin Mary on the day of her purification presented the child Jesus in the Temple, where holy Simeon gave thanks to God and with great devotion received Jesus in his arms.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the Grace of Obedience.

5. THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE: The Blessed Virgin finds the child Jesus in the Temple.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the Blessed Virgin Mary, having lost without any fault of Hers, Her beloved Son in Jerusalem, sought Him for the space of three days and later found him the third day in the Temple in the midst of doctors, discussing with them, at that tender age of twelve.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of loving Jesus Christ.
THE FIVE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES [MYSTERIES OF LIGHT]


MEDITATION: Contemplate on this mystery, how Jesus Christ started His public life. He came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. John would have prevented Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus answered him, “let it be so now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness”. Jesus is baptized. The innocent one who became “sin” for our sake [2Cor. 5:21]. While Holy Spirit descends on Him the Eternal Father declares, “This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased”. Jesus is lead up by the spirit into the wilderness to fast for forty days and forty nights.

V: We pray Oh Lord!
R: For the grace to do the Will of God.

2. THE 2ND LUMINOUS MYSTERY – THE MANIFESTATION OF JESUS AT CANA [Jn. 2:1-10].

MEDITATION: Contemplate on this mystery, how in the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee, Mother of Jesus was there; Jesus and His disciple were also there. The wine finished. The mother of Jesus said to Him, “Son they have no wine”. Jesus replied, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come”. Knowing the mysterious nature of her Son, Mary instructs, “Whatever He tells you, do just that”. And Jesus turns water into wine. The blind obedience to the Virgin Mother of Jesus earned them the first miracle of nature, which opened the hearts of the disciples to faith.

V: We pray Oh Lord!
R: For the grace of trust in Mary’s intercession.

3. THE 3RD LUMINOUS MYSTERY – THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD [Jn. 8:12; Jn. 1:4-5, 9; Jn. 12:41; Mk.1:15; Mk. 2:3-13; Lk. 7:47; Jn. 20:22-23].

MEDITATION: Contemplate on this mystery, how Jesus Christ, the light of the world goes about preaching; proclaims the kingdom of God, calls all people to conversion and forgives the sins of all who draw near to Him in humble trust; inaugurates the ministry of mercy which He continues to exercise until the end of the world, particularly through the sacrament of Reconciliation which He entrusts to His Church. He goes about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, giving sight to the blinds, making the cripples walk, the dumb to talk, the deaf to hear, setting the captives free, raising the dead [etc.] to back up His declaration that He and the Father are one.

V: We pray Oh Lord!
R: For the grace to accept the Good News and repent of our sins.


MEDITATION: Contemplate on this mystery, how Jesus as usual wants a quiet time. He takes with Him Peter, James and John up to mount Tabor. The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ. Moses and Elijah appear, conversing with Him. Peter acclaims, “Lord it is well that we are here, if you wish, we will make three booths here, one for you, and one for Moses and one for Elijah”. 
While Peter was still speaking; a bright cloud overshadows them and the Father declares, “This is my beloved Son, listen to Him”. This is to prepare the apostles to experience with Him the agony of the Passion, so as to come with Him to the joy of the resurrection and a life transfigured by the Holy Spirit.

V: We pray Oh Lord!
R: For the grace to accept the glory of the Cross.

5. THE 5TH LUMINOUS MYSTERY – THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST [Lk. 22:14-20; Mt. 26:20,26-30; Mk. 14:17,22-26; 1Cor. 11:23-25].
MEDITATION: Contemplate on this mystery, how at the last supper, on the night He was betrayed, they sit on the table eating, the Lord Jesus takes bread, blesses and breaks it, gives it to His disciples saying; “Take, eat; this is my body”. And He takes cup, gives thanks, gives it to them saying, “Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many, do this always in memory of me”.

As often as we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes in glory.

V: We pray Oh Lord!
R: For the grace to accept Jesus the Bread of life.

THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES.

1. THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN: At Gethsemane, Jesus prays as he contemplates the sins of the world
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery, how Our Lord Jesus Christ afflicted for us in the Garden of Gathesemane that His body was bathed in a sweat of blood which ran down in great drops upon the ground.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of resignation to the will of God.

2. THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR: Jesus is cruelly scourged until His mortified body could bear no more.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery, how Our Lord Jesus Christ being delivered up by Pilate to the fury of the Jews was cruelly scourged at a pillar.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of purity

3. THE CROWNING WITH THORNS: A crown of thorns is placed on the head of Jesus.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery, how those cruel ministers of Satan plaited a crown of sharp thorn and most cruelly pressed it on the head of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of moral courage.

4. THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS: Jesus carries the heavy cross upon his shoulders to Calvary.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery, how Our Lord Jesus Christ being sentenced to die, bore with the most amazing patience the cross which was laid upon him for his greater torment and ignominy, stepped forward to Calvary. He became weak by hunger and loss of blood, hardly able to
walk, stumbled, and He fell under the heavy cross. Nevertheless, he stood up again and took courage to go on.

Mary saw Her Son being disgraced, whipped, kicked and driven like a beast. For a short moment Jesus looked at her in the crowd, and Mary looked at her son. She uttered no word of protest or complaint. She shared His martyrdom.

These wicked men would not want Jesus to die on the way so they compelled Simon of Cyrene to help Jesus to carry the cross. Simon was glad when he saw the kind of person Jesus is.

Veronica pushed her way to Christ whose face was covered with sweat and blood. She did not mind the crowd or “what will they say?” not even the soldiers or “what will they do?” She wiped the face of our suffering Lord and the face remained like a picture on the cloth, even after.

Jesus struggled on, in the heat of the afternoon. He fell down again. The soldiers beat him wickedly. He stood up again and walked slowly forward.

Seeing His condition the women of Jerusalem wept but He told them not to weep for Him but for themselves and for their children. Close to Calvary, He fell again helplessly and painfully on the stony ground.

At the top of Calvary, the executioners pulled off every cloth from the wounded body of Our beloved Lord. They pulled so roughly that the skin came away with the cloth, where it was sticking by blood. When they finished, Jesus had to stand naked and bleeding in the public place. [All for you and I]

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of patience in difficulties.

5. THE CRUCIFIXION: Jesus is nailed to the Cross and dies after three hours of Agony.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how Our Lord Jesus Christ having come to Mount Calvary and stripped of his garment, Jesus lay willingly on the cross and stretched out His arms on the cross – plank. By this He offered himself as a willing sacrifice for our salvation. They hammered big nails into his hands and feet. Each time pain exploded like a bomb of fire in His brain. They raised up the cross, with Jesus nailed to it. They let the cross drop suddenly into the hole that was dug for it. The pain and the shock of all this was indescribable. Our Lord Jesus died after three hours. Mary took Her dead son in her arms. Jesus was buried and all came sorrowfully away.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of true contrition for our sins.

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. THE RESURRECTION: Jesus rises glorious and immortal three days after His death.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how Our Lord Jesus Christ triumphing gloriously over death, rose again on the third day, immortal and impossible.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of faith
2. THE ASCENSION: Jesus ascends to Heaven forty days after His Resurrection.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how Our Lord Jesus Christ forty days after his resurrection ascended into heaven attended by Angels in the sight, and to the great admiration of His most Holy Mother and His Apostles and Disciples.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of hope

Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery on how Our Lord Jesus Christ being seated at the right hand of God sent as he had promised the Holy Spirit upon His Apostles who after the Ascension returned to Jerusalem and continued in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary looking forward to the Lord’s promise.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of love.

4. THE ASSUMPTION: The Blessed Mother is united with the Divine Son in heaven.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the glorious Virgin, twelve years after the resurrection of Her son passed out of this world, and was assumed into heaven Body and Soul, accompanied by the Angels.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of thought Over the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

5. THE CORONATION: Mary is gloriously crowned Queen of heaven and earth.
Meditation: Contemplate on this mystery how the glorious Virgin Mary was in great jubilation and exaltation of the whole court of heaven, crowned with the brightest diadem of glory and how all the Saints rejoiced with Her in happiness.

V: We pray O Lord
R: For the grace of final perseverance.

[C] OTHER PRAYERS:

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

O Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, and Tender Mother of men; In accordance with you ardent desire; which was made known at Fatima; I consecrate to you myself, my brethren, my country and the whole human race. Reign over us, and teach us how to make the Heart of Jesus, reign and triumph in us and around us, as it has reigned, and triumphed in you. Reign over us, dearest Mother, that we may be yours in prosperity and adversity, in joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness, in life and in death.

Oh! Most compassionate Heart of Mary, Queen of Virgins, watch over our minds and hearts and preserve them from the deluge of impurity, which you lamented, so sorrowful at Fatima. We want to be pure like you. We want to atone for the many crimes committed against Jesus and you. We want to call down upon our country and the whole world, the peace of God and in Justice and Charity, therefore, we now promise to imitate your virtues, by the practice of Christian life, without regard to
human respect. We resolve to receive Holy Communion, on the first Saturday of every month, and to offer you five decades of the Rosary every day, together with our sacrifices in the spirit of reparation and penance. Amen.

LITANY OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY.

1. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Pray for our dear Country
2. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Sanctify Our Clergy
3. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Make Our Catholics more fervent
4. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Guide and inspire those who govern us
5. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Cure the sick who confide in you
6. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Help those who invoke your aid
7. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Deliver us from all dangers
8. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Help us to resist temptation
9. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Obtain for us all we lovingly ask of you
10. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Help those who are dear to us.
11. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Bring back to the right road our erring brothers
12. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary - R: Obtain for us pardon of our manifold sins and Offences
13. L: Immaculate Heart of Mary – R: Bring all men to the feet of you Divine child

LET US PRAY:

Oh God of infinite goodness and mercy, fill our hearts with great confidence in our dear mother, whom we invoke under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima and grant us, by Her most powerful intercession, all the graces, spiritual and temporal which we need, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Oh Most Holy Virgin and our Mother, we listen with grief to the complaints of thy Immaculate Heart surrounded with the thorns which ungrateful men place therein at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. Moved by the ardent desire of loving thee as our Mother and of promoting a true devotion to thy Immaculate Heart, we prostrate ourselves at thy feet to express the sorrow we feel for the grievances that men cause thee to atone, by means of our prayers and sacrifices, for the offences which men return for thy tender love! Obtain for them and us the pardon of our so many sins.

A word from thee will obtain grace and amendment for us all. Hasten, Oh Lord, the conversion of sinners that they may love Jesus and cease to offend the Lord whom they have already so much offended. Turn thy eyes of mercy towards us, that henceforth we love God with all our hearts while on earth and enjoy Him forever in heaven. Amen.

PRAYER TAUGHT BY THE ANGEL TO THREE CHILDREN OF FATIMA

My God I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you, I beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you – 3x
Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I adore you profoundly. I offer you the most precious body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which he is offended. By the infinite merits of the
Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg for the conversion of poor sinners. Amen.

FOOTNOTES:


1. In 1972, at the suggestion of Fr. Alonso, the Spanish “Ejercito Azul” bought the convent of the Dorothean sisters of Pontevedra which was falling into ruins [of “Fatima, apostolate mundial”. Page 191-196]. Sister Lucia’s cell being very narrow, in order to transform it into a chapel, it was necessary to bring down a partition and use an adjacent room. Thereafter, people could go there in pilgrimages.

2. Documentos, page 401. That text was drawn up by Sister Lucia at the end of 1927, at the request of her confessor, Fr. Aparicio, S.J. “Through humility, he explains. Sister Lucia shows her repugnance to write in the first person, to which I replied that she write in the third person; which is what she did”.[Letter to Father da Fonseca of Jan. 10, 1938, quoted by Father Alonso, “Ephemerides Mariologicae” 1973, page 25]

3. In the great plan of God the reparatory devotion and the consecration of Russia are so intimately connected with one another.

4. In addressing her wishes to Bishop da Silva in a letter drafted scarcely three weeks after apparition, Mother Magalhaes provides some news of her protégé, Maria das Dores [Sister Lucia] and already makes an allusion to that revelation: “Maria das Dores has already told me that she had received here a great grace from the Blessed Virgin Mary and I do not doubt it, because the little one has virtue and simplicity in such great abundance that she must charm the Most Holy Virgin! For these matters, I am the most incredulous person there could be in this world, but about her, I do not doubt at all, I do not know what that can mean! I have never spoken to her about this topic, and I do nothing more than just listen to what she has just told me spontaneously because she judge it her duty to tell me. For all the difficulties she has. I send her to her spiritual director, Dom Pereira Lopes, so that he may resolve them, since for those things I am worse than a mole” [letter of Dec. 25, 1925 quoted by Fr. Alonso, “Ephemerides Mariologicae” 1973, pages 30-31]

5. The Basilica St. Mary Major is quite close to the house of the Dorothean Sisters on the street called Passage Isabelle II

6. Let us admire the marvelous soul of Lucia. Near the portal of the garden, she meets a child and at once, the idea comes to her to speak about the Blessed Virgin Mary. The little prayer, which she teaches the child, was surely her own in that 1925 Advent.


8. Documentos, page 407; Fatima et le Coeur Immaculate de Maria, page 45.
4. CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

CONSECRATION: is setting something or somebody aside for a special religious purpose. To dedicate formally to the service or worship of God.

Our Lord demands of us to set aside or dedicate formally our entire being to the Immaculate Heart of His purest Mother. The incorruptible heart where she treasured all things. A sword would pierce through that Heart, which the Holy Simeon said, then that the secret thoughts of many hearts would be brought to light. Here let us take into cognizance the recording of St. John: “This is how the Judgement is made. Light has come into the world and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For whoever does wrong hates the light and doesn’t come to the light for that his deeds will shown as evil. But whoever lives according to the truth comes into the light so that it can be clearly seen that his works have been done in God.”

“Jesus said” I came into this world to carry out a judgment. Those who do not see shall see, and those who see shall become blind” Some Pharisees stood by and asked him, “So we are blind?” And Jesus answered, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty. Now that you say: ‘We see’ this is the proof of your sin”

God is the supreme Spirit, who alone exists of Himself, and is infinite in all perfection. In reconciling man with Him, being infinite in all perfection made use of the most perfect means. He took body like ours but not just any body. He took the most perfect body. The body that was not with even an iota of inherent sin of man. The body of the Mary Immaculate.

The administrative office of the body is the heart, the most vital part. It is in this hollow muscular organ that blood keeps circulating in the body by contracting rhythmically. Emotions or affections or inmost thought of the body centres in the heart. So whatever a body is, is made out of the heart. Hence the Immaculate being of Mary centres in Her Heart. Therefore Jesus Christ Our Lord and Our God, taking the body of His Immaculate Mother, took as well Her Immaculate Heart. However, these two hearts are inseparable.

It has pleased the Lord to establish along side His Sacred Heart, devotion to the Immaculate Heart. The Heart to which the Eternal Father has dedicated His only begotten Son for our redemption. Hence deems it right that we as well dedicate ourselves to this same Heart for our Salvation and eternal peace.

The plan for Peace which Our Lady announced at Fatima is, in essence, an effort to unite the hearts of millions with those of herself and her Divine Son, the union of which is the very source and wellspring of true peace in the world.

Thus Our Lady said in the July Apparition, to the little seers; “You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinner 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. The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father.

“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If My request are headed, Russia will be converted,
and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she will be converted and a period of peace will be granted to the world…”

Our Lady’s plan for peace is a call to both personal and public consecration. In accordance with Holy Gospel, the Mother of God asks each of us to consecrate our lives to Her Immaculate Heart, letting it become our gateway to Her son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. At the same time, Our Lady also asks the church to publicly acknowledge Her divinely appointed role as the Mediatrix of all Graces and Queen of Peace by consecrating Russia [and specifically Russia] to Her Immaculate Heart in a public ceremony by the Pope and all the world’s Catholic Bishops. “By this means,” She promises, “to convert that poor nation” and bring peace to the world. Speaking to Sister Lucia, Our Lord has confirmed that it is His intention that this great public act shall glorify His Blessed Mother’s Immaculate Heart throughout the world. Deriving as it does from charity or selfless love, the act of consecration is the single most important element in Our Lady’s plan for peace.

However, on October 31 and December 8, 1942, His Holiness Pope Pius XII did consecrate the Church, the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He had Russia mentioned and granted to the universal church the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with proper Mass Office. Nevertheless this consecration done was not with all the bishops of the world and at the same time as requested by heaven. The grace of God requires our cooperation to be effective. Whether we want peace and our own eternal salvation depends on us.

The Holy Father has done this solemn act in the name of all, we should then give its natural complement by our consecration, both individual and collective. Let us enter wholeheartedly into this great Catholic movement, and let us be happy to consecrate to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our persons, our families, our works, our country, all our interest spiritual and temporal. We shall then be sure of doing something pleasing to Our Heavenly Mother, and of drawing Her blessing of Peace and salvation on ourselves and on the whole world.

Our Lord himself very ardently desires the propagation of the cult and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of His Mother, because Her Heart is the magnet which attracts souls to Him.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary radiates on the earth the rays of Her Divine Son - the light and love of the world. That beam of mysterious light thrown on the little seers during the Apparition of 1917 which was so intense and deep that penetrated their heart even to the inmost depths of their soul, it made them see themselves in God, more clearly than in the clearest mirror. “I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have light and life”5 So he who follows Christ should consecrate himself to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in order not to walk in the darkness rather to have light and life as to see themselves in God as the little seers did.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary is the inexhaustible source, which causes to pour over the earth the living waters of the Mercy of Jesus Christ. The Mercy shown to those who acknowledged that they are blind that they may be made to see. Our Lady asked the Church to consecrate Russia that claims to see but remains blind, as to cast the light of her Divine Son on that poor nation so that she may see and be converted.
This consecration asks by Our Lady of Fatima does not consist solely in the recitation of a formula. It should be for us a real programme of Christian life, accompanied by a solemn resolution of putting it into practice under the maternal protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Remember the recording of St. John as quoted earlier. Whoever does wrong hates this light that beams out of the Immaculate of Mary which is Jesus Our Lord and Our God. But you who lives according to the truth, the truth of consecrating all that is you, comes into the light so that you can be clearly seen that your works have been done in God”. “… God is light, therefore there should be no darkness in you”.

You who refuse to be consecrated, like the Pharisees you claim to see, like them you will remain blind. You love darkness therefore no beam of light shall be thrown unto you, thus shall not see yourself in God. So, Let us accept the heavenly message of Fatima and consecrate ourselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary living in a manner worthy of our consecration, we may be sure that our salvation will be certain and lasting.

FATIMA CONSECRATION FORMAT

Consecration being a formal dedication to the service or worship of God, apart from sacramental consecration, there is no static formular or method for setting oneself, person/s, or thing/s aside for an intimate relationship with God. Consecration is a quest for a fuller union with God. Therefore, anyone willing to consecrate, might or might not follow any particular lay down formular. The method you adopt in consecration depends on the kind of spirituality you want to follow.

On the aspect of TOTAL CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART THROUGH THE IMMACULATE HEART, or rather, TOTAL CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY, or more accurately, CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, there are two popular methods propagated by St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe and St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort respectively.

Precisely, in 1917 at Fatima, Our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lady His Blessed Mother proffered for us a very simple but most effective spirituality to achieve the deepest union with God, viz: TRUE DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY - which includes Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Therefore whosoever that wishes to adopt True Devotion to the Immaculate Heart as proffered by God Himself, with the intent of achieving the greatest union with God, must formally set himself or herself aside for this purpose, i.e., must undergo a form of Consecration, which boils down to the renewal and struggle by the grace of God, in the Immaculate Heart of Mary that is full of grace, to perfect our response to the vows of our Baptism, from which every other Consecration takes rise. It is advised therefore that anyone willing to achieve this deepest union with God as has been requested by Our Lord Himself and Our Lady Herself, should follow the formal formula of Fatima Consecration. The vital importance of this is to enable the person understand, practice and perfect the True Devotion to the Immaculate Heart as requested by Our Lord and Our Lady Themselves. This Fatima Consecration might look simple, but it is far reaching.

FATIMA CONSECRATION PREPARATION SCHEME

Note: Without the GRACE of God, no one can achieve union with Him. The scheme is laid down in reflection to the events and requests of Fatima Apparitions. It is targeted with profound hope to getting the individual participants well informed about the spirituality he/she is questing to follow. Thus he/she would be well disposed and docile to the Grace of God, only which can enable the individual to achieve the intent desire to attain perfect union with God. It is therefore advised that adequate time and
attention should be given to the scheme. In spite of the time frame suggested below, parishes can start
the consecration class, i.e., preparation, any time from February. The idea is to have enough time to do
requisite justice to each topic. For more effective preparation, Parishes might fix classes in their
respective centres. In this case, co-ordinators should be selected from among well-informed members.
The co-ordinators should have their own class to receive refresher course and postage to the centres
they are to co-ordinate, before the commencement of the general preparation. From 28th of April to 4th
of May, all intending candidates for the Consecration should gather together under the Parish level for
thorough reflection on all the topics treated. The essence of this preparation in various Centres is to
carry every member of the Block Rosary Crusade along. By the nature of Block Rosary Crusade, every
member (Consecrated or yet to be consecrated) is expected to participate in the consecration class. This
is necessitated, for the fact that every true Crusader ought to be grounded in the knowledge of the
given topics and must at least annually renew he/her Consecration formally or their membership.

In alternative, Parishes can as well organize common class under Parish level from day one if this
would yield a better result.

DAYS ACTIVITIES

WEEK I 1st - 2nd MARCH Introduction.
WEEK II 3rd - 9th MARCH History of Fatima Apparitions. (chapter two)
WEEK III 10th - 16th MARCH (a) Reasons for Consecration (b) Sacraments.
WEEK IV 17th - 23rd MARCH (a) The Holy Rosary: (Pg. 118 – 153)
   (b) The Origin of the Rosary.
   (c) The meaning of the Rosary.
   (d) The Mysteries of the Rosary.
   (a) The benefits & Graces of the Rosary.
WEEK V 24th - 30th March Prayer, Penance and Sacrifice. (Pg.153 – 158)
   (a) Daily Sacrifice for Sinners.
   (b) Need for Daily Prayers.
   (c) The effects of Prayer and Sacrifice.
   (d) Indulgence.
WEEK VI 31st - 6th April The Communion of Reparation on first Saturday of
every Month. (1st Saturday Devotion). (Pg.158 -176)
WEEK VII 7th - 13th April The Scapular: (Pg. 186 – 196)
   (a) The meaning of Scapular.
   (b) The origin of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
   (c) The Sabatine Privilege.
   (d) How the Scapular should be won.
WEEK VIII 14th - 20th April Consecration. (Pg. 177 – 196).
   (a) Why being consecrated.
   (b) Life of a consecrated person.
WEEK IX 21st - 27th April The Virtues of Our Lady. (Pg. 197 – 198).
WEEK X 28th - 4th May Thorough Reflection on All the Topics treated.
WEEK XI 5th - 13th May Retreat & Confession in all Parishes.
13th May (or the immediate Sunday as designated) CONSECRATION PROPER!!!
ACT OF CONSECRATION AND SCAPULAR ENROLEMENT

(The Consecration is better done during the Holy Mass if the Priest allows it, if not, it has to take place immediately after the Holy Mass).

Priest:
My beloved children of God, you have come here today to carry out an undivided act of solemn and definitive decision. I then now ask: What do you seek?

Participant:
I seek to officially and formally, for the rest of my life unite my entire will with the Holy Will of God the Almighty, that He may use me unreservedly in recreating the world anew, so that the divine peace may reign in our world through the triumphant reign of the Immaculate Heart of Mary the Mother of God in preparation for the second and final coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Priest:
How do you intend to co-operate with God in recreating the world?

Participant:
Through the instrumentality of the Sacraments; childlike obedience to the doctrine of Our Lord Jesus Christ as being taught by the Holy Catholic Church, to fervently live, devotedly sustain and heroically defend them to the later all the days of my life.

Priest:
How do you then hope to achieve this?

Participant:
For the rest of my life, I have decided without looking back in good or bad time to live and propagate the spirituality as proffered by Our Lady Queen of Peace during Her Apparitions at Fatima, which is being lived and propagated by the Block Rosary Crusade, an Apostolate of Our Lady of Fatima.

The spirituality which entails:
1. Daily recitation of the Rosary.
2. Daily Sacrifice for Sinners.
3. Communion of reparation on first Saturday of every month.
4. Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Priest:
Having stated your intention, I now joyfully invite you to formally seal your intention in an act of Consecration in accordance with the request of Our Lady of Fatima. (The Priest then announces the Act of Consecration, the Litany and the Act of Reparation on page 173 – 175).

Participant:
(Turn to page 173 – 174 for: Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.)
FOOTNOTES:
1. Lk. 1:19, 51
2. Lk. 2:35
3. Jn. 3:19-21
4. 1 Jn. 1:5
5. Jn 8:12

5. STEADY WEARING OF BROWN SCAPULAR OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL.

This is one of the five conditions or requests of Fatima as re-affirmed by Lucia in her interview by Rev. Fr. Howard Rafferty, O. Carm. on August 15, 1950.

“Everyone in America seems to think that there are only four conditions of the Fatima message….,” he asked.

“There is one more condition,” the wearing of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel” says Lucia.

“You mean if one did all four things, but did not wear the Scapular, he would not fulfil what Our Lady asked for at Fatima?” replied Father.

Lucia answered “He could not fulfill what the Blessed Mother asked for at Fatima if he refused to wear the Scapular”.

To make the point ever clearer, Father probed the more: “Do you mean to say that the wearing of the Brown Scapular is not just something Our Lady would like us to do but that it is essential to the Message?” “Exactly”! Said Lucia, “One could not follow the message of Fatima unless he fulfilled the five conditions, one of which is the wearing of the Brown Scapular all the time day and night”1.

So from this account you can see that any person that wishes to live the Fatima message like the Block Rosary Crusaders, must wear the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel devoutly and perseveringly.

The Brown Scapular is a sacramental, one of the many items set apart or blessed by the Church to inspire devotion and increase holiness.

On October 13, as afore-announced to the three little children by Our Lady, during the closing of the cycle of apparitions, when the conversation of Lucia with Our Lady of the Rosary was finished, while the crowd contemplated the grandiose cosmic miracle, the three shepherds enjoyed several visions. They were given to admire in the sky three successive pictures the last of which was Our Lady of Mount Carmel calling to mind the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. In this last public apparition, Our Lady held the Brown Scapular in Her hands as to urge us to wear and propagate it, quite like in the preceding apparitions, the presence of her rosary had clearly manifested the wishes of Her Heart. Lucia explained this to Father Howard Rafferty in the interviews aforementioned: “Our Lady, Lucia told him held the Scapular in Her hands because she wants us all to wear it”.

Devotion for the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel has been an aged devotion to Our Lady. It is part of a religious habit belonging in its own right to the Carmelite Order. The familiar small scapular, consisting of two small pieces of Brown Wool connected by string and worn over the
shoulders, is itself a reflection in a miniature of the habit, which the monks wear as a sign of their vocation and devotion. The Scapular as worn by the monks is a sleeveless outer garment or a large apron thrown over the head, dropping front and back from the shoulder to the feet. Scapular is a Latin word meaning shoulder.

The small Scapular as we are familiar with retains the characteristics of a garment and carries with it the symbolism and promises of the large scapular. Although the old proverb remain true that “the habit does not make the monk,” there is special significant to religious garb. It is the public sign of dedication to a religious way of life.

The Brown Scapular must be brown, rectangular in shape and made of 100 percent lamb’s wool [symbolic of Jesus, the Lamb of God]. The strings connecting the pieces of wool may be of any color or material. It must, however, be worn over the shoulders, one part in front and one in back. Worn in any other way, it carries no indulgences.

THE ORIGIN

The Brown Scapular devotion originated in the 13th century from Carmelite monks. This Carmelite order is traced back to prophet Elijah. “The man of fire “ as the Bible History called him, who on Mount Carmel invoked the aid of God in overthrowing the false gods of that vicinity2, while the Scapular has a reflection of the cloak he handed over to his successor prophet Elishah. This order of Mount Carmel was founded on Mount Carmel.

*0 Prophet Elijah had a vision; he saw a little cloud that was about the size of a man’s foot at first but gradually seemed to cover most of the heavens. In it Elijah saw the heel of a foot which to him was most symbolic, as he recalled the words of the Bible. “The heel of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent! It was especially, significant to him, as the cloud became the image of the Immaculate Conception.

The vision inspired such a deep love in the heart of Elijah such a burning love that he conceived the idea of founding a Religious Order of Men who would imitate the virtues of Mary. As a group of hermits, they lived on Mount Carmel. Here they erected a chapel in Mary’s honour and from this small group of men a huge Carmelite Order of Priests has spread throughout the world. Apparently, the Blessed Virgin was so pleased that she visited them many times. *0

Carmelites have always regarded themselves as “Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel”. These hermits on Mount Carmel put their Christ centred lives of prayer under the patronage of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. At a time about 13th century, they experienced a lot of persecutions and rejection. Some regarded them as false devotees of Mary. The conditions became so unbearable and eventually they were chased from Palestine by the Saracens. They migrated to the West, bearing with them the family name of Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. They encountered great difficulties in being established in Europe and maintaining themselves there. In fact, it was in those tragic circumstances that Saint Simon Stock was elected prior general of the order in 1247. He prayed earnestly, entreated the Lady of Mount Carmel to manifest Herself as to prove the authenticity of their devotion to Her and to prove their identity as true descendants of the order of Carmel as founded by the prophet Elijah.
On July 16, 1251, St. Simon Stock was kneeling in his tiny cell, pouring his soul with deep and longing sighs in what has been often called [after the Hail Mary] the most beautiful of all the Marian prayers namely:

“Flower of Carmel,
Vine Blessing – Laden,
Splendor of Heaven,
Child – bearing Maiden.
None equals thee!
O Mother benign
Who no man didst know
On all Carmel’s children
Thy favours bestow
Star of the sea”

As the Saint lifts his tear-dimmed eyes the cell is suddenly flooded with a great light. Surrounded by a great concourse of angels, the Queen of Heaven is descending towards Him carrying the infant Jesus in Her arm, holding forth the Brown Scapular of the friars and said, “Receive My beloved son, the Scapular of thy Order, as the Distinctive sign of My confraternity: Whoever dies invested with this Scapular shall never suffer eternal fire. It is a sign of Salvation, a sure safeguard in danger, a pledge of Peace and of My Special protection until the end of the ages.” She also told him to go to the Pope and he would end the persecution of the order.

This great promise was further magnified some eighty years later when the Queen of Heaven appeared to Jean Dreze [Later Pope John XXII] and told him that “Those who have been invested with this Holy Habit will be delivered from Purgatory the first Saturday after their deaths” This great secondary promise attached to the Scapular is called the Sabbatine [Saturday] Privilege and is based on a decree issued by Pope John XXII in 1322 [and re-confirmed 400 years later by Pope Paul V]. In our own century, Pope Benedict XV, as a sign of his approval, granted a 500-day indulgence each time the Scapular is kissed.

At its essence, the scapular is a prayer in which Our Lady draws us nearer to the Sacred Heart of Her Divine Son. For over seven hundred years, the promise of the Scapular has been proven theologically sound and confirmed by miracles which the Blessed Claude de la Colombiere has called “more numerous and authentic” than any other sacramental devotion.

“…Whoever dies wearing this Scapular shall never suffer the eternal burnt of hell fire”… A promise of eternal salvation – this goes with the holy Rosary and Communion of reparation on first Saturdays. Oh! Our beloved ones, why do you still loiter on trial and error experiment of heaven? While Our Beloved Mother has assured our lives in heaven. All she requests of us is to obtain the receipt of the Assurance Policy taken for us by her with Our Heavenly Father. Be you child or adult, young or old, rich or poor, illiterate or literate, why not join Block Rosary Crusade with every zeal and love; yes! Block Rosary Crusade – the symbol of this receipt of Assurance policy. Block Rosary Crusade is the embodiment of this receipt. The five conditions or request of Fatima is the summary of what Block Rosary Crusade is all about. Our beloved ones what we are saying in essence is; why not embrace these conditions of Fatima [The receipt of Heavenly assurance] without neglecting any.

We beg your pardon for the digression. *01 Catholic Theologians and authorities like Vermeesch, Saint Robert Bellarmine, Beringer, Benedict XV etc., explain this promise of Our Lady of Mount
Carmel to mean that anyone dying in Mary’s family will receive from Her, at the hour of death, either the grace of perseverance in the state of grace or the grace of final contrition.

Mary does not mean by Her promise that anyone dying even in mortal sin will be saved. Death in mortal sin must lead to damnation. Mary’s promise naturally rewards itself “whosoever dies clothes in this habit shall not die in mortal sin.” “To make this clear, the Church often inserts the word “piously” into the promise: Quicumquer in hoc “pie” moriens, acternum non patietur incendium.

Therefore, Our Lady’s promise does not mean removal of God’s sanction of the moral law, i.e., that regardless of what we do we shall not be eternally punished. Saints and Pontiffs often warn us of the foolhardiness of abusing Mary’s promise. At the same time that he joyfully professed: “I learned to love the Scapular Virgin in the arms of my mother”, Pope Pius XI warned all the faithful that “although it is very true that the Blessed Virgin loves all who love Her, nevertheless those who wish to have the Blessed Mother as a helper at the hour of death, must in life merit such a signal favour by abstaining from sin and labouring in Her honour” One can take it as certain that if a person continually sins because of Mary’s Scapular he shall not die in the Scapular. To lead a sinful life while trusting in the Scapular promise is to commit a sin, the horror of which borders on sacrilege; its punishment will not only be eternal but far worse than if one had led a sinful life without making the Mother of God an excuse for crucifying Her Son...

This boundless generous promise of Our Lady, the grace of graces, the most sublime of all graces, that of perseverance, cannot be merited even by an entire life of sanctity spent in prayer and sacrifice, for it is always a purely gratuitous gift of the Divine Mercy. And the promise is without any exclusion, limitation, or restriction: “To all those who…, or “whosoever……, I promise.”

The disproportion between “the little devotion” requested, and the immense grace attached to it, reveals to us first of all and especially the quasi-infinite power of intercession granted to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the salvation of souls.

“The great promise, [Father Alonso writes] is nothing less than a new manifestation of this love of complacency which the Holy Trinity has for the Blessed Virgin. For those who understand such a thing, it is easy to admit that such wonderful promises can be attached to such humble practices. Such souls accept the promise with filial love, and a simple heart full of confidence in the Blessed Virgin Mary” 4.

In short, we can therefore say in all truth that the first fruit of the Scapular devotion [and the other requests of Fatima] is the salvation of the one practicing it. Let us place no limits on the Divine Mercy, but keep to the latter of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s promise; whoever fulfills all the conditions set down can be sure of obtaining at the moment of death at least and this even after miserable lapses back into a state of grave sin – the graces necessary to obtain the pardon of God, and to be preserved from eternal chastisement.

Fortunately for us, this outstanding Scapular promise from the Queen of Heaven and Earth was meant not just for the Carmelites only but for all people, every where. In order words, those who wear Her Scapular are assured of Her solicitude and protection, their salvation for all eternity.

“…. It is a sign of salvation, a sure safeguard in danger, a pledge of Peace and My Special Protection until the end of the ages,” She says.
So if you lovingly, devoutly and perseveringly wear the Brown Scapular [the Block Rosary Crusade Scapular], you would be highly guarded, highly protected, from all dangers, evils, bad spirits, power of ‘Ndí Otú’, from witchcraft, ‘Ogboni’, Poisons, Harms and accident.

The devils revealed to Francis of Yepes, the brother of St. John of the Cross that three things especially tormented them. The first is the Name of Jesus, the Second, the Name of Mary and third, the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The agents of the devil would always tell you, “take off that habit on your neck”

Are you ashamed of putting on the Scapular? May we warn you that Our Mother will be ashamed of you when time comes. Are you among those that believe and teach others that until you become a living saint, you are not supposed to put on scapular? Come of it! That is one of the ploys of Satan to keep you away from your garment of salvation, from identifying with Mary. Remember what Our Mother Ever Virgin says, “Whoever dies wearing the “Brown Scapular and not whoever that never sinned that dies wearing the scapular…."

Therefore what are you waiting for? Our beloved brothers and sisters put on your Brown Scapular all the time. It is a uniform of the members of the family of Mary. We the servants are offering you now the wedding garment. To avoid being ordered to be bound hands and feet in the wedding hall and thrown into the dark where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth5, lovingly accept our offer now while you can. It is never late until it is late.

Our Brown Scapular is an identity of Mary the Mother of God. If you identify with Her, she will identify with you and if she does, you have nothing to fear, even hell itself, she says, “You shall never suffer the flame of fire”.

Steady wearing of Brown Scapular will help you make straight your crooked ways. It will help you drop your bad habits and pick up that of our Blessed Ever Virgin Mother Mary. To die wearing it is a great privilege given to those who love and obey Our Lady. If you wear it steadily and keep living in mortal sin, may we once again assure you that there is no way you can ever die wearing it. At the point of your death, Our Lady will take it away from you before you die. So whoever dies wearing it, heaven is assured.

Our beloved, pick up your Scapular put on your Scapular devoutly, lovingly and perseveringly. It is a rich present brought down from Heaven by our loving Mother Herself for all especially those who love and want Her to help them secure eternal life. It is the garment of our beloved Mother Mary so clothe yourself in it all the time.

SABBATINE PRIVILEGE

The “second scapular promise is known as the “Sabbatine privilege”. “Sabbatine” means “Saturday”, and the Church links the Scapular to Our Lady’s special day, when it is believe the Blessed Virgin particularly comes to the assistance of Her children in purgatory. “The Sabbatine” privilege is the greatest personal reward one may receive, “Special protection after death”.

“The Sabbatine” Privilege is based on a bull said to have been issued on March 3rd, 1322 by Pope John XXI. The privilege is frequently understood to mean that those who wear the Scapular and fulfil two other conditions [which according to the copy of the bull in existence] were made by the
Blessed Virgin in the apparition to Pope John XXII will be freed from Purgatory on the first Saturday after death.

THE CONDITIONS:

The conditions for the Sabbatine privilege are:

1. Wear the Brown Scapular faithfully
2. Observe chastity according to one’s state in life: and
3. Say the Rosary each day.

To gain any reward, effort on our part is required. So it is with the Sabbatine Privilege, Our Lady has promised a most generous reward for those who persevere as Her special children under the protective mantle of Her Scapular.

ENROLLMENT REGURATIONS

The Blessing of the Scapular and the enrolling in the confraternity must be done by a priest who has faculties.

Once one has been enrolled, he remains enrolled for life. The blessing and enrolling must be carried out by the same priest, who may bless any number of Scapulars with the same blessing. Once anyone has been properly enrolled in the Scapular, he or she need not have subsequent Scapulars blessed.

A person who doubts whether he was validly enrolled should give the benefit of doubt to the priest who enrolled him and take it for granted that he had the faculties. At the present time there are very few priest who lack the faculties. In most dioceses of the country the faculty of enrolling in the five Scapulars - of which the Brown Scapular is one – is contained in the general faculties. Also many priests are members of Ecclesiastical Societies of priests that have as one of their privilege the faculty of enrolling in the Brown Scapular [e.g. the Missionary Union of the Clergy]. Therefore, when a priest enroll in the Scapular it is taken for granted that he has the faculties and the one enrolled should think no more.

Moreover, a “Sanatio” validating all invalid enrollments is granted about every six years. The name of the person enrolled should be entered on the membership list in a Carmel or in a canonically established Scapular confraternity. However many priests have the privilege of enrolling without inscribing their names. In fact the general rule is that when a group is enrolled the names need not be inscribed.

Soldiers and Sailors may enroll themselves simply by assuming a blessed Scapular or Scapular Medal and saying some prayers to Our Lady [i.e. three Hail Mary’s”] They need not send their names to a confraternity church for official inscription, but become members of the Confraternity automatically, completely and perpetually. Children may be enrolled in the Scapular before attaining the use of reason. This enrollment endures even after they reach the age of reason.

Membership in the Confraternity is not forfeited by merely laying aside the Scapular a long time, there is no need for re-enrollment. [Scapular Instructions, Carmelites National Shrine, 329E.28th St. N. Y., New York].

A non-Catholic may wear the Brown Scapular of Our Lady, and will receive many graces and blessings for this special sign of their devotion to the Mother of Christ. However, the Confraternity -
All non-Catholics who are anxious to honour the Mother of Christ should be urged to wear the Scapular.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Quoted from “Aylesford the Scapular Centre, a leaflet published and distributed with ecclesiastical approval by Darien in Illinois.
2. 1 Kings 8:1ff
3. “Sign of Her Heart” by John Mathias Haffert page 9-10
4. Alonso, la Gran promesa del Corazon de Maria en Pontevedra, page 45
*0 - *0 “99 Fact About the Brown Scapular” by Rev. Fr. John Mary Anojulu page 18.
01 - *01 “More About … Fatima” page 143 – 144.

THE TEN PRINCIPAL VIRTUES OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

1. Profound Humility
2. Her lively faith
3. Her blind obedience
4. Her continual prayer
5. Her universal mortification
6. Her divine purity
7. Her ardent charity
8. Her heroic patience
9. Her angelic sweetness
10. Her divine wisdom

CHAPTER FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

Though the Block Rosary Crusade is grouped as one of the numerous pious organizations in the Catholic Church with similar objective like others in the propagation of the Catholic faith and the raising of holy men and women, dedicated to the service of God and the needs of mankind. She is at the same time distinct from others because of her peculiar nature, scope and the antecedent of the event that led to her birth.

Here in Nigeria, the foregoing considerations necessitated the founding fathers to fashion out some sets of rules and regulations as a guide towards achieving the objective of the body. The essence of this work is to make commentary on this guide called “THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE.” However, this can only be done effectively when the nature, scope and the event that led to the birth of the Block Rosary Crusade are brought to focus.
THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE CRUSADE

Block Rosary Crusade is a community’s effort at reaching God through the intercession of Our Lady. She has for sometime become an integral part of the community’s religious life. Because she is community-like, Ecclesiastical Authority grants her the permission to operate within a community.

A basic unit of operation in any community is called a “CENTRE.” Having said this, in every community, people who are easily disposed to moon light plays are youths and that is why seventy percent of her members are children and youths while the remaining thirty percent are constituted by adults and the very old people.

The scope of the Crusade is not limited to religious life since she aims at perfection, her teaching embraces all facets of life ranging from agriculture, science and technology, arts and music, sport and politics, education and moral instructions etc. This is to enable her members not only to be relevant to the society and community but equipped towards the challenges of life. Also, through the radiating light from them, people will be radiated from the dungeon of ignorance, poverty and spiritual darkness.

Meanwhile, Block Rosary Crusade has a history from which her evolution is traced to.

THE ANTECEDENT OF THE CRUSADE

The story of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s visitation to three little peasant children at Cova da Iria in Fatima, Portugal in the year 1917 is no longer news, as it has been taken care of in chapter two; therefore, making a recap may make a nonsense of it. For the benefit of this work certain element of the visitation that cannot be divorced from the Crusade are worthy of mentioning.

After telling them not to be afraid, she said, “I COME FROM HEAVEN”. Here is an active verb qualifying the importance of the person who comes. The Queen of Heaven, the Mother of God. Her message requires immediate response. Children at that tender age need not doubt but surrender and hasten to her requests.

“Pray the Rosary every day”, confirms the Rosary as one great weapon against the devil with Our Lady as commander-in-chief. Gen. 3:15 “I will make you and the woman hate each other; her offspring and yours will always be enemies. Her offspring will crush your head, and you will bite her offspring’s heel,” She continued “and bear with submission the sufferings the Lord will send to you.” Why? In their effort to proclaim the message and bring about a change of heart in men, will warrant a serious persecution and hatred from their families, neighbours, friends and constituted authorities.

More-over, to be used as an instrument of God, one must die to self and take part in the suffering of Christ. 2 Tim. 2: 7 ““because I preach the Good News, I suffer and I am even chained like a criminal.” Our Lord Jesus Christ also warned His disciples [Matt. 10: 17-18] “Watch out, for there will be those who will arrest you and take you to court and they will whip you in the Synagogue. For my sake you will be brought before rulers and kings.

By the grace received from Our Lady, they did answer like her at annunciation “I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.” However, Luke 27 says, “Those who do not carry their own cross and come after me can not be my disciples. By implication, the children have to be told before hand what was ahead of them,, and as was told did happen to them.
Consequently, these revelations brought about the choice of the word CRUSADE,” for the Block Rosary Crusade because the society is set about to fight a continuous war against sin and evil beneath the standard of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Having given insight about the society, the “axe” is set. It is explicit to say that the above facts or revelations from heaven became the foundation for the constitutions of the Crusade. However, commentary on this constitution is long overdue because of the exigencies of this time. Area to be commented on are: THE OBJECTIVES, SPIRIT AND MEMBERSHIP, PRAYER AND ACTIVITIES OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE
Every noble activity of man either as a group or individual is borne out of a mission. Such mission could be said to be the reason for their fraternity, compelling a resolute desire to achieve their mission or objective.

The objective of the Block Rosary Crusade is traced to the mission of Our Lady at Fatima as declared by God in Genesis 3:15. Succinctly put, the Block Rosary Crusade is a force against the kingdom of darkness. She is for continuous battle against sin and evil in man and his environment until everything is restored back in the Light of God.

This objective is to be achieved chiefly through the devotion to her Immaculate Heart as requested by Our Lady and Our Lord: daily recitation of the Holy Rosary; daily sacrifice for sinners; Communion of reparation on the first Saturday of every month; Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and steady wearing of Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. In summary, the “OBJECTIVES” of the Block Rosary Crusade are to live and propagate the FATIMA MESSAGE and the true Catholic Faith. James 2: 14-20 says, “Faith without good action is useless.” Members strive to live by good action and not words both in private and in public. This may lead us to the spirit and membership of the society.

SPIRIT AND MEMBERSHIP
The spirit of the Block Rosary Crusade is aptly defined in her motto “PRAYER, PENANCE AND SACRIFICE.” Activities must be and is within the ambit of the ‘3’ above.

Based on principles of fraternity, members of the Block Rosary Crusade manage themselves through sharing of their spiritual and material wealth together according to individual disposition. What affect a member from the grass-root [centre], affects those at the National Council of the Crusade because your membership is first and most importantly recognized at the centre. It is togetherness, equality, justice and fair play. However, basic virtues of this great family are Humility, Obedience, and Holiness.

A curious friend of ours asked and requested to be a member of the family. We told him that “You can be a member but you are not a member.” Paradoxically, we are correct by our answer because of the demand of the Crusade on members. To unravel this demand, it behooves to ask WHO CAN BE A MEMBER, and who is a member?

WHO CAN BE A MEMBER?
Though this has been hinted on in chapter two, but lets have a brief look at it once again in this chapter. Membership is open to both Catholics and non-Catholics irrespective of age, sex, education or social background. The Block Rosary Crusade just like the Mother Church, preaches the unity of
Christians and mankind, therefore does not frown at any member of her community who comes to her provided the said person is willing to be law-abiding.

However, there have been cases of fallen or lapsed Catholics brought up by this body who go about and still claim to be members of the Crusade only when they are in difficulties. Such persons were members but no longer members. Also there are members who exist only in the registers of the various centres and attend prayers once in a while without good reason. Such people have fallen from active membership to passive or follower ship. The Crusade only has room for active members because it is a constant active way of life. It is mini-monastic. Those can be members but are not members who parade themselves as members yet pursue things of the world at wildly impulsive abandon, without regard to the spirituality standard of Jesus and Mary.

Moreover, there are so called members who come only because of the material or social benefit they derive. The Crusade does not build on these people because they are like the seeds that fell along the path, the rocky ground and on the bushes of which in case of any adversity to faith they stop being members. It is in this group of people you can find some undesirable elements whose life style contradict the spirituality of the Block Rosary Crusade, of course in every twelve there must be a Judas plotting to wind the hands of the clock back. In view of the above analogy, who then is a member of the Block Rosary Crusade.

WHO IS A MEMBER

Ordinarily, one can be justified as a member if he or she is a catholic or a non-Catholic willing to abide by the rules of the Catholic Church and the body including her teachings. Also the person must be a registered member of a centre and not only attends the centre’s activities but also the activities of other higher councils as will be demanded from him or her. This is a primary knowledge of membership but it transcends beyond this. Membership in the Block Rosary Crusade means more to the literal interpretation.

A member is a shining light both in private and in public [Lk.11: 33]. “No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under bushel, instead he puts it on the lampstand so that people may see light as they come.” The standard of the Crusade is the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thus this standard can not be lowered because the battle line had been drawn two thousand years ago. “I will make you and the woman hate each other; her offspring and yours will always be enemy, “Gen. 3:15. This is a continuous battle of every good Christina in this world that lasts until evil is eradicated.

A member is a witness of the Truth. Jesus is the Truth. Jesus is the Divine Word, the Son of the Father, the Wisdom of the Father, “the brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance [Heb. 1:3], the Light born of His Light [Council of Nicaea]. Jesus is the one in whom the Father speaks within the abyss of His own Being”. Everything created came to being through him. In Him therefore was life and the life was light of men [Jn. 1:4]. He is the course of life and for this purpose most things realized their nature and meaning. However, this is only in the measure to which they confirm to the idea which their Divine Archetype, the eternal Son of the Father, has had of them. Their truth is measured by the fidelity with which they represent this idea and reproduce it. Seeing a Crusader who is called a member is seeing the Truth; the light of God as the Divine essence of God for man. By this analysis you can easily tell who is a member and who can be a member.
PRAYER AND ACTIVITIES OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

All the activities of Block Rosary Crusade stem from the spirit of love of Jesus, conversion of sinners and reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They are standardized for orderliness, love and peace. They are community-like, participatory and embraceive. “Two can not work together unless they agree.” (Amos 3: 3)

In line with prayer, penance and sacrifice are the activities of the body, which are structured to include and affect all irrespective of age. Apart from the fact that the activities stem from the spirituality of the Crusade, they are made to strengthen the fraternal bond that exist among members, to orientate and educate them about the positive things in their local and international environment. Such programmes includes:

SPIRITUAL
Daily prayers; Novenas; Adoration/Devotions; Scirptural/Bible Studies and Quiz; Moral and Religious Instructions; Catechism Classes; Congresses; Retreats/Seminars; Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy - Hospital Visitations; House to House Visitations; Visits to less privileged and old people’s homes etc.

SOCIAL
Parents Day/Anniversary Celebrations; Singing and Cultural Shows; Debating and Film Shows; Sports, etc.

VARIOUS ORGANS OF THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE
Block Rosary Crusade is structured in a hierarchical manner for easy and effective administration. Each strata of the hierarchy has its own functions relevant to the pursuit of the objectives of the Crusade. Apart from this administrative frame-up, there is a body whose work is distinct and it is an arm of the Crusade namely THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE BRIGADE OF GUARD [BRCBG]. This body function like a para-military force for the enforcement of disciplines, order, and also functions as a guard during indoor and outdoor ceremonies of the Block Rosary Crusade or the Church if invited. It was formally known as the Rosary Brigade of Guard [RBG], which was established in Lagos Archdiocese in 1977 championed by Bros. Clement Chukwu and Clement Mary Opara to promote the image of the Crusade and propagate Our Lady’s message at Fatima in terms of discipline, obedience and orderliness. It is the disciplinary vanguard of the society.

The objective of BRCBG also includes working for the welfare of Block Rosary Crusader members – spiritually and morally for the good of the Block Rosary Crusade and Catholic Church in general. Membership of Block Rosary Crusade Brigade of Guard is strictly for the members of the Block Rosary Crusade recruited from the centres and approved by the center and Parish Executive Body. Every member of BRCBG must be submissive to the constituted authority of the Block Rosary Crusade at all levels. The BRCBG password is OBEDIENCE --- SACRIFICE.

GOVERNMENT OF THE CRUSADE

I. CENTRE: - This is the basic unit of the Crusade. The prerequisite of every member is to be a registered member of the Centre. A centre cannot be established in any community without getting the clearance of the Parish or Central Body. Officers are called Centre Officers.
II. ZONE: - The basic centres are grouped into zones in urban parishes or towns. The Zonal body is concerned mainly with the spiritual up growth of the centers under her and is subject to the Parish body, therefore has nothing to do with finance.

III. STATIONS:- In rural areas and multi-town parishes, all the unit centres in a town constitute the station council

IV. CENTRAL OR PARISH BODY: - This is the governing council of the Crusade in a parish. In fact, this is like a clearing-house for the centres, zones or stations. It is expected that officers at this level are those who are knowledgeable about the workings of the Block Rosary Crusade in corroboration of the Fatima message. Issues handled at this level in every parish is seen as final except such issues contradicts the Church teachings and also contradicts the decision of the higher council. The relationship and image of the Crusade between the Priest, the Church Council and Parishioners are handled by the Officers of the Parish or Central Body.

V. DIOCESAN COUNCIL: - This is the highest authority in a diocese and is made up of officers from the central bodies. Just like the officers in a parish, at this level, information and image of the Crusade is managed in relationship to the Bishop and all the Parishes. It is the bridge between the higher councils such as the Provincial and the National Councils with the Parish or Central Bodies, Zones/Stations and the Centres. It meets not less than four times a year.

VI. PROVINCIAL COUNCIL: This is the highest administrative body in the ecclesiastical province. By ecclesiastical province, we mean a district other than archdiocese with suffragan diocese [s] under an Archbishop. Membership of this organ is determined by the number of accredited representatives of the diocesan council [s]. It meets not less than two times a year.

VII. NATIONAL COUNCIL: - It is made up of all officers of the provincial councils and two representatives [preferably President and Secretary] of each diocesan council. This is the highest council of the Block Rosary Crusade in Nigeria. Its decisions and policies are meant to be implemented down to the grass roots including the centre. This is the mouth-piece and image-maker of the Crusade in the Catholic Bishop Conference of Nigeria.

Through the National Chaplain and the National President report about the society, the body is presented to the conference. In the government of the Crusade at this level, officers are called the National Executive Council [NEC]. The National Council must meet at least once a year.

In the governing of the system, information and authority is vertically addressed and expressed. One great feature of this structure is the loyalty of the various members to the higher authority. Any insubordination is a deviation from the Fatima Message, which the Constitution is said to address, protect and propagate.

IS THIS NOT A TRIBAL SOCIETY?
Block Rosary Crusade is not a tribal society. Though before we properly deal with this subject, Let us trace the origin of the Holy Rosary and the prayers that made it up. Perhaps through this we may find out whether it is truly tribal society or not. The Rosary came into the world through the Blessed Virgin Mary in the year 1214 AD. And the first man on earth who was privileged to be it’s first recipient in the present form was St. Dominic, [the founding father of the religious community known as the Order of Preachers [O.P.] This man prayed, practiced, and preached the Holy Rosary. He spread the
message of the Rosary to all parts of the world and succeeded in winning many souls to God through this Holy means.

Many followed his footsteps in propagating the message of Mary Queen of Heaven and earth concerning the daily praying of the Rosary. Among these were Blessed Alan de la Roche, St. Louis Marie De Month Forth. Etc. These two put in their best in furthering the apostolate of the holy Rosary and through their efforts weak souls were revived, sinners, pagans were converted, and the religious were greatly encouraged and strengthened.

The more popular event about the Rosary took place 1917 when the Blessed Virgin Francisco, and Lucia at Fatima. She gave them messages concerning the future of humanity, urging that the holy Rosary must be prayed daily with meditation and that men must amend their ways and stop offending God who is already so much offended. The Rosary prayer is made up of the Sign of the Cross, Invocation of the Holy Spirit, Our Lord’s Prayer, the Angelic Salutation and Glory be to the Father.

There are other known prayers added to our daily Rosary. The litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Catena, etc. These prayers have since been approved by the Church and have been generally used by the faithful all over the world. It is very necessary to note that since the commencement of this discussion, we have only based our references in the scriptures and the Church authority. As you can testify these facts about the origin of the holy Rosary or its individual prayers has nothing to do with the tribalistic feelings being nursed by people about the Block Rosary Crusade Society.

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The Catholic Church being universal has recommended the prayers of the Holy Rosary to be practiced by all. And in order to heed to the messages of the Blessed Virgin Mary given through many servants of God in the years past. People gather in groups at different times, and at various places, praying the recommended holy Rosary for the conversion of the sinners, for the salvation of souls, for the Church, for peace in the whole world and for other intentions.

These groups being many emerge in different names for easy identification. Among them are The Legion of Mary, the Blue Army, the Rosary confraternity, the Block Rosary Crusade, etc. These names do not in any way reduce these religious groups to tribal society. Even if they are conducted in any native dialect, such does not reduce the pious societies to tribal groups. It should be understood that these religious societies are affiliated to their counterparts all over the world who in their groups too pray the holy Rosary. And for the fact that they pray with their native or general languages does not interpret the groups to be for a particular tribe.

The Block Rosary Crusade therefore is far from being a tribal society neither was it inaugurated for such interest. It is a society for all, both old and young, men and women. It is suitable for parents and guardians. It is a mini religious community [in the sense that we come everyday, pray a little, sing a little, learn a little, hear the word of God a little, and then dismiss to our respective homes so as to converge again the next day]. The Block Rosary Crusade could be joined by anyone who loves Jesus and Mary, who loves to do penance for sinners, and who wants to enter heaven. This holy society is one of the groups formed at the request of the Blessed Virgin Mary who pleaded for the daily recitation of the holy rosary.

This compilation is made to broaden our knowledge of the Block Rosary Crusade Society, and to enable us to have better concept of the group. It is never a tribal society nor formed for the salvation of one town alone.
In conclusion, Block Rosary Crusade being what it is should be seen as an organization, that embraces all tribes and natives – Catholics and non-Catholics, alike. It is pertinent to note that in every society, there must be a leader who must carry out the day-to-day organization and interpretation of its policies. If fortunately the leaders emanate from the same tribe or state, it is no conclusion that the organization belongs to them. Such spirit is not godly, and should be sentenced to life imprisonment without option of fine, otherwise, it will metamorphose into heresy, disintegration and disparity.

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BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE - A UNIQUE SOCIETY

The journey with Jesus and Mary is continuous mission with battle ready for faith until evil is completely eradicated and our total life on this earth terminated. Furthering our Lady’s message and request at Fatima, the Blessed Virgin Mary said, “Offer prayers and sacrifices constantly to the Most High. Make everything you do a sacrifice and offer it to God as an act of reparation for sins by which he is offended, and in supplication for the conversion of sinners”. If the world is in shamble today, we Catholics must bear a major share of the responsibility, for our Lady placed that responsibility squarely on our shoulders at Fatima”. Moreover, bringing people to the knowledge of Truth, Justice, Love and Obedience to the church should be our primary objective, with selfless services and without complain. THAT IS BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE AND HER UNIQUENESS.

Block rosary crusade is very unique in all ramifications unlike any other societies found in the Catholic Church. Virgin Mary herself founded the society and the society’s chief devotion is the favorite prayer of Mary, Mother of God – “THE HOLY ROSARY”. The Blessed Virgin Mary placed the work of evangelization on the shoulders of members of Block Rosary Crusade with marching-forward demonstration, and blessings that should not be neglected. Praying of the rosary, one of the essential devotions of the members is a prayer so much cherished by the church. Block Rosary Crusade is a society meant for serious minded people, those who knows its worth and have been called to the race of propagating the message of Fatima, a way of life [A call for Evangelization] without any doubting spirit.

Block rosary crusade is one big solid family of all races. The beauty of the society is immeasurable. It is manifested everywhere especially among the members during recitation of the rosary/candle light procession, Rosary Day Celebration, Parish Inauguration, Crusade Wedding, Christmas Carol, First Saturday Devotion, General congress, Family Rotational Prayers and other proposals of the crusade, both Centres, Zones, Parishes, Archdiocese, Provincial and National Council where talented members are co-opted.

The gathering of members of block rosary crusade is a source of encouragement, as the society takes greater care of different families. The small praying Centres that are the powerhouse of the society are not neglected in any means, they are being tendered with great care. In a family, both father and mother including children puts their heads together for the greater success and progress of the family. That is what block rosary crusade is all about.

The leadership of the society is in line with that of our families. In the absence of the head of the family, the mother, son and rest members of the family combine their efforts to see the family growing with progress and survival. They live up to expectation in all condition. The leadership of the society warrants free and fair justice to its greatest level for progress, not minding who is at the head and so on. That is among her uniqueness!

The free and fair government is maintained not only as religious society, but also for free and active participation of the entire members of the church including non-Catholics. Block Rosary Crusade is
for conversion of sinners. The leadership of the block rosary crusade is flexible and not rigid, the leaders are called for a purpose and does a team work, that is, the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Virgin Mary Mother and Queen of the whole universe. The uniqueness of the block rosary crusade is first among equals. Block Rosary Crusade membership is open for everybody, it is a daily affair in accordance with the ardent wish of Virgin Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary and the praying venues are not hidden. Block rosary crusade is a simple society. What makes one a full member of the society is his or her contributions towards her progress. One must be a willing vessel of Jesus and Mary and ready to serve the society with immense and infallible zeal coupled with prayer. Block rosary crusade does not take registration fee. She only considers members with active participation in all her activities. Anything short of active participation is a typical abuse of the society and service of God and our Lady by the person. The zeal to sacrifice ourselves to the society without complaining pays us much. Work full of dedication; at will and not by force, knowing what we suppose to do for the society at the right time and hour, not looking much forward on entertainment, jolly moment and realization placed the society higher among other.

For the sake of Fatima message as was told to the three little seers: Jacinta, Francisco and Lucia, with attitude of prayer, penance and sacrifice, with reparations, crusade is enriched with programmes leading her members to the right road. That is, Daily Prayers, Bible studies, Catechism instructions, Moral instructions, Practical Discussions, Home Visitations, etc. A labourer works not in vain except he/she who wishes. Block rosary crusade is a shelter made perfect for all destined to be saved by day to day prayers and sacrifices with reparations including share relationship among others.

In the crusade, all members have their rights generally, sometime, members deny themselves such rights and privileges due to them and become hatred of it. That is, in the spirit of self-denial as to render selfless service to others for the glory of God and honour to our heavenly mother. If I may ask, what is block rosary crusade to you? The message of Virgin Mary to the members of the crusade in 1917 is unique in nature also. It is a message of faith, hope and love without doubt. “If I should ask you for things that cost, know that at the same time I will give you all the graces and strength to conquer yourself and my Immaculate Heart shall be your refuge”… The mission of the block rosary crusade cannot be over emphasized, “It is a society, Royal Race that has no tribal or ethnic sentiments rather has vacuum for all human race into vocational and evangelical call: The Leadership is not political and its overall interest is for the good of all. This is a society where every member is somebody and all rights are respected no matter how young or old you are. This is the only Society in the Church where any member in any parish is personally attended to and acknowledged. These attributes makes the Block Rosary Crusade really a unique society. To God who established the Block Rosary Crusade through Our Blessed Mother Mary the Commander-in-Chief of the Crusade be Praise and Glory now and forever Amen. GLORY BE TO JESUS, UNTO LIFE EVERLASTING AMEN.

MEMORANDUM OF MODUS OPERANDI

ARTICLE I
SPIRITUALITY

A. As aforesaid, Block Rosary Crusade is a pious Society in the Holy Catholic Church that lives and propagates the messages of Our Lady at Fatima which entails:
* The Daily Recitation of Rosary
* Daily Sacrifice for sinners
* Communion of Reparation on the First Saturday of Every Month.
* Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
* The Steady Wearing of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

B. Note: Our Lady promised salvation to whomever that embraces this spirituality and went further to say that God would cherish their souls as flowers placed by Her to adorn His Throne.

**ARTICLE II**

**CENTRE DAILY ACTIVITIES**

A. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes.

B. **OPENING HYNM**: Our Lady's Anthem - 'O COME TO THE THRONE OF GRACE'.

C. **DAILY PRAYER PROPER**:
   C.2. The prayers should be said neither too fast nor too slow but at a moderate pace.
   C.3. In Her July apparition, Our Lady instructed: "When you pray the Rosary, say after each decade: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of Your mercy!" Hence this prayer should be taken not after the first three 'Hail Marys', but from after the first 10 Hail Marys.
   C.4. After meditative commentary on each Mystery, some moment should be allowed for contemplation before the grace of the Mystery is announced.
   C.5. The pause while saying the Hail Mary should be observed as follows:
   L. Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with You - Blessed are You among women - And blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb Jesus.
   R. Holy Mary Mother of God - Pray for us sinners - Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.
   C.6. Care should be taken that every word in the prayers is pronounced correctly.
   C.7. Distractions must be avoided at all cost, while all attention and focus should be directed to God.

D. **POSTURE DURING PRAYER**:
   D.1. In every 5 decades: The first 2 decades should be said while kneeling upright, the second 2 decades should be said while standing upright, and the last 1 decade should be said while kneeling upright.
   D.2. The palms should be folded in Our Lady's attitude as She appears in the picture on the Altar and the Rosary should be held in the finger tips and counted in our traditional way throughout the duration of the prayer.
   D.3. The prayer taught by the Angel of Peace should be said in the Angel's attitude, i.e., kneeling and placing the forehead on the ground as he instructed (cf. Preparatory visits of the Angel to the little seers).

E. After 'In the Name of the Father ... ', a prayerful chorus should be tuned by those who led the prayer - just once. This is to checkmate noise before the hymn of which, whoever is responsible for selecting hymn should announce the hymn immediately after the response to the chorus.

F. Closing hymn can be selected from any part of the Catholic hymn book with regard to the season of the Liturgical year. For this reason, members should be taught how to select hymn.
G. Immediately after the hymn 'Allocutio' that will take not more than 10 minutes would follow.

H. Immediately after the 'Allocutio' few Zion songs should be taken to checkmate noise while the seats are being set according to the needed class/es.

I. Daily subject for study:
I.2. Prayer learning; Catechism; study of the Scripture/Handbook/Lives of the Saints; Know your faith question and answer; and learning of Catholic hymns/Zion songs/Instruments should respectively be fixed on the remaining days of the week apart from the congress day. As congress day differs with Parishes, Parishes are at liberty to do the fixture for the daily subject for study as listed above.
I.3. Classes may be shared accordingly if need be, particularly when the Centre has much members among which are, capable and knowledgeable members who can effectively handle the respective classes.
I.4. Catechism: Baptism, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation classes may be set up for the day and the fourth class for those who have been confirmed may take up any of the doctrines of the Church for the day.
I.4.a. Note: Only if those who can effectively and requisitely handle the classes are in attendance.
I.4.b. Recommended books: 'Catechism of Christian Doctrine' or Jesus is my Saviour for the Catechumens, Communion and Confirmation candidates and 'Catechism of the Catholic Church for the already confirmed.

J. ANNOUNCEMENT - if any.

K. CLOSING PRAYER:
K.1. Can be said while standing or kneeling.
K.2. Should be said as written in our prayer manual. If any prayer should be added for any special intention, it should be brief.
L. Every member must leave the Centre immediately after the closing prayer to their respective homes. No further discussions or loitering.

ARTICLE III:
ALTAR MATERIALS

A. The only materials that should be on the Altar are as follows:
* Altar clothes - the things that should be written on it are: the Name of the Centre, the Motto of B. R. C. and the Address of the Centre.
* Our Lady of Fatima's picture with the first members of B. R. C. - Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta. This should be in canvas or neatly framed or laminated.
* A Crucifix
* Two flowers. (If possible Rose flowers as it is symbolic, in that 'Rosary' derives from it).
* Two candle sticks.

ARTICLE IV:
CONGRESS

A. Should be Zonal/Outstation and Parish affair.
B. Zonal/Parish weekly or monthly congress should be rotational.
B.1. The activities:
* The normal daily prayers.
* Allocutio.
* Offering.
* Zion songs - in that the choruses should be liturgical. This should be done with well co-ordinated beating of instruments if available while members should be aware that singing is another way of praying therefore should participate actively but should behave maturely and responsibly.
* Announcement.
* Closing prayer.
* Note: Members are advised to go home immediately in group, if possible by Centres while singing or praying.

C. FATIMA EVENT COMMEMORATION CONGRESS OTHERWISE CALLED 13TH CONGRESS.
C.1. A Centre is to be chosen as the Cova da Iria for the year by the Parish.
C.2. Prayer should commence earlier, so that the prayers can be said properly and still have reasonable time for elaborate refection on the day's Apparition.
C.3. Opening hymn: Our Lady's anthem.
C.4. Full Rosary i.e., 20 decades following the normal order of JOYFUL, LUMINOUS, SORROWGUL, AND GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.
C.4.a. The last 5 decades can be chanted if time permits and aswell the Litany.
C.4.b. Accordingly the rest of our Daily Prayers would follow immediately after the Litany.
C.5. Any of Our Lady's hymn.
C.6. Allocutio: Reading and reflection on the day's Apparition.
C.7. Offering.

ARTICLE V:
COMMUNION OF REPARATION ON EVERY FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH i.e., 'FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION'

A. ACTIVITIES: As contained in this Handbook page:

B. ORDER OF PRAYERS:
B.1. Opening Hymn: Our Lady's Anthem.
B.2. Prayers: As led down in THIS Handbook page:
C. Allocutio.
D. Offering.
E. Announcement.
F. Closing prayer.

ARTICLE VI:
CHURCH HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION
* Ascension.
* Assumption.
* All Saints.
* Christmas Day.
A. Must be observed as Sunday (members must attend Mass) - independent members must not go to work, buy or sell, or engage in any commercial activities or serious work.

ARTICLE VII:
OUR LADY'S MAJOR FEAST DAYS
(Under Parish Level)

A. ASSUMPTION - 15th of August.
A.1. A day of obligation, i.e., should be observed as Sunday.
A.2. Prayers:
* Our Lady's Anthem.
* Full Rosary, i.e., 20 decades with the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
* Prayer taught by the Angel of Peace.
* Any of Our Lady's hymn.
* Elaborate talk on the Assumption of Our Lady.
* Offering.
* Announcement.
* Closing prayer.

B. QUEENSHP OF OUR LADY - 22nd of August.
B.1. Processional Rosary from one Centre to another as chosen by the Parish - full Rosary is to be taken.
* At the commencement Centre, some Mysteries and decades should be taken, some on procession to the termination Centre where the rest activities would be concluded, which should follow the order as on the Assumption Day except that members should light their candles during the Consecration Prayer.
B.2. Talk based on Queenship of Our Lady.

C. OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY - 8th of September.
C.1. This should be made a grand lively and joyous Feast by the Parish, in that, there should be refreshment.
C.2. Spiritual activities:
* As of Assumption, except that the talk is to be based on Our Lady's Birth.
C.3. Refreshment:
* Prior to the D-day the Parish should arrange for cakes, soft drinks, biscuits, groundnuts, etc. These are to be provided at will as birthday present to Our Lady: by the Parish, Centres, patrons and patronesses, individuals, members, parents and guardians.

D. OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY - 7th of October.
D.1. Processional Rosary from one Centre to another as chosen by the Parish - full Rosary is to be taken.
D.2. The rest of our daily prayers should follow immediately after the Litany.
D.3. Talk based on Our Lady and the Rosary.

E. The following are to be observed under Centre level:
* Mary Mother of God - 1st of January.
* Our Lady of Lourdes - 11th of February.
* Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary - 31st of May.
* Immaculate Heart of Mary - 19th of June.
* Our Lady of Apostles
* Our Lady of Christians.
* Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
* Holy Name of Mary.
* Our Lady of Sorrows - 15th of September.
* Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary.
* Immaculate Conception - 8th of December.

E.1. Prayers: 20 decades with the rest of our daily prayers.
E.2. Talk on the day's feast.

ARTICLE VIII:
MEMORIALS, FEASTS, AND SOLEMNITIES.

A. The following are to be observed under Centre level:
* Epiphany of Our Lord.
* Baptism of Our Lord.
* Presentation of the Lord - 2nd of February.
* Ascension of Our Lord.
* Pentecost Sunday.
* Holy Trinity Sunday.
* Sacred Heart of Jesus.
* Triumph of the Holy Cross - 14th of September.
* The Archangels - 29th of September.
* Guardian Angels - 2nd of October.
* All Saints - 1st of November.
A.1. Prayers: our normal daily prayers.
A.2. Talk based on the day's memorial, feast, or solemnity.

B. All Souls day - 2nd of November.
B.1. Members are to visit churchyard, cemetery, or graves of the dear departed ones, individually or collectively under Centre, zonal or Parish level.
B.2. Prayers to be said: Full Rosary, Divine Mercy chaplet, chaplet for the dead, etc.

C. Saints memorials.
C.1. Our normal daily program but Allocutio can be drawn from the life of the Saint of the day.

ARTICLE IX:
RETREAT/SEMINAR.

A. RETREATS AND SEMINARS are highly encouraged at all levels.
A.1. It is mandatory that from Centre to Archdiocesan level should have retreats at least three times in a year:
* Lenten retreat by the Lenten period.
* Mid-year retreat by the middle of the year.
* End of the year retreat by the end of the year.
ARTICLE X:
ESSENCE OF CENTRE

A. Centre is the basic unit of Block Rosary Crusade. It is the praying ground where daily activities of the BRC. are being carried out, precisely the daily recitation of the Rosary as requested by the Founder of the BRC. - Our Lady of Fatima. BRC membership is only made possible through the Centre.

A.1. Block Rosary Crusade Centre connotes Cova da iria, i.e., the Apparition sight where the faithful gather daily in response to Our Lady of Fatima's calling.

A.2. The Centres are never evening-baby care where kids are dumped for seemingly jobless brothers and sisters - as parents used to conclude. Neither are they recreational Centres where people gather for moonlight leisure or jamboree as some are trying to infer.

A.3. Members are hereby encouraged to be more devoted and committed to Centre daily activities.

A.4. Let those who pose at Centres as: godfathers or mothers, awaiting patrons or patronesses, elders, teachers, uncles and aunties etc., and regard the rest members as their children desist from such act as every member is required to be child-like humble and not childishly proud or timid.

B. Let those who still live in sin boast not of being Block Rosary Crusaders for he/she who lives in sin cannot render any effective prayer to convert sinners. (cf. Prov. 28:9)

C. Mode of dress:

C.1. Those who do not dress modestly are stripping Our Lord and our God, Jesus Christ necked the second time.

C.2. The sin that leads so many souls to hell is the sin of the flesh says Our Lady of Fatima. Don't constitute yourself an object of seduction.

C.3. Let those who still live the life of immorality by way of immodest dressing boast not of being Crusaders, for being among those going headlong to hell, you cannot offer any effective prayer to save your fellow hell candidates.

C.4. Note:

a. Amelia will remain in purgatory until the end of the world. Why? It is because of immodest dress she wore which was not even hers but her sister's - remember that Amelia was by no means a scandalous Christian.

b. Members are hereby advised to dress properly all the time even in their private rooms, not only at Centers.

c. Brothers are warned to desist from putting on shorts that is above the knee, sleeveless shirt, tight trousers and shirt, not only at Centres but also every where and at all times.

d. Sisters are warned to desist from putting on trousers, skimpy dresses of any type, not only at Centers but should shun any immodest dress at all times and at any place. And as well shun bleaching and body painting for you cannot recreate yourself better than what God has made you to be. Be aware that by so doing, you are blaming God, calling Him an imperfect Artist; by so doing you are attracting attention to yourself thereby exhibiting the element of lust and pride therefore declaring openly whom you serve - the spirit of the world.

D. The Sacraments of the Church must in the proper disposition be devotedly adhered to. Hence Centres must adequately take care of their members sacramental wise.

E. Daily morning Mass is highly recommended.
F. Daily reception of the Holy Communion is highly recommended, therefore members must not only avoid sin but detest it. Remember that the course we are championing started with the Holy Eucharist.

G. Visiting the Blessed Sacrament frequently is not only highly recommended but must be made part of our individual daily endeavours.

H. Charity:
1. Daily Sacrifice for sinners should be given adequate attention, individually and collectively - get to know how to practice this by going through it in our Handbook page:
2. Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy should be given serious attention individually and collectively.
3. Centres are encouraged to embark on monthly home to home visitations precisely not to fetch stubborn children but to obtain daily praying of the Rosary in the homes, hence members should be well knowledgeable about the Rosary so as to be able to live and preach it to others and as well the rest of our 'Spirituality' as adequately detailed in chapter three of this our Handbook.
4. Parishes are encouraged to embark on monthly hospital visitations which can be on Centre (if there are mature members) or Parish level.
5. Parishes are encouraged to embark on prison/motherless babies homes or handicapped people's home visitation yearly.

ARTICLE XI:
SCAPULAR

A. Members are encouraged to study about the Brown Scapular devotion very well as contained in our Handbook and make it a way of life and as well evangelize others about the devotion.

B. Those that are not enrolled yet in the Scapular devotion are advised to get one blessed by a Catholic Priest and should be worn steadily pending the enrolment. Those who have been enrolled should wear it steadily.

C. Note: The enrolment is Diocesan affair, done at the same time with the Consecration.

ARTICLE XII:
CONSECRATION

A. This is a Diocesan affair.

B. All members are encouraged to participate in preparatory class when ever it comes up, whether consecrated or yet to be consecrated.

C. Members are advised to be conscious of the consecrational vow and try to live up to it.

D. Every true and full member of Block Rosary Crusade ought to be consecrated or atleast be in quest to be consecrated.

E. Members are advised to study our Handbook as per the Consecration as the Consecration ought to ground one in the Catholic Faith, the Sacraments, Fatima events and the essence of the Fatima Apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima, i.e., the Spirituality of Block Rosary Crusade.
ARTICLE XIII:

A. Block Rosary Crusade Spirituality is not only a matter of gathering at Centres daily to say the Rosary but it is a way of personal sanctity - it is a way of life - a way to sainthood.

B. All these as have been highlighted should be written in our hearts as to shun the diabolical modern trend of worshiping God.

C. We must have to do it the way God wants us to do it and not the way that appeals to us most or the way others do it.

ARTICLE XIV:

A. Our providential identity must be maintained at all cost.

B. The vision of where we are going to, is made clear by Our Lady. All we need do is to be focused and never to lose the legacy bequeathed unto us by Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta the first members of the Block Rosary Crusade.

C. The spirituality we live and propagate is that which emanated from Our Lady of Fatima - the spirituality to Everlasting Peace, for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart, for the salvation of souls and of sainthood.

D. Hence Parishes and Centres that have been in correct order as been highlighted herein, should keep it up.

E. Hitherto, any Parish or Centre that has been wanting in this regard, are henceforth, hereby adjured to shape up.

MAY THE IMMACULATE HEART OF OUR BELOVED BLESSED MOTHER MARY REMAINS OUR REFUGE.

CHAPTER FIVE
REFLECTIONS AND ADMONITIONS

ONE HUNDRED FLAMING AND MOTIVATING SPEECHES

[1]. What have I done to merit good reward from our Lord Jesus Christ? – Reflection on Rev. 22:12
[2]. Have I suffered to appease God for my sins and the sins of others? – Meditation on Fatima Message 1917

[3]. A fasting can be positive or negative, for a fasting to be a sacrifice something you fasted from must be given out; therefore remember the less privileged as you are now fasting. – Lenten Retreat Talk by Rev. Fr. P. Anedu

[4]. Every moment of our lives, we are under temptation. A period of temptation is a Period of decision, whether we are for God or for Satan. – Rev. Fr. T. Macdemoth

[5]. Temptation is a good thing, helping us to be spiritually stronger, if we do not fall into it. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[6]. A lot of people are religious and are good Christians outwardly, but are not holy inwardly. Am I among these groups? The truth is that without holiness, no one can see God. – Bible Reference Heb. 12:14

[8]. As we beg God always not to lead us into temptation, we should as well struggle hard so as not to push ourselves into evil. – Mr. Ovidar S.E.

[9]. Those things, which I cannot do when people are around [because of its sinfulness] I should not do them even when no one is around, this is to prove my Christianity. – Victor Uzoewuru

[10]. This statement is fearful, “Any servant who knows what his master wants but fails to do it will receive many strokes ----“ [LK 12 : 47 ] we have known what our master Jesus Christ wants as recorded in the scriptures. Let us begin now to do them so as not to face the strokes of the Almighty God. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[11]. You are a candidate of heaven, that is why the devil puts stumbling blocks on your ways always, so that you do not reach there. Therefore strive to overcome him and enter. – Mr. Aloy Umeokoli

[12]. Let us begin now to make a lot of spiritual efforts, may all we do henceforth point towards heaven as we want to go there. – F. O. Ezeh

[13]. If we accept that our struggles with the enemy of our soul is not physical but spiritual, then we must be very careful about what we do. We must not useless our time watching what is impure both in the television or through other means. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[14]. Is God really happy with the way I am living my life? Oh God not only following you alone, but please help me to be doing those things that would move others to follow you too. – Obidi Ezeh

[15]. You have been liberated by Jesus Christ and have been told to go in peace. Why then do you choose to remain in the bondage of Satan? – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[16]. Your love for God and neighbour must be of good quality. It must be a humble type, so as to be able to wash the feet of “Judas” as Jesus did. - Rev. Fr. P. Anedu
[17]. As we make efforts to win souls, we should also intensify our efforts to retain them in the fold. – Victor Uzoewuru

[18]. The Blessed Virgin Mary said, “many souls go to hell fire because there is no one to pray and make sacrifices for them.” How do you see these words, does it not touch you? Show sympathy and do something in order to convert others. - Ref. From Fatima Message 1917

[19]. The master Jesus Christ said,” There are other sheep of mine who are not of these fold, they too will hear my voice and will come to me “[John 10:16] so, don’t condemn people of other religion. Perhaps this passage may be fulfilled in them. – V. M. Darah

[20]. People may think that you are an angel or a saint, but you yourself know what you really are. And it is what you are that merits you a reward either in heaven or in hell. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[21]. Any one who puts on the wedding garment will not be cast out. And the wedding garment means putting on Jesus Christ and all about him in our lives and in our day to day activities, both physically and spiritually. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[22]. Am I among those who claim to be follower of Christ, whereas my secret and private actions preach Satan? – Rev. Fr. Ben Onyia’s Sermon

[23]. We were instructed by St Paul to pray without ceasing {1st Thess. 5:17}. How frequent do you pray in a day? Is it just only morning and night? Develop the habit of praying many times a day. [even short prayers]. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[24]. Humility is the mother of all virtues. God will always favour the humble and will always punish the proud. Therefore, try to be humble. - Lesson on Personal Consecration – Mr. M. Dickson

[25]. Temptation will certainly come your way. Except you are tested and you passed, you cannot enter heaven. – Rev. Fr. T. Macdemoth

[26]. The extent we know God here on earth may likely be the level we enjoy him in the next life. And if this is the case, what measure would yours be, whereby you serve him only two hours a week [during masses on Sundays] without adding some other devotions. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[27]. What you give [out of charity] are the things that bring you blessing from God, and not what you keep to yourself. - Rev. Dr. Benjamin Bello

[28]. Signs and wonders are the marks that follow a Christian, but Christians does not go after signs and wonders. Beware of where you are rushing to, due to what you see that is happening over there. – Rev. Fr. P. Anedu

[29]. Take no pleasure in the sinful life of others, rather, pray that God would caution them, correct, and convert them. Present these people to God during your prayers. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[30]. After shouting, clapping and shivering, you feel so much satisfied thinking that you have prayed, not knowing that most often, your prayers has not gone up to God, because you did all those things satisfying yourself. – Mr. F. Nwenyi
[31]. To be religious is not easy, [being active member in my religious society and in the church] but it may not lead one to heaven, if the fellow do not put to practice the law of God. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[32]. There is no idle slave. We should pray when others are praying and sing when others are singing. We must stop being lazy in spiritual matters. - Lesson on Personal Consecration – Mr. M. Dickson

[33]. Lying is bad, it is sinful, and it has a killing effect. Avoid any deal with the devil. - Lesson on Personal Consecration – Mr. M. Dickson

[34]. Before performing any thing, we should ask ourselves, would the Blessed Virgin Mary [our model] do it this way if she should be here? – Mr. Augustine Imoh

[35]. Put smiles in any way possible on the faces of the people around you, no matter what it will cost you. By so doing, you reduce their pains indirectly. -Rev. Fr. P. Anedu

[36]. In any situation, when the Blessed Virgin Mary intervenes, Jesus Christ always do something. Go closer to her each day, you too will certainly see her performing. – Mr. Aloy Umeokoli

[37]. Missing to say your prayers matters a lot, but the very reason behind the failure to say those prayers matters most, please re-adjust for God sake. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[38]. Every rosary crusader is expected to be morally sound that is what makes you a child of God. – Mr. Aloy. Umeokoli

[39]. Go to Jesus Christ more than you go to your earthly doctors, and let him know your feelings. Visit him in the Blessed Sacrament as frequent as possible and meditate on his goodness. Having done this, you will have testimonies to give. – Rev. Fr. E. S. Akpala

[40]. Those who fear the Lord find nothing attractive in evil…. Do you fear the Lord? Let us check and examine ourselves. – Emmanuel M. Ejeagbasi

[41]. Good must be done by all, evil must be avoided by all, at all times and at all places. - Rev. Dr. Benjamin Bello

[42]. As those who want to live with God in heaven, there are other bad acts we need to avoid not only fornication. His commands are ten. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[43]. Prayer, penance and Sacrifice are essential instruments for the salvation of souls, how do you take part in these? – Victor Uzoewuru

[44]. Do you want to be holy? Then avoid immoral television programmes, avoid film houses and corrupt friends. Pray frequently and live a good life by avoiding evil. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[45]. Now you pray always, but when have you fasted last? When was the last time you made a willful sacrifice for sinners? – Mr. F. Nwenyi
[46]. Schools have lost so much moral qualities. I wonder where parents could feel up the vacuum of this moral decadence in the youths of today if not in the Block Rosary Crusade Society. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[47]. What is that thing which is blocking your friendship with God? Amend them now, so that you may be worthy of entering into his house in heaven. – Rev. Fr. E. S. Akpala

[48]. Do you know that sin leads to sin, but any sin prevented shuts off another? – Columbus Eze

[49]. What does it profit me to know the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation but could not obey the messages nor practice them? Knowing the word of God is one thing, obeying them is another thing, which matters most? – P.E. Chukwu

[50]. Remember that if you speak well of your neighbour in his absence, you are showing him love and kindness. – Mr. M. Dickson

[51]. How many people have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ through me? – Mr. M. Dickson

[52]. It is disgraceful and dangerous for us to be mixing our devotion to God with some other filthy activities, indulging in some other bad acts while answering religious personnel. That is why the Lord would say to some people, “depart from me, you workers of iniquities. – Bible Reference: Matt. 7:21-23

[53]. It is God talking to you through what you are now reading. Don’t think that these messages are for another person. Make an amendment. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[54]. The Holy Communion you receive each time in the Catholic Church is Jesus Christ “LIVE”. Therefore compose yourself very well before receiving. He is the food of our soul. – Mr. M. Dickson

[55]. Let us be cautious and not lose sight of where we are going {heaven}. We should keep on working harder until we enter there. Amen. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[56]. Our Christian journey towards eternity is a daily business. Just like you attach so much interest in your schools and in your individual businesses and professions, more seriousness also must be added to the business of eternal life. – Fidelis-Mary Nwachukwu

[57]. You are serving your master now, are you sure you are not robbing him? Do you not know the consequences of taking the money, which you don’t suppose to take? – S. E. Ovidar

[58]. As leaders of these tender children of God, how close are you to Jesus and Mary? A hungry man cannot care properly for other hungry persons, at least you know this. – Rev. Fr. Raphael Kpo – BRC Archdiocesan Leadership Workshop 2000

[59]. How you conduct your members can also help the stubborn ones among you to change to better. – Rev. Fr. Raphael Kpo – BRC Archdiocesan Leadership Workshop 2000

[60]. Don’t correct a person to kill his moral, rather correct the fellow to help and encourage him. – Rev. Fr. Raphael Kpo – BRC Archdiocesan Leadership Workshop 2000
[61]. No good leader should see any action of his as “unquestionable”. Leaders must be ready to render accounts to their subjects whenever this is needed. - Rev. Fr. Raphael Kpo – BRC Archdiocesan Leadership Workshop 2000

[62]. We should encourage the growth of other societies approved by the church. They too are looking towards heaven, striving hard for their own salvation through that group. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[63]. As leaders in the Block Rosary Crusade Society, we should always know that our work is a feeding work. Feeding all our members with spiritual grasses. We must inculcate the virtues of our Blessed Lady into our lives and the lives of the ones we care for. - Rev. Fr. Raphael Kpo – BRC Archdiocesan Leadership Workshop 2000

[64]. We should not neglect nor forget completely those former leaders or members who have fallen away from our Society. For Jesus is not interested in the death of a sinner. – Obidi Eze

[65]. Nothing is comparable with the Wisdom of God. Don’t be too proud of the little knowledge you have; remember that human wisdom no matter how convincing it may be must fall short of God’s Wisdom. – Fidelis- Mary Nwachukwu

[66]. In every twelve, they say, there must be a “Judas: But do not allow yourself to be the Judas no matter the situation. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[67]. If you cannot obey instructions now that you are a follower, do not expect obedience from your subjects when you become a leader tomorrow. – Mr. Calistus Okafor

[68]. The Blessed Virgin Mary said, “men must amend their lives and stop offending God, for he is already so much offended”. What is your personal reaction or feelings over this message? – Reflections on Fatima Message 1917

[69]. A lot of [prayers of] the holy rosary has been prayed, there is no doubt about that, but how many of them were prayed with meditation and concentration? Begin now to meditate whenever you are praying if you want to obtain your requests. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[70]. The commandment of God is wide, but it is easy for those who love him. Do you love God? Prove it by keeping his commands. – Bible Ref. Jn. 14:15

[71]. You are always in the opposition group loving opposite opinions always. Why not check well and know the very spirit that is at work in you. – Victor Uzowuru

[72]. Lord you have given us your laws and told us to obey them faithfully, please help me to be faithful in keeping your instructions. Amen. – Bible Ref. Psalm 119:4-5

[73]. Do you know that a happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers? - Robert Quillen

[74]. “It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities” - Prov. 16:32.

[75]. In the true light of life, God will not judge us on our earthly possession and human resources, but how well we have loved” – St John of the cross.
[76]. If a bad person wrongs you, forgive the person, lest there be two bad people. – Oliver Goldsmit

[77]. Many people pose around Jesus Christ, but only very few touch him. – St Augustine.

[78]. “You can not get people saved when you engage in evil they do.” – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[79]. “Unrighteousness is a destiny destroyer, emulate the righteousness of Jesus Christ. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[80]. “Righteousness does not dry people up. It establishes them and causes them to flourish. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[81]. You are a Saint today, do you know what you will be tomorrow? Remember that heavenly race is not yet over until we see ourselves in heaven. No amount of holiness or righteousness you think that you have acquired should intoxicate you. Instead, like the Saints of the old rely confidently in God and pray constantly for the grace of final perseverance each day of your life. – Bro. Peter-Mary Chinedu

[82]. Heaven is free but not cheap, religiosity of convenience will never permit us to be true and faithful Christians hoping for heaven, just like Jesus, Mary and Joseph we must surely be disturbed one way or the other on the course of our life on earth. Therefore, for us to afford the New Jerusalem, we must be highly industrious on daily basis. - Rev. Fr. Fortunatus Okeke, O.P. – Feast of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Year 2000

[83]. If you cannot serve God with means, you will end up serving your means. The gold you cannot use to serve God will soon become your god. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[84]. Except you do the work of giving, you cannot enjoy the grace of additions. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[85]. Don’t envy sinners. Their riches are but for moment. They never last. Don’t let material things blind you to your privileged position in God. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[86]. Suffering, persecution and tribulations are inevitable partners of our Christian life, do you see and understand our present difficult situations as unavoidable routes we must pass through while journeying to heaven? – Fidelis. M. Nwachukwu

[87]. We accept that you are being moved by the spirit now, but it is fitting to know which of the spirits, because there are so many spirits that can possibly move people, make sure it is the Holy Spirit that is at work in you. – Bible Ref. 1John 4:1

[88]. You refused to join or continue with the Block Rosary Crusade because you don’t want your friends to see you serving God in such a humble manner. Remember, there is no secret way of making heaven. You must be openly identified for Christ here on earth, before you talk of entering heaven. – Mr. F. Nwenyi

[89]. The Blessed Virgin Mary, from heaven brought messages that she needed many prayer of the Rosaries to be said, and that she wants all those who say the Rosary to practice Holiness in life. The
best we can do is to offer her what she requested for and try our best to amend our lives, not questioning the authenticity of her messages. – V. M. Darah

[90]. The Scripture said, “The son of man is to be betrayed and handed over to sinners”. No personal name was mentioned, but eventually it was Judas. This same scriptures is now saying, “There is a road which seems good unto man, but the end of it is death…[Proverb 14:12]. For the gate is wide and the road is easy which leads to hell and many are already traveling on it [Matt. 7”13]. No name is mentioned here as well, but this has to do with our fashions in dressing, attitudes, and conducts, the secrete groups we belongs, the kind of friends we keep etc. Therefore, let us be vigilant over what we do and work harder so as not to be the one to fill the vacuum like Judas. – S. E Ovidar

[91]. Do not hesitate to discipline a child, and do not complain or fight when your child is being disciplined. A good spanking won’t kill him. As a matter of fact, it may save his soul. – Bible Ref. Prov. 23: 13-14

[92]. Constant reflections on heavenly matters always pierce our hearts, move us to repent, keep us steady on the salvation race and empower us to live more like Jesus and Mary. How often do you have a quite and meditation time? – F. M. Nwachukwu

[93]. Someone who holds back the truth causes trouble but one who openly criticizes works for peace. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[94]. One who listen when he/she is corrected will live but one who will not admit that he/she is wrong is in danger. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[95]. Beauty in a person without good judgement is like a gold ring in a pig’s snot. - culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[96]. A good reputation is better than expensive perfume and the day you die is better than the day you were born. - Culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[97]. On earth, we should strive every minute to live our life in Christ so as to be privileged to die in Him at the hour of our death. – F. M Nwachukwu

[98]. Wisdom is better than strength. – culled from words of Wisdom RET-WEM press

[99]. Do you want to avoid eternal damnation? Avoid Sin. Death is something inevitable in the life of everyone; we should not picture death as an enemy who comes to snatch away our dearest once, instead, we should see death as our loving friend and a sure means of arriving heaven our happy home. - Mr. G. Ekechukwu

[100]. Have it in mind always that we are citizens of heaven and as a result, we must strive to please God in all things as to be worthy of heavenly inheritance. – Fidelis-Mary Nwachukwu

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THE TEARS OF AN INNOCENT CHILD
I am coming to the World for God’s mission and we all belongs to the same family of God! I want to live to be born. My life is in your hands. I am a first trimester baby, I have been alive inside my
mother for weeks and I don’t want to die before I am born. If I am not a human being, what kind of being am I? If I am not alive, why am I growing, breathing and moving about?

If I am only a part of my mother’s body, why do I have my own sex, blood type, finger and toe prints? Why is my genetic make up completely different? My digestive, circulatory, nervous and respiratory systems are already working. My heart beat and brain waves can be recorded and show regular patterns. I can taste, swallow, hiccup, make a fist and suck my thumb.

Soon, I will have eyelashes, fingernails and toenails. If my existence has no meaning, why do I respond to my mother’s voice, wake and sleep with her and dream? Why do I react to light and heat, squint and frown? If I am just a blob of tissue, a menstrual extraction why would I feel myself painfully torn apart by the abortionist suction machine? Why would I react violently to the cutting of his knife-like curette?

If I am unwanted, why must so many couples wait for many years to adopt a baby like me? Some even pays a lot of money, as lawyers’ fees to adopt a baby like me? Others even try to steal babies like me to be happy. If my body or mind is not perfect, why am I any less reliable than you are? Don’t we all struggle with some kind of handicaps and discover the joy of living? Why should I die in your hand? Don’t you remember again that we are one in God’s Family?

With you help, I can live. Give me the chance, listen to my heart beat. If you fear I would lead a life of poverty and despair, is taking my life the way to show your compassion? Why sever forever the natural bound between us? Please love and accept me, don’t pity, then reject me.

You alone have that special love that can reach past our circumstances and discover my worthiness, my unique values as given by God. Offer me for ADOPTION if need be but not ABORTION. Let me be part of the world, I love African Continent and I want to be a Nigerian citizen, let me contribute to her greatness. Please, I want to live like you, don’t kill me! Our Lady of Gwadalupe, Patroness of the unborn, Pray for us.

SOME GUIDELINES TO GOOD MEMBERSHIP

This is a wonderful opportunity through which we can widely address ourselves and carefully point out the following errors and have them corrected immediately.

[1] DISRESPECT TO LEADERS.

Brethren, even though the Bible said that a prophet is not honoured in his home land, it is equally necessary to note that our Lord Jesus Christ who first made this statement was not happy in seeing that his own people didn’t accept him. Some of our leaders before now have complained seriously of the insults and disrespectful attitudes being hurled on them by members, especially in their own very centers. Such attitude to leaders is not good and must be discouraged, for it is not from God. St. Paul said: that we should honour and respect all these people who labour among us. [1 Thessalonians. 5:12-13] Therefore being among those members who disrespect the elders or leaders of the Block Rosary Crusade, I should know that I am already off the track, and may end up losong my good rewards if care is not taken. We must henceforth respect all people, especially the leaders, whether big or small for when we do this, we are respecting the persons whom they are working for, that is Jesus and Mary.
Concerning the elderly ones among us. We should always give them due respect, bearing in mind that we have people of their age within our homes that do not come to pray with us.

[2] **DISREGARD OR UNDERRATING OF OUR MEMBERS.**

This attitude is rampant among teenagers. We should begin now to regard each other as equally important, making every individual member among us to realize that he or she is an essential material. It is true that without him the crusade will not fall, but at the same time, let us cultivate the habit of letting our members know that with them the Block Rosary Crusade would move better. Having genuine regard for each other is an ultimate means of creating a better sense of belonging among members. We failed to understand that by underrating our members especially the adults we drive some of them far away from the center, pushing them to feel rejected. Making them to believe that they are not wanted in the center. This is the major reason why you see some of our members moving very far away from their praying centers, paying unscheduled visits to other centers where they believe their services are needed. Therefore let us show love to one another as Jesus and Mary loved us. Remember, if you disregard or underrate any member, it means you don’t really love that fellow, and if you don’t love your member whom you can physically see, how can you now boast of loving God whom you cannot see. [1 John 4:20] Any member who does not love his fellow member does not know God and any one who hates others is not a true child of the Blessed Virgin Mary. So let us have regard for each other seeing ourselves as valuable items which we can not afford to miss-keep. This will help us to rebuild our centers, zones and our parish crusade without much sweat or tears.

[3] **TRACING FAULTS AND MISTAKES**

Many of our members have developed the habit of paying attention to the speeches of their leaders, not just to get any good message from what they say, but to pick out and laugh over the grammatical mistakes made by the leader during his or her speeches. This attitude is noticed among our young students. Let all those who are involved in this act know very well that they are now representing the Pharisees and the Scribes who were mentioned in the Bible. These people followed Jesus from time to time but were not willing to accept his messages. Instead, they kept on searching faults from what he preaches, which later led them to plot against him rather than benefiting from his gospel. Therefore, forget about errors in each other’s statements or speeches. Even though the fellow could not speak fluently not to find faults, but to listen carefully in order to get the intended message, which God sends to us at that moment through the one speaking. Remember that if Balaam had concentrated on the tone or kind of sound that emanated from the donkey’s mouth, he would have met his death along the way. But he paid attention to the messages which God the Almighty one was delivering to him through the unblended means [the donkey] thus his life was not lost to that incident [Numbers 22:22-35] As for the leader or member who could not possibly express himself with the purest English, help him to improve if you can, it is part of being our brothers keeper.

[4] **UN-USEFULL PUBLICITY**

We should stop publicizing or distributing our member’s fault to the world. Some of us have PHD degree in this act. We should keep on praying for ourselves and for the leaders in particular so that we would become better Crusaders and better leaders. Instead of broadcasting their faults, correct them privately if you notice it. The scripture said, My brothers, if someone is caught in any wrongdoing, those of you who are spiritual should set him right. But you must do it in a gentle way. And keep an eye on yourselves so that you will not be tempted [Galatians 6:1].
And we that have fallen, when being corrected by anyone, we should welcome it wholeheartedly without grudges. Let us improve the level of encouragement we give to each other, and when we are being encouraged, we should allow ourselves to be motivated by it. In this way, we re-encourage [indirectly] the person who is encouraging us.

[5] LACK OF CONCENTRATION.

It is observed that some of our members lack interest in what is being taught each day in the praying centers. Thus they go home each day without any new knowledge about Jesus Christ nor with any new lessons to keep their faith growing. It is unfair. Year in year out we are being taught by our leaders. Is it not high time now for us to rise and begin to teach others from what we have learnt all these while? The leaders are putting in their best, we who are being led must reciprocate their efforts by proving to others [especially to our parents and guardians] that we don’t come to the Block Rosary Crusade to while away time. And there is no better way we can do it rather than to be of good behaviour both at home and outside. Discharging our domestic duties as supposed, being sincere at all times both to our parents, our masters and mistresses, and to all people at large. Being able to lead or conduct our family prayers or [partaking actively when other member of the family is leading the prayers. Letting the light of God be active and shining in our homes and not allowing ourselves to be stubborn children.

[6] SECRET CULTS IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

We should not conclude this chapter without immensely commenting on the rate of increase of secret cults in our nation, especially in our schools. And for the fact that a vast majority of our Rosary Crusaders are students, it becomes very difficult to state with certainty that all these Crusaders are cult free, and are very innocent of the matter. But in any case, while believing that non of our Rosary Crusaders are involved, let us remind all Christians that anyone who identifies himself or herself with any secret cult has knowingly or unknowingly extracted his or her name out of the book of life, which was written in there at the moment of baptism. We want to remind all Christians that the wages of sin is death [………..] And to this effect, we should all know that the repercussion for accepting to be enrolled in any secret association or cult is total death in hell fire. Again, anyone in this deadly group has made himself any enemy of God, and thus, would not be spiritually united with God, even though the fellow spend the whole days in the church.

Just as all Religious Societies in the church lead us to union with God, even so are the secret cults leading all its members to Satan – whom they worship in disguise. He is also the one to gain the possession of all their members when they might have left this life, which they must surely leave one day or be forced out by one brief illness or the other, no matter how protected or secured.

You should know by now that all who involved themselves in secret cult business are not giving the Almighty God the right worship. That all secret cult personnels weather young or old who come to mingle with the children of God during church services or other religious functions are mere sojourners and never members of God’s family. Even though they came with us to the religious worship, stayed with us, seemingly prayed with us, but are not for us nor were they united in mind with us. They display indirectly the clear character of their grandmaster the devil who always present himself at the gathering of the children of God as though he is delighted in the spiritual outcome of the Christian assembly. But in the contrary, his presence was to take care of those who belonged to him, guiding and feeding them with distractions, using them to distract others as well, making sure that they
do not hear the word of God nor repent. He comes to the assemblies of believers to seek for any given opportunity to win more people over, making workable things difficult for the believers. This later he accomplished through some of those weak and stubborn people in your midst whom you assumed to be your members, not knowing that they are the agents. Therefore, the fact we want to lay bare is that all those who enrolled themselves in secret cults are not candidates of heavens, no matter the role they play in the church or in the religious groups they belonged. It is a clear statement because the fellow has chosen one master [Satan] to be served secretly and has regarded our Lord Jesus Christ as a second master to be served camouflaged. Whereas, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has warned us in regard to having two masters [Lk. 16:13].

Get this very clear, there may be many gods, and there may be many “mighty fathers”. But note well that there is only one and outstanding Great God, called The Almighty, the overall Father, maker of heaven and earth and all that exist, he dwells in heaven and control the earth. This is the Holy God whom Christians serve, and He has no rival. Whenever He stands, no other god dares to raise up head in challenge. And when He commands, every other self-acclaimed “mighty fathers” become dumbfounded. Know very well that all that dwells in the ocean are for the ocean, while all that dwells in the river are for the river. And you that are being promised or have already been given an inheritance or a mansion under the ocean, be rest assured that it must fail you because it has failed many others. It is like wealth acquired in the dream which one hardly bring into the world of the living. It is also like a foundation laid on a sandy ground which Jesus Christ spoke against. To you, what you see over there, the mansions you see over there may seemingly be laid on a solid foundation, but in reality it is not. Because Jesus Christ is the real foundation of every good thing and any foundation which is not laid on him is not on the solid ground and is bound to scatter as soon as the wind blows.

A lot of people have experienced the disadvantages surrounding secret cults and have decided to opt out and remain permanently for Jesus Christ, not minding the obstacles. We want to declare boldly, without mix feelings that when the heavenly Father says NO, there is no other power on earth that can effectively say Yes. This later was accomplished during Mount Carmel physical combat between the worshippers of Baal put together and the servant of the Almighty God called Elijah [1 Kings. 18:15-40]. It is good to note here that all these little gods and evil spirits both under the waters and on the land which people are still serving now, are not without stings, they have their own little powers allotted to them by the devil, which they display in many ways in order to deceive people, and each of these being monitored by the devil himself. It is through this evil powers that all these bad spirits biding in so many places were able to convince or confuse all the secret cult members causing them to believe vain things as real. But it is more unfortunate that with all these artificial powers, they cannot stand when the Holy Spirit of God is in control, instead, all their evil powers become powerless, while their proud abilities turn to disable. This is to remind us of the immeasurable gap between our God and all these stubborn and disloyal spirits which people serve in secret cults. For ever and ever they must always bow and tremble at the mention of the name of the God Almighty and His Son Jesus Christ. Having known the warning and instructions of the Holy one of Israel, which said, “I am the Lord your God….. do not worship any other god but me …..[Exodus 20:1-17].

We should therefore strive hard to be free from any secret gathering that has to do with occultism for it is condemned by God. St. Paul said, “There is no condemnation now for all those who live in union with Christ Jesus …[Roman. 8, 1:3-8]. You would be doing a lot of good by showing a copy of this book to your friend so that the fellow will not blame or point an accusing finger on you when he or she eventually finds himself or herself in the hell fire due to his or her involvement in secret cults. Although, people have their reasons for being in those secret societies, but they fail to realize that all
these reason which seemed to be justified in their eyes and senses are neither reasonable nor genuine before God.

He who created us into the world knows when our time expires. He knows the amount of years we must spend n life and when to quit. Initiating ourselves into secret cults, perhaps you do not know that it is a way of reinforcing against God, thus fulfilling [to your own harm] the passages of the scriptures which says “Why do nations plan rebellion? Why do people make their useless plots?…… against the chosen king. Let us free ourselves from their rule, they say, let us throw off their control…. [Psalm 2:1-4]. Wealth, Education, Powers, Health, Security etc are the essential needs of life, but are not the major reason why we were sent into the world. Jesus Christ was sent by God, He came, performed his assignments, saved us from sin and hell and has gone back to the Father who sent him. Many people were also sent by the same God before and after Jesus Christ, they too came, performed their tasks and have gone to the father in heaven. We too are sent by that same God to further the work of Salvation among men. Instead of us embracing the Divine assignment, we went to be initiated into secret cults believing that we would no longer die, not to talk of going back to God who sent us to the world on errand. We joined this deadly cult so that we would be allowed to excel in our carriers in life, and not be possibly attacked by anyone. It is good we know that God made us for a purpose. He made us to know him, love him, serve him sincerely in this world and to be happy with him forever, in the next life. If we have been aware of this, we can equally accept without doubt, that it is needless involving ourselves into secret cults, owing to the fact that all who belonged to this group are not spiritually useful for God, they are walking corpse moving all over the streets but must be certainly punished at the ripped time.

We speak at random as far as this issue is concerned, and at the same time reminding all Christians, members of all the societies in the church, Block Rosary Crusaders, especially the students, that secret cults are no-go areas. We also want to caution those who have joined the group to use their facilities properly, knowing fully well that their will is theirs and there is no power on earth that can force them against their will. We strongly believe that our words as per this matter are not falling aimlessly on the ground nor on deaf ears, but on active and sound ears. Bear it in mind that all baptized Christians who eventually joined the secret society are no longer for Christ, even though they go to church or fellowship with one group or the other. They are now at the side of the anti-Christ, which is the devil himself, because these occultic groups directly or indirectly work against the kingdom of Jesus Christ. And if this is no, why must you be involved? This is a call for repentance and resisting this call means suicidal. Let all those who have engaged themselves in this already condemned group reconsider their stand. We should meditate on the goodness of God and the everlasting good reward which awaits those who loved and worshipped him without divided mind. We should equally meditate on the ugliness of Satan, who always appears as an angel of light [2 Cor. 11: 13-15] and the severe punishment that awaits all those who obeyed him, hardening their heart without repentance, together, with all secret cult members.

If the Holy Spirit of God is still at work in us, we must definitely make the right choice. We want to briefly address at this point, all those who have developed interest in joining or are being pushed to join these secret groups that they are heading towards destruction and ruin. Its road may seem good and smooth, but it has a deadly and regrettable end. For most of the glittering things we now see are not all gold, this is a proverb. Some are plastics but coated with goldish colour, so as to entice those people who love glittering objects. But for the fact that it is not the real gold, it is destined to fade away when the right time comes. In the same way, those in these secret cults, no matter all the privileges they now enjoy from it, all must come to a full stop one day, it must fade away or expire one day.
It will not last forever because it is from an artificial kingdom, which is bound to collapse. Its inner content would one day be revealed and then all who belonged to it will mourn for having accepted such a group. As people are now receiving ranks and promotions for gaining new members into their secret cults, this same way they are to be multiplyingly punished for misleading souls, selling them to Satan just because of worldly powers and promotions. All of us must be rewarded according to our works during life. [Jer. 17:10, Rev. 22:12]

Remember, all these acquisitions you made in the secret cults will soon turn to be like an ancient currency in your hands which you can never spend again, that is just keeping a useless wealth. It is better to spend a very short time on earth and merit heaven at the end, than to live very many years here on earth and end up in hell. And for that fellow who are now being attacked or forced to join this death sentenced secret societies, know it well that some other Christians have gone through such pressures but they submitted not, nor succumbed due to their fearful intimidation, because the grace of Jesus Christ is enough for all believers. And the precious Blood of Jesus Christ is always there to cover all those who believed in him. Be rest assured that the power you acquire in Christ Jesus is more active than any other power obtained through any other means. This is the very reason why the scriptures said that He who is in us [Christians] is greater than he who works in them [2King 6:16]. Therefore, it is a very serious case for any one to join any secret cult of any type, because it is the society of the devil and his workers. Lucifer disobeyed God in heaven, he fought the holy angels and was defeated. Consequently, he was driven out with other angels loyal to him, and they descended into the world and form groups, claiming in these groups the titles of “mighty fathers”, “queens and princesses” of water etc. to the amazement of the people whom they have grouped. These people failed to understand that they have already joined another kingdom headed by Satan, working harder in union with him to sustain the caused kingdom through the secret cult meetings they attend. But he the Satan must certainly be punished, together with all those who ate in his table or shared from his undurable bonanzas.

By now, you reader, may be suspecting that you are not innocent of this secret societies or cults. Make genuine move towards God, we advise you. Present your case to the Ordained Priest of God, he will tell you what to do and where to start. If you could strictly take to his instructions, Jesus will certainly reveal himself to you as he has done to so many others and prepare you soul for eternal life.

RE-EXAMINATION OF OUR MEMBERSHIP

A man once asked an Elderly Block Rosary Crusader; “Mr., are you still following this Mary all these years; ---------why-------?

This is a choking question, if you can agree with us. A great question which is able to turn your devotion to the Blessed Mother of God to grow cold, if it has not been deeply rooted in you. This question too is able to reduce active Block Rosary Crusaders to auxiliary members. Yes this is true, but at the same time, it is a refreshing question and a challenge to all Marian devotees. It is equally demanding. It is a challenge in the sense that the questioner wants to know the secret behind your devotion to Mary and why you are still a Block Rosary Crusader, talking about the Blessed Virgin Mary all these while. He wants to know why some of these people who joined the Block Rosary Crusade ten to twenty five years ago, are still waxing stronger in their devotion to Mary and Jesus Christ, maintaining their membership as Block Rosary Crusaders, even with the present situation of things.
I wonder what would your answer be if those questions were to confront you.

This man’s question is some how demanding, for it makes a weak and inconstant member to wake up from slumber. It could move the “follow – follow” set of members to caution themselves. And is able to move careless leaders to get recomposed. We as Block Rosary Crusaders should expect similar embarrassing questions at all times. But we should not allow such disturb our mind, for it is part of the obstacles we must meet in our journey to heaven.

Let us draw our point from what happened between our Lord Jesus Christ and his many followers [John 6:48-68]. He taught them the truth about his body and blood. But many of them rejected this teaching and left him. Then, turning to the remaining apostles, he said, “What of you, are you not leaving too?”

In the Block Rosary Crusade Society, since its inception, many members have left the society to other places or groups, due to reasons best known to them. And perhaps many are rounding up their plans to quit as well and you may be one of them.

Here comes our re-examination points through which we check ourselves. Why are you still following Jesus and Mary? Why do you still maintain your membership in the Block Rosary Crusade all these years? Are you not old enough to quit? When are you planning to leave as others have done? And if you have concluded your plan, is that the best thing to do? What will be the consequences of the abandonment thereafter?

Let us discuss this matter with one accord, and jointly examine our membership. Beginning our experiment from the lowest stage of membership, perhaps we would find out where we belong, and them pick up courage.

Let us assume that you are now a nursery or primary school student and you are very active now in Block Rosary Crusade affairs.

Can you still be an active member when you have entered secondary school? Can you still pray the Rosary with us when you have gone up to S.S.3. Level? Let us believe that you have passed these stages mentioned above, and you are still a good crusader, Thanks Be To God.

Check it this other way; You are currently a secondary school student thus you are regular in attendance of the crusade daily prayers, supposing you are sent after your secondary school to a higher institution or sent to other places of learning to acquire certain profession, can you still pray with us when you are back?

Would you not be carried away by your level of education or by the extent of civilization and enjoyment, which you have experienced? Would you not be confused by the numerous new friends, which you might have accumulated in those places of higher learning? Examine yourself.

Let us address other stages of our membership:- Presently you are a maid, servant, an apprentice, or learning one business or the other from your master.

In this way you are good and active member of the Block Rosary Crusade today. Tomorrow, by the Grace of God, you get your freedom from the person you are serving. Now the question is, “being an independent brother or sister this time around, would you still be coming to the daily prayer? Will you
remember those encouraging words of God, which you always proclaim to your members in those
days, boosting their moral? Alternatively, would you begin to qualify the Block Rosary Crusade with
a new grammar saying, “this is the prayer group I belonged in those days when I was serving my
master?”

Again, as a worker, you are currently employed in a small-scale industry or in a low graded business
centre, and you are now very active in the Block Rosary Crusade Society, begging God to lift you
higher.

Your prayers may be granted and you succeed in securing another bigger and well-enriched company
to work with, earning reasonable salaries and allowances. The question here is, “would you still
identify yourself with the Block Rosary Crusade, by attending prayers in any centre nearest to you
under your present big and prestigious level.

All these questions may sound very funny to some people, but indeed, they have numerous lessons to
teach. Let us assume that you as a current member have excelled in the above examination points and
are still matching forward, congratulations! And continue to thank God for what He is doing in your
life. Keeps it up, struggle continues, until we persevere to the end.

It is very necessary that we must view the matter this other way. Now as a mature member, you may
be called by God to the Priesthood and Religious life. Or it pleases him that you should get married.
In this elevated situation, will you still be a Block Rosary Crusade member according to the level of
your availability or will you now claim to be an auxiliary member? Will you now decide to be praying
at home, feeling ashamed to be seen praying openly with little children? Although, we thank God,
because today, there are thousands of married people and the Religious men and women who are still
Block Rosary Crusaders where ever they go. This is not a formulated story because you know some of
them yourself. Therefore, we who are still young crusaders today should be encouraged by their
constant love for the Blessed Virgin Mary and for the Block Rosary Crusade. We must emulate them,
and should strive to maintain our membership in the crusade no matter where we may find ourselves
tomorrow.

And to our officers and leaders; You are very active now, because of your position in the Block Rosary
Crusade. What of tomorrow, when you are no longer holding any office, will you still be our member
or will you now remain at your home, waiting for patronship award?

Once again, let us consider this other category. Our Lord Jesus Christ, having seen all your efforts and
toils, may decide to bless you with wealth, and so you become a car owner, a Landlord, etc. In this
esteemed state in life, can you still be a member of Block Rosary Crusade or will you then turn to be
story tellers, like some early thirty Christians, who now narrates how they built the ancient church
cathedrals, how they preached the Gospel with Rev. Father Kettle and how they traveled on foot to
remote villages with Rev. Father Cotton in those days, but are now pagans due to circumstances which
they thought were beyond their control.

These wealthy fallen away Block Rosary Crusaders, in their effort to convince the people that they
were in the system some decades ago, would keep on narrating how they led the crusaders to Singing
competitions, Christmas Carols, Cultural dances, etc. But now, they are weak Catholics, and very far
from being Marian devotees. No sign left to prove that they have ever known the mother of Jesus
Christ. What a great fall! On the contrary, you may not be a story teller, but may decide to quit from
the Block Rosary Crusade so as to join some other big men’s group [in the Church] where your Co-
Land-lords and car owners belong. Re-examine yourself. Are you now jack or admirer of all Societies in the Church but inactive member of all? It is hypocritical and highly dangerous.

Deserting the crusade is not the solution. And we must not blame God indirectly for making us wealthy. When your wealth and other accumulations of life are blocking your way or time to serve God, then you are indirectly blaming the one who gave you those gifts.

This advice is really inclusive for both past, present and future members of the Block Rosary Crusade. It is good to mention here that some people depart from this society claiming to have seen the light brighter than the one they saw already. While others quit from this prayerful society due to hardship of life. Be it known to you that each moment God knows what is happening in your life and what you are undergoing.

Here comes the call for endurance and perseverance. Jesus Christ wants us to persevere to the end with good deeds so as to be saved [Matt. 10:22]. He wants us to follow him daily with our crosses, that is, our difficulties in life. [Luke 9:23] He is the real light of the world [John 8:12] And there can be no light brighter than He’s. His brightness reaches to all nations at all times. So it is our duty to cleanse our spiritual eyes so as to be able to see this great light that illumines the whole world. It shines around us at every moment, not until we move from Jerusalem to Jericho before we could see the light.

We, members of the Block Rosary Crusade should watch and examine ourselves through the above “mirror” and make necessary corrections. Let us put aright our system of membership and take off our minds from the evil thought of abandoning the society.

Block Rosary Crusade is for all people of different classes in life. It is for mothers and fathers, not only for teenagers and children. It is for the rich and well to do people and not only for the poor. It is for the learned and not only for the illiterates. It is for the religious and the married. We should decease from claiming that we have over grown the age of being a Block Rosary Crusader, even if our children or wards are members too.

May those members who have already dropped from this society re-affirm their membership, so as to be numbered among the children of that good Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. May we plan our heaven through Her, and work effectively towards that goal. May we keep on striving to do the will of God in all things and at all times. God will certainly reward our little gesture of prayer, penance and sacrifice which we offer him daily in our centres.

Glory be to Jesus – Unto life ever lasting! Amen.
CHAPTER SIX

HISTORY OF PARISHES

PREAMBLE

Like the story of the mustard seed, the Block Rosary Crusade planted in Lagos Archdiocese in 1972 has grown to become one of the greatest lay apostolate organizations in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos. This growth however was not achieved overnight but have been an ongoing process over the years as various areas of the Archdiocese continue to behold the light of the crusade in their areas at different times and seasons. It is on record today, that the presence of the crusade can be recognized in almost all the parishes in the Archdiocese and where it is not yet in existence, effort is being made to establish it by the Archdiocesan Council.

From Lagos Island to Iganmu, Ajegunle to Ebute Metta, from Oshodi to Surulere, from Shomolu to Mushin, from Ikeja to Mafoluku, from Ojo Alaba to Badagry, there is no area where there is no Block Rosary praying centre throughout Lagos State. All the Military and Police Barracks in Lagos are not left out as there are vibrant centres all over the places from Dodan Barracks to Mayon Barrack, from Ikeja Cantonment to Ojo Barracks to mention but a few.

The zeal in the heart of many Crusaders to establish new centres in their areas is one of the contributing factors to the spread of the crusade. This is so because many of them established centres without knowing that similar centre exist in other areas. It was only later when they met each other and come together to form one body [zone or central body].

Writing briefly on the history of the Block Rosary Crusade in the parishes of Lagos Archdiocese is not an easy task. This is as a result of the many changes, which the crusade has undergone in the course of its administration in the past years. When we were operating the central body system, many parishes were joined together to form a central body. In 1997, the central body structure gave way to the Parish - Deanery and presently Parish to Diocese; that is to say we have had what looked like this:

1972 – 1996 - Centre to [Zone] To Central Body to Diocese
1997 – 1998 - Centre to [Zone] To Parish to Deanery to Archdiocese
1998 – DATE - Centre to [Zone] Parish to Archdiocese

Since 1997 the directory from the crusade’s chaplaincy is that all parishes should stand on their own and be represented in the Deanery. Many Parishes hesitated to comply due to the fact that they were not many. When the new directive came in 1998, the deanery structure was disbanded and all parishes had a direct link with the Archdiocesan council. For this reason, it can be noted that many parish Block Rosary Crusade administrations in the Archdiocese is very new as many of them had their first parish election in 1998 even though the crusade has existed in those areas for many years before then.

PARISH HISTORY

1. OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH IGANMU: The Crusade started in this area in August 1972 the same year it started in Lagos Island. It started with the establishment of the 1st Centre, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom in the area at No. 72 Iganmu Road, Sari Iganmu that later became the heart of the crusade in Iganmu. Some of the Pioneer members include Bros. Clement Ndukwe, Justine Chikwe, Remigius Obasi, and Felix Chiagoro among others. The Parish is one of the Pioneers in the archdiocesan council as it was officially recognized in 1976. Presently the Parish has a total of 34
Centres spread throughout the areas of its jurisdiction including Amuwo Odofin with a numerical strength of over 2000 members.

2. ST. MARY’S PARISH AJAGUNLE: The Block Rosary Crusade in St. Mary’s Catholic Church Ajegunle with its outstations is dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Peace. Its mother centre, Our Lady Queen of Fatima was established in 1973 at No. 5 Uzor Street, Ajegunle by some brothers from Obanikoro Street, Idumagbo in Lagos Island with the assistance of the Nwoke’s family and Bro. Emmanuel Okoye.

Numerically, the Parish has about 1500 members in 30 centres. The Parish has produced two Rev. Fathers, three Monks and some Rev. Sisters and Brothers among other achievements.

3. ST. PAUL’S PARISH EBUTE META: The Crusade started in St. Paul’s Catholic Church Ebute Meta in the year 1974 with the name Our Lady of Fatima. Its mother centre is Our Lady Queen of Mercy Iponri. The Pioneer members are Bro. Sylvester Ewelukwa, Bro. Mathew Akigwe and Bro. Marcel Ekujuba. Presently the Parish has a total of 19 Centres in both Western and the Eastern Zones of the parish.


The growth of the crusade in this area was very slow due to the under development of the area and lack of interest by many. Presently the parish has 13 centres and operates in three zones with a population of over 500 members.

5. SS. PETER AND PAUL’S PARISH SHOMOLU: The Block Rosary first came to Shomolu in 1980 as a family prayer at No. 3, Church Street, Shomolu by some brothers and Sisters under the care of Bro. Bernard Okonkwo from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Iganmu Lagos. In January 6th 1981 it was fully established as a centre with the name Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. She pioneered the then Yaba Central Body until the year 1996 when she had her first parish election. Presently with the creation of St. Roberts Catholic Church Mayong Barracks Yaba as an independent body, SS. Peter & Paul Parish BRC now has three Zones and eleven Centres.

6. ST. JUDE PARISH MAFOLUKU OSHODI: The Block Rosary Crusade in St. Jude Catholic Church Mafoluku is dedicated to Our Lady Cause of our Joy”. She is a baby from St. John’s Parish Oshodi. The first Centre in the area was established in the Church compound in 1984 by Bro. Anthony Alozie, Late Bro. Adulphus Anokwuru [RIP] Bro. Valentine Nwaimo among others. The Centre is known as Our Lady Queen of Virgins and from there the crusade spread to all other areas in the Parish. There are 8 Centres presently in the Parish with a population of over 400 members.

7. ST. CYPRAIN PARISH OKO-OBA AGEGE: Our Lady Gate of Heaven Block Rosary Crusade of St. Cyprain’s Catholic Church Oko-Oba was established in 1996. The first centre in the area is our “Lady Queen of All Saints” Located at Awori Bus Stop, Abule Egba. Bros. Dominic Enesi, Basil Metu and Ambrose Okonkwo started it. Though, Block Rosary in this area suffered a lot of set back in the beginning especially due to lack of interest by many parishioners as well as members leaving the
crusade for other societies, the parish has continued to strive by the help of God. Under Ikeja/Agege Central Body, Oko-Oba was in zone E with Sango and Alakuko. In 1996 the zone was elevated to a central body with Oko-Oba as the secretariat. In 1997 when all the central bodies were disbanded, Oko-Oba became independent and has its first parish election in 1998. The B.R.C. in the Parish now have six viable centres and a population of over 250 members.

8. ST. MICHAEL PARISH LAFIAJI LAGOS: The Block Rosary Crusade came to St. Michael’s Catholic Church Lafiaji in 1987 through Bros. Tobias Okwuma [RIP] Agustine Ejike and Paulinus Okwuma from the Centre at Olowu Close [now phase 3 Adeniji Adele] who opened the first centre in the area at No. 2A Foresythe Street, Sand Grouse market, known as Our Lady Queen of Peace’ [Okesuna Centre]. The Pioneer members of the Parish were Bros. Paulinus Okonkwo, Charles Ejiaso, Ephraim Eze, Malachy Nweke, Chidi Agbasianya, Lenus Okeke, Basil Chiacha and others.

22 St. Michael Parish B.R.C. became independent in 1998 when it has its first Parish election, which produced Bro. Innocent Okeke as the first president of the parish. There are 9 viable centres in the Parish presently with the numerical strength of 225 members.

9. ST. SABINA PARISH IDIMANGORO AGEGE: The Block Rosary Crusade of St. Sabina’s Catholic Church Idimangoro Agege which is dedicated to Our Lady of Immaculate Conception was established on the 11th of November 1987 by late Bro. Nicholas Mary Okonkwo [RIP] The mother centre is “Our Lady Mother of Divine Grace” Centre 9 Ile-Zik spare parts compound, Ile Zik Bus-Stop. The Parish Block Rosary Crusade has been in Oshodi/Agege Central Body and Agege/Ikeja Central Body. In 1996 it became the secretariat of Agege Central Body and in 1998, it became independent as Agege Parish B.R.C when it has its first Parish election. The first President of the Parish B.R.C is Bro. Virtus Mary Okwuolisa. Presently the Parish has a total of 15 Centres with a population of over 365 members.

10. ST. GABRIEL PARISH LADI-LAK BARIGA: The Block Rosary Crusade came to St. Gabriel’s Catholic Church Ladi-Lak Bariga in 1989 when the request of their then Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Patrick Moore [SPS] and other interested parishioners from the Lagos Archdiocesan Council of BRC then under the leadership of Bro. Justine Okonkwo to come and open a centre for them was granted. The new centre which was opened at the Church compound under the leadership of Bro. Innocent Okeke with Bro. Emmanuel Ukah, Sis. Lorrita Okwaraji and others. The Parish Block Rosary Crusade was made up of St. Gabriel’s and St. Garald’s Catholic Church Gbagada [an outstation] and it has a total of twelve Centres with over 500 members. The Parish B.R.C is dedicated to ‘Our Lady Mother of Good Counsel’

11. CHRIST THE KING PARISH ILASAMAJA: The Block Rosary Crusade in Christ the King Catholic Church Ilasamaja Parish has existed for so many years as zone 2 of the then Mushin Central Body where her performance was excellent. It was officially inaugurated on the 15th of April 1998 when she had her first Parish election and Bros. Stephen Okafor and Christopher Iwuchukwu emerged president and secretary respectively. The Parish B.R.C is known as Our Lady Mystical Rose and has a total number of eight Centres with a population of over 300 members.

12. REGINA MUNDI PARISH MUSHIN: The Block Rosary Crusade started in Regina Mundi Catholic Church Mushin towards the end of 1977. It was pioneered by Bro. Mathew Akaigwe and his friends from Ebute Meta who then resettled in Mushin. The first Centre in the area is ‘Our Lady Queen of all Saints’ at No. 2 Olanibi Street, Mushin. In her earlier stages, Mushin BRC was joined to
the then Surulere Central Body where it remained until 1984 when it was officially inaugurated as Mushin Central Body with only 5 centres. As a central body then, her jurisdiction includes; Ilasa, Isolo, Idimu and Ejigbo. All of these areas [Parishes] are now on their own. Presently the Parish has a total of nine centres with over 1200 members. The Parish Block Rosary is dedicated to ‘Our Lady Seat of Wisdom’.

13. ST. ANTHONY PARISH GBAJA SURULERE: The Block Rosary of St. Anthony’s Catholic Church Parish Gbaja Surulere is dedicated to ‘Our Lady Virgin most Merciful.’ The area was formerly the secretariat of the then Ojuelegba Zone of Surulere Central Body under SS Mulumba & David Catholic Church Lawanson Surulere. The first Centre of the Parish Our Lady Queen of Peace located at No. 33 Ishaga Road was opened around 1978 and one of the Pioneers member was Bro Michael Ututor, who is also one of the strong pioneer that brought the crusade to Lagos State. In 1996 the area was carved out from Surulere Central Body as Gbaja Central Body. In 1998 when the Central body structure was disbanded, it became an independent parish body of the crusade. The first parish election was held on the 2nd of April 1998 and Bro. Aloysuis Umeokoli was its first parish president. The parish now has one outstation – Our Lady Queen of Nigeria Clegg and fourteen Centres in two Zones with a population of over 800 members.

14. ST. THERESA’S PARISH IFAKO AGEGE: The Block Rosary Crusade came to St. Theresa’s Catholic Church Ifako Agege in 1993. The Pioneer members include Bros. Remiguis Mary Ugbor and Hilary Mary Ikojiobi who started the first Centre, ‘Our Lady Mother of the Church’ at No. 41 College Road Ifako with the assistance of the Landlord who happens to be a Mushin. The parish was formally with the Agege/Ikeja Central body and later [1996] with Agege Central body. In 1997 it became independent and in 1998 had her first Parish election and Bro. Emmanuel Mary Obodo emerged its first Parish President. The Parish has four Centres at present and is dedicated to ‘Our Lady Queen of All Saints’

15. ST. TIMOTHY PARISH OJODU IKEJA: The Block Rosary Crusade of St. Timothy’s Catholic Church Ojodu Ikeja is dedicated to Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. The Mother Block Rosary Crusade Centre of the Parish is ‘Our Lady Queen of Martyr’ at No. 44 Ishola Bello Street, Akiode. The Pioneer members are Bro. Godwin Mmegwa, Michael Ufondu and Benedict Osuji. The Parish was formally an outstation of St. Leo’s Parish Ikeja until October 1999 when it was created a parish. There are 2 zones that make up the parish Block Rosary Crusade [Ojodu & Olowora] each of the zones has 2 Centres making a total of four centres for the parish. The first parish election was held at the end of April 2000 and Bro. John Ibe and Ethel Ekhurebor are the first president and secretary respectively.

16. ST. CHARLES LWANGA PARISH MILITARY CANTONMENT I KEJA: The Block Rosary Crusade came to St. Charles Lwanga Catholic Church, Military Cantonment Ikeja in 1982. It was started by Bro. Michael A. Obi [now a Catholic Priest] and Marcellinus Ashie. It started first as a Catechuminate class and organizes prayer, choral and quiz competitions to keep the faith of the young ones. The first centre was opened at the Church compound with the name, ‘Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary which the Parish Block Rosary Crusade adopted. The spread of the crusade in the Barracks was rapid leading to the establishment of 24 Centres towards the end of 1983. In 1984 she teamed up with St. John the Evangelist Parish Ladipo Oshodi to form the then Oshodi Central Body. Between 1992 and 1998, the political problem in the Country, especially within the military affected the Block Rosary so much, leading to the collapse of most of the centres. In 1996 she became a central body independent of St. John’s Parish Oshodi and Bro. Mathew Zibiri was elected its first Parish President. At this time, the military authorities banned all public gatherings, hence all the centres went back to the Church for their daily prayer. Presently, with the relatively peace atmosphere in the
country, some of the centres have gone back to their base. There are now a total of seven centres in the Barracks while effort is being made to start new ones.

17. OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH B.R.C. AGUDA SURULERE – DEDICATED TO OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE. The Block Rosary Crusade came to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church Aguda Surulere in the year 1973 by the establishment of the mother centre. ‘Our Lady of Fatima’ Block Rosary Crusade centre at No. 3 Olatunde Onimole St. Aguda. At that time, Aguda was under St. Anthony’s Catholic Church Gbaja, Surulere as an outstation. The Pioneer members are Sis. Emilia Onye and Sis. Anna Anyanwu. At the initial stage the crusade in Aguda faced serious problems including ejection from the Church compound by their first Parish Priest claiming that it was a tribal society. The Parish was formally under the then Surulere Central Body with SS. Mulumba and David Church Lawanson as headquarters and then under Ikate/Aguda Zone. The Parish became independent in 1998 when it had its first parish election and Bro. Jude Amaizu emerged as the first parish President. Presently the parish has twelve centres out of which 6 have been officially opened. This parish Block Rosary Crusade has produced two Rev. Fathers and two Rev. Sisters with good number of others still under formation.

18. SS. MICHAEL, GABRIEL & RAPHAEL PARISH SATELLITE TOWN: The Block Rosary Crusade first came to SS. Michael, Gabriel & Raphael Catholic Church Satellite Town in 1984 at Ilaje. The first Centre, ‘Our Lady Mother of Our Saviour ‘ was opened at No. 19 Dele Oyefolu Street, Ojo Town, by the then Ojo Alaba Central Body with the assistance of Bros. Clement and Sylvanus. At this time Bro. Augustine Okpara was the President of Ojo Alaba Central Body.

In 1985 the Crusade spread to Agboju. Due to the fast development of the area and the increasing number of centres and members, she was inaugurated in 1987 as Agboju Central Body. The area comprises Satellite Town, Agboju and Navy Town. AS a result of problem resulting from cultural dance, the Central body was disbanded in 1989 by the Lagos Archdiocesan Council B.R.C. and was made a zone under Ojo Alaba Central body with Sis. Eucheria Anaedum as the Caretaker Chairperson. With the aid of Ojo Alaba members sent to work in the zone, most of the collapsed centres were revived and new ones opened. With the directive that all parishes should be on their own in 1997, all the centres in the area, viz, Ojo, 5 Satellite, 5 Agboju, 10 and Navy Town 2 came together to form the Satellite Parish B.R.C with the name ‘Our Lady Queen of the Most Holy Rosary’ The first Parish election was held in 1998 and Sis. Eucheria Anaedum was elected the first Parish President. Presently, the Parish has a total of twenty-seven Centres in 5 zones.

19. ST. ANDREW’S ILEMBEA AWORI: St. Andrew’s Catholic Church Ilemba Awori is an outstation under St. Patricks Catholic Ojo Alaba. The Block Rosary Crusade in this church is dedicated to ‘Our Lady Seat of Wisdom’. The crusade was established in Ilemba in 1989 at No. 6 Mashebinu Street, Ilaje Bus Stop. The Pioneer members are Sis. Ruth & Bibian Obiora and Bro. Fabian Offor. The area was formally under ‘Our Lady Ark of the Covenant’ Ojo Alaba Central body before it was elevated to a central body in 1996.

This was due to the fact that the area is very far from Alaba and because of the maturity of the crusade in the area [this is a rare privilege] Though not yet a parish, the area is recognized by the Archdiocesan council who still insists that there must be mutual cooperation and collaboration between the parish and outstation. Presently the area has eighteen functional centres in 5 zones.

20. OUR LADY QUEEN OF NIGERIA PARISH CLEGG STREET, SURULERE:
The Block Rosary Crusade of Our Lady Queen of Nigeria Catholic Church, Clegg Street, Surulere, was carved out from St. Anthony’s Parish Gbaja in the year 2001. The Society came into existence in this area as far back as late 70’s then under Surulere central body with Our Lady Queen of Angels as the first established centre. Being a zone under Gabja Central Body created in 1996, Our Lady Queen of Nigeria an Outstation was holding the seat of power of Lagos Archdiocesan Council from 1999 to 2001. The Zone received the blessing of the Archdiocese as a parish body in Block Rosary Crusade in November 2001. The recognition was necessitated by the speedy growth and increase in strength of members within the area. Before elevating the Outstation to parish status by His Eminence on 28th December 2003, the first Parish election was held on the 24th March 2002 with Bro. Fidelis-Mary Nwachukwu as the first Parish President. The parish Block Rosary Crusade dedicated to “Our Lady Virgin Most Powerful” has six centres with a population of over 350 members.

21. SACRED HEART PARISH BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE MILITARY CANTONMENT OJO.
BRC. in this parish – dedicated to Our Lady Holy Mary Mother of God – took flesh in the year 1979 AD. Her first Centers are Our Lady Virgin Most Powerful located at C.V.D. and Our Lady Queen of Virgins located at Camp 4. The pioneer members were Bro. Moses Onu and Bro. Eugene Doya who were then on military posting from the eastern part of Nigeria.

The formation of the Central Body in 1979 saw Bro. Eugene Doya as the first president who collaborated the leadership with Bros.:Francis Egboja, Capt. David Emakhu, Thaddeus Lornenge, Godwin yakubu (R.I.P.), Joseph Okechukwu, Sylvester Chukwuma Young and Peter Ochefu. BRC. was extended from this parish to St. Patricks Alaba, Holy Trinity Mile II barrack and Holy Spirit Cath. Ch. Onireke. As at the time this profile was submitted, Bros. Mark Joseph and Henry Cyprian respectively were the parish President and Secretary. Akin to the saying ‘soldier go soldier come barrack remains’, transfers, retirements, lack of seriousness and commitment on the part of adults impede the growth of BRC in this Cantoment. Though there are 34 Centres located within the area of its jurisdiction, but the numerical strength is not very encouraging.

22. ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE IKORODU.
22 BRC. of this parish took rise from St. Luke Cath. Ch. Army barrack in the year 1994 pioneered by Bro. Eugene Doya. From there it spreaded to St. Patrick Cath. Ch. Owode pioneered by Bro. Joseph Elum. Now as an autonomous parish BRC, St. Augustine Ikorodu has as at the time of the submission of this profile, a total of 25 Centres under her. The oldest of them all being Our Lady Mother of Good Counsel which was inaugurated on 9 Dec. 1984, pioneered by Bro. Innocent Mary Ezegba.

23. ST. CATHERINE PARISH BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE ALAKUKO.
23 This parish BRC. was given autonomy in the year 1999 AD. - dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Peace. The first Centre, Our Lady Mother Most Lovable at Ijaiye bus–stop now under SS. Joachim and Ann Meirn was inaugurated in the year 2000 AD. The first official election produced the following pioneer officers: Bro. Cyril Mary Udechukwu – President, Sis. Victoria Egbeh – Ass. Sec., Bro. Paul Obikwe – Treasurer, Bro. Chinadu Ananti – Promoter.
24 As at the time of the submission of this profile, the parish has 9 Centres under her jurisdiction.

24. SS. PETER AND PAUL PARISH BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE SHOMOLU.
22 BRC. got to the door step of this parish in the year 1981 AD., pioneered by Bro. Emmanuel Nwaobodo from Our Lady Morning Star BRC. Lagos Island. The first Centre, Our Lady Seat of
Wisdom was located at No. 13, Church street shomolu. During Central Body dispensation, the now autonomous parish BRC. was then a Zone under Yaba Central Body. As a Zonal Body, the first president was Bro. Emmanuel Nwaobodo. When Central Body formation was abrogated and parish formation took precedent, SS. Peter and Paul was given autonomy by the Mother Lagos Archdiocesan Council in the year 1996 AD. The first election held on 21st July 1996 as an independent parish produced Bro. Oscar Udemezue as her first parish president.

23 SS. Peter and Paul parish BRC. gave birth to St. Robert parish BRC. Yaba. As at the time this information was submitted, there were 16 Centres within the domain of this parish with Bro. Obi Eze at the helm of affairs.

OTHER PARISHES: - It is unfortunate that the profile of most parishes could not be reached before going to the press in the second edition of this handbook, it is however on record that there are strong Block Rosary Crusade Presence in so many other Parishes in the Lagos Archdiocese such as: -
1. St. Patrick’s Catholic Church Idumagbo Lagos which is the mother parish of the Block Rosary Crusade in Lagos Archdiocese
2. Holy Cross Cathedral Lagos
3. Church of the Assumption, Falomo
4. St. Theresa Catholic Church, Ikota
5. St. Denis Catholic Church, Bariga
6. St. Dominic’s Catholic Church, Yaba
7. SS. Mulumba & David Catholic Church, Lawanson Surulere
8. St. Brigid Catholic Church, Ijeshatedo
9. St. Ann’s Catholic Church, Itire
10. St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Isolo
11. St. Peter’s Catholic Church, Ejigbo
12. St. Francis Catholic Church, Idimu
13. St. Roberts Catholic Church, Mayon Barracks Bariga
14. St. Joseph Catholic Church, Dodan Barracks Lagos
15. St. Mathew Catholic Church, Amukoko
16. St. Charles Catholic Church, Olodi Apapa
17. St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, Ojo Alaba
18. St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Okokomaiko
19. SS. Joachim and Ann Catholic Church, Ijegun
20. St. John Catholic Church, Igando
21. Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Badagry
22. St. Agnes Catholic Church, Maryland – Ikeja
23. St. Leo’s Catholic Church, Ikeja
24. St. Michael’s Catholic Church, Ketu
25. St. Kizito Catholic Church, Iju Agege
26. Christ the King Catholic Church, Akowonjo
27. St. Ferdinand Catholic Church, Ipaja
28. Holy Family Church, Ajara, Badagry
29. St. Theresa’s Catholic Church Bonny Camp
30. St. Augustine Catholic Church, Iba Estate
31. St. Stephen Catholic Church, Agboju
32. Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Ojota
33. St. Margaret Catholic Church, Olodi Apapa
34. St. Patrick Catholic Church, Owode Oniru
35. St. Joseph Catholic Church, Kirikiri
36. St. Augustine Catholic Church, NAF Base Ikeja
37. St. Martins De Pores Catholic Church, Oshodi
38. St. Joachim and Ann Catholic Church, Miron
39. Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Ojo Cantoonment
40. Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Epe
41. St. Joseph Catholic Church, Gowon Estate Ipaja

The Outstations of these Parishes are not left out. As at the Jubilee year 2000, there are over 500 Block Rosary Crusade Centres Scattered all over these Parishes in Lagos Archdiocese where Sons and Daughters of Jesus and Mary gather every evening to pray, offer sacrifice and do penance as requested by Our Lady of Fatima in 1917. Throughout the federation, members of the Block Rosary Crusade salute each other with this inspiring greeting “Glory be to Jesus. Unto life everlasting. Amen”.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INVESTITURE FORMATS AND DAILY ORDER OF PRAYERS AND OTHER PRAYERS

DEDICATION PLEDGE OF THE OFFICERS OF BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

The Priest:
To the effect of preservation of the true Catholic Faith; salvation of souls; Our Lady's world Peace Plan; and the Triumph of Her Immaculate Heart, you have been called to the status of Leadership in living the life of, and propagating the messages of Our Lady of Fatima as requested in 1917 at Fatima by Our Lady of the Rosary, the Queen of Peace Herself.

I hereby invite you to declare your response to this call.

The Officer:
Oh! Mary Ever Virgin, Mother of God and Tender Mother of all mankind, Mother Most Lovable and Admirable, Our Lady of Fatima, Queen of the Holy Rosary and Queen of Peace, moved by the ardent desire of loving You as my Mother and Mistress, of living and propagating Your messages at Fatima:

I (name), Kneeling here, now willingly accept Your call to the leadership of the Block Rosary Crusade, Your Apostolate that enkindles in the hearts of men, the love of Jesus Christ Your Divine Son; prays; does penance and sacrifice tirelessly for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation to Your Immaculate Heart; and strives for the preservation of the true Catholic Faith, the Church of Your Son.

I hereby pledge my total royalty to You through this Your noble Apostolate and solemnly promise to lead and to lead by example through out the tenor of my office, in imitation of my Lord Jesus Christ as to remain for life a faithful Apostle of the Block Rosary Crusade in imitation of Lucia, Francisco and Jecinta. I promise to be faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Constitution of the Block Rosary Crusade and to be regular and punctual in attending prayers, meetings and other activities of the Block Rosary Crusade, both those we give and those I am asked to attend for our instruction.
Therefore, I renounce myself and I solemnly dedicate myself whole and entire to Your Immaculate Heart. Make It my abode, may It remain my refuge. Watch over me and preserve my mind and heart from the deluge of impurity, which You lamented so sorrowfully at Fatima. I went to be pure like You. Your virtues, infuse in me by the practice of Christian life, without regard to human respect. Help me, to the best of my ability and simplicity, to be a dedicated leader of the Block Rosary Crusade. Help me to Know what I should do and to do it to perfection in You, in accordance to Your messages at Fatima through this Your Pious Society.

Oh! Everlasting Father, God of infinite goodness and mercy, through the Holy Spirit fill my intellect with the knowledge of myself; the knowledge of the essence of the Fatima Apparitions; the knowledge of the true Catholic Faith; the knowledge of Your Most beloved and admirable Handmaid, Mary Ever Virgin and Mother; the knowledge of Your Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and our God; and the knowledge of the Trinity of Your Being - One Eternal God. Through Mary's most powerful intercession, grant me the graces, spiritual and temporal, which I need.

Fill my heart with a sense of responsibility, honesty, good human relations, leadership qualities, balanced judgement, openness of mind, a sense of realism, a capacity to transmit consolation and hope so that by the example of my live and service, I may help all in my care to grow in faith and love of You.

I ask this through Jesus Christ Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit One God forever and ever. Amen.

The Priest's prayer and blessing:

BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE BRIGADE OF GUARD (BRCBG.) NIGERIA INVESTITURE RITE.

A. Presentation of members to be invested by Parish Commandant to the Commissioner.

B. BRCBG prayer by those to be invested:
God of power and mercy, only with Your help can we offer You befitting service and praise; may we live the faith we profess and trust Your promise of eternal life. Amen.

Commissioner: Do you realize that this Brigade is an arm of Block Rosary Crusade?

Candidate: Yes I do.

Commissioner: Have you satisfied all the obligations of being a true Block Rosary Crusader and do you guarantee the certainty of maintaining them as long as you remain in this Brigade?

Candidate: Yes I do.

Commissioner: Are you then going this extra mile of joining this Arm of the Block Rosary Crusade out of your own freewill?

Candidate: Yes I am.
Commissioner: Are you aware and consent that on leaving this Arm of Block Rosary Crusade, all her properties in your possession whether purchased by you or not must be surrendered to her?

Candidate: Yes I consent.

Commissioner: Then recite the BRCBG laws.

Candidate:

Commissioner: Recite the BRCBG pledge to Mary.

**BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE BRIGADE OF GUARD PLEDGE.**
I pledge to Mary, Mother and Queen of heaven and earth Who promised at Fatima to convert Russia and bring peace of God to the world.

In reparation to Her Immaculate Heart, I vowed to live, defend and propagate the spirituality of Block Rosary Crusade - for the love of Jesus and conversion of sinners.

I solemnly promise to carry out all my Brigade duties as a sacrifice in total obedience to the authority of Block Rosary Crusade through Mary, with Mary, in Mary and for Mary - for the salvation of souls and to the glory of God. Amen.

If it is during Mass, the Priest can give a short advice to the members to be invested. If not, the Commissioner would then take the cap, place it on the head of the respective Candidates to be invested while saying:

I invest you with the uniform of love and peace. May you live up to your promises to the glory of God and honour to the Blessed Virgin Mary through Christ Our Lord.

Candidate: Amen.

Note: To save time the Commissioner may invite other senior officers to help him place the caps on the heads of those to be invested.

Commissioner: Recite the BRCBG promise.

Candidate: I (Name).

Commissioner: Recite pledge to Nigeria.

Candidate: I pledge to Nigeria my Country. ...

Commissioner: The National Anthem.

Candidate: Arise O Compatriots, ...

Commissioner: Our Lady's Anthem.

Candidate: O Come to the Throne of Grace, ...


Priest: Blessing on the members. All go back to their seats.

**BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE BRIGADE OF GUARD COMMISSIONING RITES**

1. Our Lady’s Anthem: O Come to the Throne of Grace, ...
2. Opening Prayer.
3. BRCBG Prayer: God of power and mercy, only by your help can one offer you befitting service and praise. May we live with faith we profess, and trust Your promise of eternal life. Amen.
4. (a) The National Anthem.
   (b) Inspection of the Guards of honour.
   (c) Presentation of the officers at that level by the Commandant with the unlighted Candles.
5. Standing in front of the officers, collect one candle and matches from the commandant who is with two candles. Blows his whistle to invite other members at that level to line up behind their officers.
6. Commissioner lights his candle and that of the commandant who will in turn light his officers' own.

Commissioner: You have agreed to be members of the Block Rosary Crusade Brigade of Guards. Are you ready to live up to your promise and pledge?

Answer: Yes I am.

Commissioner: To the glory of God and honour to Mary Immaculate and service to man, are you ready to keep the light burning?

Answer: Yes I am.

Commissioner: Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary:

All: Recite.

Commissioner: Handing over BRCBG flag which will be provided by them, while saying:

You are hereby commissioned as a ...(at that level) and may God bless and may Our Lady help you -(In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit). If there is no Priest in attendance, but if there is a Priest, he will give his blessings.

The Brigade Anthem.

**PATRON/PATRONESS INVESTITURE FORMAT**

NOTE:
Patrons/patronesses must be chosen from among practicing Catholics who are communicants with proven integrity.
The Priest:
To the effect of Our Lady’s plan for WORLD PEACE and SALVATION OF SOULS, you have been
called in the status of Patron/Patroness, to live and to assist in the propagation of the messages of Our
Lady of Fatima by the Lady of the Rosary Herself.
Hence, may I now invite you to declare your assent to this call.

THE PLEDGE

Patron/Patroness:
Oh! Mary Ever Virgin, Mother of God and Tender Mother of all mankind, Our Lady of Fatima, Queen
of the Holy Rosary and Queen of Peace, moved by the ardent desire of loving you as my Mother and
Mistress, of promoting effectively the propagation of Your message at Fatima, I (name) kneeling here,
now willingly accept Your call to be a Patron/Patroness of Block Rosary Crusade. I pledge, by your
motherly intercession, to the best of my ability to be a dedicated Patron/Patroness of this Your
Association. Help me to know always what I should do and to do it most perfectly by You, with You,
in You, and for You through this Your great movement.

Oh! Everlasting Father, God of infinite goodness and mercy, through Your Holy Spirit, fill my intellect
with the knowledge of me, the knowledge of Your most beloved Handmaid Mary Ever Virgin and the
knowledge of Your only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and our God. Through Mary's most
powerful intercession, grant me all the graces, spiritual and temporal, which I need through Christ our
Lord.

The Priest's prayer and the blessing of the Scapular which the Priest would invest on the
Patron/Patroness while saying with the recipient, any of Our Lady's prayers e.g. Hail Mary ..., Hail
Holy Queen ..., etc.

BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE ORDER OF DAILY PRAYERS

METHOD OF PRAYING THE ROSARY IN THE BLOCK ROSARY CRUSADE

1. OPENING HYMN
2. OPENING PRAYER – THE SIGN OF THE CROSS
3. REPARATION PRAYER
4. INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
5. THE APOSTLE’S CREED
6. ONE OUR FATHER AND THREE HAIL MARY
7. GLORY BE TO THE FATHER
8. THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY – JOYFUL MYSTERIES ON
MONDAYS AND SATURDAYS. LUMINOUS MYSTERIES ON THURSDAYS. SORROWFUL
MYSTERIES ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS. AND GLORIOUS MYSTERIES ON
WEDNESDAYS AND SUNDAYS.
[THE EJACULATION, “O MY JESUS” COMES AFTER EACH DECADE, i.e., 10 HAIL MARYS.
9. HAIL HOLY QUEEN
10. LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
11. CATENA
12. PRAYER TO ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL
13. OCTOBER PARYER TO ST JOSEPH (IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER)
14. VARIOUS PETITIONS
15. ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
16. PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH
17. THE MEMORARE
18. PRAYER TO THE GUARDIAN ANGEL
19. PRAYER TAUGHT BY THE ANGEL TO THE THREE CHILDREN AT FATIMA.
20. THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

OPENING HYMN: Our Lady's Anthem - CHB. 302.

OPENING PRAYER - (On the Crucifix, say):

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE REPARATION PRAYER:
O Jesus, it is for the love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the offences committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, that we offer You this prayer of the Rosary.

THE INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:
Leader - Come O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful
Response - And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
L. - Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created
R. - And You shoull renew the face of the earth.

LET US PRAY:
O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation; through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

L. - You O Lord, will open my lips
R. - And my tongue shall announce Your paise.
L. - Incline unto my aid, O God
R. - O Lord make hast to help me.

L. - Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
R. - As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world with end. Amen.

I BELIEVE IN GOD.
L. - I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord; Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven; and is seated at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
R. - I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Amen.

OUR FATHER - (on the first large bead).
Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name, Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done on earth as It is in heaven. Give us this day, and forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY - (three Hail Mary on the three small beads).
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with You, Blessed are You among women and blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb Jesus, Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

On the second large bead, say:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

{Announce the first appropriate mystery. [After announcing each mystery, pause for some seconds for meditation and contemplation]. Then ask for the grace}.

Still on the large bead, say one 'Our Father'

On every ten small beads say ten 'Hail Mary'.

On every large bead within the decades, say:

Glory be to the Father ...

O our Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of Your mercy!

Jesus have mercy on us - Virgin Mary help us.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, - through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Announce the appropriate mystery and the grace.

One Our Father ... Etc.

After the last decade of Hail Mary, say:

Glory be to the Father ...

O our Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are in most need of Your mercy!

Jesus have mercy on us - Virgin Mary help us.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, - through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

In conclusion, say:
HAIL, HOLY QUEEN [SALVE REGINA]
Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, Hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To You do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to You do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, Your eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, shown unto us the blessed fruit of You womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

Pray for us O Holy Mother God - that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY
O God, whose only begotten Son, by His Life, Death and Resurrection has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation, grant we beseech You, that meditating upon these mysteries in the most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus    - Have mercy on us
Immaculate Heart of Mary     - Pray for us
St. Joseph                   - Pray for us
St. John the Evangelist      - Pray for us
St. Louis Maria de Montfort - Pray for us

LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Lord have mercy on us
Lord have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us
Christ have mercy on us
Lord have mercy on us
Lord have mercy on us
Christ hear us
Christ graciously hear us
God the Father in heaven
Have mercy on us
God the Son, redeemer of the world
Have mercy on us
God the Holy Spirit
Have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, One God
Have mercy on us
Holy Mary
Pray for us
Holy Mother of God
Pray for us
Holy Virgin of virgins
Pray for us
Mother of Church
Pray for us
Mother of divine grace
Pray for us
Mother most pure
Pray for us
Mother most chaste
Pray for us
Mother inviolate
Pray for us
Mother undefiled
Pray for us
Mother most loveable
Pray for us
Mother most admirable
Pray for us
Mother of good counsel
Pray for us
Mother of our Creator
Pray for us
Mother of our Saviour
Pray for us
Virgin most prudent
Pray for us
Virgin most venerable
Pray for us
Virgin most renowned
Pray for us
Virgin most powerful
Pray for us
Virgin most merciful
Pray for us
Virgin most faithful
Pray for us
Mirror of justice
Pray for us
Seat of wisdom
Pray for us
Cause of our joy
Spiritual Vessel
Pray for us
Pray for us
Vessel of honour
Pray for us
Singular vessel of devotion
Pray for us
Mystical rose
Pray for us
Tower of David
Pray for us
Tower of ivory
Pray for us
House of gold
Pray for us
Ark of covenant
Pray for us
Gate of heaven
Pray for us
Morning Star
Pray for us
Health of the sick
Pray for us
Refuge of sinners
Pray for us
Comfort of the afflicted
Pray for us
Help of Christians
Pray for us
Queen of angles
Pray for us
Queen of patriarchs
Pray for us
Queen of prophets
Pray for us
Queen of apostles
Pray for us
Queen of martyrs
Pray for us
Queen of confessors
Pray for us
Queen of virgins
Pray for us
Queen of all saints
Pray for us
Queen conceived without original sin
Pray for us
Queen assumed into heaven
Pray for us
Queen of the most holy rosary
Pray for us
Queen of Nigeria
Pray for us
Queen of peace
Pray for us

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.
Spare us o Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.
Graciously hear us O Lord
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.
Have mercy on us

Pray for us O Holy Mother of God
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

LET US PRAY
Grant that we your servants Lord, may enjoy unfailing health of mind and body; and through the prayers of the ever Blessed Virgin Mary in her glory, free us from our sorrows in this world and give us eternal happiness in the next; through Christ our lord. Amen

THE CATENA  (While standing)

Antiphon:
L. Who is she
M. That comes forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array?

L. +My soul glorifies the Lord,
R. My spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.

L. He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
R. Henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

L. The Almighty works marvels for me.
R. Holy His Name!

L. His mercy is from age to age,
R. On those who fear him.

L. He puts forth his arm in strength
R. And scatters the proud-hearted.

L. He casts the mighty from their thrones
R. And raises the lowly.

L. He fills the starving with good things,
R. Sends the rich away empty.

L. He protects Israel, his servant,
R. Remembering his mercy,

L. The mercy promised to our fathers,
R. To Abraham and his sons forever.

L. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Antiphon:
L. Who is she
M. That comes forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array?

V O Mary, conceived without sin.
R Pray for us who have recourse to you

Let us pray:
O Lord Jesus Christ, our mediator with the Father, who has been pleased to appoint the most Blessed Virgin, your mother, to be our mother also, our mediatrix with you, mercifully grant that whoever comes to you seeking your favours may rejoice to receive all of them through her. Amen.

(while kneeling)
Mary Immaculate Mediatrix of all graces - pray for us
St Michael and St. Gabriel - pray for us
St John the Baptist - pray for us
All you heavenly powers Mary’s Legion of angels - pray for us.
Saints Peter and Paul - pray for us.
Blessed Francisco and Jacinta - pray for us.

LET US PRAY
Confer, O Lord on us, who serve beneath the standard of Mary, that fullness of faith in You and trust in Her, to which it is given to conquer the world.
Grant us a lively faith, animated by charity which will enable us, to perform all our actions, from the motive of pure love of You, and ever to see You and serve You in our neighbour.
A faith firm and immovable as a rock through which we shall rest tranquil and steadfast amid the crosses, toils and disappointments of life.
A courageous faith which will inspire us to undertake and carry out without hesitation, great things for God and for the salvation of souls.
A faith which will be our Rosary Crusade’s pillar of fire, to lead us forth united, to kindle everywhere the fire of Your Divine love, to enlighten those who are in darkness and in the shadow of death, to inflame those who are lukewarm, to bring back life to those who are dead in sin and which will guide our own feet in the way of peace.
So that, the battle of life over, our Rosary Crusaders may reassemble, without the loss of anyone, in the Kingdom of Your love and glory. Amen.

May the souls of our departed Crusaders and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL
Defend us in the day of battle. St. Michael the Archangel.
Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
and do thou O prince of the heavenly Host,
by the power of God,
cast into hell, satan and all the other evil spirits,
who prowl through the world,
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.
OCTOBER PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH [ONLY ON OCTOBER]
To you, O Blessed Joseph we have recourse in our tribulations and while imploring the aid of your most holy spouse we confidently invoke your patronage also.
By that love which united you to the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, and by the fatherly affection with which you did embrace the infant Jesus, we humbly beseech you graciously, to regard the inheritance which Jesus purchased by His precious blood and help us in our necessities, by your powerful intercession.

Protect, O most provident guardian of the holy family, the chosen children of Jesus Christ, ward off from us, O most loving father, all taint of error and corruption; graciously assist us from heaven o most powerful protector, in our struggle with the powers of darkness and as you did once rescued the child Jesus from imminent peril of his life, so now defend the holy church of God from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity.

Shield each one of us with your unceasing patronage, so that, imitating your example and supported by your aid, we may be enabled to live a good life, die a holy death and secure everlasting happiness in heaven. Amen.

VARI0US PETITIONS
Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church, that spreads throughout the world and for the intentions of our Holy Father the Pope.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our Bishops, Priests and all Christians, who spread the Kingdom of God, that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit, to do their work for the glory of God, and for the betterment of mankind.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our Chaplain, that God may grant him health of mind and body, the ability to work and the grace to guide our Crusade in the way that pleases Mary and Jesus.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the progress of the Block Rosary Crusade, which spreads the message of our Holy Mother at Fatima, that God may help the leaders, so that many people may fulfill Our Lady's wish of appeasing God; and also that sinners may be converted and the Peace of God be brought into this world.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our parents, guardians and the sick, that God may bless them and grant the sick quick recovery.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the increase in vocations to the Priesthood and Religious life, that God may raise up in our land many holy Priests, brothers and sisters, who will lead their fellows to the knowledge and love of God. That He may infuse great faith and charity into the hearts of Christian parents, that they may willingly and gladly offer their sons and daughters to His service.
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.
Let us pray for our own intentions: (observe some period of silence for inward prayer).
We pray O Lord - Lord hear our prayer.

Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created,
And You shall renew the face the earth.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.
O Holy Mary my Mother,
I offer myself, soul and body to Your blessed protection,
so that You would take care of them.
In Your kindness watch over them this day,
and every day of my life
and especially at the hour of my death.
In Your Hands I place all my hope and comfort,
my sufferings and my needs,
all the days of my life.
At the end, I am confident
that by Your holy intercession and merits,
all my actions will be in accordance
to the will of Your Son. Amen.

PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
- I give You my heart and my soul
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
- Assist me in my last agony.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
- May I breath forth my soul in peace with You.

THE MEMORARE
Remember, O Most Loving Virgin Mary,
that is it a thing unheard of,
that anyone ever had recourse to Your protection,
implored Your help, or sought Your intercession,
and was left forsaken.
Filled therefore with confidence in Your goodness,
I fly to You O Mother, Virgin of virgins.
To You I come, before You I stand,
a sorrowful sinner.
Despise not my poor words,
O Mother of the Word of God,
but graciously hear and grant my prayers.

PRAYER TO THE GUARDIAN ANGEL
O my beloved angel,
be always at my side to guide and guard me.
PRAYER TAUGHT BY THE ANGEL TO THE THREE CHILDREN OF AT FATIMA
(This adoration Prayer is said while prostrating, with the forehead planted to the ground. - Should be said as often as possible daily)

My God,
I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You,
I beg pardon for those who do not believe,
do not adore, do not hope and do not love You. (3x)

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
I adore You profoundly, I offer You
the Most Precious Body, Blood,
Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ,
present in all the tabernacles of the world,
in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges
and indifferences by which He is offended.
By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
and Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I beg for the conversion of poor sinners. (3x)

CLOSING PRAYER
In the Name of the Father, ... .

Our help is unto the Name of the Lord - Who made Heaven and Earth.
May the Lord hear our prayer - and let our cry come unto You.

Glory be ... .

For novena intentions (if any) say: one Our Father ... ., one Hail Mary ... ., and one Glory be ... .

NIGHT PRAYER
O my God, I sincerely believe that You are ever present here, that You see and are mindful of all my actions and of my most inner thoughts, I give You thanks for all Your benefits to me this day. Amen.

WE FLY TO YOUR PATRONAGE
O Holy Mother of God, despise not our prayers in our necessities but deliver us from all dangers, O Ever Glorious and Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus - Have Mercy on us.
Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary - Pray for us.
Our Lady of Fatima - Pray for us.
Our Lady of the Rosary - Pray for us.
Our Lady Queen of Peace - Pray for us.

In the Name of the Father, ... .
THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY
The Rosary is a form of vocal and mental prayer on the mysteries of our redemption, divided into twenty decades. The recitation of each decade is accompanied by meditation on one of the twenty EVENTS or 'MYSTERIES'. The Mysteries consist of four groups: The Joyful, The Luminous, The Sorrowful, and The Glorious Mysteries.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES
(Mondays and Saturdays)

1st of the five Joyful Mysteries:
THE ANNUNCIATION:
The Angel Gabriel appears to Mary, announcing, She is to be the Mother of God. (Contemplate a while on this event).
We pray O Lord - For the grace of humility.

2nd Joyful Mystery:
THE VISITATION:
Elizabeth greets Mary, "Blessed are You among women and Blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb. (Contemplate a while on this event)
We pray O Lord - For the grace of fraternal charity.

3rd Joyful Mystery:
THE NATIVITY:
The Blessed Virgin Mary gives birth to the Redeemer of the world.
(Contemplate a while on this event).
We pray O Lord - For the grace of spiritual poverty.

4th Joyful Mystery:
THE PRESENTATION:
The Blessed Mother presents the Child Jesus in the temple.
(Contemplate a while on this event).
We pray O Lord - For the grace of obedience.

5th Joyful Mystery:
THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE:
The Blessed Mother finds the Child Jesus in the Temple.
(Contemplate a while on this event).
We pray O Lord - For the grace of loving Jesus Christ.

THE FIVE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES
(Thursdays)
1st of the five Luminous Mysteries: (Mt.3: 13-17; Mk.1: 9-11; Lk.3: 21-22; Jn.1: 32-33)
THE BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN:
Jesus is baptized, the Holy Spirit descends on Him and the Eternal Father declares, This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased”.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace to do the Will of God.

2nd Luminous Mystery: (Jn.2: 1-10)
THE MANIFESTATION OF JESUS AT CANA:
In the wedding feast, wine finished, the Virgin Mother of Jesus instructs, "Whatever He tells you, do just that", and Jesus turns water into wine.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - for the grace of trust in May's intercession.

3rd Luminous Mystery: (Jn 8: 12; Jn. 1: 4 - 5, 9; Jn. 12: 41; Mk. 1: 15; Mk. 2: 1 - 12, Lk. 7: 47 - 48; Jn.. 20: 22 - 23 etc)
THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD:
Jesus the Light of the world calls all people to conversion and to the Mercy of God and declares that He and the Father are One.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - for the grace to accept the Good-News and repent of our sins.

4th Luminous Mystery: (Mt 17: 1 - 13; Mk. 9: 2 - 8; Lk 9: 28 - 36)
THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS:
On the Mount Tabor, the glory of God shines forth from the Face of Christ, Moses and Elijah appear conversing with Him. The Father declares, “This is My beloved Son; listen to Him”.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - for the grace accept the glory of the Cross.

5th Luminous Mystery: (Lk. 22: 14 - 20; Mt. 26: 20, 26 - 30; Mk. 14: 17, 22 - 26; 1 Cor. 11: 23 - 25)
THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST:
At the last Supper, Jesus changes bread into His Body as real food and wine into His Blood as real drink and instructs us to do it always in memory of Him
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - for the grace to accept Jesus the Bread of life.

May the grace of Luminous Mysteries come down into our souls and show us the way to heaven.

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES
(Tuesdays and Fridays)

1st of the five Sorrowful Mysteries:
THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN:
At Gathsemane, Jesus prays as He contemplates the sins of the world.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of resignation to the Will of God.

2nd Sorrowful Mystery:  
THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR:  
Jesus is cruelly scourged until His mortified Body could bear no more.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord for the grace of purity.

3rd Sorrowful Mystery:  
CROWING WITH THORNS:  
A crown of thorns is placed on the Head of Jesus.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of moral courage.

4th Sorrowful Mystery:  
THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS:  
Jesus carries the heavy Cross upon His Shoulders to Calvary.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of patience in difficulties.

5th Sorrowful Mystery:  
THE CRUCIFIXION:  
Jesus is nailed to the Cross and dies after three hours of agony.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of true contrition for our sins.

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES  
(Wednesdays and Sundays)

1st of the five Glorious Mysteries:  
THE RESURRECTION:  
Jesus rises glorious and immortal, three days after His death.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of faith.

2nd Glorious Mystery:  
THE ASCENSION:  
Jesus ascends to Heaven forty days after His resurrection.  
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of hope.
3rd Glorious Mystery:
THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:
The Holy Spirit descends upon Mary and the Apostles.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of love.

4th Glorious Mystery:
THE ASSUMPTION:
The Blessed Mother is united with Her Divine Son in Heaven.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of thought over the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

5th Glorious Mystery:
THE CORONATION:
Mary is gloriously crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth.
(Contemplate a while on this event).

We pray O Lord - For the grace of final perseverance.

OTHER PRAYERS

THE ANGELUS
V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
R. And She conceived of the Holy Spirit
   Hail, Mary …. .
V. Behold the Handmaid of the Lord
R. Be it done unto Me according to your word
   Hail, Mary …. .
V. And the Word was made Flesh (while on genuflection)
R. And dwelt among us. (while beating your chest)
   Hail, Mary …. .
V. Pray for us O holy Mother of God
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY
Pour forth, we beseech You O Lord, Your grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Your Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may be brought by His Passion and +Cross to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

May the Divine assistance always remain with us, - And may the soul the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

REGINA CAELI
(Said from Easter to Ascension instead of Angelus)
O Queen of heaven, rejoice – Alleluia
For He Whom You did merit to bear, – Alleluia
Has risen as He said, – Alleluia
Pray for us to God, – Alleluia
Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, – Alleluia
For the Lord has risen indeed – Alleluia

LET US PRAY
O God, Who gave joy to the whole world, through the resurrection of Your Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that we may obtain, through His Virgin Mother Mary, the joy of everlasting life. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF AFRICA
O Eternal God, Creator of all things, be mindful of the souls of those who knew not Thee, or who heed not the message of Your Divine Son Jesus. They were created by You to Your own image and likeness. Behold, O Lord, how like sheep without a shepherd, they stray in the wilderness, where they may be lost forever. Your well beloved Son came to seek them, and gave His precious Blood to save them. Suffer not, O God, that they should any longer be insensible to His redeeming love.

Hear the prayers of Your saints and martyrs, hear the voice of Your Church, the Spouse of Your Son, and be mindful of Your mercy. Grant that all peoples and tribes, may gather into the One Fold of the Shepherded Jesus Christ, Your Son Our Lord, to Whom all glory belongs forever. Amen.

Our Father ..., Hail Mary ..., Glory be ..., Pray for us O Saints and Martyrs of Africa -
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY
O God Our Lord, Who gave the Saints and Martyrs of Africa, light and strength in former times, and also gave to the Martyrs of Uganda, that same light and strength in our days, by their prayers and examples grant that the souls of those millions who in this continent, still dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, may be won to the truth of Our Lord Saviour Jesus Your Son, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR NIGERIA IN DISTRESS
All Powerful and Merciful Father, You are the God of Justice, Love and Peace. You rule over the Nations of the earth. Power and Might are in Your Hands and no one can withstand You.

We present our country Nigeria before You, we praise and thank You, for You are the source of all we have and are. We are sorry for all the sins we have committed and for the good deeds we have failed to do.

In Your loving forgiveness keep us safe from the punishments we deserve. Lord, we are weighed down not only by uncertainties, but also by moral, economic and political problems.

Listen to the cries of Your people who confidently turn to You. God of infinite goodness. Our strength in adversity, our health in weakness, our comfort in sorrow, be merciful to us Your people.
Spare this nation, Nigeria from chaos, anarchy and doom. Bless us with Your Kingdom of Justice, Love and Peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER AGAINST BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA
Father in Heaven, You always provide for all Your creatures, So that all may live as You have willed.

You have blessed our country Nigeria with rich human and natural resources, to be used to Your honour and glory, and for the well-being of every Nigerian.

We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of these Your gifts and blessings through acts of injustice, bribery and corruption, as a result of which, many of our people are hungry, sick, ignorant and defenseless.

Father, You alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We beg You, touch our lives and the lives of our leaders and peoples so that we may all realise the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it.

Raise up for us, God-fearing people and leaders who care for us and who will lead us in the path of peace, prosperity and progress.

We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus - Have mercy on us.
Immaculate Heart of Mary - Pray for us.

PRAYER TO OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL
Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day, be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

I PLEDGE MYSELF TO OUR LADY
Dear Queen and Mother, Who promised at Fatima, to convert Russia and to bring Peace to Mankind. In reparation for my sins and the sins of the whole world, I solemnly promise:
To say, at least five decades of the Rosary daily while meditating on its Mysteries.
To offer up each day, the sacrifices demanded by my daily duties.
To Observe communion of reparation on first Saturday of every Month.
To wear steadily the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, as a profession of this promise and as an act of consecration to Your Immaculate Heart. I shall renew this promise often, especially in moments of temptation. Amen.

I am all Yours, all I have is Yours, Oh my most loving Jesus, through Mary Your Holy Mother. Amen. (3x).

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH
O St. Joseph, Whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in You all my interests and desires. O St. Joseph, do assist me by Your powerful intercession and obtain
for me from Your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below Your Heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers.

O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating You and Jesus asleep in Your Arms. I dare not approach while He reposes near Your Heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine Head for me and ask Him to return the kiss when I draw my dying breath.


(Say this prayer for nine consecutive mornings for anything you may desire. It has seldom be known to fail).

PRAYER OF ST. SIMON STOCK
O beautiful flower of Carmel, most fruitful vine, Splendor of Heaven, holy and singular, who brought forth the Son of God, still ever remaining a Pure Virgin, assist me in this necessity. O Star of the Sea, help and protect me! Show me that thou art my Mother.
O Mary, Conceived without sin,
Pray for us who have recourse to thee!
Mother and Ornament of Carmel, Pray for us!
Virgin, Flower of Carmel, Pray for us!
Patroness of all who wear the Scapular, Pray for us!
Hope of all who die wearing the Scapular, Pray for us!
St. Joseph, Friend of the Sacred Heart, Pray for us!
St. Joseph, Chaste Spouse of Mary, Pray for us!
St. Joseph, Our Patron, Pray for us!
O sweet Heart of Mary, Be our Salvation!

OFFERING OF THE DAY TO MARY
O Sweet Virgin Mary, O gracious Queen, O merciful Mother. I praise and thank you for having kept and protected me during this night. I thank you for having giving in union with Jesus praise and thanksgiving to God the Father on my behalf. O Immaculate Virgin, I unite myself to the Heart of Jesus, to the angels and saints and all the souls that are truly devoted to You. That I may salute you this day with a renew favour and love, as a token of my love, I consecrate myself entirely to You with all that I have. I give You my body and my soul. I leave the value of my good works to Your intentions for the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Could I but repeat this offering and donation of myself a thousand times today, I present to you Sweet Mother in union with all the intentions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and all the Holy Masses to be celebrated today throughout the world. I intend today to gain every indulgence and merit I can this day and I leave them to you to be applied as You will. Receive O most gracious Virgin, this little offering of my slavery in honour of, and in union with obedience which Jesus Eternal Wisdom has shown You, and in thanksgiving with privileges which the Holy Trinity has favoured you. Amen.

MORNING OFFERING FOR SCAPULAR WEARERS
O My God, in union with the Immaculate Heart of Mary [ here kiss your Brown Scapular] I offer You the Precious Blood Of Jesus from all the alters throughout the world, joining with it the offering of my every thought, word and action of this day.
O My Jesus, I desire today to gain every indulgence and merit I can and offer them, together with myself, to Mary Immaculate.... That she may best apply them to the interest of Your most Sacred Heart.

Precious Blood of Jesus, Save us!
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Pray for us!
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Have Mercy on us!

FOR DAILY DUTIES
I offer all my actions of this day to you, O Mary. Purify them and offer them to your beloved Son.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
Virgin of Fatima, Mother of Mercy, Queen of Heaven and Earth, Refuge of sinners, we who belong to the Marian Movement consecrate ourselves in a very special way to your Immaculate Heart.
By this act of consecration we intend to live with you and through you, all the obligations assumed by our baptismal consecration. We further pledge to bring about in ourselves that interior conversion so urgently demanded by the Gospel, a conversion that will free us of every attachment to ourselves and to easy compromises with the world so that, like you, we may be available only to do always the will of the Father.

And as we resolved to entrust to you, O Mother most Sweet and Merciful, our life and vocation as Christians, that you may dispose of it according to your designs of salvation in this hour of decision that weighs upon the world, we pledge to live it according to your desires, especially as it pertains to renewed spirit of prayer and penance, the fervent participation in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the works of the apostolate, the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary and an austere manner of life in keeping with the Gospel, that shall be to all a good example of observance of the law of God and the practice of the Christian virtues, especially that of purity.

We further promise you to be united with the Holy Father, with the hierarchy and with our priests, in order thus to set up a barrier to the growing confrontation directed against the Magisterium, that threatens the very foundation of the Church.

Under Your protection, we want moreover to be apostles of this solely needed unity of prayer and love for the Pope, on whom we invoke your special protection.

And lastly, insofar as is possible, we promise to lead those souls with whom we come in contact to a renewed devotion to You.
Mindful that atheism has caused shipwreck in the faith to a great number of the faithful, that desecration has entered into the Holy Temple of God, and that evil and sin are spreading more and more throughout the world, we make so bold as to lift our eyes trustingly to You, O Mother of Jesus and our Merciful and powerful Mother, and we invoke again today and await from you the salvation of all Your children, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

IMITATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
God all Powerful who has suffered on the Tree of the Cross - Respond – Be with Us.
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Have Pity on Us
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Be Our Hope
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Turn away from us all sharp weapons
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Pour into us all good
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Turn away from us all evil
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Make us well in the paths of Salvation
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Preserve us from all spiritual and temporal accidents
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - May we adore Thee
Holy Cross of Jesus Christ - Now and forever

Jesus of Nazareth, crucified have pity on us. Make the invisible fly far from us now and forever Amen. Holy Mary Mother of God, St. Joseph, St. Michael, Archangels and Holy angels protect for us. Prayer for the poor Souls in Purgatory: Eternal Father I offer you the most Precious Blood of your Divine Son, Jesus, in Union with the Masses said throughout the whole World to-day, for all the holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, sinners in the universal Church, those in my own home and within my Family. Amen.

FOR THE SOULS DEPARTED

The prayers offered for our departed brethren are like purifying substance aiding to shorten their stay in Purgatory, if they by any misfortune are eventually there.

THE CHAPLET OF THE DEAD

The chaplet is said on the normal Rosary beads of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And the usual mysteries of the Rosary are used.

On the large beads take the Meditation and Our Father ... as usual.

On the ten small beads say:
Hail Mary .... - 3x
L. Merciful Jesus,
Rv. Grant him/her/them eternal rest oh Lord. - 7x.

On the preceding large bead say:
L. Eternal rest grant unto him/her/them oh Lord,
Rv. And let perpetual light shine upon him/her/them.
L. May the soul/s of (Name) and the souls of all the faithful departed,
Rv. Through the meercy of God rest is peace. Amen.

Still on the large bead take the appropriate mystery and say the usual ‘Our Father’ and contune untill you have finished the number of the decades you wish to take.

End with Hail Holy Queen ... .
Pray for him/her/them O holy Mother of God that he/she/they may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:
O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the soul/s of Your servant/s departed, the remission of all his/her/their sins, that through our pious supplication, he/she/they may obtain that pardon which he/she/they has/have always desire/s. We ask this through Christ Our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit One God forever and ever. Amen.
If you wish to take the normal Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the response should be: Have mercy on him/her/them. And pray for him/her/them.