

hospitals and retreat houses and faces a vast square in which is the little Chapel of the Apparitions. Numerous cures have been reported, though publicity has not been sought. On the 50th anniversary of the first vision, 13 May, 1967, a crowd of pilgrims, estimated to number one million, gathered at Fátima to hear Pope Paul VI say mass and pray for peace. At the end of the 20th century, there was growing speculation concerning the three messages the Virgin Mary was said to have revealed to the peasant children in 1917. Though two of the messages had been disclosed in the 1940s—commonly interpreted as the prediction of the end of World War I and the start of World War II and the rise and fall of communism—the third had been kept secret by the Vatican, giving rise to numerous theories. In May 2000 it was finally announced that the third message was the Virgin Mary's vision of the 1981 assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II. The news came during a beatification ceremony for Francisco and Jacinta Marto. In 2017, Pope Francis canonized the two younger children, who died in 1919 and 1920. Lucia died in 2005 after a long and cloistered life as a nun. Her canonization is in process.

-Bernard Kellett

Entrance antiphon: All that you have done to us, O Lord, you have done with true judgement, for we have sinned against you and not obeyed your commandments. But give glory to your name and deal with us according to the bounty of your mercy.

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28

Responsorial Psalm: 24. Remember your mercy, Lord/R

Second Reading: Philippians 2: 1-11

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him. Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew: 21:28-32

Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: Remember your word to your servant, O Lord, by which you have given me hope. This is my comfort when I am brought low.



Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Cycle A, 2023 Weekly Reflection: Marian Shrine (1) - Our Lady of Fatima, Portugal: Over a century ago, the vil-

lage of Fátima in central Portugal was a rustic enclave devoted to sheep herding. Today, it's a major Catholic pilgrimage site. The Santuário de Fátima, built where visions and miracles took place in 1917, attracted 9.4 million visitors in its centenary year. Pope Francis made a pilgrimage in May 2017, 100 years after the Virgin Mary first appeared to three shepherd children. Forty miles north of Lisbon, The Sanctuary of Fátima is now a massive complex, including the Basilica of the Holy Trinity, completed in 2007 – the fourth largest Catholic Church in the world. The shepherd children's depictions can be seen on the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary. It was 13 May, 1917, when three children – 10-year-old Lucia dos Santos and her cousins Jacinta Marto, 7, and Francisco Marto, 8 – were tending their family's sheep. The Três Pastorinhos (three little shepherds) saw a bright light in a place called Cova da Iria. Then, beside a small oak tree, a woman shining brighter than the sun revealed herself. Only Lucia could speak with her. She identified herself as the Lady of the Rosary and told Lucia she would appear there on the 13th for the next six months. Each month, the children returned to the spot and saw her, although she was invisible to others. Lucia requested a miracle, to persuade people to believe in their visions.

On 13 October, a crowd (generally estimated at about 70,000) gathered at Fátima witnessed a “miraculous solar phenomenon” immediately after the lady had appeared to the children. After initial opposition, the bishop of Leiria on 13 October, 1930, accepted the children's visions as the appearance of the Virgin Mary; in the same year, papal indulgences were granted to pilgrims. The content of the devotion includes frequent recitation of the rosary and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The first national pilgrimage to Fátima took place in 1927, and the basilica was begun in 1928 and consecrated in 1953. With a tower 213 feet (65 metres) high, surmounted by a large bronze crown and a crystal cross, it is flanked by