

# The Fatima Story

by Brian Judge

Fatima is a small town in Portugal. The story goes that three peasant children saw a vision of the Virgin Mary on six occasions. The year was 1917. They were two young girls and an even younger boy. They saw her and spoke to her at regular intervals as directed by the Virgin who presumably spoke in either Portuguese or their local dialect. People from the village on hearing of these miraculous events then accompanied the children to see for themselves what was happening. None actually saw the Virgin or heard anything apart from the children focussing their eyes on 'something' and speaking softly, it seemed in answer to questions. At first I imagine the children were not taken seriously or believed by the authorities in the Catholic Church. After all they were simple, uneducated village children. However in time, their sincerity began to give credence to what they were doing and speaking of.

As far as I remember, on the last occasion the Virgin conveyed to them a message to be given to the then Pope. Of the three predictions given, two were later said to have come about, one of which was the onset of World War 2. and that began twenty-two years later in 1939. The third prediction it was said was so catastrophic that it could not be made

public and was for the eyes of the Pope alone.

Much later a vast magnificent monument on the site was built to where pilgrims go to pray to this day. So what of the other two predictions?

Now in the year 1917, World War 1 was still raging. A revolution had taken place in Russia that year which toppled the monarchy and replaced it with a Communist Regime which was decidedly anti-clerical.

My personal knowledge is that as a boy, attending Mass every Sunday I remember that at the end of the service the Priest and People always prayed for the conversion of Russia. Now Russia before the revolution had always been Orthodox Christian, not Catholic and with no real connection to the Vatican.

So what kind of conversion were we praying for? I did not know then and still do not know. What I do know is that suddenly and without any explanation sometime in the 1950s, we stopped praying for the conversion of Russia. Why was this? Nothing apparently had changed. Russia was still a Communist Country and officially anti-clerical.

I suspect that one or other of the Virgin's alleged predictions, perhaps regarding the 'conversion of Russia' was found to be flawed and also the cataclysmic one just never happened. The day of Armageddon simply came and went with no terrible occurrence.

I recently found a catholic organisation on the Internet called 'The

Fatima Society' which is located in Canada and I contacted them requesting some information as to the actual content of the predictions but all this brought was a request for a donation towards some recent structural damage on their property.

Some explanation should have been given by the Pope himself as to why the weekly prayers were to be abandoned after decades of prayer by millions of Catholics around the world, and such an important matter quietly dropped. None was given by the then Pope nor any of his successors. I wonder why?