

FATIMA FOR TODAY

study guide

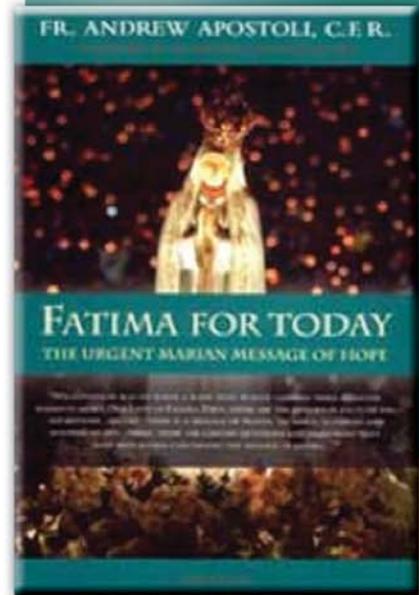
PART 1

Introduction to Fatima for Today – Part 1

Having seen *The 13th Day* and *Finding Fatima*, we are now familiar with the basic story of the events at Fatima. In *Fatima for Today*, Fr. Andrew Apostoli now invites us to go deeper into the meaning of Fatima for our present time.

This may seem an odd thing to do since the events prophesied at Fatima have been fulfilled. But, as then-Cardinal Ratzinger has pointed out in the official Vatican statement on the Third Secret of Fatima, “Even if the events to which the third part of the ‘secret’ of Fatima refers now seem part of the past, Our Lady’s call to conversion and penance, issued at the start of the twentieth century, remains timely and urgent today.”

In this study, therefore, we will undertake to mine deeper insight from the spiritual life the seers of Fatima were trained in by the angelic and Marian apparitions, as well as to delve more deeply into the way in which grace both transformed and shone out of them for the benefit of their neighbors, critics and, ultimately, the world. Since the book covers a lot of ground, we will break our study of the book into two parts. The first part of our study of *Fatima for Today* will cover pp. 1-146. The second part will focus on pp. 147-284.



[Introduction to Finding Fatima](#)

[Questions for Understanding](#)

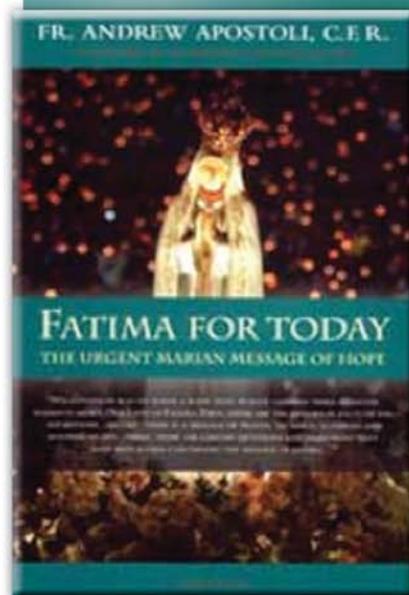
[Questions for Reflection](#)

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Questions for Understanding

1. What role did prayer play in Benedict XV's labors to bring peace during World War I? How does this relate to the apparitions of Mary and to the message she brings in response to the prayer of the Church for peace?
2. What is the Pardon Prayer and why does the angel focus on believing, adoring, hoping and loving God? What does the angel tell the children? Summarize briefly the five basic elements of that message.
3. What is the dream of St. John Bosco and what are the twin pillars of the Faith that it speaks of? How does this relate to the revelations given at Fatima? How does the Eucharistic Prayer connect the angel with the dream of St. John Bosco and anticipate the basic message of Mary at Fatima?
4. What are the three things for which the angel asks reparation? What is the point of the vision of Hell? If the point of the message is not to threaten, browbeat and/or accuse, then what is it?
5. What is penance and how do we live it? Can penance change the future?
6. What was Lucia's greatest torment? What does this suggest about the power we wield over those closest to us either to bless or afflict them? How does Lucia deal with her sufferings? How does Fr. Apostoli see the mysteries of the Rosary in relation to the apparition of Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima? What does he have to say about the need to subject our penances and mortifications to the guidance of the Church?
7. How does the message of Fatima relate to the family? How does this speak to us today?



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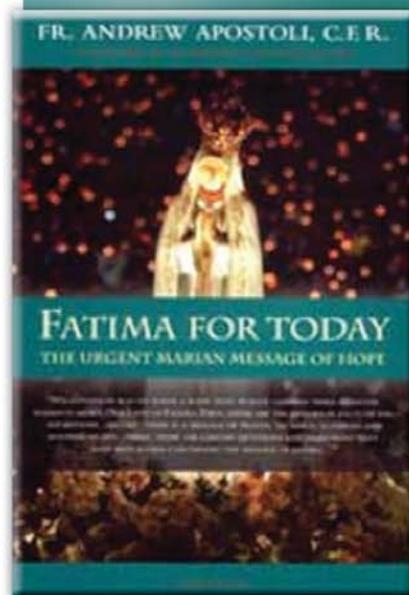
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1. Lady of Fatima reveals herself to the children as Our Lady of the Rosary. What is your experience of praying the Rosary? Does your encounter with the story of Fatima change your perspective on and experience of the Rosary? How?
2. The dream of St. John Bosco gives a fresh perspective on the Eucharist and Mary as the twin pillars of our Catholic faith. How does your experience of the Eucharist inform your relationship with Mary and how does your relationship with Mary inform your life as a disciple of Christ, fully present in the Eucharist? Do you have special ways of honoring Mary? Do you have special ways of honoring the Eucharist? What are they?
3. The children are prepared for the hardships they must endure by experiences of overwhelming love and grace from the Blessed Virgin, which immerse them in the love of God. Have you ever had an encounter with the love of God that made an indelible impression on you and changed your life? What was that like? Have you ever known somebody else who has had such an experience? What happened and what were they like as a result?
4. One of the striking things about the apparitions at Fatima is the shocking burden of prayer and sacrifice requested of the children. Can you think of a time in your life when God required something of you that seemed impossible to bear in your weakness? What happened? Have you ever known a person who was willing to take on a great burden of prayer or sacrifice?
5. One of the points Fr. Apostoli makes is that different people are called to different forms of penance and that we should seek pastoral guidance, lest we inflict unrealistic burdens on ourselves. Do you struggle with the notion of penance? Do you think yourself too harsh? Too lax? Or just right?
6. Mary insists that by our prayer and sacrifice many souls will be saved. Have you ever had an experience where you have prayed and offered sacrifices and seen a spiritual harvest of some kind? What happened?
7. Both Francisco and Jacinta have an astonishingly lively faith in Heaven and cannot wait to go there. They enter their sickness with an eagerness that is reminiscent of the early martyrs going to their doom singing. Do you find it hard to believe in Heaven on Monday morning, so to speak, when the “real world” is crowding in? Do you take time, as St. Paul says, to “set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2)? How do you do that? What is the fruit of that in your life? Have you ever lost somebody you love to death as Lucia did and been able to entrust them into the hands of God? What was that like? Was it a struggle?



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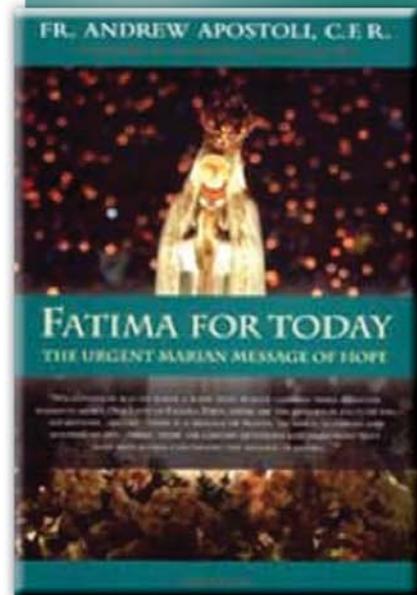
Questions for Reflection

Answers to Questions for Understanding

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1. Read the passage from Pope Benedict on p. 8.
2. Read pp. 23-25 and 27-30.
3. Read pp. 31-35.
4. Read pp. 39-42 and 60-67.
5. Read pp. 86-88.
6. Read pp. 102-103 and 111-115.
7. Read pp. 126-127.



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