

Route with Saint Francisco Marto

Pilgrimage with Saint Francisco
Marto starting from the Chapel
of Our Lady of Ortiga



ISANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA



I. Preparing and Living the Pilgrimage

1. External preparation

1. Get to know the various options of routes and adapt the route to the pilgrims' time availability and physical ability (taking into account the distance, length, orography and ground).

2. Preparations and precautions:

- prepare a small backpack with water and some food reinforcement, according to the duration and time of the pilgrimage (fruit, biscuits, cereals...);
- take a rosary;
- use sunscreen;
- wear comfortable shoes and clothes;
- avoid the hottest hours of the day;
- if necessary, ensure that a car is available at a short distance in case of an emergency; avoid accompanying the pilgrims along the route.

2. Inner willingness

What is pilgrimage?

Pilgrimage is a way of searching, of moving forward, of looking at the horizon, that line where the Earth and Heaven touch. To go on a pilgrimage is to undertake a journey. It is also a way of looking inwards.

(From the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy, No. 286.)

Pilgrimage helps us see **life as a journey** towards a goal, which is now a shrine situated in space and time, but in the end will be the shrine of eternity, life in God.

The difficulties, the overcoming of obstacles and the personal effort make us understand that this effort is necessary also in life, to overcome evil, temptation, addictions and sin.

The joy, conviviality, friendship and spontaneity that are part of the journey, just as they are part of life, are signs of the festive encounter with God in daily life.

The pilgrimage is **a journey of prayer**. In each of its stages, prayer should enliven the pilgrim and the Word of God will be his light and guide, his nourishment and support. It is challenging to walk physically, but also spiritually, living well the times of reflection, prayer and sharing.

Pilgrimage is **a proclamation of faith**: pilgrims become itinerant heralds of Christ; their passage is a witness to others.

The pilgrim journeys **with companions**, but also with the Lord himself who journeys with the pilgrim, with the community of origin, with all those who pray in the shrine, with all humankind and with all creation.

3. For the pilgrimage to Fatima: knowing the event

The events that are at the origin of what we live today in Fatima began with the apparitions of the Angel of Peace, in 1916, and continued with the apparitions of Our Lady, in 1917. These events were lived by three shepherd children: Lucia de Jesus, aged 10, and her cousins Francisco Marto, aged 9, and Jacinta Marto, aged 7, siblings. The events took place in the parish of Fatima, in the municipality of Vila Nova de Ourém, now the diocese of Leiria – Fatima.

The event begins with the apparitions of the Angel to the three seers, three times, in the year 1916 – the first one in spring, the second in summer and the third in autumn. The first and the last took place in Loca do Cabeço (or Loca do Anjo), in the

area of Mount Valinhos; the second took place near the well in the backyard of Lucia's house, known as Poço do Arneiro, in the village of Aljustrel (where they lived). Introducing the Little Shepherds to a dynamic of ever deeper prayer, the Angel was for them a pedagogue in their relationship with God and in their attention to the needs of others. In this way they were also being prepared for the surprising meeting that was to take place the following year.

On May 13, 1917, the three children were pasturing a small flock in Cova da Iria. Around midday, after praying the Rosary, as they usually did, they were amusing themselves building a small house of loose stones, on the spot where the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima stands today, when suddenly they saw an unexpected and brilliant light. Thinking it was lightning, they decided to leave, for fear that it might rain; however, just below, another flash illuminated the space and they saw on top of a small holm oak (which was located where the statue of Our Lady now stands in the Chapel of the Apparitions), «a Lady, dressed all in white, more brilliant than the sun» (*Memoirs of Lucia de Jesus*).

The Lady told the little Shepherds that much prayer was necessary and invited them to return to the Cova da Iria for another five consecutive months, also on the 13th day and at that same hour. The children did so, and on the 13th of June, July, September and October, the Lady appeared to them again and spoke to them in Cova da Iria. In August, the meeting took place on the 19th, in the village of Valinhos, about 500 metres from the village of Aljustrel, because on the 13th the children had been taken by the Council Administrator to Vila Nova de Ourém.

At the last apparition, on 13 October, with about 70,000 people present, attracted by the spread of the news, the Lady told them that she was the «Lady of the Rosary» and asked that a chapel be built there in her honour. After the apparition, those present

were able to witness the miracle promised to the three children in July and September (as proof that they were speaking the truth): the sun, resembling a silver disc, could be looked at without difficulty and rotated on itself like a wheel of fire, seeming to precipitate down upon the earth.

Later, when Lucia was already a religious of Saint Dorothy, Our Lady appeared to her again, in Spain (on 10 December 1925 and 15 February 1926, in the Convent of Pontevedra, and on the night of 13 to 14 June 1929, in the Convent of Tuy) requesting the devotion of the five First Saturdays (to pray the Rosary, meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary, confess and receive Holy Communion, in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary) and the consecration of Russia to the same Immaculate Heart. Our Lady had already announced this request on July 13, 1917.

Since 1917, thousands upon thousands of pilgrims from all over the world have never ceased to come to Cova da Iria, first on the 13th day of each month, then during the summer and winter holiday months, and now more and more at weekends and on a daily basis, with an average number of about five million per year.

The six pilgrimage routes proposed to the young pilgrims of WYD Lisbon 2023 who come to Fatima have different starting points and different thematic and spiritual proposals, but the same destination and the same goal, in the Shrine of Fatima: the encounter with Christ, through Mary, who maternally continues, in Fatima, to help us welcome the Gospel message.

If you wish to know more about the event and the message of Fatima, you can read the Memoirs of Lucia de Jesus. There you will come into contact with what happened through the words of the person who lived it.

4. To bear fruit in life: celebrate Reconciliation

If you have the opportunity and wish to do so, complete your pilgrimage by going to a priest for confession. You can do this in the Chapels of Reconciliation of the Shrine, located on the ground floor of the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity.

II.

**On Pilgrimage
with Saint
Francisco
Martó**

1. Before starting the pilgrimage

Hymn

Meet the travelling companion: Francisco Marto

Francisco was one of the three children to whom Mary appeared at Fatima. While Lucia saw Our Lady, heard her and communicated with her, and Jacinta saw and heard her, Francisco only saw Our Lady and did not hear what she said.

He was born in Aljustrel, on June 11th, 1908. He died on April 4, 1919, at his parents' home, a victim of the pneumonic flu (or Spanish flu), the pandemic that ravaged the world in those years. Very sensitive and contemplative, he directed all his prayer and sacrifices to «consoling Our Lord» (*Memoirs of Lucia de Jesus*).

Francisco had a contemplative heart and gaze, capable of discovering the beauty of the little things in nature and in life. After the Apparitions, he was enchanted by the beauty of God and of Our Lady. While Jacinta lived all these things with her gaze turned towards others, Francisco discovered God's presence in attitudes of contemplation and adoration.

Francisco had a special liking for consoling the «hidden Jesus». This is how Francisco referred to the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, as the One whose body is present "hidden" in a piece of bread. He would spend hours in a corner of the Parish Church of Fatima contemplating Jesus as a gift in the Eucharistic bread, present in the tabernacle.

Predisposing life to journey

Contemplation and adoration were, therefore, the lifestyle of little Francisco, which materialised in a deep devotion to the Eucharist.

Before beginning the journey:

1. Recall a special place that you know or frequent. Bring that place to mind and contemplate the deep meaning and beauty of that place for you.
2. Recall the day of your First Communion. It was probably a day of celebration with your family. Be aware of the importance of that day and that moment as the first in which you received in yourself such a real and close presence of Jesus. Thank the Lord for that day and for the fact that he stayed with us in this way, as the «hidden Jesus».

Whether you are going on pilgrimage as an individual, or as a group, take some time in silence to reflect.

Hymn

Praying together

Mary, Mother of Pilgrims,
Lady of the Way,
who made your life a journey with God and for God,
who walked with the People of Israel in hope of a saviour,
who climbed the mountain in haste
to give Elizabeth the joyful proclamation of the Incarnation
of the Word,
who went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem to praise and adore the Lord,
who on the way of the Cross have found and supported your
Son Jesus
who at Fatima offered the world your own immaculate heart,
refuge and secure path to God,

be our encouragement and support,
comfort and help,
protect and guide our steps,
on this path we are about to share
towards the heart of God.

Hail Mary.

Hymn

There's a rush in the air [Official theme song of WYD Lisbon 2023]

2. Along the way

In the various apparitions at Fatima, Mary insistently recommended praying the Rosary, which thus became the prayer of the Fatima pilgrims. If and when it seems appropriate, pray the Rosary while meditating on the glorious mysteries of Jesus' life:

1st Mystery | The resurrection of Jesus (Mt 28:1-10)

2nd Mystery | The ascension of Jesus into Heaven (Acts 1:6-11)

3rd Mystery | The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the
Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles
(Acts 1:12-14 and 2:1-4)

4th Mystery | The assumption of Our Lady (Lk 1:48-49)

5th Mystery | The crowning of Our Lady as Queen of Angels
and Saints (Rev 12:1-17)

Along the way, try to be attentive to some small detail, an object, a person, a gesture, an element of nature... try to recognize there a sign of God's presence.

Stop at the Parish Church of Fatima and sit before the tabernacle.

This tabernacle is the original, the one before which Francisco spent countless hours in adoration. Here, say your prayer of adoration to the «hidden Jesus»: adore, contemplate and console Jesus.

3. Meeting with Jesus, welcomed by the Mother

Go to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary in Fatima; on the left side, next to the altar, there are the remains of Saint Francisco Marto.

At the tomb of St Francisco, say your prayer, asking the Lord, through his intercession, to grant you the gift of cultivating a contemplative heart and gaze before God, the creation, life and the others.

4. To complement

You can take the opportunity, by yourself or as a group, to follow the Young Pilgrim Itinerary that the Shrine offers to all young pilgrims.

Route with Saint Francisco Martó

Pilgrimage with Saint Francisco
Martó starting from the Chapel
of Our Lady of Ortiga



SANTUÁRIO DE FÁTIMA
SHRINE OF FATIMA

