

The World Apostolate of Fatima

SCOTLAND



**“O, MY JESUS, FORGIVE US.
SAVE US FROM THE FIRE OF HELL.
LEAD ALL SOULS TO HEAVEN,
ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST IN NEED.”**

Many years ago, as I began going on pilgrimage to Fatima, I became aware that, at the rosary each evening, the Portuguese finished the prayer taught to the children by Our Lady more quickly than myself. I tried speeding up but still was always behind! I then noticed that the translation in the English prayer leaflets provided by the Shrine was as I have quoted above and not the one normally used in English today.

As I read more books about the visions, I then began to realise that the shrine translation was also the original translation in the early books in English. Whilst I found it strange and wondered where the words had come from, it was only when the First Saturday Devotion Group was reconstituted as the World Apostolate of Fatima – Scotland that it became a major concern.

We discussed this as a group and reached the conclusion that, difficult as it would be, it was better that we use the words actually given to us by our Blessed Lady rather with the additions as they did not seem to have any authority.

The question which I would like to tackle is what difference, if any, do the words make. In other words, why did Our Lady give us this specific prayer formula and not the one which has crept into English, and, I think, into other languages too.

“O MY JESUS, FORGIVE US!”

The sad, yet joyful reality, is that each and every one of us is a sinner to the roots of our being. St John, the Evangelist puts it so beautiful in his First Letter [1 John 1:5-2:2]

If we say we have no sin in us,
we are deceiving ourselves
and refusing to admit the truth;

but if we acknowledge our sins,
then God who is faithful and just
will forgive our sins and purify us
from everything that is wrong.
To say that we have never sinned
is to call God a liar
and to show that his word is not in us.”

John goes on to speak of the wound of sin within us and categorises it under three headings: the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life.

Each one of us, therefore, stands in a constant need of God's mercy. Without Divine Mercy, we remain trapped in the bondage of sin, in the power of Satan.

The mercy of God is bestowed on us through grace and that brings me to the second part of the prayer.

Is it an exaggeration to say that the place in which devout Catholic Christians are least desirous of encountering Jesus is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

The Devotion to the Five First Saturdays is the only devotion given to us personally by Our Lady in which she explicitly links the graces she wishes to dispense with the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**“LEAD ALL SOULS TO HEAVEN,
ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST IN NEED.”**

Vision of the Holy Trinity

In June 1929, in the convent of the Dorothean Sisters, Lucia, already a religious of St. Dorothy, describes the following apparition:

“... suddenly the entire convent Chapel was illuminated in a supernatural light, and a Cross of light appeared over the altar and reached the ceiling. On the superior part the face of man was seen and his body down to the waist. A dove of light was over his chest and nailed to the Cross was another man.

Suspended in air over his waist I was able to see a chalice with a large Host. Drops of Blood from the face of Jesus Crucified and His pierced side fell into the chalice, dripping from the Host.



Beneath the right arm on the Cross was Our Lady. It was Our Lady of Fatima, with her Immaculate Heart in her left hand, without thorns or roses, but with a crown of thorns and flames.

Underneath the left arm on the Cross, big letters, similar to crystal water came down to

the altar forming these words: **"Grace and Mercy."**

Lucia said: "I understood it was the mystery of the Blessed Trinity that was revealed to me, and I perceived inner light about this mystery which I'm unable to reveal."

GRACE AND MERCY

Whilst I would not dream of adding to the words given to us by Our Lady, it seems to me that the vision clearly joins grace and mercy together in an unbreakable bond. Our Lady is teaching us that, without grace, we cannot repent and, and without repentance, we cannot confess and receive God's mercy. This teaching is, of course, central to the Catholic Faith and, indeed, to most Protestant expressions of Christianity.

Since we are all sinners, we are saved by grace alone and we all stand in need of God's mercy.

Our Mother Mary is full of beauty because she is full of grace. Because she is 'full of grace' then she is, like the Father, "rich in mercy."

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

This is a sacrament of healing, a sacrament of peace. Pope Francis has, since his election, constantly exhorted the Church to embrace the Sacrament of Reconciliation. By his own very public example, at the regular Penitential Services he holds in St. Peter's, he has shown us the way.

MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL TRIUMPH

In 1917, at a time of terrible war and conflict, Mary announced to the world at Fatima a message of peace. Where she is enshrined in the human heart there is peace. She has asked us to pray the rosary for peace which is a universal aspiration.

In his message for 1st January this coming year. the **53rd World Day of Peace**, he writes:

"The journey of reconciliation calls for patience and trust. Peace will not be obtained unless it is hoped for."

His invitation is to overcome fears that are at the roots of conflict, to promote a culture of encounter, to give life to universal fraternity,

"as we tread a Christian path sustained by the sacrament of Reconciliation, which "requires us to set aside every act of violence in thought, word and deed, whether against our neighbours or against God's creation".

MERCY IS THE TRUE FACE OF LOVE

In an article from the Vatican News 14 July 2019, Pope Francis reflected on the Parable of the Good Samaritan and says the trait of a true Christian is to always be merciful and compassionate.

"Mercy towards a human life in a state of need is the true face of love. It is by loving the other that one becomes a true disciple of Jesus and that the face of the Father is revealed.

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" he quoted from Luke the evangelist, highlighting the fact that God's Commandment to love one's neighbour for Christians is a single and coherent rule of life.

Trusting in Mary's prayers, on behalf of all us here on the WAF Scotland Team, I wish each and everyone of you a very peaceful New Year and every joy and blessing in the Lord.

Fr. Joe Mc Auley, Spiritual Director



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