

My brothers and sisters,

Traditionally, the month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This special month offers us an opportunity to thank God for the gift of Our Lady in our lives and in the life of the Church.

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, the Virgin Mary stands as a model for us as she leads us to Hope, itself, her Son, Jesus.

From the Annunciation to the foot of the Cross, Our Lady has faithfully responded to her call as the Mother of the Messiah, the Christ, and as Mother of the Church. She gives us hope in the midst of the shadow of the Cross of Good Friday and as we stand at the entrance of the empty tomb - the triumph - Resurrection!

Within the month of Mary, the Church honors Our Lady under the special title of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima. Within her six apparitions, at the Cova da Iría to St. Jacinta, St. Francisco and their cousin Lúcia, they were given the task to share the call to repent, pray (specifically, the Rosary) and offer penance (sacrifices) for the sake of the conversion of sinners and for peace in this world.

The messages of Our Lady to the Shepherd Children became fondly known as *the School of Mary*. The Message of Fátima is all-encompassing! It is a message that focuses upon the fundamental teachings of the Church which foster *evangelization and catechesis*. The Message can serve as a remedy, a means of hope, to overcome the spiritual ills - the *diabolical disorientation* - of our day and age.

I challenge you, during this month of May, to explore and reflect on the Message from Heaven and to become a student, a disciple, of the *School of Mary* in this Jubilee Year of Hope.

My friends, in order to acknowledge Our Lady during this month of May, we are thankful and blessed to receive into our Cathedral of the Annunciation, the generous gift of the image of Our Lady of Fátima. This beautiful image will serve as a sign of hope for us. It will encourage devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima. As we seek her intercession, let us entrust all our needs to her maternal and Immaculate Heart.

As we turn to the Word of God, the Scriptures reassure us to persevere, as did the Apostles, when they were sent on mission to proclaim, share and teach the Good News of Jesus. “We must obey God rather than men...” were the words we heard in the Acts of the Apostles, today.

In the Book of Revelation, John proclaims: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor, and glory and blessing.” And “To the one

who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever.” This is the end all message of Our Lady to humanity that she conveyed at Fátima, Portugal in 1917.

In this Sunday’s Gospel of John, Jesus directs the Apostles to “cast the net” for a catch. By obediently following his direction, the catch of fish is super-abundant! In a similar way, Our Lady and Mother of the Church, directs us to “cast the net” of the Rosary for a catch. If we cast it - by obediently praying the Rosary - daily - the catch will be abundant!

All of this leads to the question that Jesus asks Peter in today’s Gospel: “Do you love me?” My friends, it is Jesus who asks us the same question through the appeal of Our Lady’s message at Fátima: “Do you love me?” And if our answer is: “Yes Lord, you know that I love you;” Jesus will send us on mission - as Pilgrims of Hope. Then, as he gazes upon us, and looks into our hearts, he will say to each of us: “Follow me!”

St. Jacinta Marto, pray for us.

St. Francisco Marto, pray for us.

Sr. Lúcia dos Santos, pray for us.

Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima, pray for us!