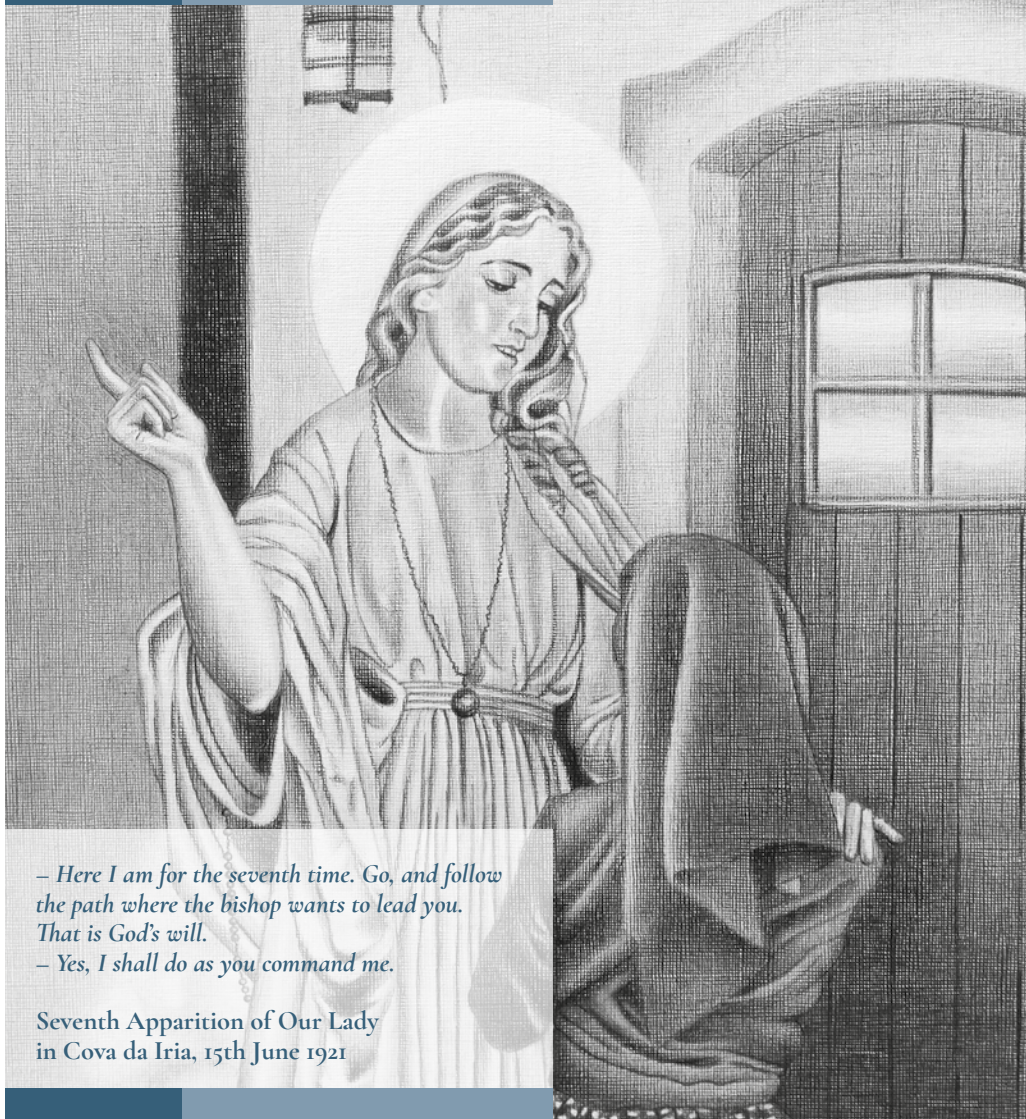


## BULLETIN OF THE SERVANT OF GOD MARIA DE LÚCIA OF JESUS AND THE IMMACULATE HEART

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Illustration: Francisco Correia de Almeida



*– Here I am for the seventh time. Go, and follow  
the path where the bishop wants to lead you.  
That is God's will.*

*– Yes, I shall do as you command me.*

Seventh Apparition of Our Lady  
in Cova da Iria, 15th June 1921

# HERE I AM FOR THE SEVENTH TIME

*«It was the 15th of June 1921. You have seen my struggle, the hesitation, and the regret of the 'yes' I had given before, the uncertainty of what I was going to find, the resolution to turn back. The knowledge of what I was leaving, and the nostalgia tearing at my heart!*

*That farewell to everything, in the awakening of youth where a beautiful future was smiling at me [...]. Where the Bishop wants to take me, I do not know how it will be, and on the condition that I never go home again, so I will never see my family again, nor these blessed places! [...]*

*Without even being able to write directly to my mother! That's impossible, I shall not go!*

With this multitude of thoughts, running over one another, it was on that day's afternoon that she went to visit all the places linked with the apparitions and with a peculiar connection to her heart. When she arrived at Cova da Iria, she knelt, next to the barriers where the holm oak had been, where Our Lady had appeared, and she let the tears run, irrepressibly, *while she asked Our Lady to forgive her for not being able to offer such sacrifice, which seemed beyond my strength. [...]*

At this moment, Lúcia had no one to turn to for advice, and Heaven came to help her. The Virgin Mother, who had promised never to abandon her, at his moment of such anguish, came to bring peace to her soul and thus fulfilling the promise made on May 13, in 1917, that She would return for the seventh time. [...]

Thus solicitous, once more You descended to Earth, and it was then when I felt Your friendly and motherly hand, touching my shoulder; I looked up and saw You, it was You, the Blessed Mother, giving me Your hand and showing me the way; Your lips opened, and the sweet timbre of Your voice restored the light and the peace within my soul: *Here I am for the seventh time. Go, and follow the path where the bishop wants to lead you. That is God's will!*

*Then, I said my 'yes' once more, but now much more consciously than I did on the 13th of May 1917. [...]*

*I remembered my dear Our Lady of Mount Carmel and, at that very moment, I felt the call to the religious life and the attraction of the Cloister of Carmel. I took as my protector my dear Sister Therese of the Child Jesus.*

*A few days later, following the bishop's advice, I took as my rule the Obedience and as my motto the words of Our Lady as the Gospel narrates it: Do whatever He tells you. »*



# ONE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE THE SEVENTH APPARITION OF OUR LADY

On the next 15th June, we will be celebrating one hundred years since the seventh apparition of Our Lady at Cova da Iria. This anniversary is a special occasion for us to meditate on the vocational dimension of Sister Lucia's life. Too often, we run the risk of looking at these memorable personalities of faith as if vocation had been something clear and immediate from the very first moment;

*Lucia in Aljustrel shortly before leaving Fatima.*



as if there had been no struggles, no difficulties, no doubts. But all these episodes are part and parcel of all real narratives of holiness (by the way, it is surprising to see how in the Old Testament, Jacob struggles with the angel, a paradigmatic episode of any vocational process: cf. Gn 32: 25-32). And this is what happened in the life of Sister Lucia as well.

We remember the year of 1921, when Lucia was preparing herself to leave the village where she was born, grew up, and was educated. She knew those little streets, those houses, those faces. In that village there was not only her home; it was her home. Lucia's departure was prepared, firstly from Fátima to Leiria, and then to Porto. When the day of departure arrived, and a huge inner struggle began, as she narrates in her own diary: «It was the 15th of June 1921. You have seen my struggle, the hesitation, and the regret of the 'yes' I had given before, the uncertainty of what I was going to find, the resolution to turn back» (in *Um caminho sob o olhar de Maria*, p. 121). These notes are particularly important, because of what we have already said above: the dedication of someone's life to God, the answer to the call received as well as the finding of God's will are things always involved in an inner struggle. We must live in a permanent state of conversion: we can never think that everything has been done, that everything has been decided. We must live permanently in a vocational quest, even when the definitive answer has already been given.





*D. José Correia da Silva,  
1st Bishop of the Restored Diocese of Leiria  
(1920-1957).*

It is not because someone has already embraced the priesthood, the religious life, or marriage, that the vocational question ceases to impose itself. On the contrary: the one who is willing to take life seriously under God's will, knows that it is necessary not to stop asking: «What does God want from me?», «How would Jesus act in each situation?», «What can I do to bring more souls to God?». The vocational search is not something exclusive to young people who seek to find God's will, but it must be an identity element of any Christian soul who tries to find God's will all the time.

Nonetheless, let us return to the 15th of June, in 1921. Amid her inner struggle, Lucia asked for forgiveness for hesitating, while remembering the apparition of May 13, 1917, as well as the answer she had given to Our Lady when she addressed the little shepherds in the following terms: «Do you want to offer yourselves to God?». The whole of Lucia's life matched coherently with this first 'yes' that she gave to God's will through the Virgin Mary. On that very 13th of May, Our Lady had promised that, after her visit for three consecutive months, she would return: «Then I will come back here for the seventh time» (*Quarta memória*, p. 173). In June 1921, the Virgin Mary accomplished her promise, when in the turmoil of Lucia's anguish, she appeared to give her strength, to encourage and to show her the path she should follow. Regarding this apparition, I would like to stress three notes which we could summarise in three words: Mother, Fortitude, Church.

First, the maternal meaning of this apparition of Our Lady. Mary always appears as Mother; it is her core mission, but also her most important title. She appears like a Mother who strengthens, encourages, and indicates the path to follow, but she never appears to pamper, not even to let her fall into commiseration. Our Lady is not a Mother of that sort of mother. She is the Mother who offers life, and therefore she knows and helps us to discover that the only way to live our life to its fulness is when we correspond to God's will.

Secondly, fortitude. This is one of the virtues that we often forget, since we often look at what is hard and difficult for us with mistrust. We live in the age of disposable, of the instantaneous, of guarantees without any kind of effort. Nevertheless, Our Lady appears to Lucia to hold her hand, to strengthen her, and to encourage her to do God's will. Fortitude is a human virtue, but it is also a gift of the Holy Spirit, insofar as it points towards the decision according to God's will, no matter what it may cost! Regarding Our Lady, that meant living and accepting the sword of sorrow that would come to pierce her soul; while regarding Lucia's life, it meant the effort to overcome herself, leaving her homeland and trusting completely in the advice given to her by the bishop. And what about us? How could we live this fortitude in obedience to God's will?

Thirdly, the ecclesial dimension of this apparition. Our Lady said to Lucia: «Go and follow the path where the bishop wants to lead you. That is God's will». Vocation is always a mission for the Church, whatever vocation it may be. Of course, if we think that someone is called to the priesthood or the religious life, that means that it is for the service of the Church. But marriage also means a service to the Christian community: first, because it is a sign of Christ's union with His Church; then, because it rejoices the Church with new children. In this indication given by the Virgin Mary, we thus find this fundamental feature of vocation: it is always fulfilled in the Church and the service and communion of the Church. In conclusion, we might say that there is no vocation without this ecclesial dimension.

The seventh apparition of Our Lady, beyond offering us the fundamental traits that Heaven wants to pass on to Christians, we find, above all, Lucia's spiritual journey. We can see that it is truly a journey, that is an itinerary of the unveiling of God's will, to grow in love, in service and in the knowledge of God, with and likewise Our Lady. With Lucia, we can learn, every one of us, to have the firm resolution to seek God's will in everything, to feel Our Lady's call to follow that will with all our heart, and to know that we are never alone: «My Immaculate Heart shall be your refuge and the pathway that will lead to God».

Fr. Ricardo Ferreira  
Parish Priest of Óbidos



*D. José Correia da Silva with Sister Lúcia,  
as a religious dorothea.*

# GRACES



I am a great devotee of Sister Lucia and I wish to communicate a grace received: after a cystoscopy, I was diagnosed with a malignant tumour in my bladder. I then turned to prayer and asked God, through the intercession of Sister Lucia, to help me. I underwent a surgery and at the same time a pathological examination, the result of which was as follows: “No signs of malignancy”. I have not the slightest doubt that I have received this grace through the intercession of Sister Lucia, whom I have addressed with faith and whom I so much wish to see on the altars next to St. John Paul II, as they were here on this “holy mountain”. I continue to pray that, if it is for the greater glory of God, such a happy and longed-for moment may be achieved as soon as possible.

*Maria de Lurdes, Portugal*

I am here to inform you that I have received, through the intercession of Sister Lucia, together with God, that a serious problem I had was solved, and that I was able to receive an account that was lost. After finishing the novena, I began to receive it little by little. That is why I have come to fulfil my promise, communicating the grace obtained by Jesus, with the help of Sister Lucia, who I believe is in Heaven, together with God, St. Jacinta, and St. Francisco Marto, with all the multitude of Angels and Saints, and who is praying for us. I send an offer as a symbol of gratitude, to help the Cause of Her Beatification.

*Flávia Alves, Brasil*

I would like to thank Sister Lucia of Jesus for the grace she has given me. My son had a medical diagnosis that indicated the possibility of lymphoma, and so I asked Sister Lucia very much that the medical tests, which the doctor had prescribed to confirm the diagnosis, would have a negative result. This is what happened: the tests did not confirm the lymphoma, and everything was normal. I would like to thank her for her intercession.

*Maria Teresa Silva, Portugal*

I am 12 years old, and my grandfather is ill with chronic hepatitis B, which is gradually taking away his strength and health. When I was 7 years old, after several treatments for malignant tumours in his liver, he suddenly worsened and metastases were detected in his lungs and neck, to the point that the doctors predicted that he would only have two months to live, at the most. At that time, when I heard what was happening and my parents prepared me for the possibility that my grandfather might leave for Jesus’ side, I asked Sister Lucia in prayer that my grandfather would not die. Before the end of the year, we received the news that all the metastases had disappeared, and my grandfather lived all these years with quality of life. Now he was hospitalised again because he had ruptured some varicose veins. I prayed to Sister Lucia again, and he is still alive, even though he is still bedridden. I am very grateful for the time I was able to spend with him.

*Francisco Carmo Pedro, Portugal*





I come, with great joy, to communicate a grace received through the intercession of Sister Lucia. I have a seven-year-old grandson! Some time ago, he was found to have a spinal deformity, which would force him to wear various orthopaedic accessories, including special shoes. I started praying to Sister Lucia, and yesterday, almost seven months after his diagnosis, I learned that the doctors said he would need nothing more than physical exercise and correct posture. I believe it was a grace from Sister Lucia of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart, which I will be grateful for as much as I can, and I pray that she will be beatified when God wills! Please thank the Blessed Trinity for this grace received through the intercession of Sister Lucia!

**Maria Helena Matos, Portugal**

My daughter, after two consecutive risky pregnancies, sank into such a deep depression that not even the doctors could help her. Seeing her in that state, all I could think of was that my grandchildren could not be brought up by their mother. One day, looking at a prayer card of Sister Lucia, I asked her, with great faith, for my daughter. It was then that she started to get better and now, thanks to Sister Lucia's help, my daughter can work and is fully recovered. We thank God for all that he has done for her and ask him to continue praying for us.

**Maria da Conceição Pinto, Portugal**

I come to communicate the grace I have received, after having prayed a novena of prayer to God through the intercession of Sister Lucia, which had to do with the success of one of my grandsons in a university exam, who passed the course.

**Maria de Lourdes Martins, Portugal**

I suffered a thrombosis which caused me several sequelae, in particular twisting my mouth to the left. I appealed to Sister Lucia to ask Our Lady of Fatima for the grace of my cure. Shortly afterwards, I recovered and was able to lead a normal life for a person of my age. I promised to make known this grace granted through the intercession of Sister Lucia, and I am doing so.

**Albertina Barrigão, Portugal**

I have come to thank Sister Lucia for the grace she has given me. My husband used to drink, and the more I asked him not to drink, the more he drank. One day, a lady offered me the Bulletin and I began to pray the novena. Soon after, my husband started to cut down on alcohol. He is still not totally free, but with the faith I have in Our Lady, and through the intercession of the Servant of God Sister Lucia, I have hope that he will be able to stop. I continue to pray the prayer for her beatification every day.

**Maria Baião, Portugal**

# THE ZERO SUITCASE

*Our mother superior told me to put the key [...] in the suitcase that keeps the documents so that they could not be found or seen by anyone.*

*O Meu Caminho, Vol. II (1958-1970), p. 197, mss.  
(unpublished)*

During the years that Sister Lucia lived in the Carmel of Coimbra, she was allowed the use of some objects – an exception to the *Rule*, justified by her connection with the “events of Fatima”. All these objects are being carefully separated and classified: those of her use and those of her *offerings*. Many of them acquired special importance in the context of the construction of the Memorial and the opening of the Process of Beatification and Canonisation, being recognised as canonical relics.

Among the most varied objects is suitcase zero. It is a camphor wood suitcase with a handle, two locks, and metal support on both sides, measuring 65 cm (length) x 30 cm (width) x 9 cm (height). The interior is lined with white padded satin, with a white textile cord at the edges and ends. The historical interest of this suitcase lies in the fact that it is Sister Lucia’s first “archive”, as it contains

the most important correspondence received by the Popes, the Vatican Secretary of State, the Apostolic Nunciature, Cardinals, Bishops and Fathers Generals of the Order. Among the matters found in the missives are the following: apostolic blessings, licences, norms regarding visitations, interrogations, and photos.

The zero suitcase was in the custody of Sister Lucia until the time of her death, and its contents were duly catalogued, the documentary sequence organised and selected by the Servant of God is kept in the newly created Sister Lucia Archive.

This suitcase is the origin of the archive which, for years, has preserved thousands of letters addressed to the Sister Mary Lucia of Jesus and of the Immaculate Heart – letters which have transfigured the desk of her cell into an altar! From there, her dedication out of love and her ‘yes’ given to sacrifice in favour of humanity, one can see the expression of her “priesthood” at the service of the Message transmitted to her by Our Lady.

José João Loureiro  
CEHP-COD





## BIOGRAPHY

Lúcia Rosa dos Santos was born in Aljustrel, Parish of Fátima, on the 28th of March 1907. In the company of her two cousins, the Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto, she was visited three times by an Angel (1916) and six by Our Lady (1917), who asked them to pray and do penance for the reparation and conversion of sinners. Her peculiar vocation consisted in spreading the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the soul of the Message of Fátima.

She entered the Dorotheans, in Spain, where she had the experience of the apparitions in Tuy and Pontevedra: the apparitions of the Holy Trinity, Our Lady, and the Infant Jesus.

Yearning for a life of deeper retreat to better respond to the Message entrusted to her by the Lady, she entered the Carmel of Coimbra, in 1948, wherein she devoted herself more intensely to prayer and sacrifice. Our Lady came for her on the 13th of February 2005, and her body rests in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary, in Fátima since the 19th of February 2006.

### **This Bulletin is free of charge.**

To whom it might be interested in helping the expenses of the Cause for the Beatification of the Servant of God Sister Lúcia, we welcome the donations to the following address:

*Causa de Canonização Irmã Lúcia de Jesus  
Carmelo de Santa Teresa,  
Rua de Santa Teresa, n.º 16  
3000-359 Coimbra - Portugal*

### **Attention! New account details**

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### **We give thanks for all the donations received.**

In the Carmel of Coimbra, on the first Saturdays of each month as well as in every 13th, the Eucharist is offered for the intentions of those who trust themselves to the intercession of Sister Lúcia.

## PRAYER FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF SISTER LÚCIA

*Oh, Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore thee profoundly and give you thanks for the apparitions of the Most Holy Virgin in Fátima, who revealed to the world the riches of her Immaculate Heart.*

*By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I pray Thee, if it should be for your greater glory and the good of our souls, to glorify Sister Lúcia, the shepherd of Fátima, before the Holy Church, by granting us the grace which we ask through her intercession.*

*Amen. Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory.*

With ecclesiastical approval.  
We kindly ask you to communicate all the received graces to the Carmel of Coimbra.

CAUSE FOR THE BEATIFICATION  
OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

# LÚCIA

MARIA LÚCIA OF JESUS  
AND THE IMMACULATE HEART

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da Irmã Lúcia  
Carmelo de Santa Teresa  
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*«Nostalgia pressed like a dagger, digging into my heart, but I promised, and I need to be faithful! I renew my yes, and I call to my aid my dear Guardian Angel and the Angel of Portugal, forerunner of the Virgin Mother. [...]*

*[At the beginning of this day, June 16, 1921, at about two o'clock in the morning, while the whole town was asleep, I got up to go with my dear mother, who had no idea of the struggle that was piercing my heart, like another Abraham climbing the mountain to offer his son Isaac to God, and with the company of a poor labourer, we set out, passing through the Cova da Iria, to say my farewell Rosary.*

*When this was over, we set off again, and I was a little late, for I turned to say my last farewell, just at the place where the Basilica stands today, and it was then that I saw a figure of light. It seemed to me that it was the dear Mother of Heaven, giving me the courage and her Maternal Blessing, but I don't know, perhaps it was only a reflection left in my spirit by what had happened the day before, or the light of the moon among the trees. [...]*

*- At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I was at Leiria station, giving my mother a farewell hug, who, drenched in tears and as always tortured by doubt, said goodbye to me, saying:*

*- Go, daughter, for if it is true that you have seen Our Lady, She will keep you, but if you have lied, you will be wretched. And so, my dear mother's prophecy was fulfilled. Our Lady has been protecting me, guarding me, helping, and defending me, guiding my steps.*

Carmelo de Coimbra – *Um Caminho sob o Olhar de Maria*, 2.ª ed, 2016, pp. 123 e 124.