

FATIMA AT 100 FATIMA TODAY



TEN STEPS
TO WORLD PEACE

MARY K. DOYLE

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Why Fatima Matters Today

Throughout history, some level of unrest has existed. Since the creation of humanity and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, we've argued our differences, often to extreme outcomes.

No one can deny that any pockets of peace our planet is currently experiencing are isolated and fragile. The extent of violence seen globally is shameful and against God's will. Economic disparity, religious conflicts, racial and gender discrimination, sexual identity issues, substance abuse, greed, jealousy, and vengefulness are global flash points. At any moment, these issues can, and do, spark firestorms harming and claiming innocent lives.

The Virgin Mary says it doesn't have to be this way. World peace is possible, and Mary explained how it could be achieved a century ago. She clearly spelled out a plan in 1917 in Fatima, Portugal, through a series of apparitions to three young shepherd children: ten-year-old Lucia dos Santos, nine-year-old Francisco Marto, and seven-year-old Jacinta Marto.

Obviously, we haven't fully heeded Mary's guidance, because we have yet to attain lasting peace. If we believe world peace to be an important goal, action must be taken now, and it must be taken by all of us. No act of compassion, kind word, or prayer is too small. Every step we take brings us closer to peace in our home, family, neighborhood, country, and ultimately the entire world.

Before Mary appeared to the children, an angel, who said he was the Angel of Peace, came to them. He told them to, "Pray! Pray very much!" That first message, along with an urgency to change our ways, is the message of Fatima in a nutshell. The angel prepared the little shepherds by encouraging prayer and sacrifice. He told them to offer everything they did to God in reparation for the sins of the world and the conversions of sinners. He taught them specific prayers. He also said they should accept any suffering the Lord sent them.

Mary, who said she was Our Lady of the Rosary and that she was from heaven, reiterated that message in monthly apparitions that

occurred from May 13 to October 13, 1917. She said that the current war—World War I—was going to end, but a worse one would break out if her guidance wasn't heeded, and of course it did, not merely once but many times.

Mary gave specific instructions to use through the children, but overall her point was to pray, and to pray unceasingly. In particular, she told them to pray the rosary every day. She also asked the children to bear all the sufferings that God sent them as an act of reparation for the sins of others and their conversion. Other instructions were to establish a worldwide devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, establish the devotion of the First Saturdays, and consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The references to Mary's Immaculate Heart are significant in that we are to imitate her open and pure spirit.

Portugal heeded Mary's warning, and the Catholics of the country followed her instructions to the best of their ability. Because of their efforts, many feel, Portugal was one of the few European countries that was not invaded in World War I and left mostly untouched by that horrific war.

Our Lady of Fatima's 100-year-old message continues to be important because it seems we've run out of other ways to attain worldwide peace. Mary said her spiritual approach is the one that will ultimately work. The steps in her plan are biblically based and can help move the entire human race closer to God, because it is difficult to be hurtful to anyone when we sincerely are connecting with the Lord.

This little booklet outlines a Ten-Step Peace Plan that Our Lady of Fatima encouraged us to follow. These steps include: Honor the Lord, Ask for Forgiveness, Change Our Ways, Embrace Suffering, Just Say, "Yes!" Get the Word Out, Don't Be Afraid, Pray Continuously, Meditate on the Rosary, and Seek God's Comfort. Each of the steps in this booklet offers a scripture verse and reflection to ponder and suggestions on how to apply that step in our daily life.

This booklet encourages us to build on our relationship with the Lord. The focus is on us doing everything we can to treat everyone and everything around us with love and respect. We are to be light to the world. We aren't to be concerned about what others are doing

wrong but about how we are doing on our own path to Christ.

The scripture verses used here are from the contemporary version of the Bible known as *The Message: Catholic/Ecumenical Edition*. This new translation of the Scriptures into contemporary American English is meant to make the biblical basis for Mary's plan for today very clear. As it is written in 1 Corinthians 14:4-5 in *The Message*, "The one who prays using a private 'prayer language' certainly gets a lot out of it, but proclaiming God's truth to the church in its common language brings the whole church into growth and strength. I want all of you to develop intimacies with God in prayer, but please don't stop with that. Go on and proclaim his clear truth to others. It's more important that everyone have access to the knowledge and love of God in language everyone understands than that you go off and cultivate God's presence in a mysterious prayer language—unless, of course, there is someone who can interpret what you are saying for the benefit of all."

Please read this booklet, either alone or with others, during the year-long celebration of Mary's appearances at Fatima and strive to make them a permanent part of your daily prayer life. Choose a different step to follow each day or for a designated period of time until you are ready to proceed to another one. Some of these steps are more challenging than others, but each promotes peace within and around us. If you believe in the urgent need to end the volatile state of affairs on our planet, please do your very best to follow as much of this plan as you possibly can for the rest of your life.

Your effort is vital, because *you* are the answer to world peace.

TEN STEPS
TO WORLD PEACE

Step One. Honor the Lord.

"It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself — Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration."

John 4:23-24

REFLECTION

God is the only one we worship. We are to love the Lord our God with our heart, mind, and soul.

We honor and praise God by being our best self and living in God-like ways. As creations in God's image, we show respect for our blessings by always striving to respond to one another in the way we hope God will respond to us.

We also honor the Lord through personal prayer. This doesn't have to be done in any particular way. God wants us as we are. We only need to pray from the heart and try to reach deep within, naked and stripped down to the essence of our being. In this way we praise the Lord from our very soul. Our prayer is raw, honest, and sincere.

Mary encourages and guides us in praying like this. The objective of her apparitions in Fatima, as all of her apparitions, is to bring us closer to God. She wants us to honor the Lord in all that we do. Jesus gave us his loving mother from the cross, so that she can coax, prompt, guide, and walk with us to the Father.

The Angel of Peace prepared the way for Mary's apparitions in Fatima by teaching the shepherd children a quick, little prayer to honor God. We also can pray these words, "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love you! I ask pardon of you for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love you."

The prayer is short and straightforward. Adoring God starts with words like this. Our prayer doesn't have to be complicated or sophisticated. Speaking simply from within is how we open ourselves so that God's light may shine through us and reflect that light on others. It's how we allow God's peace to fill our souls and those we touch.

ACTION

- Meditate on the scripture passage above that honors God.
- Turn your complaints into praise. Find a blessing in every situation and give thanks to God for it.
- Speak honestly to God in your own words.

My Actions for World Peace



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Step 2. Ask for forgiveness.

"There's nothing done or said that can't be forgiven. But if you deliberately persist in your slanders against God's Spirit, you are repudiating the very One who forgives. If you reject the Son of Man out of some misunderstanding, the Holy Spirit can forgive you, but when you reject the Holy Spirit, you're sawing off the branch on which you're sitting, severing by your own perversity all connection with the One who forgives."

Matthew 12:31-32

REFLECTION

Sin is not something we like to talk about, or even admit to, but the truth is that we all sin—and we sin often. We are surrounded by temptations, and the human spirit is weak. We repeatedly hurt ourselves, one another, and God's creations.

The good part is that God forgives us. Amazingly, there isn't anything we do or say that God won't pardon with the exception of speaking against the Holy Spirit (see Luke 12:10), which repudiates the very God who forgives. Our heavenly Father is incredibly merciful. All we have to do is acknowledge, apologize, and ask for forgiveness.

On October 13, 1917, Lucia asked Mary for answers to prayers from some of her neighbors. Mary reminded her of their need to show regret. She said that the petitioners must first ask forgiveness for their sins.

We expect that when we are generous, people will respond with gratitude and kindness. If they repeatedly hurt us or show little-to-no appreciation, don't we eventually stop giving and doing for them? And will people continue to give to us if we frequently hurt them?

Before we can ask God for forgiveness, we have to acknowledge what we've done wrong. We need to analyze our thoughts, words, and

actions to become aware of how we have failed. Such introspection takes courage and honesty.

Scripture says, “If we claim that we’re free of sin, we’re only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—he won’t let us down; he’ll be true to himself. He’ll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we’ve never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God (see 1 John 1:8-10).

Honestly reflecting on our failings promotes peace, because our attention is shifted to how we caused pain to others rather than the other way around. We have to admit what we did and how we could have done better. Our concerns are focused on improving what we do and less on what others are doing.

ACTION

- Before bed, carefully reflect on what you did that day. Recognize where you could have done better and try harder tomorrow.
- Ask God for forgiveness for any of your thoughts, words, or actions that were mean-spirited.
- Apologize to someone you hurt and do your best to make restitution. If the person is no longer alive or available or if your apology might cause the person more pain, apologize in your heart and then do something kind for someone else.

My Actions for World Peace



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Step 3. Change our ways.

Peter said, "Now it's time to change your ways! Turn to face God so he can wipe away your sins, pour out showers of blessing to refresh you, and send you the Messiah he prepared for you, namely, Jesus. For the time being he must remain out of sight in heaven until everything is restored to order again just the way God, through the preaching of his holy prophets of old, said it would be. Moses, for instance, said, 'Your God will raise up for you a prophet just like me from your family. Listen to every word he speaks to you. Every last living soul who refuses to listen to that prophet will be wiped out from the people.'"

Acts 3:19-23

REFLECTION

One of the last things Mary said to Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta was not to offend the Lord our God anymore, because he is already so much offended. For months Mary, as did the Angel of Peace, spoke to them about all of us changing our ways and praying for the conversion of sinners. When Lucia presented the many prayer requests given to her, Mary said that some prayers would be answered but others not until they amended their lives.

Mary encouraged turning away from anything that distracts us from the Lord. She also wished us to stop the endless cycle of repeating the same offenses. Her objective was for us to change our behavior.

By praying for the conversion of sinners, we lift every one of us up. We pray for everyone's strength to turn away from sin. The general definition of conversion is the act of converting one thing into something else. In a spiritual sense, it refers to a moral change. We pray for every one of us to reform our ways and avoid hurting each other and, ultimately, the Lord.

Our reference points for sin can be found throughout the Bible, especially in the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20) and Jesus' teachings. Jesus said that sin comes from the heart. "It's from the heart that we vomit up evil arguments, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, lies, and cussing. That's what pollutes" (see Matthew 16-20).

In the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5) Christ raised a new awareness about sin in regard to hypocrisy, scandal, infidelity, and sins against the Holy Spirit. He said, "You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill" (Matthew 5:21-22).

Mary showed Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta a vision of her heart encircled and pierced with thorns. It was a symbol of the pain that is inflicted upon her when we hurt God. She also shared three "Secrets": a vision of hell; the prediction of World War I ending but another greater war (World War II) to follow; and what is thought to be chaos in the Church and possibly the assassination attempt of Pope John Paul II.

All three of these so-called secrets reflect the dire need for reform. Violence and suffering results from ongoing sin. If we want our painful lives to change, we must change. As Pope Benedict XVI (then known as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger) wrote in the document, "The Message of Fatima," the visions are meant to mobilize the forces of change in the right direction, speak of dangers and how we might be saved from them, and summon us to penance and conversion.

Our own conversion and our prayer for others to change their ways are paths to peace because they not only transform us but the world for generations to come. The Lord would fill our lives and there would be no room for anything else.

ACTION

- Find one small trait or habit that you want to change, and work on it until it no longer is a part of you.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your conversion.
- Pray for the conversion of all sinners, including yourself.

My Actions for World Peace



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Fatima Time Line

- 1907 + March 28.....Birth of Lucia de Jesus
in Aljustrel, Portugal
- 1908 + June 11Birth of Francisco Marto
in Aljustrel, Portugal
- 1910 + March 11.....Birth of Jacinta Marto
in Aljustrel, Portugal
- 1915 +Lucia and three companions spot a
“cloud in human form.”
- 1916 +The Angel of Peace appears three
times to the shepherd children, Lucia,
Francisco, and Jacinta.
- 1917 + May 13Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
shepherd children for the first time.
- June 13Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
children for the second time.
- July 13Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
children for the third time.
- August 13The children are detained in the Ourem
courthouse
- August 19Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
children for the fourth time.
- September 13Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
children for the fifth time.
- October 13.....Our Lady of the Rosary appears to the
children for the sixth time.
- 1919 + April 4Death of Francisco in Aljustrel, Portugal
- 1920 + February 20Death of Jacinta in Lisbon, Portugal
- 1921 + June 16Our Lady of the Rosary appears to
Lucia in Cova da Iria.
- 1922 + March 6.....Chapel of Apparitions is destroyed by
dynamite.

- 1925 + October 12.....Our Lady and the Child Jesus appear to
Lucia in Pontevedra
- 1926 + February 10Lucia begins the novitiate at Tuy.
- 1927 + December 17Lucia hears the voice of Jesus.
- 1929 + June 13Lucia sees the vision of the Holy Trinity.
- 1942 + October 13.....Women of Portugal offer a crown to
Mary in thanksgiving for Portugal not
being involved in World War II.
- 1946 + May 13Papal Legate crowns the statue of Our
Lady of Fatima as Queen of Peace and
of the World.
- May 17Lucia is sent to the Dorothea
community of Gaia.
- 1948 + March 25.....Lucia enters the Carmel of Saint Teresa
in Coimbra, Portugal.
- 1951 + April 30.....The remains of Jacinta are transferred to
the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary,
Fatima, Portugal.
- 1952 + February 17The remains of Francisco are transferred
to the Basilica of Our Lady of the
Rosary, Fatima, Portugal.
- 1982 + March 26.....Pope John Paul II offers the bullet from
the attempt on his life to the Sanctuary
of Fatima.
- 2000 + May 13Pope John Paul II beatifies Francisco
and Jacinta.
- 2002 +Feast of Our Lady of Fatima is added to
the Church's worldwide calendar.
- 2005 + February 13Death of Lucia in Carmel in Coimbra
- 2006 + February 19The remains of Lucia are transferred to
the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary,
Fatima, Portugal.

Consecrations

The Portuguese Episcopate consecrated Portugal to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on May 13, 1931; May 13, 1939; May 13, 1956; May 13, 1957; May 13, 1975; May 13, 1981; May 13, 1983; and May 13, 1992.

In December of 1940, Sister Lucia wrote a letter to Pope Pius XII saying that Our Lord requested the Pope to consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with a special mention for Russia. All bishops of the world were to join the pope in the consecration.

Pope Pius XII performed the first consecration of Russia on the radio on October 31, 1942, consecrating the world as a whole with vague reference to Russia. The pope renewed the consecration of the world on December 8, 1942, and consecrated the people of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on July 7, 1952.

Pope Paul VI renewed the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on November 21, 1964.

Pope John Paul II renewed the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on June 7, 1981, and December 8, 1981. On May 12-13, 1982, while on a pilgrimage to Fatima in thanksgiving for his survival after the assassination attempt on his life, Pope John Paul II consecrated the Church, all people and nations, with a veiled mention of Russia, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He renewed the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on October 16, 1983. Once again, on March 25, 1984, in Saint Peter's Square in Rome, before the statue of Our Lady from the Apparition Chapel, Pope John Paul II consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in union with all the bishops of the world. On October 8, 2000, he consecrated the new Millennium to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Saint Peter's Square in front of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima from the Apparition Chapel.

On August 29, 1989, Lucia affirmed in writing that the consecration "has been accomplished." The Berlin Wall came down in November of 1989, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics dissolved on December 25, 1991.

Prayers Taught by the Angel of Peace

My God, I believe, I adore, I hope, and I love you! I ask pardon of you for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope, and do not love you.

Through the infinite merits of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of you the conversion of poor sinners.

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I adore you profoundly, and I offer you the most precious Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges, and indifference with which he himself is offended. And, through the infinite merits of his most Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg of you the conversion of poor sinners.

Prayers Taught by Our Lady of Fatima

Mary said to sacrifice ourselves for sinners and say many times, especially whenever making a sacrifice:

O Jesus, it is for love of you, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Mary said to pray after each mystery:

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of your mercy.

Devotion of First Saturdays

On December 10, 1925, Mary and the Infant Jesus appeared to Lucia at Pentevedra, Spain, where Lucia had been sent to the Dorothean Sisters to learn to read and write. Mary said that her heart was covered with thorns of ingratitude and blasphemies. She promised to assist us at our hour of death if we make reparation for those sins with the devotion of the First Saturdays.

On the first Saturday of five consecutive months, we are to:

- Go to Confession
- Receive Holy Communion
- Say five decades of the rosary
- Keep Mary company for a quarter of an hour while meditating on the mysteries of the rosary

The Rosary List

There are four sets of mysteries: Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious. If you know your prayers, you will find this to be a handy list to remind you of the mysteries. Choose the mysteries, such as the Glorious or Sorrowful, that you would like to meditate upon and follow those through the list.

Sign of the Cross
Apostles' Creed
Our Father
Three Hail Marys
Glory Be

FIRST MYSTERY

Joyful.....Annunciation
LuminousBaptism of Jesus by the Holy Spirit
Sorrowful.....Agony in the Garden
Glorious.....Resurrection

Our Father
Ten Hail Marys
Glory Be
Fatima Prayer

SECOND MYSTERY

Joyful.....Visitation
LuminousFirst Public Miracle at Wedding in Cana
Sorrowful.....Scourging at the Pillar
Glorious.....Ascension

Our Father
Ten Hail Marys
Glory Be
Fatima Prayer

THIRD MYSTERY

Joyful..... Birth of Jesus
Luminous The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
Sorrowful..... Crowning with Thorns
Glorious..... Decent of the Holy Spirit

Our Father
Ten Hail Marys
Glory Be
Fatima Prayer

FOURTH MYSTERY

Joyful..... Presentation
Luminous The Transfiguration
Sorrowful..... Carrying of the Cross
Glorious..... Assumption of Mary

Our Father
Ten Hail Marys
Glory Be
Fatima Prayer

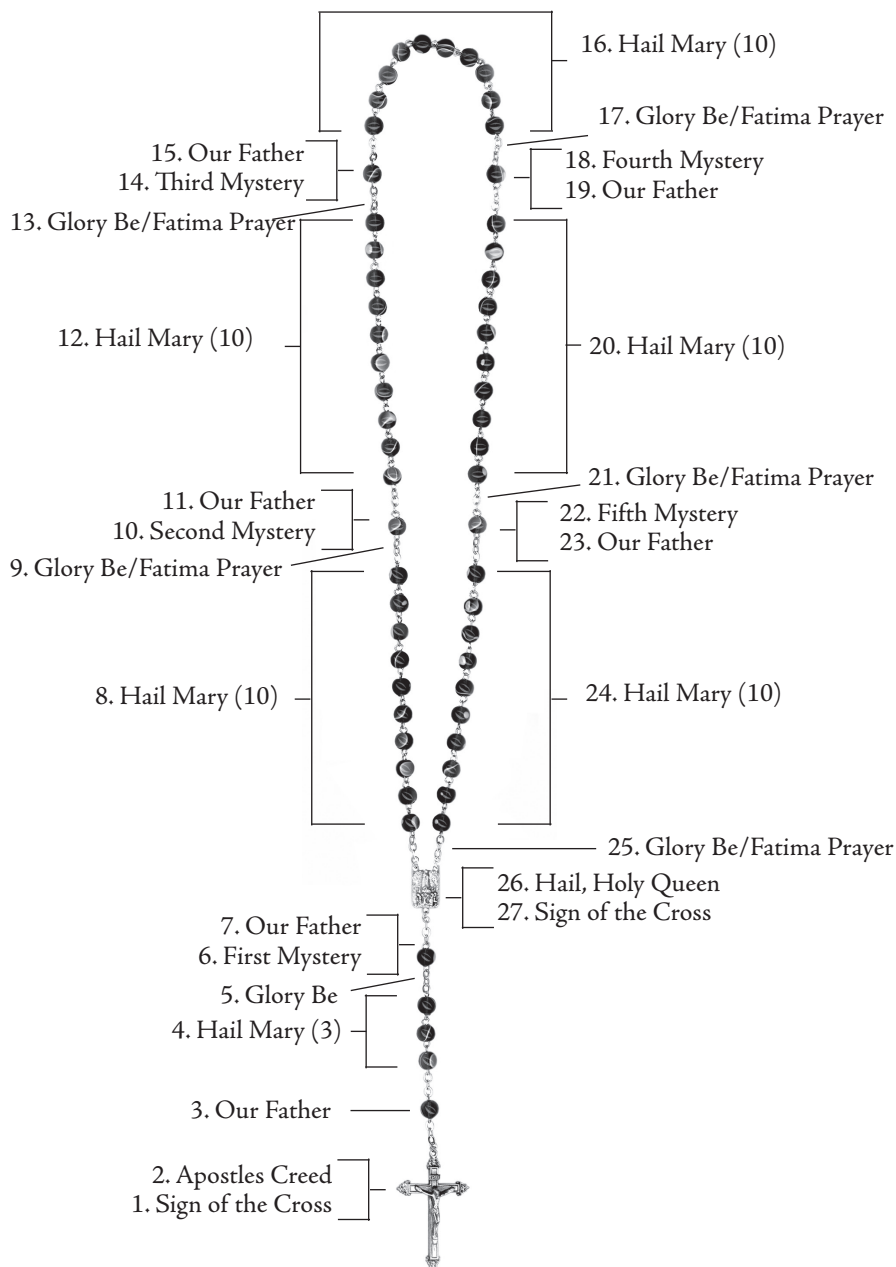
FIFTH MYSTERY

Joyful..... Finding in the Temple
Luminous Gift of the Eucharist
Sorrowful..... Crucifixion
Glorious..... Coronation of Mary

Our Father
Ten Hail Marys
Glory Be
Fatima Prayer

Hail, Holy Queen
Sign of the Cross

The Map of the Rosary



The Prayers of the Rosary

Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles' Creed: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Fatima Prayer: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of your mercy. Amen.

Hail, Holy Queen: Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R: That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.

World peace is possible. The Blessed Virgin Mary shared this hope with three young shepherd children in 1917 in Fatima, Portugal. She even told the children and all of us how this peace could be achieved. This little booklet outlines the ten-step peace plan Our Lady of Fatima urged us to follow and encourages us to build on our relationship with the Lord. The focus is on us doing everything we can to treat everyone and everything around us with love and respect. We are to be light to the world. We aren't to be concerned about what others are doing wrong but about how we are doing on our own path to Christ.

The steps include: Honor the Lord, Ask for Forgiveness, Change Our Ways, Embrace Suffering, Just Say, "Yes!" Get the Word Out, Don't Be Afraid, Pray Continuously, Meditate on the Rosary, and Seek God's Comfort. Each step is accompanied by a scripture verse, and action response. The scripture verses used here are from the contemporary version of the Bible known as **The Message: Catholic/Ecumenical Edition**.

Designed for personal reflection and small group use, **Fatima at 100 • Fatima Today** offers a plan for the Fatima centennial year and for the rest of our lives. Author Mary K. Doyle implores us to take our efforts seriously. With God's grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are the answer to world peace.



Books, blogs, or feature articles, **Mary K. Doyle's** writings are rich in content, easy and enjoyable to read, and avenues for personal growth and compassion. Her powerful faith and decades of writing experience is evident in her story-telling style.

Mary has a Masters Degree in Pastoral Theology from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business Management and Leadership with Highest Distinction from Judson University.

Her published books include: *Hans Christian Andersen, Illuminated by The Message; Navigating Alzheimer's; Saint Theodora and Her Promise to God; Young in the Spirit; Grieving with Mary; The Seven Principles of Sainthood; The Rosary Prayer by Prayer; and Mentoring Heroes.*

Spirituality/Mary



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