

# Blessed Francisco Marto

**F**rancisco's main preoccupation was to "console Our Lord" whom he saw so sad and offended. His spirit of love and reparation for the offenses to God was remarkable for such a young lad. He spent hours in prayer "thinking about God". He was a contemplative soul.

*Decorative flourish*  
Date of birth: June 11 1908  
Birthplace: Aljustrel, Fatima, Portugal  
Died: April 4, 1919 Age: 10

**Feast day February 20**

**Patronage:** Bodily ills, captives, people ridiculed for their piety, prisoners, sick people, against sickness.



*How beautiful God is, how beautiful!  
But He is sad because of the  
sins of men. I want to console Him,  
I want to suffer for love of Him."*

**Francisco's deep love of living things and nature, befitted a boy whose patron was St. Francis of Assisi.**

**1908**

Francisco Marto was born in Aljustrel, Fatima, in Portugal on June 11.

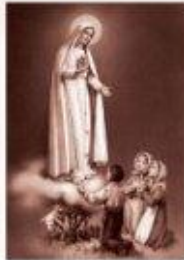


**In rural Portugal of 1916 it would not have been unusual to see children leading their family flocks to pasture. This is what Francisco, his sister and cousin, did for many days.**

**1916**

Francisco, his younger sister Jacinta and their cousin, Lucia dos Santos — were visited three times by the Angel of Peace.

The angel, calling himself "The Angel of Portugal", prepared them spiritually for a series of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



**1917**

On May 13, Our Lady appeared to the three children atop of a holm oak.

The lady asks them to come to the Cova da Iria five more months in succession, on the 13th day, at the same hour.

When, in the course of the first apparition, Lucia asked if Francisco would go to Heaven, Our Lady replied: "Yes, he will go there, but he will have to recite the Rosary many times."

After the apparitions, Francisco had made it clear that he wanted to suffer as Our Lady requested.

He deprived himself of food and drink for days at a time during hot weather and wore a thick rope round his waist.

He prayed to console God and honour the Mother of the Lord, gradually progressing along the path of sanctity.

On August 13, he found himself kidnapped along with his sister and cousin.

Francisco was threatened with death by being boiled alive in oil by government authorities if he refused to declare the Fatima apparitions as false.

However, he stood firm and did not betray the Virgin Mary, and he encouraged his cousin and sister to do the same.

On October 13, the sixth and final apparition takes place. The foretold Miracle of the Sun was witnessed by more than 70,000 people.

**1918**

In August, when World War I was nearing an end, Francisco and Jacinta both contracted influenza. Before he became ill — Francisco told Lucia, "Listen. You go to school, and I will stay here in the church, close to the 'Hidden Jesus'".

*It is not worth my while learning to read as I will be going to heaven very soon. On your way home, come here and call me."*

**1919**

The priest heard Francisco's confession on the evening of April 2 and brought Communion to him the next morning.

Francisco died a saintly death on April 4, in his parent's house.

**2000**

On May 13, he and his sister Jacinta were beatified by Pope John Paul II and in the presence of their 93-year-old cousin Lucia dos Santos.



**Alone among the three, Francisco never heard Our Lady's words, although he saw her and felt her presence. He was so humble that he accepted his apparently less privileged role in the history of Fatima.**



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