

ADDRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA TO THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

***By Prof. Americo Lopez-Ortiz, International President WAF, February, 3,
2006***

Your Excellency, Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity; Your Excellency, Bishop Serafim de Sousa Ferreira e Silva of Leiria-Fatima, Ecclesiastical Advisor to the World Apostolate of Fatima; Your Excellency, Bishop Diego Bona, Ecclesiastical Advisor to the WAF Italy; Your Excellency, Archbishop Emeritus Karel Otcenasek of Hadrec Kralove, Czech Republic; Monsignors, Priests, fellow members of the Board of Trustees of the World Apostolate of Fatima; National Delegates from all over the world; Mr. Duncan McLaren, Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis; special guests, staff members of the Pontifical Council for the Laity; staff members of the International Secretariat of the WAF; journalists and workers of the media; members and advocates of the World Apostolate of Fatima...

Blessed be Jesus Christ! Today with joy the World Apostolate of Fatima celebrates its approval by the Holy See as a public association of the faithful for the Universal Church. A great blessing and at the same time a great responsibility to carry out with hope and excellence!

Under the umbrella of the World Apostolate of Fatima, all associations and apostolic movements propagating the authentic message of Fatima may encounter an example of faithfulness and loyalty to the Holy Father and the Diocesan Bishops in communion with the Successor of Peter. The WAF will serve the Church as a world wide instrument of the New Evangelization proposed by John Paul II, the Great, and by his Successor, Pope Benedict XVI. The WAF will live its charisma of formation of lay people by transmitting the authentic message of Fatima and its profound spirituality, centred in the Primacy of God in our society and our civilization; the reverent meditation of the mystery of God the Holy Trinity as the centre of our Lives; the most profound love for Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament; the practice of the prayer of meditation - the Holy Rosary - as the instrument to achieve world peace and rebuild families as the main institution of our societies; the daily offering of our duties to follow Christ as his beloved disciples, bearing our daily cross and learning from it to become saints (friends of God), living his Grace and Mercy; practicing the reparatory devotion of the Five consecutive First Saturdays of the month, to obtain from God the special grace of unity and strength of the Universal Church against its enemies and inner dissention, as well as a promise of perseverance and all the necessary means of salvation at the moment of death; crowned by the 'entrustment' of our lives to God, through Jesus Christ, by the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a true school of sanctity for men and women of our era, consecrating our lives as a renewal of your baptismal pledge, a pledge that is resembled in our WAF pledge to convert ourselves and be instruments to live and make live the Gospel in our days. The Brown Scapular of Our Lady is the sign of such a consecration, a sign of personal conversion and group solidarity. A sign of love, of true charity, of solidarity with the poor an oppressed, so that our charity, the "agape" of the

Gospel, will turn into deeds, not merely words, so that people can turn to the WAF members and exclaim: "Look how much they love each other, how much they resemble true Disciples of Christ!" This is our faith, this is our commitment, this is our responsibility to God, to the Church, to history! Do not rest until the pleas of Our Lady of Fatima are heard by humanity... Do not rest until her requests are responded by many!

An era of peace, a century of hope, a new Marian Pentecost, a new spring for the Church and for the world, was promised by Our Lady, if we are faithful to her message. The message of Fatima is more urgent now than ever before, more actual, more essential to the present state of moral and spiritual crisis of our civilization. Our Apostolate must contribute as much as possible to offer a new criteria, a new option to solve the present crisis by turning to the ever new, ever actual, ever efficient call of the Gospel: "Repent and do penance! Convert yourselves while there is still time!"

My gratitude goes to the Holy Father for his approval through the Pontifical Council for the Laity, Archbishop Rylko, Monsignor Miguel Delgado Galindo and the staff members of the council.

My gratitude goes to Bishop Serafim for his inspiration and counsel, for his friendship and unity!

My gratitude goes to the Board of Trustees of the Apostolate for their support and devotion to the cause of Our Lady of Fatima!....

My gratitude goes to Mr. James Broschious for his legal counsel and expertise!

My gratitude goes to our International Secretariat and our two secretaries, Nuno Prazeres and Ana Reis, for their dedication and efficiency!

My gratitude goes to Bishop Diego Bona, Mother Ludovica Pellegrini, the Sisters Oblates of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the members of the WAF in Italy for their magnificent preparations to celebrate this ceremony! (A big applause for all of them). Finally, my gratitude goes to the national delegates and members of the Apostolate all over the world, for their patience and charity, for their prayers and penance, to achieve today's great grace. Special thanks to the children and young people of the world who by their adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and practice of the Holy Hour may further achieve great graces for our needy world!

May the Holy Spirit renew our hearts with the peace and joy of Jesus Christ ever present in the Immaculate Heart of Mary so that we all may remain in his Grace and Mercy! "Semper fidelis!"