



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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Vatican-Approved Pilgrimage Site at Old Cathedral Announced

ST. LOUIS – Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, Archbishop of St. Louis, has designated the Basilica of Saint Louis, King (the “Old Cathedral” at 209 Walnut) and its historic statue of Our Lady of Fatima as a destination for pilgrims in the Archdiocese of St. Louis during the centennial anniversary of the Marian apparitions in Fatima, Portugal, which took place May-October 1917.

Pope Francis granted the opportunity for Catholics to obtain a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, during the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima by making a pilgrimage to Portugal, or by visiting with devotion a statue of Our Lady of Fatima that is “solemnly exposed for public veneration” such as the statue in the Basilica.

An official announcement from the World Apostolate of Fatima reads:

“To the faithful who visit with devotion a statue of Our Lady of Fatima solemnly exposed for public veneration in any church, oratory or proper place during the days of the anniversary of the apparitions, the 13th of each month from May to October 2017, and there devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honor of the Virgin Mary. In addition, the faithful must pray the Our Father, recite the Creed and invoke Our Lady of Fatima.”

Remaining dates on which Catholics may obtain a plenary indulgence by visiting the Fatima statue in the Basilica are August 13, September 13, and October 13.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, an indulgence is “the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven.” Indulgences can be partial if they remove part of the temporal punishment due to sin, or plenary if it removes all punishment. With the help of the Church, which is the “minister of redemption,” a properly disposed Christian can obtain an indulgence only under certain prescribed conditions; these include some form of devotion or charitable work, prayers for the pope, participation in Mass, and recourse to the sacraments.

The significance of the Fatima statue in the Basilica dates back to 1970 when John Cardinal Carberry, then-Archbishop of St. Louis, led a delegation of pilgrims to Fatima, 53 years after the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three young shepherd children there. The children saw and spoke to Mary, who urged the entire world to pray fervently. Thousands witnessed miraculous events during the apparitions, including the sun “dancing” in the sky. Upon his return, Cardinal Carberry – the first English-speaking prelate to celebrate Mass at the Fatima shrine – directed that a replica of the Fatima statue be placed in the Basilica. The three-foot statue was a gift from then-Bishop John Venancio of Leiria, Portugal.

The Basilica is open Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. For Mass times and more information, visit oldcathedralstl.org.

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