

# Q & A

## Father David Poulson,

spiritual director of the  
World Apostolate of Fatima,  
Erie Diocesan Division,

**discusses the  
impact of Fatima.**



**Q:** What does this 100th anniversary mean to you and the larger church?

**Father Poulson:** The thing that's always attracted me about the message of Fatima is that over the course of my lifetime, I've seen the things Our Lady prophesied being fulfilled.

Our Lady had predicted the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II, the spread of Communism, wars and persecution of the church, and the church and the Holy Father would have much to suffer. Several entire nations would be annihilated.

But in the end, she said, "My Immaculate Heart will triumph and Russia will be converted and a period of peace would be granted to the world."

That promise of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart and a period of peace being granted to the world was something that always inspired me to do what Our Lady had asked, which is mainly to offer up the sufferings involved in carrying out our daily duties and to offer those up to the conversion of sinners and to pray the rosary every day for peace in the world.

**Q:** The world's not yet in that period of peace.

**Father Poulson:** No, it's not. I don't think anybody any more places their hope in human means to bring about world peace.

We really need Our Lady's intercession and God's intervention to bring it about.

**Q:** The secrets revealed at Fatima can be scary. Do you agree?

**Father Poulson:** Aspects of the messages are scary. They were scary to the children...the vision of hell, for example. But it's all avoidable by people living a life that is faithful to the Gospel and to the teachings of Jesus, keeping the Commandments and living a life of faith and prayer.

**Q:** What would you say to people who are skeptical of the apparitions at Fatima?

**Father Poulson:** The children themselves asked Our Lady to perform some sign so that everybody would believe. That's why Our Lady did the "Miracle of the Sun" on Oct. 13, 1917. [The miracle was viewed by 70,000 or more people in the pasture area known as the *Cova da Iria* and was reported to have been seen from as far as 25 miles away.]

**Q:** Then it's a matter of faith?

**Father Poulson:** It always is. The advantage that we have in the 21st century is that we can look back and see that what Our Lady prophesied has happened step by step in the order that she predicted. We have even more reasons to trust in this message than the three children had.

**Q:** What is the message for the 21st century?

**Father Poulson:** Our Lady came to warn us about world wars, communism and the persecution of the church, but at the same time to give us hope that people's souls can be saved and peace in the world is free for the asking. All we have to do is pray for them.