**Francisco’s quotes: *“I am happier than you are, because I have the Hidden Jesus within my heart.”***

***“More than anything else I want to console Our Lord.”***

***“The worst thing would be if Our Lady never came back again! That is what hurts me most.”***

***“I would like to console Our Lord, and after that convert sinners so that they won’t offend Him any more.”***

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**Jacintas’ quotes: *“I am suffering a lot, but I offer everything for sinners, and in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”***

***“Oh, how much I love to suffer for love of Our Lord and Our Lady, they greatly love those who suffer for the conversion of sinners.”***

***“Oh, my Jesus! This is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, for the Holy Father, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary!”***

***“More I think the more I suffer, and I want to suffer for love of Our Lord and for sinners.”At times, Jacinta kissed and embraced a crucifix, exclaiming: ”O my Jesus! I love You, and I want to suffer very much for love of You.”***

In the Jubilee year, the beatification of Jacinta and Francisco, the two little shepherds of Fatima, Portugal, was a landmark event. These two children, aged 10 and 11, are the youngest non-martyrs ever to be beatified in the history of the Catholic Church, proving that no matter how young you are, you can still become a saint.

Francisco Marto was born in Fatima, Portugal, on June 11, 1908, and his sister Jacinta was born on March 11th, 1910. The brother and sister were not much alike; Francisco had a calm personality and loved nature and music, while Jacinta was more active and playful.

Beginning at a young age, the two children accompanied their cousin Lucia Santo to the fields each day to watch the families' sheep. One day in 1916, they saw an Angel, who told them he was the angel of peace and the guardian angel of Portugal. The angel taught the amazed children a prayer to say in reparation for sins: "*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 angel appeared to the children three times in all, reminding them to pray and make sacrifices. During the third visit, the angel appeared holding a chalice and a host, and taught them another prayer: "*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.*" He gave Lucia, who was the only one who had made her first Communion, the host, and gave Jacinta and Francisco the blood in the chalice to drink. These apparitions filled the children with a sense of peace and the presence of God, preparing them for the apparitions of Mary which were soon to take place.

The first apparition of Our Lady took place on May 13, 1817, an event which would change their lives forever. In this first of the several apparitions at Fatima, Our Lady asked the children to say the Rosary and to make sacrifices, offering them for the conversion of sinners.

Seven-year-old Jacinta especially took this request very seriously, even though it had earlier been her idea to save time in reciting the Rosary by only saying the first two words of every prayer! She was particularly struck by the Blessed Virgin's request to pray for sinners, especially after seeing the vision of Hell which Mary showed to the three children.

Francisco was affected by the vision in a different way; he saw how sad Jesus and Mary were, and how much they were offended by sins, and his great desire was to console them. The children began to make sacrifices for sinners, and in reparation for the sins which wounded the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Sometimes they gave their lunch to beggars, going without food themselves; they refrained from drinking water on hot days; they offered up their daily crosses; they wore little ropes around their waist until Our Lady told them not to; they prayed often, alone, or together.

In October of 1918, Francisco and Jacinta became seriously ill with the Spanish flu. Our Lady appeared to the two children and told them she was coming soon to take them to Heaven: Francisco first, and then Jacinta later.

Francisco, who had longed for Heaven, was thrilled at the thought of being able to see Jesus and Mary forever. In his last illness, he continually made the sacrifice of taking any medicine or food which was given him, no matter whether he liked it or not, without complaining. As his illness progressed, he could no longer say his prayers out loud, but he continued to pray "with his heart." At Francisco's request, the parish priest came to give him his first Communion, which he had not yet received. It would be his last Communion - Francisco died peacefully the next day, April 14, 1919.

Poor little Jacinta, who was still extremely ill, missed her brother greatly. At the same time, she was suffering from an abcess on her chest. Despite her sufferings, she continued to make sacrifices and offer her pain to God for her dearest intention - the conversion of sinners. She was ready to suffer anything to save souls from Hell. Eventually Jacinta was transferred to a hospital in Lisbon, but her condition did not improve, despite a painful operation. Our Lady continued to console Jacinta with her presence, and on February 20, 1920, the little girl died in the hospital, attended only by a nurse.

The lives of Jacinta and Francisco teach us that even young children can become saints. In 1999, the Vatican accepted a miracle for the beatification of the two children. They were beatified on May 13th, 2000, the 83rd anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady at Fatima.

*Blessed Jacinta and Francisco, PRAY FOR US!*

**Francisco Marto** (June 11, 1908–April 4, 1919) and his sister **Jacinta Marto** (March 11, 1910–February 20, 1920), also known as Blessed Francisco Marto and Blessed Jacinta Marto, together with their cousin, [**Lúcia dos Santos**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%BAcia_dos_Santos) (1907–2005) were the children from Aljustrel near [Fátima, Portugal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A1tima%2C_Portugal), who said they reported witnessed three [apparitions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apparitional_experience) of an [angel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angel) in 1916 and several apparitions of the [Blessed Virgin Mary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blessed_Virgin_Mary) in 1917. Their visions of [Our Lady of Fátima](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_F%C3%A1tima) proved politically controversial, and gave rise to a major centre of world [Christian pilgrimage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_pilgrimage).

The youngest children of Manuel and Olimpia Marto, Francisco and Jacinta were typical of Portuguese village children of that time. They were [illiterate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literacy) but had a rich [oral tradition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oral_tradition) on which to rely, and they worked with their cousin Lúcia, taking care of the family's sheep. According to Lúcia's memoirs, Francisco had a placid disposition, was somewhat musically inclined, and liked to be by himself to think. Jacinta was affectionate if a bit spoiled, and emotionally labile. She had a sweet singing voice and a gift for dancing. All three children gave up music and dancing after the visions began, believing that these and other recreational activities led to [occasions of sin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occasions_of_sin).

Following their experiences, their fundamental personalities remained the same. Francisco preferred to pray alone, as he said "to console Jesus for the sins of the world". Jacinta was deeply affected by a terrifying vision of [Hell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hell) reportedly shown to the children at the third apparition. She became deeply convinced of the need to save sinners through penance and sacrifice as the Virgin had reportedly instructed the children to do. All three children, but particularly Francisco and Jacinta, practiced stringent self-mortifications to this end.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-0)

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## [[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto&action=edit&section=1)] Illness and death

The siblings were victims of the great [1918 influenza](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1918_influenza) epidemic which swept through Europe in 1918. Both lingered for many months, insisting on walking to church to make [Eucharistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucharist) devotions and prostrating themselves to pray for hours, [kneeling with their heads on the ground](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proskynesis) as instructed by the angel who had first appeared to them.

Francisco declined hospital treatment and died peacefully at home, while Jacinta was dragged from one hospital to another in an attempt to save her life which she insisted was futile. She developed purulent [pleurisy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pleurisy) and endured an operation in which two of her ribs were removed. Because of the condition of her heart, she could not be [anesthetized](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anesthesia) and suffered terrible pain, which she said would help to convert many sinners. On February 20, 1920, Jacinta asked the hospital [chaplain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaplain) who heard her [confession](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confession) to bring her [Holy Communion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Communion) and give her the [Anointing of the Sick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anointing_of_the_Sick) because she was going to die "this very night". He told her that her condition was not that serious, and that he would return the next day. A few hours later Jacinta was dead. She had died, as she had often said she would, alone: not even a nurse was with her.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-1)

In 1920, shortly before her death at age 9, Jacinta Marto reportedly discussed the [Alliance of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alliance_of_the_Hearts_of_Jesus_and_Mary) with a then 12 year old [Lúcia Santos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%BAcia_Santos) and said:

When you are to say this, don't go and hide. Tell everybody that God grants us graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that people are to ask her for them; and that the Heart of Jesus wants the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be venerated at his side. Tell them also to pray to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for peace, since God entrusted it to her.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-2)

Jacinta and Francisco are both buried at the [Our Lady of Fátima Basilica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_F%C3%A1tima_Basilica).[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-3)

## [[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto&action=edit&section=2)] Beatification

From left to right, Jacinta Marto, [Lúcia dos Santos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%BAcia_dos_Santos) and Francisco Marto, holding their [rosaries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosary) in 1917.

The cause for the siblings' [canonization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonization) began during 1946. Exhumed in 1935 and again in 1951, Jacinta's face was found [incorrupt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incorrupt).[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-4)[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacinta_and_Francisco_Marto#cite_note-5) Francisco's had decomposed. On May 13, 2000, they were declared "blessed" in a decree from the [Congregation for the Causes of Saints](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_for_the_Causes_of_Saints). Jacinta is the youngest non-martyred child ever to be [beatified](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonization).

This of course came more sharply into focus with the revelation of the [Third Secret of Fátima](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Secret_of_F%C3%A1tima) the following month, indicating that a Pope in fact would be assassinated. In her biography of Jacinta, Lúcia had already established that Jacinta had told her of having had many personal visions outside of the Marian visitations; one involved a Pope who prayed alone in a room while people outside shouted ugly things and threw rocks through the window. At another time, Jacinta said she saw a Pope who had gathered a huge number of people together to pray to the [Immaculate Heart of Mary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immaculate_Heart_of_Mary).

Sister Lúcia, when questioned about the Third Secret, recalled that the three of them were very sad about the suffering of the Pope, and that Jacinta kept saying: *Coitadinho do Santo Padre, tenho muita pena dos pecadores!* (“Poor Holy Father, I am very sad for sinners!”) The Third Secret can thus be interpreted in the context of Jacinta's prayers and sacrifices for the pope whom she saw being killed.