

Father Rafferty – His Meeting with Sr. Lucia on August 15, 1950

A transcript of Audio of Speech given in 1958- Transcribed by Kathleen M. Heckenkamp

[E.N. I heartily invite you to read the words of Sr. Lucia spoken to Fr. Howard Rafferty in 1950. This document is important for a number of reasons. First, it established without a doubt, Heaven's requests: In order to fulfill the requests of Our Lady of Fatima asked for, it is necessary and imperative to wear the Brown Scapular as a sign of our consecration to her Immaculate Heart. Therefore, there are not four conditions but five in order to fulfill the requests of Our Lady of Fatima.

Secondly, at the end of his speech, Fr. Rafferty shares with his listeners his thoughts on Sr. Lucia's smiling silence to his final question that he poses about Our Lady's Seventh Appearance at Fatima. Our Lady, herself, promised that after her six visits from May to October 1917, that she would indeed come a seventh time. Father received a confirmation that she indeed promised to come a seventh time and this with a smile from Sr. Lucia... For those of us who are still awaiting the TRUE UNADULTERED CONSECRATION OF RUSSIA TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, when we read these words once again relayed to us by Father Rafferty, it gives us hope in her promises... In the End My Immaculate Heart Will Triumph! Dear Friends of Our Blessed Mother, let us joyfully work to fulfill Our Lady's requests with a heart full of gratitude for receiving the grace to know the Truth! Let us pray with perseverance for all of us to keep it in our hearts!]

Dear Friends of Our Blessed Mother,

I was tremendously privileged to see and to hear one of the children of Fatima – the only one who is now alive. In the city of Coimbra in Portugal, the oldest of the three seers of Fatima, Lucy by name, is a cloistered Carmelite sister and I should tell you how it was that I came to see her.

In my work as editor of Mary Magazine, and provincial director of the Third Order of Our Lady of Mt Carmel I visit the various parts of this country talking with Carmelite Tertiaries and our staffers, leading little discussions on the scapular and devotion to Our Lady. Many times I have been asked to say something about the Fatima Message and of course I always try to summarize all of the things that Our Lady wants done. You recall in brief review that Our Lady first of all prepared the children of Fatima by sending more than a year before her own coming, an angel known as The Angel of Peace. That angel first appeared in a place known as the Cabeco.

Overlooking the great valley where Our Lady, herself, was to appear a year later. Each time the angel came, he gave them a message. The first time he spoke it was a message of Faith, Hope and Charity. Three times he repeated the prayer:

“Oh my God, I believe I adore I hope and I love you and I beg pardon for all those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and will not love you.”

Then the angel said,

“Pray thus, the hearts of Jesus and Mary are attentive to the voice of your supplication.”

The next time he came he appeared in the yard outside the house of Lucy. He stood near the old well where the children were just lying around because of the summer heat.

He told them something that gave them an indication of what was to follow in the next year. He said, ***“Pray. Offer prayers and sacrifices to the Almighty.”*** Our Lady came on the 13th of May 1917. She told the children to pray the rosary. On June 13th of that same year, after repeating the message of the rosary and saying something about sacrifice, she opened her hands that were always folded in prayer and revealed her Immaculate Heart, but she did not say anything about it. It was a heart surrounded with thorns. **And the children understood that she wanted prayer, she wanted reparation.** In July, came that terrible vision of Hell and the secret later made

known of Consecration to her Immaculate Heart. Then in August, a **repetition of those three conditions: Prayer and sacrifice and consecration**, although the communions of reparation did not form a part of that consecration. Finally, Our Lady who was always serious now looked sad and announced: ***“Many souls go to Hell because they have no one to sacrifice, no one to pray for them.”*** The September vision brought the promise of a great miracle that would happen in the next month. A miracle that was going to convince everyone; then we had the Great Miracle of the Sun; the promise fulfilled. Telling the children who she is ***“The Lady of the Rosary”*** **repeating again the conditions** and then coming in a **final vision dressed in the habit of Carmel, holding the Brown Scapular.**

I was able to hold everyone spellbound until I came to that last vision. When I told how **Our Lady came dressed in the Carmelite habit holding her son in her left arm, reaching out with her scapular in her right hand just as we always see her, I would say, “Now that is the final condition of Fatima message! Wear the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt Carmel.”**

Thinking that I convinced everyone, the question period would come, and usually it was one of the priest that would ask, ***“How do you know that Our Lady wants us to wear the Brown Scapular? She didn’t say anything about the scapular at Fatima.”***

Well of course I had to agree that Our Lady had not spoken about the scapular at Fatima, but she had come as Our Lady of Mt Carmel. **Mary wanted us to wear the scapular because she came holding the scapular out to us at Fatima.**

Then some lag in the corner would say, ***“Naturally, a Carmelite is speaking!”***

I determined that I would have to go to Portugal and talk with Lucy, the only living seer of that message. I continued to pray and hope that one day I would get to Fatima, a place I had never seen, that I would be able to interview personally the only one who could give me the assurance that Our Lady wanted the wearing of the Brown Scapular. So, I wrote one fine day to the head of the third order, a Carmelite priest, who fortunately for me had studied at old St Phil’s College in Chicago. His name is Father Luis Gonzaga Oliveira.

My letter stated: ***“Father Luis, you never met me, but you know certain priests here in Chicago that have told me about you and how you will do anything possible to help an American...”*** We had been so kind to him as a student for the priesthood. Well, I mentioned that I would like him to get permission for me to interview Lucy, now Sr Lucy of the Immaculate Heart. Making it a more difficult thing to do, she had just left the Sisters of St Dorothy and had entered the cloistered Carmelite sisters. It would be a most difficult job to get permission to interview this girl who had gone into the convent to give all of her time to prayer, to escape the world and a lot of curious people like myself who were going around asking her a bunch of foolish questions.

Father Luis sent his answer saying, ***“Why, you can’t get in to see Lucy, only bishops can get into to see her.”*** It was a great disappointment. But I tried again. I wrote back and told him that I understood that I wasn’t important enough really to get in to see her. Very simply **I stated the whole problem. If I could go around the country and talk to the thousands of people and tell them with assurance that Our Lady had come at Fatima with her scapular. Then no one would be able to deny that the scapular was one of the conditions of that message. Secondly there were those that admitted that she had come at Fatima as Our Lady of Mt Carmel but would not admit that the scapular was indeed one of the conditions.**

About a month later, I had a startling letter, ***“Father Howard,” he said, “I have a privilege for***

you which is given only to Archbishops. But I had to canonize you to get you in.”

Imagine, I had this very unusual permission. I could go to Portugal and at my own convenience I could see the only living seer of that message. I could talk to her as long as I wished. Being a poor Carmelite I now had to find a way to get to Portugal. My long-awaited opportunity came, during the Holy Year of 1950. The third order was invited at that time by our Father General to have an International Marian Congress in Rome as one of the manifestations of the Holy Year.

The third order directors were to attend, if at all possible. As leader of a Carmelite third order pilgrimage which went to this International Congress in Rome, I scheduled a visit to Portugal on the way home. We were there on the 12th of August and were to remain until after the ceremony on the 13th.

I had already made arrangements with Fr Luis to meet him at Fatima. The great Cova where Our Lady had appeared holds one million people. At the end of that Cova is the great Basilica –there the final outdoor Mass is held. The Solemn Pontifical Mass of the Saints. Father said he would meet me on the steps of the basilica. Of course, there were only about 250,000 people at Fatima that day and for some reason we missed each other on those steps! Father Luis was so busy when I had seen him in Lisbon that he couldn't go with us. I begged him to go along with us to Fatima. I was afraid that this very thing would happen. But he is an old man now. He said that he had his own pilgrimage to bring to Fatima and he would surely find me --there wouldn't be any difficulty at all. I waited until late afternoon. Finally, the rest of the pilgrims- there were 35 with me- they were anxious to get back to Lisbon because the next day- the 14th- we were leaving. We were scheduled to arrive in New York very early on the morning of the 15th. The next morning, I went to the shrine of Blessed Juno where Father Luis lived. He was quietly sitting in the sacristy as if nothing had happened. And I didn't take long to ask him, ***“Where were you yesterday?”***

And he just looked up at me and answered, ***“Oh, I was there. Where were you?”***

He listened with sympathy as I answered, ***“I was on the steps, and I lost at least 20 lbs. in the heat waiting for you.”***

With a shrug, he said, ***“Well I thought you weren't coming so I took someone else with me.” We saw Lucy.”***

“Do I still have permission to see her?” I asked.

“Oh, yes, you have permission. You can go anytime you want to go.” But he said, ***“You are going home.”***

And I answered, ***“Yes, I am going home.”***

“So, you have your plane reservations?”

“Yes, I have my plane reservations?”

You have no idea how frustrated I was. No money to remain over. It was a great disappointment after so many plans. We had an early lunch at the airport after which a wonderful thing happened. This is one of those happenings we hear about. I am glad it happened to me. We were already checked in. Everything is ready. Our baggage was checked. Our flight was called. Thirty-three of our pilgrims were already through the gates. Some were on the plane and ready to fly. Just remember all this time I was giving the Blessed Mother kind of a hard time. I told her that I

was going back to America, and I was not going to have the word that I needed to preach her message with authority. Just then the announcement came on the loudspeaker. There were two people too many on that plane. I fly quite a bit in my work. I have been in it now for over 10 years. And never before or since that time have I met any situation where there were too many people on the plane. This day there was two too many. Two priests who had been sold tickets being the last two making reservations. The airline authorities told these 2 priests that they would have to be the ones who would be the ones kept over until a later flight.

Well fortunately, they were both assistants and they had an insistent pastor for whom I thank God every day. They told the manager that they had to be back in New York on the Feast of the Assumption. That their pastor demanded that they be back that day and that if they didn't get back to New York they were going to report this agent to the President of the company when they did get back. It was fortunate for me because it was only then the announcement came: ***"Would someone please volunteer to stay over a few days? They would have all their expenses paid."*** Well, you know who volunteered. Actually, I should never have doubted the plans the Blessed Mother had made were much more perfect than any I had thought of. On the 13th of August, 1950, there were lined up at the Carmelite Monastery in Coimbra many bishops. I would have been in line with those bishops. When an ordinary priest gets in line with a bishop, you know what happens. He keeps going back to the end of the line. I imagine by the time I would have gotten to see Lucy, I wouldn't have been able to ask all the questions I had ready because by that time, I had a travel diary full of questions. Everyone who heard that I was going to see her would give me a question. ***"Now when you get in there,"*** they would say, ***"ask her this question..."*** So, I would write it down and leave 1/2 a page for the answer. Barney McKay, one of our pilgrims from Galesburg, IL, agreed to stay over with me. We waved goodbye as the plane took off for New York.

I immediately called Fr. Luis. He said, ***"Oh that's wonderful! We'll go out tomorrow on the Feast of the Assumption because in the Carmelite convent on a Holy Day they don't work. All Lucy will have to do will go to the prayers of the Community. She will have free time – more time to see us and talk with us. Everything will be just perfect."*** he said. He was right. Everything was perfect. **No one else visited Sr. Lucy that day. I was the only visitor.** We had lunch in the little town of Coimbra – then we went in and rang the little bell at the door of the Speak Room. Barney McKay wanted very much to stay there, and we would have liked to have kept him there but the permission was for only Fr Luis and myself. If you have ever been in the Speak room of the Carmelite convent, you know that the sisters appear on the other side of the grille. This one had crisscross bars forming little squares patterns. Each intersection had a protruding spike to keep the curious at a good distance. After getting a good poke myself, I warned Barney. When he left the room the Mother Prioress opened the little sliding door at the other side of the grillwork. Then a heavy curtain was opened. Father Luis and I saw the Mother Prioress kneeling there with another sister asking for a blessing. They both had the black veil pulled over their faces. But when they saw who it was, (Father Luis knows both of them quite well.) **they drew up this black veil so that I saw Lucy's face clearer than I can see any of you now. I was about a foot and a half away from Lucy-- Sr Mary Lucy of the Immaculate Heart.** So, we gave them a blessing and a little rosary we had brought from Rome--A little present for them from the Holy Father. **Fr Luis by the way, knowing idiomatic Portuguese and knowing English quite well having studied here until his ordination was one who was quite the best interpreter, I think, in the world.**

Some of the things I could understand but I wasn't taking any chances. Maybe later on someone would say, "Well how do you know that's what she said?" I am sure of the answers Lucy was giving. And I wrote them down. We talked about many things for about

a half hour. Then a bell rang. It was the bell for vespers. Fr Luis said, **“We’ll have to leave until the sisters finish the [Divine] Office.”** Lucy suggested we go out into the chapel saying, **“Thedim has carved several beautiful statues for us there.”**

We saw one of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and one of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. All beautifully carved and donated by the famous sculptor, Thedim, the same artist that carved the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima so popular in this country. As we looked and prayed, we could hear the nuns chanting the Divine Office. We had Lucy’s word that we could go into the Speak Room again. We went back in and spent about another hour and a half. How did she appear to me first of all? I recall reading in one of the books on Fatima that a few years after the visions of Fatima had finished, Lucy wanted to enter the cloistered Carmelite sisters but the Bishop of Leiria told her that the Carmelite life would be much too difficult for her. He urged her to join one of the active orders. Remembering that, I looked at this **peasant – type girl** sitting there before me. I assure you that **she doesn’t look delicate. She doesn’t even look thin. She is on the plump side.** Recall the features of her face, as you have seen her in pictures- **rough sort of features -- Thick features you would say.** As I recall what Walsh said in his book **“Our Lady of Fatima”** that she showed no signs in 1917 of becoming “Miss Portugal” of that year. In other words, **she is not beautiful. Although when she talks and especially when one mentions Our Lady there comes upon her a beauty that is indescribable.** We can only imagine what it must be like to have seen God’s Mother. And not only has this girl who kneels before us now for a blessing seen God’s Mother giving the world a message at Fatima in the Cova de Iria but she has seen her on several occasions right in this convent where we are visiting. She has seen Our Lord too. **What she says is of the utmost importance because she is the one appointed by Our Lady herself to explain the message. The one who will live until the fullness of that message has been given to the world. I believe that my question about the scapular was one of the things she was appointed to interpret.** I said to her, *“I have all these serious questions to ask you.”* She answered, *“Oh I am very sorry, Father but I have been forbidden to answer any questions.”* Turning to Father Olivera, I said, *“Well what do you know about that?”* **Here we are with a whole book full of questions, and she won’t talk.** He turned to her and reminded her again I guess of the permission that we had. Then said to me, *“You can ask her anything you want to ask and she will answer what she is permitted to say. Other things she just won’t answer.”*

So, I said, *“Fine. Let’s begin.”*

We started with this question about the scapular:

“First of all, did Our Lady of Mount Carmel come at Fatima.?”

“Oh, yes, Father, she did!” She lit up right away thinking of how Our Lady looked when she came at Fatima. ***“Oh yes, she came!”***

“Did you know that it was Our Lady of Mount Carmel? In some of the books the writers say that you were not sure what you said you had seen on the 13th of October because so many things happened, one after the other, that you couldn’t possibly remember everything. That is, was so confusing that you couldn’t tell what color our Lady was wearing or how she was dressed or anything else? How did you know?”

“Oh, Father, I knew it was Our Lady of Mount Carmel because in September of 1917 Our Blessed Mother told me that she was going to come as Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There was no doubt in my mind that I was seeing what Our Lady told me I was going to see a month before it actually happened.” That answered the first question very well.

Then I asked her: *“Well how did she look?”*

“She looked like the picture in the parish church,” said Lucy. I had already visited the church in the little village at Fatima I had seen the pictures of Our Lady in her Sabbatine Privilege -A picture that I am sure all of you have seen. Our Lady is over Purgatory and angels at her direction are going down into the flames and picking out the souls that are clothed in the scapular of Carmel-those who have been devoted to her and have faithfully worn her brown scapular together with keeping the two other conditions – of chastity according to their state in life and the saying of her “Little Office” have her promise to be released from Purgatory the Saturday after their death. That’s how Our Lady looked.

“Well,” I said, and this was the great question now- *“Why did Our Lady come that way? What did she mean?”*

Without hesitating she said, *“She meant that we should wear the scapular.”* I was surprised and I looked at her in surprise and I said, *“How do you know that? She didn’t say anything when she came with the scapular.”* That was of course the key question. The reason why I had come here. And of course, now she looked at me thinking that I had lost my mind being a Carmelite myself. It seems that everyone in Europe already believed that the scapular was already one of the conditions of the Fatima message.

She said, *“Father,”* and she began pounding the grillwork, *“I saw the Blessed Mother and I know what she meant! If I had misinterpreted her message or had a different idea than what she wanted me to have Our Lady would have spoken about the scapular.”*

After I get home, I thought to myself, a lot of people might say - Well why didn’t you ask her this other question to make sure? **So, I tried to express the same question in two or three different ways.** I said, *“Now let’s get this straight, I am going back to America. I probably will never be here again and never see you again, Everyone in America believes there are four conditions of the Fatima message:*

- *First of all, we are to say the Rosary every day.*
- *Secondly, we are to offer the sacrifices of our daily lives.*
- *Thirdly, we are to make communions of reparations on First Saturdays.*
- *Finally, we are to consecrate ourselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”*

“Oh” she says, “there is one more condition-- the wearing of the scapular-the symbol of our consecration.”

“Well” I said, “Now let me get this straight, you mean to say that if someone did all four things and didn’t wear the scapular that he would not fulfill what our Lady asked for?”

She said, “He could not fulfill- He could not fulfill what Our Lady asked for at Fatima if he refused to wear the scapular!”

“Well,” I said, “in other words it isn’t just something that Our Lady would like us to do- it is something that is essential to the message In other words if you don’t wear the scapular you could not follow that message.”

She said, “Exactly, you could not follow the message of Fatima unless you add also the fifth condition which is the wearing of the Brown Scapular of Our Lady.”

There was a Franciscan priest on our pilgrimage, and I guess he wanted to start a great big argument. He had said to me, *“When you get in there, you ask Lucy which she considers more important the saying of the daily rosary or the wearing of the scapular.”* But at this point now face to face with Sr Lucy the question seemed out of place. I tried to give her a chance to dismiss it by saying, *“There is another question here and it is kind of foolish, but I promised that I would ask it: Which is more important the saying of the daily rosary or the wearing of the scapular all of the time?”*

She gave an answer that I think has been quoted millions of times: “Father, the rosary and the scapular are inseparable. You cannot have one without having the other.”

I don’t think there was another way we could have cleared up the questions I asked her during that interview. I thought of the possible talks that I could now give – explanations of the Fatima message and the place of the scapular in it. You see now it is already 1958 and I saw her in 1950. What she said was as interesting for me to recall, and I am sure for you to hear, as it was the day she told me these things.

I wanted her to become a part of every talk so requested, *“Sr Lucy, would you promise to say some special prayers every day for everyone who listens to what I have to say about Fatima and about Our Lady and especially about the conditions of the wearing of the brown scapular?”*

She said, “Yes, Father, I promise to pray for everyone who listens to anything you have to say about Fatima. So, you can be assured that Lucy is praying a very special prayer for you because you have become a part of this message of fulfillment.”

You might say the fullness of the message that she was given to transmit to the World. Last August, I was able to return to Fatima since that first trip I have been there three times. The last time I had been there was in August of 1957 -just last August. **Today, over the rise of the hills, directly behind the Basilica there is the second largest building at Fatima. The Basilica of course is the largest and most important church in Portugal. But behind it, a five-minute walk away, is the International Center of the Brown Scapular.** I was there for the dedication. It was the fortieth anniversary of Our Lady’s coming at Fatima. What a wonderful privilege it was to be present for the dedication of **the shrine that would remind the world that Our Lady did come the last time as Our Lady of Mount Carmel with her scapular!**

Many priests and people, I am sure, have never seen a Carmelite priest. Not so long ago I met a priest in Minneapolis who said, *“You’re a Carmelite priest? I thought they were all nuns!”* He had never met a Carmelite priest. And yet **I feel that all men and women throughout the world have known the scapular that Our Lady gave to the general of Carmel, St Simon Stock.** Actually, we have been friends for a long time. We have been praying for each other too! **We have a universal devotion represented in the scapular. And I think it is a beautiful thing that Our Lady chose that scapular we all know so well as the sign and the symbol of Consecration to Her Immaculate Heart.**

Last fall it wasn't possible to see Sr Lucy. Cardinal Piazza who dedicated the new scapular center went to Coimbra and saw her. Reading the report of the questions which he asked, I recalled the same questions **I had asked her in 1950. I had questioned her about the letter to be opened in 1960. Did the bishop still have that letter.** *"Oh yes the bishop still had that letter."*
"Did he know what was in it?" "No, he had never opened it"

During the Marian year, an interesting book by April and Martin Armstrong was published called **"Fatima- A Pilgrimage to Keep"** when they went to see Bishop Jose who has since died. Mrs Armstrong asked the Bishop of Leiria, Fatima if he had the letter which Lucy wrote at Our Lady's direction, and which was to be opened in 1960.

The bishop answered, *"Oh yes, right over there" - you know-very unconcernedly.*

She said, *"You mean to say that it is here in this very office?"*

"Yes – yes..."

"Oh! oh!" she said "I would have such curiosity! I wouldn't be able to restrain myself from opening that letter!"

He said, *"Well that's why we don't have any women bishops!"*

When I asked Lucy, *"Does anyone know what's in that letter besides you?"*

She answered, *"No" She said, "No one knows."*

I asked, *"Well there is a report that's been repeated many times... there is a report going around that the Holy Father has read that letter."*

She looked sharply at me. Then I said, *"this rumor says that after the Holy Father read your letter he fainted, and he didn't come to for three days!"*

"Oh!" She was hysterical by the time I had finished. She thought it was the funniest story she had ever heard. As for Father Oliveira, he just kept laughing and said, *"No they had not heard that story in Europe. That is an American invention!"*

I questioned her further. *"Does the Holy Father know what is in it?"*

"Oh no! The Holy Father doesn't know what's in it!"

I said, *"Well now, maybe you have bilocation? You know we read about that in "The Lives of the Saints". You could be here in the convent in Coimbra and at the same time you could be in Rome talking to the Holy Father."*

Oh, she thought that was a big joke too.

She said, *"I don't have bilocation."*

"There is no way I could get to Rome. I've never been to Rome. And I I've never seen the Holy Father I've never been told to Our Lady to send the letter to him. He does not know what is in that letter."

Then I said, *"What is in there?"* I figured as long as I had permission to ask questions I might as

well ask that one!

And she looked at me for a second and just smiled. That is what Father meant when he said, “Certain questions that she can’t answer, she just won’t answer.”

So, she didn’t answer that question but then she added, (and I think this is a good thing to remember) She said, **“But if you were the Holy Father I would certainly tell you what is in that letter.”**

So, we know that if the Holy Father does request the opening of that letter or perhaps the transmission of what is in that letter, before the year 1960 that Lucy will send him the answer or send the letter from the archives in Leiria.

Finally, I asked her about one other thing. that has always puzzled me. And up until that time I had not seen it commented on in the message of Fatima. In May of 1917, Our Lady told the children to come five more times. She appeared, of course, in May, June, July, August, September and October that was 6 times altogether.

But in May, her first appearance, she had said, “I will come again a seventh time.”

Father Luis objected and said, “I don’t think she said that!”

And Lucy said, “Oh yes ! yes! Our Lady did say that!”

I continued, “Now what did Our Lady mean? Has she already come the seventh time or is she yet to come? Because in my mind, there has always been the thought that maybe if Our Lady is going to convert Russia, she will come the way she came the last time at Fatima.— perhaps there will be a great manifestation there of the power of God and the influence of Our Lady. And I thought, well may THAT is the seventh coming.”

Lucy was smiling but she said nothing. That was another question she wouldn’t answer but I think the fact that she wouldn’t answer it let me to believe that Our Lady has not come the seventh time.

I asked Father Luis how it affected him. And it affected him the same way. He said he interpreted that to mean the same as I did. That Our Lady had not yet come the seventh time.

The seventh coming- Will we suppose it to be an official coming? Something that will be connected in some way with the Worldwide message of Fatima. At least that is a good thing to think about. Maybe in our day we will have a manifestation of Our Lady’s power and motherly concern. **A seventh coming in fulfillment of her promise and perhaps if we all continue our work promoting the FIVE conditions of the Fatima message, we, in our day, will see that other promise fulfilled – the conversion of Russia and Peace in our world.**