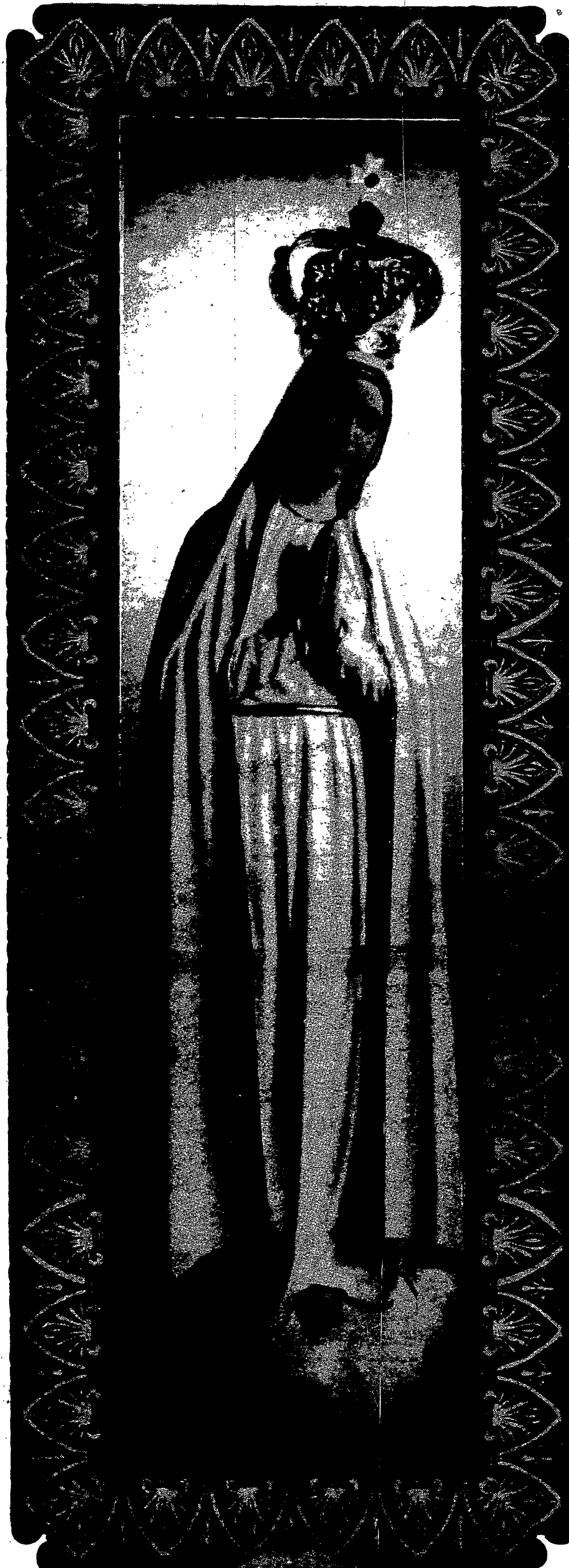


# CATHOLIC COURIER

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By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Following a holy hour and Benediction at Holy Rosary Church Thursday, April 23, 25-year-old Anthony Valentini explained how he had become involved in saying the rosary each week with local members of the Blue Army, an international organization of Marian devotees.

"A few years ago, I was simply deeply moved by someone poor in the church," Valentini recalled. "I asked him — he was a young guy — 'Why do you come to church?'"

The poor man replied that he "felt he had to worship and express himself to God," for "everything he had," related Valentini, a Bishop Kearney graduate.

"If more poor people had that attitude, I feel they could convert the world," he said, noting that the man's gratitude for his few blessings inspired Valentini to reflect on his own thankfulness for the Lord's blessings.

Since then, Valentini has regularly joined others who hope to convert the world to Christ through the power of prayer, penance and sacrifice.

In so doing, he and his fellow worshipers are fulfilling the requests of Our Lady of Fatima, whose reported appearances to three Portuguese shepherd children 75 years ago are commemorated this May by Catholics around the world.

## *Devotees observing Fatima's 75th year*

In a Europe racked by World War I, siblings Jacinta and Francisco, and their cousin, Lucia, first claimed to have seen an "Angel of Peace," who told them he was the "Guardian Angel of Portugal." The angel appeared to the children three times in 1916, telling them on the third appearance to pray for mankind and do penance for its "outrages, sacrileges and indifference" to God.

Then on May 13, 1917 the children saw the figure of a woman, whom they described as being brighter than the sun. She subsequently appeared to them once a month for the next five months, urging them to recite the rosary daily and telling them that they were bound for heaven.

But the woman said many souls, unlike those of the three children, were treading a path in the opposite direction. On July 13, the woman showed the children a vision of the fate such souls await.

Lucia described that terrifying day in an interview with Father Thomas McGlynn published in the 1948 book *Vision of Fatima*. Lucia spoke with the priest-author when she had grown up and become a nun. The memoirs recall the heavenly woman opening her hands and the "reflection which they gave out seemed to penetrate the earth ..."

The three children "saw a sea of fire and, plunged in this fire devils and souls like transparent embers, black or bronzed, in human form, which floated in the fire and were carried by the flames which they themselves gave forth ..."

"You have just seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go," the woman told them. "To save them the Lord wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If people do what I shall tell you many souls will be saved and there will be peace.

"The war will soon end. But if men do not stop offending the Lord

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