

# Statues To Be Re

## Fatima Image At Mount Genuine Work Of Art

By A Staff Reporter

Genuine art in churches is rare. Usually, worshippers are faced with standardised, mass-produced images. At the Abbey Church, Mount St. Benedict, there is this rare thing: an original, genuine work of art, installed last week on the altar of Our Lady's Chapel.

It is a life-sized image of Our Lady of Fatima carved from cedar by a Portuguese sculptor, and was given to the Benedictine Monastery by an anonymous Port-of-Spain businessman in fulfilment of a vow.

### 6-FOOT TALL

It is a remarkable, beautiful work. A trip up the winding road to the Abbey is worth the trouble just to see it. This image will have many pilgrim devotees.

The entire height is 6.88 feet, including a pedestal representing the top of the oak tree on which Our Lady appeared and the cloud that surrounded her feet.

Figure of the Virgin itself is 5.41 feet high, and is richly decorated with glittering stones. But what is so remarkable, when one is told that it is not plaster but wood, is the vivid impression of movement in the Virgin's garments.

### SILVER ROSARY

A delicate, diaphanous breast-cloth is windblown against the white cape. Such is the artistry that through the ruffled parchment-coloured cloth one sees the white veil. The Virgin's cape and gown are a revelation in how plastic wood can seem.

The face is delicately coloured, itself conveying a sense of



exquisite colour. The forehead of the cape is filigreed with gems as are the hems of the cape. A sterling silver rosary is draped from the clasped hands.

The statue is the work of Amalio Maia and his brothers who completed it in nine months, at their workshop in the Castelo de Maia, near Oporto, Portugal.

There are two other such statues in the world, one in the Church of Our Lady of Mercy, Lisbon, and another in Brazil.

Sculptor Maia worked along the directions given to him by Fr. Neves, the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Mercy at Lisbon. He expressed the wish that the statue should be made corresponding as closely as possible to the descriptions of the visionaries of Fatima.

As a result, this representation is more lively than earlier images. The statue is

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As a result, this representation is more lively than earlier images. The statue arrived in its crate last week from Portugal without damage, and was installed at the altar of Our Lady. It is draped.

The Archbishop of Port-of-Spain, Count Finbar Ryan, will bless it on Sunday, July 26, at 4 p.m., before an expected crowd of pilgrims. The ceremony will be held outside the Abbey Church. The Archbishop will preach the sermon, followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.