

Chapter 10

The “New” Third Secret

In Chapter 8 we discussed how, in keeping with the Church’s new post-conciliar “orientation,” the Vatican Secretary of State has established a “Party Line” on Fatima according to which a “new” version of the Fatima Message has been substituted for the authentic Message, which is at odds with “ecumenism,” “dialogue,” “interreligious dialogue,” the *Vatican-Moscow Agreement*, and the “updating” of the Church in general, with all the disastrous results these compromises and departures from Catholic Tradition have produced.

In this Chapter we will focus on how the Vatican “commentary” in *The Message of Fatima (TMF)*, published together with the vision of the “Bishop dressed in white” on June 26, 2000, proposes to substitute a “new” Third Secret, stripped of its admonitory and prophetic content and reduced to a mere recollection of things past. In due course we will discuss the developments in 2006-2007, which have shown beyond any doubt that the vision cannot possibly constitute the entirety of the Secret, and that a text containing precious words of the Blessed Virgin has been withheld, as Antonio Socci was forced to conclude. First, however, we must consider the “new” Third Secret advanced in *TMF* under the auspices of the Secretary of State—an office that will come to be occupied by the man who is now the principal protagonist in the Fatima controversy: Cardinal (then Archbishop) Tarcisio Bertone.²⁸³

The reader should bear with us if confronted with an occasional polemical comment in this more detailed theological exegesis of *TMF*, but we need not apologize for being polemical because polemics are a good thing when necessary. Today’s society increasingly substitutes the Catholic Faith and replaces it with faith in the so-called “exact sciences.” People of today, therefore, do not value the science and art of polemics whose purpose is to defend the Faith and the Church against the enemies of Christ, Who is the Truth. “*Ho polemos*” is the ancient Greek phrase for war. Nothing is wrong with waging war in defense of Christ and the Catholic Faith; but people who do not have the faith, or if their faith is weakened, will not understand this because they give too much faith to the so-called “exact sciences.”

The “Introduction”

Already the second paragraph of the Introduction of *TMF* concerning the Third Secret, written by the future Secretary of State, Archbishop

²⁸³ This chapter incorporates the original analysis by the late Father Gregory Hesse, S.T.D., J.C.D., as supplemented by a consideration of developments in the Church since the first edition.

Bertone, contains a piece of Vatican politics that seems to be oblivious of both recent history and Moral Theology:

The Twentieth Century was one of the most crucial in human history, with its tragic and cruel events culminating in the assassination attempt on the “sweet Christ on earth.”

That even an attempt to assassinate the Supreme Pontiff is a heinous crime, no person in his right mind will doubt. It is indeed under the punishment of excommunication, even in the rather liberal Code of Canon Law of 1983. However, the statement shows a tragic lack of proportion. That the “tragic and cruel events” would have been “*culminating*” in the attempt on Pope John Paul II’s life, is definitely out of proportion and in grave disregard of Stalin’s sixty million victims, plus the victims of all wars of the last century and the fifty-five million victims of abortion every single year! The lack of proportion is infinitely worse in its disregard of the supernatural aspect such as the real “sweet Christ on earth” in the tabernacle, Whose Real Presence is distributed in the hands and dropped on Saint Peter’s Square²⁸⁴ as also happens in thousands of other places. There is a purpose in this statement and it lies in *downplaying the importance of the Third Secret* in *TMF*.

The Introduction of *TMF* states on the next page that “there is only one manuscript, which is here reproduced photographically.” This would be a rather misleading, but literal truth, if it is meant that only one of the manuscripts has been photographically reproduced, but in the light of Cardinal Ratzinger’s statement, that the Secret has been published in its “entirety” (*TMF*, pp. 32, 39), it has to be considered false. There is a mountain of evidence²⁸⁵ that there are indeed *two* parts of the Third Secret, the first one being the vision of the “Bishop dressed in White” taken from the archives of the former Holy Office and published on June 26, 2000, and the second one in the Pope’s apartment. The evidence is marshaled in compelling fashion in an article by Mr. Andrew Cesanek (cf. Chapter 13 and *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue No. 64). As Mr. Cesanek points out, the published text contains no words of Our Lady. Thus, the Ratzinger/Bertone presentation of the Third Secret lacks credibility.

Without any illicit accusation of a deliberate sin against the Eighth Commandment, we are nevertheless facing the fact of a printed falsehood. As there has been no public statement to the contrary so far, it is impossible to talk about this as simply a mistake as to the number of manuscripts. Who and how many people are involved in this

²⁸⁴ Between 1986 and 1991 several *Sanpietrini*, the uniformed guards in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, have directly told Father Gregory Hesse (R.I.P., January 25, 2005), the principal author of this chapter (who at that time had been working in the Vatican for ten years), that after almost every single papal Mass in the Square, Sacred Hosts are found on the ground.

²⁸⁵ Since this book was first published in 2002, there is even much more evidence that there are two different manuscripts which together make up the whole Third Secret. This is proven again and again in *The Secret Still Hidden* by Christopher A. Ferrara and in *The Fourth Secret of Fatima* by Antonio Socci.

falsehood is of no importance, but the published falsehood as such is of a theological importance: even if it *were* only an error, it would affect the entire theological interpretation presented in the document. If it is a falsehood, which is what we firmly believe, then it means that the theological and historical interpretations presented are leading towards a wrong conclusion or message. It affects a lot more than the theology visible in the published commentaries, as we shall see.

It is also of theological importance to see the quotation marks for both the “secret” and “Our Lady.” If an “apparition” says that all religions are pleasing to God, which is heresy and blasphemy²⁸⁶, we should put “Our Lady” in quotation marks, as we know the “apparition” to be someone else, most probably a demon. But to place quotation marks around Our Lady regarding an apparition that has been approved by several Popes and been proven by a definite miracle in front of 70,000 witnesses conveys a message: namely, the possibility that it was not Our Lady after all. As one piece in this jigsaw of truths, half-truths, and falsehoods, this is of great significance.

The following pages of *TMF*'s Introduction reiterate the falsehood that the Consecration has been done, especially p. 8 which cites an unsigned letter by “Sister Lucy” which, as we showed in a previous chapter, is a manifest fake, as shown also by Father Paul Kramer.²⁸⁷ *The Fatima Crusader* has sufficiently dealt with this falsehood in the past and there is no need for repetitions here. In the present document the old quotations from this fake letter, however, present an explanatory context for the new lies.

Finally, we note again the incredible statement by Archbishop Bertone on p. 9 of the Introduction in *TMF*:

The decision of His Holiness John Paul II to make public the third part of the “secret” of Fatima brings to an end a period of history marked by tragic human lust for power and evil, yet pervaded by the merciful love of God and the watchful care of the Mother of Jesus and of the Church.

Various articles already published have sufficiently explained the absurdity of this statement in the historical sense.²⁸⁸ Indeed, historically seen, there can be no reasonable justification for such a statement by anyone. Clearly, this is a complete falsehood, bordering on lunacy. It is so false, so obviously wrong that who in their right mind could ever believe it or expect anyone else to believe it?

Now, the then-Archbishop Bertone, acting at the time as Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is neither out of his mind

²⁸⁶ Only a religion in which one can be saved can be pleasing to God, and there is only one (which is a dogma of the Faith), whence the contrary is heresy and it is also blasphemy, as God, Who is the Truth, cannot be careless about the Truth, whence to state the contrary is blasphemy.

²⁸⁷ *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64, p. 115.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 54ff.

nor a lunatic. This statement must, therefore, be of a theological nature. Father Gruner rightly suggested that according to Msgr. Bertone we are supposed to believe that “the so-called ‘fall of communism’ means that Fatima is no longer relevant to world politics and the conversion of Russia is no longer to be mentioned.”²⁸⁹ This is not only a political interpretation concerning the continuation of Cardinal Casaroli’s *Ostpolitik* and Pope John Paul II’s relationship to the propagator of genocide, Gorbachev, but it is a clear analysis of a changed theology which is central to the Church’s new orientation, a theology called Ecumenism.

For the moment the questions resulting from these observations will have to wait, as that can be understood better in the light of the “theology” of the former Cardinal Ratzinger.

The “Secret”

As far as the authenticity of the published text is concerned, while Father Gruner seems to be convinced of its authenticity,²⁹⁰ certain questions present themselves: Why did Sister Lucy—who by 1944 had surely read Holy Scripture and many “devotional books,” as Cardinal Ratzinger calls them—say that the Holy Father “prayed for the souls of the *corpses* he met on his way” (*cadaveres* in Portuguese)? Throughout the history of salvation one speaks of the “souls of the dead or defunct,” as one can find in the Creed (... resurrection of the dead ...). Only in the Old Testament can one find the term “corpse”, and it is found in the context of apostates or lost souls.

It is equally strange in the context of the First and the Second Secret that the seer would speak about a “Bishop dressed in White,” when the events of 1939 were clearly prophesied with a reference to the pope and even his name: Pius XI. A “Bishop dressed in White” could be the Abbot of Brixen in South Tyrol, any bishop in the tropics, or an impostor in Rome who pretends to be Pope—as the sedevacantists claim. We cannot and shall not venture an answer, but the phrase “Bishop dressed in White” is strangely vague in the historical context of all the events since 1917.

The Interpretation of the “Secret”

A. The Pope’s Letter to Sister Lucy

In this letter, dated April 19, 2000, which is cited in *TMF* (p. 27), the Pope says:

Since on that day [the Beatification of Francisco and Jacinta, May 13, 2000] there will be time only for a brief greeting and not a conversation, I am sending ... Archbishop Bertone ... Archbishop Bertone ... **will come in my name** [sic] to ask certain questions about the interpretation of “the third part of the secret.”

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

We conclude that His Holiness had no time for a conversation with Sister Lucy. The ever-vigilant defender of the late Pope John Paul II might object to this conclusion by reminding us that it is not in our power to advise the Pope about his schedule, nor to challenge his decisions in discipline and Church government, *in rebus ... quae ad disciplinam et regimen Ecclesiae ... pertinent* (D.S. 3060).

This is certainly true. But we are allowed to ask an obvious question: How is it that the Pope's advisors and assistants scheduled His Holiness to receive the Masons of the Trilateral Commission,²⁹¹ the aforesaid Mikhail Gorbachev, the Jewish High Masons of the B'nai B'rith,²⁹² to preach from the pulpit of Rome's Lutheran Church,²⁹³ to visit Rome's Synagogue,²⁹⁴ to meet with the Buddhist "patriarch" Vasana Tara,²⁹⁵ the Dalai Lama,²⁹⁶ and Yasser Arafat,²⁹⁷ and allowed the schismatic and heretical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople²⁹⁸ to stand next to him on the Papal Loggia of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome (!), but they could not find the time to schedule the Pope to talk to Our Lady's personal and perhaps most important of all messengers in the past 100 years?

We do not know the answer and cannot venture to give it, but the theological connection to the Vatican's downplaying the Third Secret is obvious.

B. Cardinal Bertone's Commentary in *TMF*

This unsigned account of an alleged conversation (in April 2000) between Archbishop Bertone and Sister Lucy, commencing on p. 28 of *TMF*, is a remarkable piece of deception, probably written by Archbishop Bertone himself. As Father Paul Kramer rightly pointed out, Msgr. Bertone not only failed to ask Sister Lucy if the Consecration of Russia had been done, but he also juxtaposes two logically separate statements, namely Sister Lucy's affirmation that the figure in white was a Pope, although she *does not know the name* (!), and her agreement with Pope John Paul II's claim that it was "a mother's hand that guided the bullet's path" on May 13, 1981.²⁹⁹

There were many rather strange coincidences—or was it Providence?—in Ali Agca's assassination attempt, to consider a non-theological digression:

- Why did the gun jam after the third shot? It is not unusual for a semi-automatic pistol to jam, but it is almost impossible that Italy's best

²⁹¹ Daniel Le Roux, *Petrus liebte du mich?* (Stuttgart, 1990). *Peter, Lovest Thou Me?*, p. 110. The skeptic will find that I only referred to pictures which can be easily found in the English translation published by Instauratio Press, Yarra Junction, Australia, 1988.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁹⁹ *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64, p. 31.

police force, the *Carabinieri*, would not find the cause after weeks of microscopic examination in their laboratories. Was it the Guardian Angel’s interference? That would be theologically highly probable.

- Why did Ali Agca not use hollow point bullets or the readily available *Federal Hydra-Shok* ammunition which would have accomplished his purpose to assassinate the Pope? Most sources claim that some organization or secret service was behind the attack. Were they all amateurs?
- Why did he choose St. Peter’s Square and a small handgun, with no chance to escape, why not a rifle (easily available back then) and one of the many elevated positions around St. Peter’s Square with at least a chance to escape? Was he just a dumb fanatic?

Probably, we will not know the truth about that day in our lifetime, but we do know the truth that this attempt to assassinate the Pope has nothing to do with the Third Secret, *because he was **not** killed*. The event was tragic, but it cost the Pope in his full activities less than one year—out of more than twenty-five. It is an insult to Divine Providence and to Our Lady to claim that this *relatively* unimportant event would be at the core of a prophecy about hell, two World Wars, Communism, and the punishment still to come.

Finally, we must ask: Why would the 1981 incident be better understood after 1960, as Sister Lucy said the Third Secret would be? Anyone in the 20th Century would have understood it as we do. Would the generation that had fought in World War II and in Korea have better understood the role of soldiers in this vision only *after* 1960? Sister Lucy’s insistence on disclosure in the year 1960, that “Our Lady wishes it so”, can only mean that Lucy knew something was going to happen around 1960 or shortly after that would make the Secret clearly understandable as a prophecy of future events. The Secret clearly has no connection with the assassination of President Kennedy, but what about John XXIII’s encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, published in 1963, or Vatican II which was opened in 1962, *but announced January 25, 1959*?

C. The “Announcement made by Cardinal Angelo Sodano ...”

The deception continues in the Secretary of State’s statement that the text of the Third Secret must be interpreted “in a symbolic key”. (*TMF*, p. 30) The purpose of this suggestion becomes evident when Cardinal Sodano distorts the actual vision by saying: “He [the Pope] too falls to the ground, apparently dead.” As we discussed in a previous chapter, the words “apparently dead” are the exact contrary to Sister Lucy’s word “killed.”

This is followed by pushing the message into the past, be it by pointing at the event in 1981 or with the ridiculous declaration that 1989 ended Communism and the spreading of atheism. Gorbachev’s “glasnost” and “perestroika” have been sufficiently dealt with in

various issues of *The Fatima Crusader* and there is no need to repeat these analyses here. It is sad to see, however, that Cardinal Sodano, the former Secretary of State, does not shrink from using a decade-old lie to debunk a message from Our Lady.

D. Cardinal Ratzinger's "Theological Commentary"

i) Introductory Downplay

The very second line of this Commentary (*TMF*, p. 32) already contains the claim that the "so-called third 'Secret' of Fatima" has been "published here in its entirety." This falsehood is repeated later on (*TMF*, p. 39). The quoted article by Andrew Cesanek produces sufficient proof that this is false (see Chapter 13). We will deal with this deception at the conclusion of this chapter.

The next statement is cynical to say the least:

No great mystery is revealed: nor is the future unveiled. We see the Church of the martyrs of the century which has just passed represented in a scene described in a language which is symbolic and not easy to decipher.³⁰⁰

If no great mystery is revealed, then why did Our Lady bother to make it a secret in the first place? Possibly—as we shall see later—the future is revealed in the other part of the Third Secret which has evidently been withheld from us, the part which contains the words of Our Lady following "In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved etc." In any case, to claim that the vision of soldiers shooting the Pope dead is merely a symbol of the past, especially in the connection with the unusually clear messages of the rest of the Fatima Message, is preposterous.

In comparison to most prophecies—one thinks of the difficulties in interpreting the Apocalypse—the secrets of Fatima are indeed unusually clear and to the point; why would the Third Secret be "symbolic and not easy to decipher"? Why would the *Twentieth Century* end in nineteen hundred and ninety-nine?

In the year 1900 Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany *decreed* this to be the beginning of the Twentieth Century, which is mathematically impossible. It would seem that the former Cardinal Ratzinger's mathematics, as well as his theology, was dependent on authority instead of the truth. To say this is not to engage in "cheap polemics" in the light of a rather remarkable change of mind between 1984 and 2000. In 1984, when discussing the content of the Third Secret, Cardinal Ratzinger spoke of "the absolute importance of history", "the last times" and "religious prophecy" and said:

... but the things contained in this third secret correspond to

³⁰⁰ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Theological Commentary", *The Message of Fatima (TMF)*, June 26, 2000, p. 32.

what is announced in Sacred Scripture and are confirmed by many other Marian apparitions themselves in their known contents.³⁰¹

Cardinal Ratzinger’s statement of 1984 is in direct contradiction to his downplaying of the Third Secret, sixteen years later, in *TMF*. Father Paul Kramer³⁰² collects the most important Marian messages from the other Marian apparitions on this point. They are quite frightening, and certainly—at least in a part of the prophecy—predict events yet to come.

We are once again faced with the same basic tenor of the entire publication, which trivializes the Third Secret into an insignificant prediction of a failed attempt on the Holy Father’s life. May we call the failed attempt on Pope John Paul II’s life an “insignificant” prediction? Yes! We have said so already and it is the truth: The attempt *failed*, and even if it had killed the Pope, this would have had nothing to do with the Third Secret. In Roman dialect we say: “*Morto un Papa, se ne fa un’altro*”: with the death of a Pope, another one is elected.

Another point arises: Why has nobody in the Vatican bothered to suggest that the Third Secret may deal with the untimely death of Pope John Paul I? Was he a completely insignificant figure? No Pope is, but God never *knew* the future—He *knows*. The failed attempt on a Pope’s life is indeed “no great mystery” as the former Cardinal Ratzinger formulated it, but the actual—and quite mysterious—death of a Pope had been conveniently forgotten.

The prophecy and the three seers’ comments make it abundantly clear “that the Holy Father will have much to suffer.” In the context of *two* world wars and—as we shall see—much worse, it borders on idolatry to enhance one Pope’s importance to the point of making a few months in the hospital *the* Third Secret. What John Paul II had to suffer in Rome’s Gemelli Hospital is something that one would not even wish to contemplate. However, with today’s medicine, the Pope’s suffering at that time does not even compare to the average priest’s fate in the Nazi concentration camps—not to mention the fate of many more priests and bishops behind the Iron Curtain.

Most telling of all, if the Third Secret predicts only that a Pope will survive an assassination attempt, then why did the then-Cardinal Ratzinger say in 1984 that the Secret had not been disclosed to avoid “confusing religious prophecy with *sensationalism*”? What would be sensational in 1984 about a prophecy concerning a *failed* assassination attempt that had taken place three years earlier? Obviously, nothing. The former Cardinal Ratzinger’s June 26, 2000 version of the Third Secret is what the lawyers call a recent fabrication. The “sensational” content he had in mind in 1984 clearly could not have been the 1981 assassination attempt.

³⁰¹ *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64, pp. 34ff.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 115ff.

ii) On Public and Private Revelations

Cardinal Ratzinger significantly set, at that time, the entire phenomenon of Fatima in the context of “private revelations”—one ought to call them either “fake” or “extraordinary,” depending on their authenticity. Cardinal Ratzinger stated that the Message of Fatima, like all “private revelations” approved as authentic by Church authorities, “can be a genuine help in understanding the Gospel and living it better at a particular moment in time; therefore it should not be disregarded. It is a help which is offered, but *which one is not obliged to use.*” In other words, according to the then-Cardinal Ratzinger, no one in the Church is obliged to follow the Message of Fatima—not the Pope, not the bishops, not the priests, not the members of the laity. Fatima—including the consecration of Russia and the Five First Saturdays devotion—is purely optional. If we prefer, we can simply ignore it completely—as if the Miracle of the Sun had never happened; as if the requests of the Virgin of Fatima had been made by a ghost! Fatima is a mere “help” that we can take or leave at our pleasure.

One of the most erudite Popes in history, Benedict XIV, rightly says that these revelations cannot be held with the assent of Faith, but “rather an assent of human faith in keeping with the requirements of prudence which puts them before us as probable and credible to piety.” But Cardinal Ratzinger’s quotation of Pope Benedict seems to ignore what is so extraordinary about Fatima, and what takes it out of the category of other “private” revelations: the astounding Miracle of the Sun that proves Fatima to be a bit more than just “credible to piety.”

The former Cardinal Ratzinger took this approach, it seems, with all of the extraordinary revelations of the past centuries. For example, he reduced the extraordinary revelations about the Corpus Christi Feast and the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque to an event that merely had an “*effect even on the liturgy.*” This borders on blasphemy when we consider the fate of France after Louis XIV’s and his two successors’ impertinent and disastrous refusal to obey the request of Christ for the consecration of France to the Sacred Heart, conveyed to St. Margaret Mary in the same “private” revelations.³⁰³

Cardinal Ratzinger’s erroneous conception of prophecy is clear in the following statement:

... it should be kept in mind that prophecy in the biblical sense does not mean to predict the future but to explain the will of God for the present, and therefore show the right path to take for the future. A person who foretells what is going to happen responds to the curiosity of the mind, which wants to draw back the veil on the future.

³⁰³ See Bishop Emile Bougaud, *The Life of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque* (originally published by Benzinger, 1890; republished by TAN Books and Publishers, 1990), Chapter XIV, “The Last Grand Revelation—The King of France, 1689”.

This is tantamount to a denial of *all* prophecy, which is commonly called one of the highest of all freely given graces, the *gratiae gratis datae*. Prophecy often involves the correct interpretation of the past and the present, but is as such understood as a prediction of the future. Either Isaias, David, Christ, and St. Paul “responded to the curiosity of the mind” and the Church Fathers and many Doctors of the Church just wanted “to draw back the veil of the future,” or Cardinal Ratzinger is wrong. May we leave the answer to you?

Perhaps Cardinal Ratzinger reduced prophecy to “the signs of the times” because (at least before he became Pope) he failed to see the real signs of the times, namely: empty churches, heresy, apostasy, blasphemy, sexual perversion and impurity, neo-paganism, and in fact, a total disagreement among many bishops and priests on anything in the Catholic Church. The only thing agreed upon among the leading powers in the Vatican is to hate traditional Catholic theology, which is scorned by them, along with the whole idea of the conversion of Russia to the Catholic Faith—again, the very conflict of ecclesial world views which gave rise to the very grave injustice we are discussing here; namely, the *de facto* suppression of the full Fatima Message from being heard and complied with, thereby imminently endangering literally billions of persons’ lives and souls.

Cardinal Ratzinger seemed to think these real signs of the times have nothing to do with that event known as the Second Vatican Council, wherein it is claimed that the Holy Spirit came a second time. That is obviously false, as we can see from the Council’s bitter fruits. As Our Lord said, “By their fruits you shall know them.” (Matt. 7:16)

As Pope Benedict, however, the former Cardinal has come to recognize, as we noted in Chapter 7, that “in vast areas of the world the faith is in danger of dying out like a flame which no longer has fuel...”, that “in the decades following the Second Vatican Council, some interpreted the opening to the world not as a demand of the missionary ardor of the Heart of Christ, but as a passage to secularization...”, that “certain fundamental truths of the faith, such as sin, grace, theological life, and the last things, were not mentioned anymore [and] they were unconsciously caught up in the self-secularization of many ecclesial communities; these, hoping to please those who did not come [instead] saw the members they already had [then] leave deprived and disappointed...” and that the result is a “secularized ecclesial environment” and—what an admission!—a “desert without God” in the very midst of the Catholic world. Stunning and bitter results of Vatican II—it is hard to imagine Our Lady of Fatima would have overlooked them and not try to warn us of them. Perhaps an explicit admission of a connection between this disaster and the Council will not be long in coming. At any rate, Pope Benedict’s remarks throw cold water on the “enlightened” ones who still speak disparagingly of the “alarmism” of the “Fatimists,” including those involved in the writing of this book.

To return to the unfortunate commentary in *TMF*, however, we may be accused of “polemics,” but in the light of Christ’s teaching and especially the Church’s teaching on prophecy and the importance that St. Paul and the Church Fathers attributed to this divine gift, *TMF*’s view of prophecy borders on heresy and blasphemy, to say the least. To reduce everything between the Psalms and Saint John Bosco or Fatima to a “responding to the curiosity of the mind” is tantamount to declaring Holy Scripture, the Church Fathers, Tradition, and almost all extraordinary revelation of the future as a sort of clerical Rainbow Press on the level of the lowest publication at the local supermarket’s cash register. The implication that the future predictions of divine prophecies are merely objects of idle human curiosity is an insult to God and the Saints; and this cannot ever be taken lightly. On p. 38 of *TMF* Cardinal Ratzinger again refers to Cardinal Sodano’s trivializing the significance of the vision:

[they] do not describe photographically the details of future events, but synthesize and compress against a single background of events, facts which extend through time in an unspecified succession and duration.

That all of these events are in the past and no great mystery is the evident message of these eminent Cardinals.

It should be noted that Pope Benedict XVI, on May 13, 2007 in the National Marian Shrine of Aparecida in Brazil, stated that Fatima is the most prophetic message of the 20th Century. This public statement may be in reparation for his former trivializing Fatima and its prophetic message, but still the Church suffers to this day with not taking the Fatima prophecies of annihilation and many souls going to hell seriously enough.

iii) Cardinal Ratzinger’s “Attempt to Interpret ...”

The first question that arises here concerns Cardinal Ratzinger’s surprise. In *TMF* (p. 39) he states that the Virgin’s message that devotion to Her Immaculate Heart is the way to salvation is surprising to “the Anglo-Saxon and German cultural world.” Why does Cardinal Ratzinger say this? Have the English and the Germans not heard about the Sacred Heart,³⁰⁴ St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, and St. Philip Benitius, let alone Pope Leo XIII, or are they too intelligent to fall for such an Italian or Spanish romanticism? Does the sober German tell his girl: “I love you with all my brain!”, or would a determined Englishman communicate his passion with a dry reference to his faculty of the will? What is the purpose of such ludicrous statements? The answer may lie in the lines

³⁰⁴ In the 13th Century, St. Gertrude, a German, was a “herald of the Sacred Heart”. See *St. Gertrude the Great*, published by the Benedictine Convent of Clyde, Missouri, republished by TAN Books and Publishers in 1979, pp. 26ff. Thus we do not understand why the “German cultural world” would find anything strange about Devotion to the Sacred Heart or the Immaculate Heart.

that follow this incomprehensible “surprise” of the Cardinal’s.

Cardinal Ratzinger’s “attempt to interpret the ‘secret’ of Fatima” completely fails to interpret what is not the secret as such anyway, as this has not been revealed, but he ends up discrediting the Immaculate Conception Himself. This eminent prince of the Church seemed to have forgotten when Our Lady appeared at Lourdes She did not introduce Herself as “Immaculately Conceived,” but rather said: “I am *the* Immaculate Conception.” Only She, among all mere creatures, has ever been conceived without Original Sin *and* has never committed a sin. Only Her Heart—referring to the third faculty of the soul, not the internal organ but the heart which St. Thomas Aquinas calls the *sensus communis*—therefore, is the Immaculate Heart. Cardinal Ratzinger inflates this term, reserved to the Mother of God, to include any “heart, which, with God’s grace, has come to perfect interior unity and therefore ‘sees God.’” He actually abuses the Gospel with his interpretation by citing Matthew 5:8, which only says: “Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God.” Christ talks about the clean of heart, not “perfect interior unity” and certainly not the only Immaculate Heart. If we follow this implicit denial of the exclusiveness of the Immaculate Heart by attributing it to all who are “clean of heart,” then we might as well arrive at the logical conclusion that all priests have sacred hearts, as they are consecrated an *alter Christus* (another Christ), which might account for their Latin title of *Reverendus* (to be revered). But to say all priests have sacred hearts would be blasphemous, which is exactly what one ought to think of trivializing the Immaculate Heart.

Even the ‘typically Protestant’ objection “that we should not place a human being between ourselves and Christ” is answered by Cardinal Ratzinger in apparent ignorance of Our Lady: he quotes St. Paul’s exhortation to “imitate” him, instead of explaining that it was Our Lord Himself Who placed a mere human being between Himself and us by making His Mother the *Mediatrix* of all graces!

Sister Lucy finally was discredited as a seer when Cardinal Ratzinger said that the vision incorporates images which she “may have seen in devotional books”.³⁰⁵ This is tantamount to declaring the whole vision a product of fantasy, and fits snugly into the plan of dissolving Fatima “into nothing more than generic Catholic piety and platitudes, involving events that are over and done with,” as Father Gruner in his article so aptly describes the Bertone/Ratzinger commentary (*TMF*).³⁰⁶

As we discussed in a previous chapter, the last page of *TMF* again declares everything in the Secret to be part of the past, including Our Lady’s words: “My Immaculate Heart will triumph”—from which the Cardinal removes the words *In the end*. He reduces all of Fatima to “the *fiat* of Mary, the word of Her heart, [that] has changed the history of

³⁰⁵ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “Theological Commentary”, *The Message of Fatima*, p. 42.

³⁰⁶ *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64, p. 51.

the world".³⁰⁷ This seems to be an effort to eliminate Fatima entirely from the scene.

iv) A Warning from Scripture

TMF's "liquidation" of the Message of Fatima reminds us of Our Lord's admonition to His disciples to "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Mt. 16:6) At first the disciples, who were eating bread at the moment, did not understand. What did this talk of leaven in bread have to do with the Pharisees? Soon, however, they grasped Our Lord's meaning: "Then they understood that He had not said that they should beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Mt. 16:12)

As Archbishop Alban Goodier, S.J. explained in his classic commentary on this passage in Scripture, Our Lord was teaching the disciples to be on their guard against the *subtleties* of the Pharisees, which were far more dangerous than any open opposition to Christ:

It was not so much their opposition that He feared for His own, it was their [the Pharisees'] *subtlety*. Before the Pharisees had blamed Him for His miracles and other good deeds; He knew that this would not take His friends away from Him. Now this morning they [the Pharisees] had come, with an affected simplicity, a show of desire to know the truth, an appeal to the *prophets, a zeal for tradition, a respect for law and order and obedience to the powers that be*; and all this, He knew, would be likely to affect His own *more than any open enmity*. Like leaven, unless they were careful, it would spread unconsciously among them.³⁰⁸

The Virgin of Fatima, like Our Lord Himself, was quite straightforward in Her message. But the former Cardinal's commentary obscures the simplicity of God's truth. And by the time the Cardinal had finished with his "tribute" to Fatima, nothing seems to be left of it. According to *TMF*, the matter is all very *subtle*—so subtle that it vanishes.

But the apparitions at Fatima are not so subtle. They were given to little children, who could not read, for the edification and guidance of the wise and the learned of this world, including theologians at the Vatican. Either Our Lady appeared at Fatima or She did not. Either She gave a distinct message to the children, which they could remember and repeat just as they had heard it, or She did not. Either She intended this message to be passed on to the world or She did not. Either She insured that Her message would be accurately transmitted or She did not. Either She guaranteed beyond any shadow of reasonable doubt, by the Miracle of the Sun, that it was indeed She, the Queen of Heaven and Earth, Who came, Who spoke and Who commanded, or She did not. The answer in each case is, obviously, that She did, for She is the Mother of God.

³⁰⁷ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Theological Commentary", *The Message of Fatima*, p. 43.

³⁰⁸ Archbishop Goodier, S.J., *The Public Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Vol. I, (Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., London, England, 1932) p. 462.

Like the disciples in their encounter with the Pharisees, we must be on guard against Pharisaical subtleties which have spread like poisonous leaven through the Church over the past forty years. Now the latter day leaven of the Pharisees seeks to penetrate the Message of Fatima. The Pharisees of old were dangerous precisely because they seemed to have a genuine respect for the truth. Today a feigned respect for the Message of Fatima conceals its most determined opponents.

Conclusion

In one of the stranger events in an already very strange post-conciliar Church, we are faced with quite a few questions which arise from the unorthodox comments on the vision in the Third Secret provided by *TMF*:

- Why are the actual words of Our Lady, the real Third Secret, written down on a single sheet—and most probably still in the papal safe— withheld from the public? Why do they pretend in public that these words do not even exist?
- Why is the published vision, which obviously deals with the murder of a Pope in the future by public execution by a band of soldiers, associated with the 1981 attempt on John Paul II’s life which failed?
- Why is the falsehood that the Consecration of Russia has been done repeated?
- Why the absurd statement that: “The decision of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to make public the third part of the ‘secret’ of Fatima *brings to an end a period of history marked by tragic human lust for power and evil*”?
- Why did the late Pope’s assistants and advisors make His Holiness available for hundreds of political meetings but made available virtually no time for Sister Lucy?
- Why is the lie about the fall of Communism in 1989 repeated?³⁰⁹
- Why is the Secret, long kept secret, belittled as “no great mystery,” and reduced to symbolism?
- Why is prophecy’s prediction of the future denied?
- Why is the Immaculate Heart belittled and equated with the “clean of heart”?
- Why is the unchangeable future—and with it God’s Providence— denied, at least implicitly?
- Why is Sister Lucy’s vision belittled by mentioning “devotional books” as the possible source?

³⁰⁹ Cardinal Sodano, on May 13, 2000 at Fatima, said in his speech: “The successive events of 1989 led, both in the Soviet Union and in a number of countries of Eastern Europe, to the fall of the Communist regimes which promoted atheism.” This false statement has been disproven over and over again in *The Fatima Crusader* in the years following 1989.

- Why do the prelates fail to explain the line “In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved *etc.*”?
- What is the purpose of publishing the vision of the Third Secret in the first place, when the words of Our Lady are withheld and the vision reduced to nothingness?

Whenever we are faced with any kind of sin, such as a lie, we have to ask the question: *Cui bono?*—to whose benefit?

The evidence points to one answer for all these questions. The Vatican’s fabrications and incoherencies about the Third Secret and Fatima as such, cannot be a silly play by a few bored prelates. *There must be an important purpose to the fabrications that can be unmasked with no great difficulty. Why risk this exposure, unless for an important purpose?*

As it is evident that the Third Secret is not abused to predict some politically correct or convenient visions for the future, but—on the contrary—is reduced to the past *and* deprived of any real importance, *the only purpose of the entire act of publication must be a strategic diversion from the actual words of Our Lady: a vision and a prophecy are turned into deception or—as the intelligence communities like to call it—perception management.*

This answer is far from being a mere speculation. Every piece of evidence we have discussed so far, including the Third Secret vision itself and other approved apparitions referred to by Cardinal Ratzinger himself in 1984, points to the conclusion that the Third Secret *in its entirety* must include words of Our Lady withheld from the public.

There cannot be many reasons for withholding part of a message from Our Lady, if ever. It would be hardly conceivable that the part withheld is so terrifying as to cause panic. Possibly the message might be too symbolic to comprehend, as might be the case with a few lines in the Apocalypse. A third possibility is that the message is quite clear and explicit, but highly embarrassing for the ones who hold power over its publication.

It seems evident that the first two possibilities are out of character with Fatima and most Marian apparitions, which leads us to the third possibility as our conclusion: *The Vatican has something to hide that would be extremely embarrassing.* We recall the testimony of Father Joaquin Alonso, who for sixteen years was the official archivist of Fatima:

It is therefore completely probable that the text makes concrete references to the crisis of faith within the Church and to the negligence of the pastors themselves [and the] internal struggles in the very bosom of the Church and of grave pastoral negligence of the upper hierarchy.³¹⁰

This is entirely congruent with the 1846 apparition and message

³¹⁰ Father Joaquin Alonso, *La Verdad sobre el Secreto de Fatima*, (Centro Mariano, Madrid, Spain, 1976) p. 73. In *The Whole Truth About Fatima* - Vol. III, p. 704. See also *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 64, p. 121.

of Our Lady at La Salette, the apparition of 1634 of Our Lady of Good Success, Quito, and a few others. And possibly we might know the actual text of the Third Secret: There is the story of some years ago of a supposedly reliable French priest who heard a supernatural message, while listening to a recording in a sort of Oratory. He claims to have heard the following lines:

There will be a wicked council planned and prepared that will change the face of the Church. Many will lose the Faith and confusion will reign everywhere. The sheep will in vain search for their shepherds. A schism will tear apart the tunic of My Son.— This will be the end of times, announced in the Holy Scriptures and recalled to memory by Me in many places. The abomination of abominations will reach its peak and it will bring the chastisement announced in La Salette. My Son’s arm, which I will not be able to hold back anymore, will punish this poor world, which has to expiate its crimes.—One will not talk but about wars and revolutions. The elements of nature will be unchained and will cause anguish, even with the best (the most courageous). The Church will bleed from all Her wounds. Blessed are they who will persevere and search for refuge in My Heart, because in the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph.

Of course, there is absolutely no proof for the authenticity of this text. We must not claim this to be the real Third Secret. However, it makes a great deal more sense than anything contained in the Vatican’s “interpretation” of the visional part of the Third Secret.

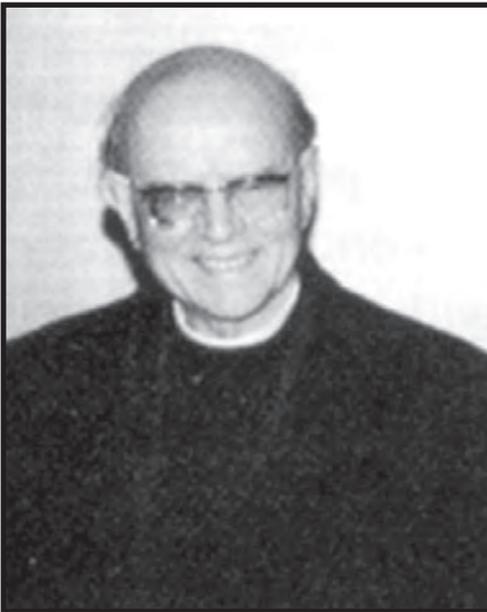
The heresies and the apostasy following Vatican II are of such a tragic and widespread importance that common sense demands that we believe this to be the Third Secret, or part of it. Is it possible that Our Lady knew about the end of World War I, the beginning of World War II under Pius XI, Russia spreading her errors, Russia being the instrument of chastisement, a future Pope being shot by soldiers, but nothing about the cataclysmic developments in the Church beginning with Vatican II, an event that spiritually pales all wars into insignificance? We have already mentioned that no less than Pope Paul VI said:

The Church finds Herself in an hour of unrest, of self-critique, one might say, even of auto-destruction! It is like an internal, acute, and complicated revolution, for which no one was prepared after the Council. (Dec. 7, 1968)

He also mentioned “the smoke of Satan” that had entered the Church. Even Paul VI, who found himself at the center of the crisis, perceived the disaster to a point. And we have already mentioned the recent and quite devastating admissions about the crisis by the former Cardinal Ratzinger, speaking now as Pope. Is it conceivable that Our Lady of Fatima had nothing to say about this unprecedented situation in the Church, when even the former Cardinal Ratzinger admitted, the Third Secret of Fatima

speaks of “dangers threatening the faith and the life of the Christian, and therefore of the world”? Clearly it is impossible for Our Lady not to have mentioned the present-day apostasy and its causes!

And so while there is no proof—we say it again—for the authenticity of the above-quoted message the French priest claims to have received, there is no logical alternative to the Third Secret being *something* along these lines. This can only mean that there is a text pertaining to the Third Secret which the Vatican has yet to disclose—a text that follows the words about the dogma of the Faith being preserved in Portugal. We will discuss the contents of this text in Chapters 12 and 13; and then, in Chapter 14, we will review the explosive developments that have confirmed its existence beyond any doubt. But first we must consider in detail that famous and quite strange “interview” of Sister Lucy by a highly placed Vatican functionary—the prelate who would go on to conduct a virtual one-man public relations campaign in defense of the Secretary of State’s Party Line on Fatima, including a book and a series of television and radio appearances whose aim was to control the damage caused by overwhelming evidence of a Vatican cover-up of the missing text. We mean the co-author of *TMF* and now the Cardinal Secretary of State himself: Tarcisio Bertone.



Father Caillon (left) said, “An order came from Rome, obliging everyone to say and think: ‘The Consecration is done. The Pope [John Paul II] having done all that he can, Heaven has deigned to agree to this gesture.’” It was around this time, 1988-1989, that many Fatima Apostolates who had insisted that the Consecration of Russia had not been done suddenly began asserting that the 1984 consecration fulfilled the desires of Heaven (see pages 112 and 354-355).