

Chapter 2

The Long Opposition Begins

Even a cursory reading of the first two parts of the Great Secret in the Message of Fatima reveals that it is a heavenly challenge to the powers of the world, whose hold on even Catholic Portugal had been increasing since the beginning of the 20th Century.

Recalling the text of the Secret set forth in the first chapter, it is obvious that what Heaven has proposed therein would be anathema to the Masonic regime in Portugal, and indeed to all of the organized forces against the Church which, at the beginning of the last century, were plotting (by their own admission, as we shall see) a final assault upon the Catholic citadel. The basic elements of the Message constitute a veritable charter of opposition to these forces: saving souls from hell; the establishment throughout the world of a Catholic devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the consecration of Russia to that Immaculate Heart, and Russia's consequent conversion to Catholicism; and, world peace borne of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart.

The Message of Fatima is important for the salvation of souls; that much is completely obvious. But somewhat less obvious—and this is what will come to infuriate both the external and internal enemies of the Church—the Message and Our Lady's appearance are also very important for the correct ordering of human society. As Our Lord said: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Luke 12:31)

If mankind heeds the Virgin's message, then peace among individuals, families, cities and countries, and in fact the whole world, can be achieved in the form of *Catholic social order*. (We shall see in the next chapter that this social order is not some utopian dream, but a thing which has been achieved even in the 20th Century—in Portugal, through its Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1931.) To be sure, Original Sin would remain, but we would see a period in human history like that prophesied by Isaias, who, under divine inspiration, envisioned a time when men would make war no more, would learn the art of war no more, but would beat their swords into plowshares.⁴³ The tendency of man toward sin would be vastly ameliorated and controlled by the beneficent influence of the Church and Her sacraments. And who, looking upon the world today, could seriously argue that even the worst "excesses" of men in the Catholic social order that once existed in pre-"Reformation" Europe are anything at

⁴³ "And He shall judge the Gentiles, and rebuke many people: and they shall turn their swords into plowshares, and their spears into sickles: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they be exercised any more to war." (Is. 2:4) Also, "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into spades: nation shall not take sword against nation: neither shall they learn war any more." (Micah 4:3)

all when compared with the evil and violence which have been virtually institutionalized in every nation in our time—first and foremost with the endless holocaust of “legalized” abortion.

The implications flowing from the simple text of the Great Secret of Fatima are plain enough to anyone of minimal intelligence: Such a plan for peace in the world could only be achieved if enough individuals, at every level of society, freely cooperated. (We are not speaking here of some forcibly imposed religious dictatorship, as exists in certain Islamic states, but a social order naturally arising from the common Catholic faith of the people.) The plan could succeed, even then, only if it were based on the designs of the Creator of mankind, Who has anointed Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, as King of kings and Lord of lords (Apoc. 19:16). Jesus is King, not only of individuals but also of societies and the whole world. Therefore, if this plan of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who is Queen of Heaven and of earth, is to work, mankind must acknowledge the sovereign Kingship of Christ over all mankind as it is exercised through His Catholic Church. That men will, in fact, be moved to do so in sufficient numbers—first in Russia and then elsewhere—is the very miracle promised by the Virgin if Her requests are honored.

One can understand that the prince of this world, as Jesus Christ referred to the devil, would not accept easily the proposed destruction of his flourishing kingdom here on earth. Nor would this peace plan from Heaven be accepted by those men, associations and secret societies whose power and ill-gotten riches would be forfeited if the plan were put into effect and the conversion of Russia and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart—and thus of the Catholic Faith—were to follow.

With this background we can better appreciate why fierce opposition to the Message of Fatima arose even while the apparitions were going on, and why it continues to this day, enlisting even men within the Church as opponents of the requests of the Virgin.

At the time of the Fatima apparitions, the Mayor of Ourem, the county seat to which Fatima and Aljustrel (the village where the children who had seen Our Lady lived) belonged, was Arturo de Oliveira Santos, whom we encountered in Chapter 1. A Freemason who professed no belief in God, and a blacksmith by trade, he was popularly referred to as “the Tinsmith”. His formal education had been slight, but his ambitions were large. Arturo Santos was a self-propelled and intrepid young man, who became the editor of the *Ouriense*, a local gazette in which his anti-monarchical and anti-religious opinions were expressed with bitter zeal and with some talent. At twenty-six he joined the Grand Orient Masonic Lodge at Leiria.

As the great Catholic historian, William Thomas Walsh, points out, Santos became indoctrinated with the esoteric lore of a syncretistic and naturalistic religion which had been the main opponent of the Catholic Church in modern times, and which had already boasted that, by planning and carrying out the Portuguese revolution of 1910, it had taken

a long step toward the total elimination of Christianity in the Iberian Peninsula. Walsh further informs us that in 1911 the Grand Orient chief, Magalhães Lima, predicted that in a few years no young man would wish to study for the priesthood in Portugal, while the prominent Portuguese Mason Alfonso Costa assured all his brethren, and some delegates from the French lodges, that one more generation would see the finish of Catholicism, “the principal cause of the sad condition into which our country has fallen”. Indeed there was much evidence to support the prediction, but not the accusation.

Professor Walsh goes on to note that in 1911 the new masters of Portugal seized Church property, scattered, imprisoned and exiled hundreds of priests and nuns, and gave the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon five days to leave that city, never to return. Refugee priests and religious fled to France and elsewhere. Some knelt at Lourdes and prayed to the Mother of God to help their unhappy country, once proud to call itself “The Land of Holy Mary”, now a spectacle of unbelief and anarchy, with a new revolution every month.

Arturo Santos founded a new Masonic lodge in Ourem, where he had moved his blacksmith shop. By 1917 he became its president. Through friends in his brotherhood, he was able to become Mayor of Ourem. This title carried with it the corollary titles of President of the town Administration and of the Chamber, and Deputy Judge of Commerce. With all these honors and their companion authority, Senhor Santos became the most feared and influential man in his section of Portugal.

During his administration, fewer and fewer people went to Mass and the Sacraments, there were more divorces, and there were not so many children. When he arrested six priests and held them incommunicado for eight days, the leading Catholic laymen in the Council and the Chamber were too busy making profitable compromises so they did not have time to protest loudly enough to be heard. To the Tinsmith and his friends the fight for “progress and enlightenment”, as they preferred to describe their conflict with the Catholic Church, was all but won.⁴⁴

By August of 1917 all Portugal knew the story of the Apparitions at Fatima, although in a variety of versions. The journalists of the anti-religious press enjoyed writing comical versions of the story. As Father de Marchi records the attitude of the anti-religious press, they claimed that: “these children were the puppets of the Jesuits. Not the Jesuits? Well, then, the clergy in general, or the Pope, in particular—luring ignorant and unwary people to the Cova da Iria, in order to fleece them of their money. They didn’t have any money? Well, then, of their political allegiance, so that the humane fabric of the enlightened Republic could be sabotaged to the advantage of Rome and Reaction. The press enjoyed its jolly excursions. The Freemasons were delighted.”⁴⁵ All loyal supporters

⁴⁴ William Thomas Walsh, *Our Lady of Fatima*, (Image-Doubleday, New York, Imprimatur 1947) pp. 95-97.

⁴⁵ Father John de Marchi, I.M.C., *The Immaculate Heart: The True Story of Our Lady of Fatima*, (Farrar, Straus and Young, New York, 1952) p. 87.

of the reigning New Order found the situation increasingly humorous.

But Arturo Santos, the Mayor of Ourem, did not find it so humorous because the open manifestation of religion was happening in his own county. Some of his constituents already believed that Our Lady was appearing at Fatima, and he could not think what explanations he could provide his political colleagues if this Christian religious manifestation, which was contrary to the Mayor's hopes of building a Godless Republic, continued to thrive in his own county. So he decided to bring the heavy fist of "the law" down upon the three seers.

On August 11, 1917, the Mayor of Ourem ordered the parents of the three children to present them for trial at the City Hall. Ti Marto, the father of Jacinta and Francisco, said, "There's no sense in taking such young children before a court of that kind. Besides, it's three leagues, and that's too far for them to walk. And they don't know how to ride on a beast. I'm not going to do it. And I'll go over and tell the Administrator why." His wife Olimpia agreed. Lucy's father, Antonio, however was inclined to agree with his wife Maria Rosa that if Lucy was lying, it would be a good thing to have her taught a lesson, while if she was telling the truth (and they doubted she was), then Our Lady would take care of her. Antonio put his daughter on the back of a burro (she fell off three times on the way) and they set off on the journey to see the Mayor. Ti Marto left his children at home and went by himself to speak on their behalf. Before the journey, Jacinta said to Lucy, "Never mind. If they kill you, you just tell them that I am like you, and Francisco more so, and that we want to die too. And now I will go with Francisco to the well to pray very hard for you."

The Mayor asked Lucy if she had seen a Lady at the Cova da Iria, and who she thought it was. He demanded that she tell him the secret that Our Lady had confided to the children, and promise never to return to the Cova da Iria again. Lucy refused to tell him the secret and to make such a promise. (Our Lady had asked the children to return to the Cova da Iria on the 13th day of each month, and they had promised to go there at the appointed time and date for the next three visits as well.) Then the Mayor asked Antonio if the people in Fatima believed the story, and he replied, "Oh no, sir! All this is just women's tales."

"And what do you say?" the Mayor asked Ti Marto. "I am here at your command," he replied, "and my children say the same things I do." "Then you think it is true?" "Yes, sir, I believe what they say."

The bystanders laughed. The Mayor made a gesture of dismissal and one of his men told them to go. The Mayor followed them to the door and said to Lucy, "If you don't tell that secret, it will cost you your life!" Then Lucy and her father and Ti Marto returned to Aljustrel.

In the evening of August 12, three policemen summoned the children to the house of Ti Marto, where the Mayor was waiting for them in person. He told the children that death might be the penalty for not revealing the Great Secret they had learned on July 13. The children refused to tell

it, on the grounds that they could not disobey Our Lady. "Never mind," whispered Jacinta to the others. "If they kill us, so much the better, for then we shall see Jesus and Our Lady." On the morning of August 13, Ti Marto was out working in the fields. He came into the house to wash the soil off his hands. There was a crowd of people around the house, who had come to be present at the apparition that was to take place that day at the Cova da Iria. His wife Olimpia was upset and she pointed towards the living room. Ti Marto went into the living room, and as we read in his own account of it to Father de Marchi: "Who should I see but the Mayor himself. Even then, I suppose, I wasn't very polite to him, because I saw a priest was there too, and I went first to shake hands with the priest. Then I said to the Mayor, 'I did not expect to see you here, sir.'"

The Mayor said he would take the children to the Cova da Iria in his wagon, to give them time to talk to the parish priest at Fatima, who, he said, wanted to question them. The children and their parents had misgivings about his suggestion of taking them in his wagon, but they complied. He took them first to see the parish priest at Fatima, and then, instead of taking them to the Cova da Iria, people saw him crack the whip and make the horse bolt off down the road in the opposite direction. He took them to Ourem, and locked them in a room in his house.

About fifteen thousand people were at the Cova da Iria, all wondering where the children were. At the time Our Lady was to appear, a number of supernatural manifestations occurred that were also noticed by the crowd at Her other apparitions at Fatima, which convinced many people, even unbelievers, that She had arrived. But the children were not there to receive Her message. Then some people arrived with the news that the Mayor of Ourem had kidnapped the children and had taken them first to the parish priest of Fatima and then to his own house at Ourem. The crowd quickly concluded that the two had conspired together in the kidnapping, which they felt had "spoiled the apparition and disappointed the Mother of God." Bitter voices were raised against the Mayor and the parish priest. But Ti Marto persuaded the crowd not to take revenge. "Boys, take it easy! Don't hurt anyone! Whoever deserves punishment will receive it. All this is (allowed) by the power of the One above!"

The next morning the Mayor of Ourem again interrogated the children, who again said they had seen a beautiful Lady, and again refused to tell him the Secret, even when he threatened them with life imprisonment, torture and death. The Mayor was resolved to obtain from the children some sort of admission that would end the religious manifestation taking place in his county. So he then had them thrown into the town jail, with its dark and bad-smelling cells with iron bars. They were put into the common room where most of the prisoners were herded together. The children were frightened and sad, especially the seven-year-old Jacinta, who thought she would never see her parents again. But they reassured one another, reminding each other of what Our Lady had told them about Heaven, and they offered their sufferings for

the conversion of sinners. The children prayed the Rosary in the prison, and the convicts joined in the prayers.

Some time later, the Mayor had the children brought before him by a policeman, and he made a final demand for the Secret. Then, since they again refused to tell it, he told them they would be boiled alive in oil. He shouted a command, and a guard opened a door. He asked the guard if the oil was good and hot, and he replied it was. Then he ordered the guard to throw the youngest, Jacinta, into the boiling oil first. The guard seized the child and carried her away. A guard saw Francisco moving his lips silently, and he asked him what he was saying. "An Ave Maria", Francisco replied, "so my little sister will not be afraid." Lucy and Francisco were convinced that the guard would soon come back to kill them too. Francisco said to Lucy, "What do we care if they kill us? We'll go right to Heaven."

Later the guard came back to the room where the children were being questioned by the Mayor, and informed Lucy and Francisco that Jacinta had been boiled in oil since she would not reveal the Secret. The Mayor tried to persuade the remaining two children to reveal the Secret or the same thing would happen to them. Since they would not reveal the Secret, Francisco was taken away to the same fate. Afterwards, the guard came for Lucy. Even though she believed that Francisco and Jacinta had been killed for not revealing the Secret, she too would rather die than reveal the Secret the Blessed Virgin had entrusted to her. So she also was taken under the custody of the guard to what she thought was certain death.

It turned out that Jacinta had simply been led to another room, and Francisco and Lucy, when it was their turn to be "boiled in oil", were led to the same room, and they were all together again. It had just been a trick to frighten them into revealing the Secret. Lucy, writing in her memoirs, recalling the incident, informs us that she was certain, as were her two cousins, that they were about to be martyred at the hands of the Mayor.

The next morning, with another interrogation, the Mayor still was unable to get them to reveal the Secret. So he admitted it was no use, and ordered them sent back to Fatima. It was August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady.

That the Masonic Mayor of Ourem would go so far as to threaten three little children with a horrible death in order to prevent people from believing and openly manifesting their faith in God, His Holy Mother and the Catholic Church, gives some indication of the extent to which the Freemasons would go in their desperation to level the Church once and for all and erect in its place their Godless Republic—not only in Portugal, but throughout the whole world.