

THE FATIMA
SECRET REVEALED



THE WHOLE TRUTH
ABOUT FATIMA
THE THIRD SECRET

Frere Michel de la Sainte Trinite

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ABOUT FATIMA**

**VOLUME III
THE THIRD SECRET
(1942-1960)**

**Frere Michel de la Sainte Trinite
of the Little Brothers of the Sacred Heart**

Translated by John Collorafi

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SISTER LUCY, HEAVEN'S MESSENGER

To relate the wonderful history of Fatima, we must always return to the first manifestations of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the Cova da Iria, in June and July of 1917. They are like a divine wellspring, from which this great river of grace and mercy has been poured out over the world. We must return to the central apparition of July 13, where Our Lady of Fatima revealed Her great prophetic message to the three shepherds: the threefold and wonderful Secret of Her Immaculate Heart, the salvation of souls and nations and the Church's ultimate recourse before the unchained forces of evil.

But we must also return to Her apparition of June 13, 1917, when She revealed to the three seers their individual vocation, their particular mission in Her service. To Lucy's prayer, «I would like to ask You to take us to Heaven», Our Lady had replied: «Yes, Jacinta and Francisco, I will take them soon, but you Lucy, shall remain here for a certain time. *Jesus wishes to use you to make Me known and loved. He wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.*» And to Lucy's anguished question, «Am I to remain here all alone?» Our Lady had responded by a solemn promise: «No, My daughter. You suffer a great deal; do not be discouraged, I will never abandon you! *My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way which will lead you to God.*»¹

«*MY IMMACULATE HEART WILL BE YOUR REFUGE...*»

Over twenty years later, these words still resounded in Lucy's heart and formed the whole basis of her consolation, for the wonderful promise had been entirely fulfilled. Lucy privately confided this to her former confessor, Father Aparicio:

«The Immaculate Heart of Mary is my refuge, especially in the most difficult hours. There I am always secure. It is the heart of the best of mothers; it is always attentive and it watches over the least of its children. How this certainty encourages and strengthens me! In Her I find strength and consolation. This Immaculate Heart is the canal by which God makes the multitude of His graces gush into my soul. Help me to be grateful to Her and to correspond to such great mercies.»²

«*JESUS WISHES TO USE YOU...*»

These choice graces also helped her fulfil her vocation as Heaven's messenger. The years of the World War, which were also her last years spent in the active life — for before long, in 1948, she went to be buried behind the grilles of Carmel — were a period of very intense literary activity for her. Along with her usual correspondence with her confessors and Bishop da Silva, we have seen how she wrote a long letter to Pope Pius XII in 1940. Then she passed on Our Lord's requests to Cardinal Cerejeira. Now we are going to see her speaking to the bishops of Spain. But above all, this was the period when she wrote down

the literal and complete text of Our Lady's great Secret: the first two parts in 1941, in her Third and Fourth Memoirs, and the third part, this final Secret which still has not been divulged, in January 1944, written in dramatic circumstances which we have yet to explain. For the exact context of this writing of the text is a very significant clue in trying to discover the probable content of this text. Beyond any doubt it is the most important text written by a human hand since the death of the inspired authors who wrote down the original and total Divine Revelation of Jesus Christ, Son of God and Saviour of the world.

THE LIFE OF A HUMBLE RELIGIOUS

However, we must not get the wrong idea: in spite of her role as Heaven's messenger, in her convent of Tuy Sister Maria das Dores preserved in ordinary life all her childlike simplicity, all the spontaneity of a little Portuguese peasant girl. Among her sisters nothing distinguished her externally except perhaps her humble gaiety and her enthusiasm. «*She was very cheerful and very simple.*» This is what one of her old companions at Tuy, whom I was recently able to question, told me about her. She added this phrase which underscores how well the Fatima seer had maintained her humility, steering clear of any originality or excesses which would have set her apart and drawn attention to her: «*She was a holy religious... like others that were in the community.*»

Along with her labours in the sewing room, where she made clothing for the Sisters, Lucy was often called to leave the cloister. She remained very natural in her office as seer, and as Father Alonso reports she became «the best known, most liked and esteemed person in the whole population of Tuy... The people greeted her with courtesy, without any appearance of curiosity. Agents of government bureaus and businesses could even joke with her about having had the honour of speaking with "the one who saw the Holy Virgin". But there was a natural respect which imposed itself on them and which Lucy herself imposed on them. Her conduct was always dignified and reserved in responding to the affability with which she was received everywhere.» She also exercised the office of catechist in various points of the town, with great success among the children.³ «Lucy does much good for the children and all those who approach her», the superior at Tuy confided to Father Jongen.⁴

A CHOSEN INSTRUMENT

Canon Galamba, who at this period had the privilege of visiting her often, has left us a precious testimony concerning her which we must quote here in full:

«Like her cousins, Lucy was unlettered. At the moment of the apparitions she did not even possess a primary education, and it was Our Lady who ordered her to learn how to read. If possessing nothing else of hers except the photographs from that time which still exist, many specialists, considering only the photographs, would make a false judgment on the degree of her intelligence and on her other qualities. Thanks to God, Lucy is not dead, and as the years pass we can make a detailed analytical study of her personality.

«The impression is totally different after one has spent a half hour with her. She is simple and is not concerned with her manner of being and presenting herself. There is nothing extraordinary in her appearance, her words, or her glance. She converses like any other religious and when the opportunity is offered to her, she is spiritual and light-hearted, but the light-heartedness is moderate, modest and well-balanced. She does not speak with arrogance and haughtiness but she simply offers her opinion timidly, if she is obliged.

«She does not like to speak about the apparitions, and to lead her onto this subject is always delicate and risks upsetting her. When she feels obliged to do so, she does it with naturalness, with modesty, but with assurance. She does not discuss her purely interior motions without accompanying her statements with a prudent “It seems to me”, “If I am not mistaken”, or similar phrases.

«Her glance is serene, she speaks with poise, and her whole being is calm. There is nothing about her which could, even from afar, give us the idea of a neurotic, excitable person or a visionary.

«She expresses herself with a great facility and a natural elegance remarkable for a person deprived of all literary formation. She is endowed with a very faithful, rapid, extraordinary memory. Facts and words seem to remain engraved in her memory and imagination. Her intelligence is lucid, brilliant, and she possesses an admirable faculty for discernment and reasoning.

«In her life as a young girl, before leaving her family and her native land there was nothing bizarre or affected about her. One would have said she was like any other young girl. As a religious, whether understood or not, she has always been exemplary, and the other novices and professed sisters loved very much going to her and associating with her intimately, even before knowing who she was.

«In physical suffering and moral suffering, she has always known how to remain full of joy or at least in supernatural conformity with God’s Holy Will. She shows great docility to the orders of her superiors, in which she always recognizes the divine authority. She is no less respectful to her spiritual directors as well as the venerable Bishop of Leiria, His Excellency Don José Alves Correia da Silva, whose opinion she requests and generally adopts with humility and trust, even when it is contrary to her own way of seeing and feeling.

«Here is the unanimous opinion of all those who have approached her or studied her calmly and impartially... There is really nothing in her personality which permits us to judge that her declarations are the fruit of her own imagination or the effect of an action exerted upon her by some other person.»⁵

CHAPTER I

THE MESSAGE TO THE BISHOPS OF SPAIN: THE TRUE REFORM THAT HEAVEN REQUESTS

We have already described how in Spain, between 1931 and 1939, the terrible prophecies of the great Secret about Bolshevism Russia's role as the scourge of God and "rod of the divine wrath" in our twentieth century began to be fulfilled.⁶ But the very close relationship between Fatima and Spain was not limited to this terrible prophecy. In 1941, Heaven intervened once more to deliver the Fatima seer a message directly concerning the Church of Spain, the evils it suffered from and the means to be employed to remedy them.

Thanks to the decisive work *Fatima, Espana, Rusia*, published by Father Alonso in 1976⁷ as a summary of his great critical study, today we can give a full description of this almost unknown chapter in the history of Fatima. The author, who does not hide his most ardent love for Catholic Spain, his dear homeland, was able to show with great skill the importance of Heaven's messages concerning Spain. We shall also show how beyond its immediate application, the wider significance of this grave warning addressed to the Pastors of the Church can be easily perceived.

I. THE REVELATION OF JUNE 12, 1941

Once again this divine communication took place on a Thursday evening, during the holy hour which Lucy made faithfully each week in conformity with the Sacred Heart's requests at Paray-le-Monial.⁸ But this was no ordinary Thursday, it was Corpus Christi, and in addition, that evening Sister Lucy was undoubtedly united in spirit with the pilgrims at the Cova da Iria who were going to spend the night in prayer to begin the ceremonies of June 13.

Here is the most complete account of this divine communication, addressed by the seer to Archbishop Garcia y Garcia of Valladolid. He was the former Bishop of Tuy, who for this reason had become one of her spiritual advisors:⁹

«To satisfy the desires of Our Good Lord and Your Excellency, with the greatest clarity possible for me I explain what the Good Lord deigned to communicate to me so that I could pass it on to you.

THE HOLY HOURS OF ADORATION AND REPARATION. «With the permission of my superiors, I have the custom of remaining in prayer in the chapel until midnight from Thursday to Friday. In these hours of very great recollection, the Good Lord has the habit of communicating Himself so intensely to my poor soul that I do not doubt His presence in any way. Ordinarily, after having confounded me in my own nothingness and my own misery by making me feel what there is in me that displeases Him, *He continues by lamenting other things which, in the poor world, cause Him such pain.*»¹⁰

THE EVILS OF THE CHURCH IN SPAIN. «On June 12, 1941, He complained especially *about the coldness and laxity of the clergy of Spain both secular and regular, and the indifference of the sinful life of the Christian people.*»

THE REMEDY PROPOSED. «And He continued thus: If the bishops of Spain gathered each year in a house specially chosen to make their retreat, and if, with a common accord, they decided on the course to follow in leading the souls confided to them, they would receive enlightenment and special graces from the Divine Spirit.

«Make it known to the Archbishop (of Valladolid) that I ardently desire the bishops to meet in a retreat to arrange among themselves and determine with a common accord the means to be employed for the reform of the Christian people and to remedy the laxity of the clergy and a great part of the religious. The number of those who serve Me in the practice of sacrifice is very limited. I have need of souls and of priests who serve Me by sacrificing themselves for Me and for souls..

«The Good Lord will make known to Your Excellency the reality of His desires and He promises to bless the efforts you will deign to make to satisfy them.»¹¹

A MESSAGE FOR THE CHURCH

This divine communication certainly marks an important date in the gradual revelation of the message of Fatima. It is not absolutely new because already, a few months earlier, Sister Lucy had reported similar complaints of Our Lord concerning the world and sometimes Portugal as well. Still, this message which directly concerns the internal life of the Church and the evils it suffers from, is expressed here for the first time with clarity and insistence. Also for the first time, Heaven proposes a precise remedy for the evil denounced.

THE EVILS OF THE CHURCH IN SPAIN. What are the evils of which Our Lord bitterly complains to His confidant? They are «the coldness and sinful life of the Christian people». They are «the very limited number of souls in the state of grace, disposed to give up whatever is demanded of them by the observance of His law.»¹²

But the indifference of the people is undoubtedly only the effect of the laxity of consecrated souls. For Our Lord also complains above all, to repeat Sister Lucy's most vigorous expressions, of «the sinful, lax and listless life of a great number of priests and religious, souls from which He expects reparation and which move Him on the contrary, to indignation and chastisement.»¹³ There are few souls who fully correspond to His designs of mercy: «The number of those who serve Me (He is speaking here about consecrated souls) in the practice of sacrifice is very limited! I need souls and priests who serve Me by sacrificing themselves for Me and for souls.»

Once again, we are very much in line here with the message of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial. In His great revelation of June 16, 1675, Our Lord already complained about the

infidelity of consecrated souls. Here we must recall this divine oracle, the last phrases of which are very often omitted or toned down.

«Behold this Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, exhausting itself and consuming itself to give them evidence of its love, and in return I receive for the most part only ingratitude by their irreverences and their sacrileges, and by the coldness and scorn they have for Me in this Sacrament of Love. *But what pains Me most is that it is hearts consecrated to Me who treat Me thus.* This is why I ask you...»

The Sacred Heart goes on to ask for reparation for all these offenses.¹⁴

The same complaints and the same requests which the Sacred Heart once addressed to Saint Margaret-Mary, it now addresses to His messenger from Fatima. Faced with the unchaining of the forces of evil and the deluge of sin in a world which is more and more involved in a satanic revolt against Him, God needs more than ever faithful souls, generous and fervent souls entirely consecrated to Him, who console His outraged Heart, and through a life full of duty and sacrifice make reparation for the crimes of apostate humanity.

THE BISHOPS' DUTY: REFORM "IN HEAD AND MEMBERS". There is another element in this message of June 12, 1941. Our Lord indicates to the seer the remedy which must be applied to this evil: this «True reform of the people and the clergy» is to be promoted by the bishops. Let them remember that they have "charge of souls"! Whether the faithful and consecrated souls themselves are more or less fervent, more or less holy – it belongs to the zeal of the bishops to make the necessary decisions! On them and on them alone it is incumbent to lay down the disciplinary decrees or courageous measures which will re-establish the good spirit and fervour in the clergy and religious orders, and good Christian morals among the Faithful.

The maxim dear to Saint Pius X, «*do your duty and everything will go well*», summarizes the spirit of this request of Our Lord perfectly. Notice here that the revelation is not a substitute for the ordinary exercise of the episcopal ministry. Heaven simply and urgently requests the pastors of the flock to fulfil the conditions necessary to receive the graces of light and strength which will make them take together the measures adequate for the «true reform» requested: "Each year let them meet in a retreat to determine by a common accord the road to follow in leading the souls entrusted to them." In effect it is certain that in a Church where true Catholic doctrine and the great traditional discipline impose themselves on everybody without being disputed by anyone, bishops' meetings have always been the most effective means of remedying abuses, and encouraging and supporting all holy enterprises in the service of God.

Let us retain but one example, which is closely related to the history of Fatima since it concerns the rebirth of the Church in Portugal. The latter had fallen very low at the beginning of this century, victim of a concordat arrangement under a corrupt, liberal and Masonic monarchy.

AN ENLIGHTENING PRECEDENT: THE DIRECTIVES OF SAINT PIUS X (1905). Lamentable scandals had taken place at the major seminary of Lisbon. Without any delay, Saint Pius X reacted vigorously. On May 5, 1905, he addressed the letter *Sollicito vehementer animo* to the Patriarch, Cardinal Neto. It is a brief document but rich in doctrine, and its conclusion particularly interests us here.

Having examined the «unbelievable sorrow» which the recent grave disorders had caused him, the holy Pope took advantage of the occasion to address a vigorous exhortation to the Portuguese bishops to watch over the good order in their seminaries with greater care:

«We beg you, do not let your zeal as pastors of souls fail in any way on this point... If these establishments faithfully preserve their character and their reason for existence, very great things can be expected of them; on the contrary, if they depart little by little from this purpose, the greatest evils are to be feared: this has just been confirmed by sad experience. Therefore, if you have at heart – and it is a grave duty for you – the vigilance to admit into your clergy priests who will in no way dishonour the holy ministry by their ignorance, their laziness, or bad morals, but on the contrary demonstrate their worthiness by their knowledge, their zeal, their integrity of life, it is obvious that each of you is bound to ensure good order in your seminary.»

The significant part is that, after reminding the bishops of «the duties incumbent upon them» and the necessity that they «not do anything contrary to their conscience as bishops», Saint Pius X concluded with a formal order corresponding precisely to the request which Our Lord addressed to the bishops of Spain in 1941 through Sister Lucy:

«In this whole affair (i.e. the dignity and holiness of clerical life), which touches each of you in particular as well as all of you in general, since the salvation of the Church in Portugal depends on it, *let it not suffice for you to exercise your zeal in isolated efforts; rather we desire that you combine your enlightenment and deliberate together to study the best way of attaining the goal pursued by all. For this reason, since we have learned that the custom of having solemn bishops' meetings has been interrupted in your country, you will see that it returns in force as early as possible, and especially in view of the question of which we are speaking.*»¹⁵

When Our Lord urgently requests the bishops of Spain to meet to determine together the proper means of effecting the necessary reform of the Christian people, the clergy and religious orders, clearly it is not a case of substituting a collective authority for the inalienable authority of each pastor at the head of his flock. In the case of the bishops, it is a way of mutually enlightening each other and assisting each other to make salutary decisions, however painful and sad they might be. These requests from Heaven refer to the great age-old tradition of the Church, the tradition of the Council of Trent, the tradition of Saint Pius X.

II. THE PASSING ON OF THE MESSAGE

A LONG SILENCE

Curiously, the letter we have quoted, where Sister Lucy explains in detail the divine communication received on June 12, 1941, was not written until a year and a half after the event. Later on the seer avowed that she had hesitated a very long time before making known this warning from Heaven to her directors. The fact must be stressed: she experienced an extreme reluctance at revealing this kind of message concerning the disorders of the Church. If there was any need, this reserve, this almost insurmountable difficulty in passing on revelations which are accusatory of the clergy and hierarchy of the Church, testifies in her favour.

But perhaps there is something more. Perhaps another motive might have been at work, encouraging our seer to maintain silence. If this message to Spain has some relation with the themes of the third Secret, which Our Lady had not yet permitted her to reveal, we can easily understand her procrastination and her long delay before she dared to reveal it. Later on she was to accuse herself of cowardice, where perhaps she had been paralyzed by doubts and uncertainty on what she could say and what she had to keep silent on... The hypothesis is very possible.

In any case, months passed and Sister Lucy continued to keep secret this complaint of Our Lord regarding the Spanish Church. Fortunately, she was finally led to speak by providential circumstances and a formal order of her spiritual director.

A PROVIDENTIAL VISIT BY THE BISHOP OF TUY (AT THE END OF NOVEMBER 1942)

Msgr. Garcia y Garcia, who had been bishop of the little city of Galicia since 1935, had great esteem for the Fatima seer. He considered her one of the sheep of his flock, and although he himself visited her frequently, he had charged his vicar general, Don Angel Varela, with being her ordinary spiritual director.¹⁶ After the death of Maria Rosa, Lucy's mother, on July 16, 1942, he showed how great was his paternal affection for our little seer: in his diocesan bulletin he published a concession of indulgences in favour of those who would pray for the repose of her mother's soul.¹⁷

Don Antonio Garcia had his doctorate in theology, philosophy and canon law from the Gregorian University of Rome, and was well known in Spain for his numerous writings. At that period, he enjoyed great authority within the Spanish episcopate.

Appointed recently to the see of Valladolid, the new Archbishop remained at the same time apostolic administrator of Tuy while he waited for a successor to be appointed. At the end of November, 1942, during a visit to the Dorothean convent, he had a long conversation with Sister Lucy. Shortly afterwards, Sister Lucy received a written account of this conversation, no doubt from the Bishop of Gurza, Don Manuel Ferreira, who at the time was her principal spiritual director. Lucy recalls:

«The Archbishop of Valladolid spoke to me with great interest about devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He told me that he had always been persuaded that the reign of the Heart of Jesus would not come without being preceded by that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, since it is through her that everything comes to us.»

A WONDERFUL INTERVENTION OF HEAVEN. «He told me how before making the blueprint for the construction of a church in honour of the Sacred Heart at Valladolid, in the very place where this divine Heart had told Father Hoyos that He would reign in Spain,¹⁸ the architect, confused, presented him the blueprint with a spectacular tower dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, telling him: “I don’t know how this happened, most excellent Lord, it seemed that an invisible being guided my hand; and without knowing how, without having thought of it, I found that I had this tower dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.” “Very well”, His Excellency answered, “the tower of the Immaculate Heart of Mary will reign in the temple of the Heart of Jesus. These two Hearts are inseparable...”»

«IT IS NOW OVER A YEAR AGO THAT OUR LORD INSISTED...» «It was a consolation to see how the Good Lord moved hearts (to lead them) to the fulfilment of His designs; but as always it is I who do the least in this respect: it is now over a year ago (the first divine communication took place on June 12, 1941), that Our Lord insisted that I manifest His desires to His Grace the Bishop (of Valladolid). (He wants) the bishops of Spain to meet in a retreat and discuss together the means they must employ to remedy the laxity of the clergy and Christian people.

«In spite of the great opportuneness of this occasion to explain it to him, timidity closed my mouth; although His Excellency had asked me three times if I had anything to explain to him or ask him, or if I desired something of him, etc, etc... His Excellency is a saint, but it is I who am incapable of anything. Until the present I have not spoken of this desire of Our Lord out of fear that someone order me to reveal it.»¹⁹

In effect that is what happened. The Bishop of Gurza answered her immediately, assuring her that this communication certainly came from God and that it must be passed on without delay to its intended recipient, the Archbishop of Valladolid. So on January 17, 1943, Sister Lucy took up her pen to write to Bishop Garcia y Garcia. But this first letter, which Father Alonso quotes from,²⁰ was very brief, and the Archbishop asked her for more ample information. In response to this request, she immediately wrote the more complete account we have quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

III. THE «TRUE PENANCE» HEAVEN REQUIRES

SOME NEW DIVINE COMMUNICATIONS: THE LETTER OF FEBRUARY 28, 1943

Still encouraged by the Bishop of Gurza, and perhaps also to answer some of his questions, Sister Lucy wrote a long letter on February 28, 1943. In his last work Father A. M. Martins gives the integral text. In this letter she expresses with precision the various divine

communications she had already received months before. But she also alludes to new divine locutions heard during a holy hour between Thursday (evening) and Friday, for which she does not give the exact date.

Because of the importance of the themes it takes up, this text constitutes one of the major documents of the history of Fatima.

THE CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART. The Good Lord has already shown me His contentment with the act, although incomplete according to His desire, performed by the Holy Father and several bishops. He promises in return to end the war soon. The conversion of Russia is not for now.»

THE MESSAGE FOR THE BISHOPS OF SPAIN. «If the bishops of Spain take into account Our Lord's desires and undertake a true reform among the people and clergy, good! *If not*, (Russia) will again be the enemy through which God will chastise them once more.»

THE TRUE PENANCE. «The Good Lord will allow Himself to be appeased, but He complains bitterly and sadly about the very limited number of souls in the state of grace, disposed to deny themselves according to what the observance of His law requires of them.

«Here is the true penance which the Good Lord requests today: the sacrifice which everybody must impose on himself to lead a life of justice in the observance of His law.

«And He desires that this way be clearly made known to souls, for many give to the word "penance" the sense of great austerities, and as they feel neither the strength nor the generosity for that, they get discouraged and let themselves go into a life of lukewarmness and sin.

«From Thursday to Friday, being in the chapel with my superiors' permission, at midnight, Our Lord told me: *"The penance that I request and require now is the sacrifice demanded of everybody by the accomplishment of his own duty and the observance of My law."*

«And, Your Excellency, I have to be the first to submit in all things to the orders and desires of the Good Lord. And for that purpose, to obey what you told me in your last letter, I send you this declaration.

«The Good Lord does not manifest this to me by means of apparitions, it is by means of an intimate and intense feeling of His presence in my soul.»²¹

Thanks to the Bishop of Gurza to whom this letter was addressed, this message rapidly came to have great repercussions in Portugal, and before long in Spain as well. It was read publicly on two occasions very favourable to its publication: the first occasion was on April 20, 1943 at Fatima, during a retreat according to the "Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius" preached to a group of doctors, jurists, engineers and other members of the Portuguese elite. During the month of May it was also read to the Portuguese bishops, who were

meeting at the Cova da Iria for their annual retreat. A copy of the letter, intended for Spain, had been sent to the Archbishop of Valladolid.²²

A LETTER TO FATHER GONÇALVES: MAY 4, 1943. Before commenting on this document of capital importance, we must still quote a letter of Sister Lucy to her old confessor, who had just left the mother country to return to his mission in Zambia. While developing the same themes, Sister Lucy provides us with some supplementary information:

«Thank goodness, I finally received a letter from you. My God, it took so long...! I can't even think that you are so far away; but I think about it a lot so that my sacrifice may be more complete for the conversion of those souls. May the Good Lord accept it.

«As for me, I am doing well. *The Bishop of Gurza tries to help me, and I always thank him for his good counsel and prayers. He also shows me what I must make known, and that is as always the most difficult thing for me to do,*²³ but obedience gives me strength and I keep going. I had to make known to the Archbishop of Valladolid, by order of His Excellency, a little request of Our Lord to the bishops of Spain and another to the bishops of Portugal. May God grant that all of them hear His voice!

«He wishes that the bishops of Spain gather together in a retreat and *determine a reform in the people, clergy and religious orders*; for some convents! and many members of others...! do you understand?

«He wishes that it be made clear to souls that *the true penance He now wants and requires consists first of all in the sacrifice that each one must make to fulfil his own religious and temporal duties.*

«He promises the end of the war shortly in answer to the act of consecration made by His Holiness. But since it was incomplete, the conversion of Russia will take place later. *If the bishops of Spain do not attend to His wishes, it (Russia) will be once more the scourge with which God punishes them.*»²⁴

Throughout her life Sister Lucy has never stopped receiving new revelations and divine communications. However, one fact is worth noting: these revelations are always closely related to the message received in 1916-1917. This is the reason for the perfect coherence of all her writings, in spite of the great diversity of the themes discussed and the great lapses in time in their date of composition: they always refer to some phrase in the initial message. The same is true for this revelation, which our seer returns to with insistence. It concerns «the true penance Our Lord wants and now demands».

«THE TRUE PENANCE» AND «THE TRUE REFORM» THAT HEAVEN DEMANDS

We are now at the very heart of the public message of 1917. From month to month, Our Lady had announced: «In October, I will tell you who I am and *what I want.*» During Her final apparition She had solemnly declared to the children: «*People must no longer offend*

the Lord our God, for He is already too much offended!» This is the primordial request. Indeed, when the Blessed Virgin requests prayers and sacrifices at other times, Sister Lucy insists on making it clear: *«Especially those which it is necessary to make so as to avoid sin.»*²⁵

Is not this solemn warning on «the true penance» more relevant than ever? Heaven does not make pathetic appeals for the faithful to commit themselves to «take part in the apostolate»! Nor does it require great austerities. Far from asking us to “pray at least three hours a day and fast twice a week”, Sister Lucy warns against such requirements being laid upon everyone. These are excellent ways of immensely nourishing self love, and before long they leave souls discouraged and desperate, and ready to relapse «into a life of indifference and sin».

No, the way proposed to us at Fatima is much more humble, more solid: we are not capable of the extraordinary mortifications our Fathers imposed on themselves. But with all our hearts let us at least apply ourselves to pleasing God by giving up sin and fulfilling the duties of our state as best we can. This demands great sacrifices, great acts of self-denial, precisely the ones that God expects of us before anything else. Once more it is the golden rule of Saint Pius X: *«do your duty and everything will go well!»*

Finally the context of the letter of February 28, 1943 underlines the universality of the maxim: it concerns the simple faithful, but also priests and religious, the bishops of Spain and the Pope himself: let everyone accomplish his whole duty, following the demands of his state in life and everything will go well, everything will be so much better in the Church! This is «the true penance» which will infallibly bring about «the true reform of the people, the clergy and religious orders», urgently requested by Heaven. The future of Spain in 1941 and more generally the future of the world will depend on it.

IV. A REPRIMAND FULL OF LOVE

A SEVERE WARNING

This is the great teaching of Our Lady of Fatima, as well as the teaching of the Gospel and the prophets: our history is a sacred history which God sovereignly directs as a most kind and merciful Father. Precisely because of this jealous love and this infinite mercy, He also acts with justice and rigour. Whether the world has peace or war, whether our nations and the world have a happy destiny or an unhappy one, depends in the end on the zeal of Christians and first of all their leaders: the Pope, the Cardinals, their bishops, their priests, and consecrated souls. It depends on whether they correspond with faith and docility to God's holy will and the great designs of His Heart.

This is why the message to the Church in Spain is accompanied by a terrible threat, as we have seen: if the bishops pay attention to Our Lord's desires and undertake a true reform, it will be well! If not, Russia will still be the enemy by which God will chastise them once more.

It could not have been said more clearly: the terrible civil war had been the great chastisement of the Church in Spain gravely unfaithful to its age old tradition of integral, conquering Faith. Already for several generations it had grown indifferent and dangerously compromised with the liberal, Masonic and antichrist current raging over Europe. Let the Spanish people at least realize the lesson to be learned from this terrible trial of purification! Such is the meaning of the message of June 12, 1941.

AN UNQUESTIONABLE RELIGIOUS RENAISSANCE. However, such a severe warning addressed to Spain four years after the heroic Crusade – in the course of which thirteen bishops and over seven thousand priests, brothers and nuns followed by several hundred thousand of the Faithful had shed their blood for the Catholic Faith – might be surprising because of its abrupt nature.

Immediately after the victory of April 1939, had there not been a wonderful effort of Catholic restoration? This fact is incontestable. To demonstrate this we can hardly do better than quote here the enthusiastic words of Pope Pius XII to the new ambassador of Spain. The Pope spoke on December 17, 1942, at the very moment Sister Lucy decided to inform the Archbishop of Valladolid of Heaven's severe warnings:

«Spain is Catholic, and this tree has so profoundly taken root in its soil, as well as in the courageous hearts of its children, that the formidable torment itself whose consequences we still deplore was not capable of uprooting it. And even more, just as the field grows greener after the storm, so we see (Spain) springing up once more in spite of an era so unfavourable for recuperation, and recovering, powerful and conscious of its past, full of its own proper spirit and confidence in the future.

«As for ourselves, with a fatherly regard we help it by our prayers, and at the opportune moment by our words and encouragement as well.²⁶ Day by day we have followed this beautiful recovery which gives us such great hope for the good of Spain. We have admired its continual manifestations of piety and faith in public or in private... We have heard you say that your “way of life would not be perfect if it was not profoundly Catholic”, that “you affirm the most absolute orthodoxy a hundred times.” For the great consolation of our soul we have been informed of the progress of Catholic Action, of the abundance of good and solid priestly vocations, we have seen Christ triumph in the schools; we have seen churches rise from their smouldering ruins and the Christian spirit permeate laws, institutions, and all manifestations of official life. Finally, we have contemplated God present once more in your history...»

Alluding to the immense cross 165 yards high crowning the memorial basilica of the valley of Los Caidos, where construction was beginning, the Pope continued:

«We have only one desire to express concerning Spain: to see her united and glorious, lifting up a cross in her powerful hands, surrounded by an entire world which, thanks largely to her, thinks and prays in Spanish; and also to propose her as the example of a restoring power bringing life and education, and the example of a faith in which, after all, we will always find the solution of all problems.»

Then, before making his blessing descend upon the beloved Spain «of saints and heroes», the Holy Father mentioned the «most noble head of the Spanish state», who was «so worthily placed at the head of his dear country».²⁷

In other words, thanks to the harmonious cooperation of the two powers, much good was already being accomplished in Spain... just as in Portugal, concerning which, as we remember, Our Lord had addressed them in these terms in a letter to Cardinal Cerejeira from Sister Lucy. Writing on December 19, 1940, she said:

«Our Lord is dissatisfied and grieved with the sins of the world and of Portugal. He complains about the lack of correspondence, the sinful life of the people, and especially about the lukewarmness, indifference and extremely comfortable life of the majority of the priests and members of religious orders. The number of souls He meets through prayer and sacrifice is extremely limited.»²⁸

THE MARK OF A REAL PREDILECTION

Harsh words indeed! However, let us be so bold as to say: the culpable life of the people and the laxity of the clergy and consecrated souls were surely no graver in these two countries, where an unquestionable religious renaissance was in progress, than in other nations. Quite the contrary. But Our Lord, who had preserved them as if by a miracle from the terrible chastisement of the war which was then ravaging the world, had greater designs of mercy upon them. These two nations had been chosen by the Queen of Heaven to manifest Her in our century. Without any doubt they were called to be the first to implement Our Lady's requests. Thus they were destined to become for other people the striking showcase of the incomparable benefits granted by the mediation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Therefore these divine reprimands and even threats, far from being the sign of some kind of reprobation, were actually the mark of a real predilection. They remind us of a passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews:

«And you have forgotten the exhortation that is addressed to you as sons, saying: "My son, neglect not the discipline of the Lord, neither be thou weary when thou art rebuked by Him. For whom the Lord loves, He chastises; and He scourges every son whom He receives." (Prov. 3:11) Continue under discipline. God deals with you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not correct? But if you are without discipline in which all have had a share, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.» (Heb. 12:5-8)

It reminds us also of the reproaches which Our Lady, in Her first apparition to Catherine Labouré on July 18, 1830, asked Catherine to pass on to her superiors. As at Tuy, Heaven complains of the «great laxity» of certain religious souls. Seated in the armchair of the director while Catherine knelt next to her, Our Lady said:

«My child, I love to pour out My graces upon the community especially. I love it a great deal. (However), I am sad. There are great abuses. The rule is not observed. Regularity leaves something to be desired. There is a great laxity among the two communities. Tell this to the person entrusted with you, although he is not superior. He will be entrusted with the community in a special way. He must do everything possible to see that the rule returns in vigour. Tell him on my behalf not to read bad books or lose time visiting. When the rule is returned to force, a great community will come to be joined to your own... God will bless them and they will enjoy great peace.»²⁹

Finally, let us recall Our Lord's warning to the Church of Laodicea, which was so vehement:

«I know thy works; that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth... Those whom I love, I rebuke and chastise. Be zealous, therefore, and do penance. Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to Me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.» (Apoc. 3:15-20)

As we have said, the Portuguese bishops took Heaven's warning, which was passed on to them by the Fatima seer, very seriously. On February 2, 1941, they published a "Collective Pastoral Letter" on "The anguish of the war and the need for expiation", which was clearly inspired by the message passed on by Sister Lucy.³⁰ Father Alonso adds that «at this period, Sister Lucy was behind many initiatives of the Portuguese bishops which obtained the most excellent and salutary results for the Christian people».³¹

Before long, the Spanish bishops were to follow this example. As we will see, their country was saved as if by a miracle from the terrible Bolshevik menace of the years 1945-1946. But first their response was awaited...

THE FUTURE OF SPAIN: SISTER LUCY'S DISQUIET

Don Garcia easily guessed that there would be an indignant reaction from some of his colleagues, the bishops and Archbishops. He could not bring himself to immediately pass on the message he had received. Meanwhile, he interrupted Lucy again: «Could it not have been the result of some illusion?» he asked her. With her customary humility, the seer responded that she herself had had some fears, but that «her spiritual director had assured her that this came from God».

The Archbishop of Valladolid was convinced. He wrote to Lucy:

«Very well, my daughter. For your peace of mind I can tell you this: here in Spain there is a soul to whom Our Lord also communicates Himself, and He revealed exactly the same thing to her. Now we must pray a great deal to Our Lord to help me overcome the difficulties which are numerous, especially on the part of the government.»³²

Time passed, and Sister Lucy was afraid that Heaven's requests might go unheeded. She complained to Don Antonio:

«... I ask the Immaculate Heart of Mary to help Your Excellency fulfil the designs of Our Good Lord. May the Good Lord not say, as He did concerning the Holy Father: "He will do it, but it will be late."»

The Archbishop of Valladolid was intrigued by this last phrase which he did not understand. Lucy explained it to him in the following letter;

«As far as what I say about the Holy Father is concerned, I only repeat the words of Our Lord... *These words were spoken to me in reply to an urgent supplication which I made for His Holiness.*»³³

No doubt the seer was referring to a divine communication received in May 1936, where Our Lord tells her, on the subject of the consecration of Russia: «The Holy Father! Pray a great deal for the Holy Father. *He will do it, but it will be late.*»³⁴ This was already the content of the terrible revelation of Rianjo during the summer of 1931, after Pope Pius XI had refused to pay attention to the request made of him in the name of Our Lady of Fatima.³⁵ Sister Lucy wrote to Archbishop Garcia y Garcia:

«I don't know why, I am afraid of hearing the same words concerning Spain. For some time I have been asking that the moment be hastened when God's designs shall be fulfilled in this nation. And the fear of hearing the same response comes back to me: "They will do it, but it will be late."»³⁶

In this same year, 1943, at the moment when Sister Lucy, who was ill, informed the Archbishop of Valladolid of her grave anxiety over Spain – a prophetic anxiety which the future was to fully justify³⁷ – she also spoke with him about an even greater concern. She was preoccupied by an urgent task that frightened her: Bishop da Silva had asked her to write down the text of the third Secret..

CHAPTER II
THE THIRD SECRET
PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL FACTS
(1943 - 1945)

The mysterious third Secret was revealed by Our Lady on July 13, 1917, over seventy years ago. The innumerable errors, falsifications, and lies which have been peddled on this subject, as well as the decisive importance of this text – whose relevance is more urgent than ever, since it has certainly been fulfilled before our eyes since 1960 – are reasons for us doing everything possible to shed a little light upon it.

Thanks to documents published in the last few years, notably the works of Father Alonso, we now have an impressive mass of reliable information which we must be careful not to neglect. In effect, every single detail of this dramatic history, no matter how insignificant it may appear at first sight, will help us resolve the urgent question before us: what are the contents of this final message of Our Lady of Fatima, reserved precisely for our epoch? By reasoning with prudence and rigorous logic on the greatest number of established facts concerning its writing down and its history, we can discard erroneous solutions. Finally, with Father Alonso, we will be able to propose a clear hypothesis which corresponds perfectly to all the historical evidence as well as the general context of the message of Fatima.

I. «THE PART OF THE SECRET I AM NOT PERMITTED TO REVEAL»

When did Sister Lucy receive Heaven's authorization to reveal the last part of the Secret? Even before retracing the circumstances in which it was written down, we must clear up this preliminary question, for it is not without importance.

THE GREAT SECRET
(MANUSCRIPT OF THE FOURTH MEMOIR)

braga. assumtados e como que a prediz. meas.
ao levantarem a vista para Nossa Senhora
que vos disse com bondade e tristiza. Vistes
o inferno, para onde vad as almas dos pobres
pecadores; para as salvar. Deus quer estabelecer
no mundo a devoçao a Imem Imaculado
Coraçao, se fizerem o que eu vos disse. Sabra-
se ad muitas almas e terao paz: a guerra
vai acabar: mas se vad dissiparem de ofender a
Deus, no reinado de Piu XI comecara outra
fres. Quando virdes uma noite abimeada por
uma luz desconhecida, sahei que e o grande
sinal que Deus vos da de que vai a punir o
mundo de seus crimes, por meio da guerra, da
fome e de proseguiçoes a Igreja e ao Santo Padre.

Para a impedir, vici fuder a coraçoada da Rus-
sia a Imem Imaculado Coraçoada, e a communhao sepa-
radora vos puniraos sabados. Se atenderem a meus
pedidos a Russia se convertera e terao paz: se vad,
espallara seus erros pelo mundo, promovendo qua-
ras e proseguiçoes a Igreja, os bons vad martiri-
zados, o Santo Padre tera muito que sufer, varias
naçoes vad ouqueiladas: por fim o Imem
Imaculado Coraçoada triumphara. O Santo Padre
comagra me a a Russia que se convertera e
sera consultado ao mundo algum tempo de
paz. Com Portugal se conservara sempre o re-
gnum da fe etc. Isto vad o digais a Domingum-
do Francisco sim, podeis dige. so.

To our knowledge, it is in her Third Memoir, written in July-August, 1941, that Sister Lucy mentions for the first time the division of the Secret into three distinct parts. She writes: «The Secret is made up of three distinct parts, two of which I am now going to reveal.»³⁸ She then writes down, also for the first time, the integral text of the first two parts of the Secret.³⁹ In doing this, she had the certainty that she was fulfilling the will of God, which revealed to her that «the moment had come to reveal the first two parts of the Secret». She feels «interiorly convinced that this is indeed the hour God has chosen...»⁴⁰

However, on the third Secret, she still had to keep silence because she had not received Heaven's permission to reveal it. On this point we have explicit testimony: on October 7, 1941, Bishop da Silva and Father Galamba came to Valença do Minho for a painstakingly prepared interrogation. In her Fourth Memoir, which she began writing immediately

(October-December, 1941), Sister Lucy mentions this memorable conversation and she explains her silence on the final Secret:

«First of all, Your Excellency has expressly required of me to write about the Apparitions of the Angel, putting down every circumstance and detail, and even, as far as possible, their interior effects upon us. Then, along comes Father Galamba to ask you to command me also to write about the Apparitions of Our Lady. “Command her, Your Excellency, *command her to write everything, absolutely everything*. She’ll have to do the rounds of Purgatory many a time for having kept silent about so many things!” As for Purgatory, I am not in the least afraid of it, from this point of view. I have always obeyed, and obedience deserves neither penalty nor punishment. First, I obeyed the interior inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and secondly, I obeyed the commands of those who spoke to me in His name (...).

«Father Galamba then said: “Your Excellency, command her to say everything, everything, and to hide nothing.” And Your Excellency, assisted most certainly by the Holy Spirit, pronounced this judgment: “No, I will not command that! I will have nothing to do with matters of secrets.”

«Thanks be to God! Any other order would have been for me a source of endless perplexities and scruples. Had I received a contrary command, I would have asked myself, many times: “Whom should I obey? God or His representative?” And perhaps, being unable to come to a decision, I would have been left in a state of real inner torment!

«Then Your Excellency continued speaking in God’s name: “Sister, write down the Apparitions of the Angel and of Our Lady, because this is for the glory of God and Our Lady.” How good God is! He is the God of peace, and it is along the paths of peace that He leads those who trust in Him.

«I shall begin, then, my new task, and thus fulfil the commands received from Your Excellency as well as the desires of Dr. Galamba. *With the exception of that part of the Secret which I am not permitted to reveal at present, I shall say everything.*»⁴¹

This Fourth Memoir, however, presents an important new element concerning the third Secret. At the end of the text of the first two parts, which on all points are identical with the text of the Second Memoir, Sister Lucy added a sentence which is not found there: «*Em Portugal se conservara sempre o doguema da fé etc.*»⁴²

Recall that the year 1942 was marked by the ceremonies of the Fatima jubilee and the act of consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the opening months of 1943, we see Sister Lucy preoccupied with informing people that this act of the Holy Father was incomplete, while on the other hand she strives to pass on to the bishops of Spain Our Lord’s warning concerning them. It is precisely in this already grave and dramatic context that the third Secret enters the picture once more.

II. THE WRITING DOWN AND PASSING ON OF THE FINAL SECRET (JUNE 1943 - JUNE 17, 1944)

Lucy had always enjoyed good health. However, she occasionally suffered from bronchial troubles which constrained her to take some rest periods, which she almost always spent in the gentle climate of Pontevedra, La Toja, and Rianjo... For the first time, during the summer and autumn of 1943, a grave pleurisy followed by several relapses seemed to endanger her life. This was to be the providential occasion which made Bishop da Silva decide to ask her for the text of the third Secret. But, as always, things went slowly with the Bishop of Leiria, which prolonged the seer's painful trial that much longer. It was a difficult, dramatic period, but without any doubt one of the most important periods of her life, and one of the most decisive periods for the Church's future...

A PROVIDENTIAL ILLNESS

Sister Lucy was thirty-six years old. At the beginning of June 1943, she was struck with pleurisy which was not serious at the beginning, but very quickly assumed an alarming character. The seer wrote to Bishop da Silva: «*Perhaps all this is the beginning of the end, and I am happy. It is good that, as my mission on earth is being completed, the Good Lord prepares for me the way to Heaven.*» These statements already gave the good bishop reasons for being disturbed, and even more so his friend Canon Galamba, who was always animated by the holy desire to make Our Lady's great message known without delay, in its entirety.

In July, there was a definite improvement in Sister Lucy's condition. Perhaps this was the moment when Bishop da Silva wrote to Lucy to ask her for a few notes in view of an upcoming edition of *Jacinta*. Soon, however, and still in July, Sister Lucy had a relapse due to an infection from a shot that was given improperly. The bishop's and the Canon's fears returned.

However, on August 2, while she wrote to Father Aparicio, her health seemed to be improving again:

«I am recovering from a sickness which has kept me in bed for around two months: a pneumonia, which then caused me to have a liquid pleurisy, and finally, an infection caused by an injection. Now all I have is a little fever which will go away with time, if God wills.»

After answering various questions she concluded this way, clearly referring to Bishop da Silva's recent requests:

«As for myself, I live here in complete abandonment between the hands of God. I follow events according as He disposes them, striving to do in all things His most holy Will manifested directly, or indirectly through the person representing Him for me. The publication of so many things, which I tried so carefully to hide, costs me, but if this poor sacrifice serves in some way for His glory and the good of souls, I am content. I have no

other desire. I thank Your Reverence for your prayers, which I need so much. In my own poor prayers, you are not forgotten.»⁴³

Is Sister Lucy referring only to the new notes on Jacinta that had been requested of her? Or did it already concern something else? We cannot say everything with certainty. But it is possible that a very important conversation on the third Secret took place at this moment, precisely during these few days in August when Sister Lucy's health was improving.

AT VALENÇA DO MINHO: A MEMORABLE CONVERSATION

Canon Galamba and Bishop da Silva (who at this time was at Formiguera, his country home near Braga) came as usual to Valença do Minho to meet Sister Lucy there. This time Sister Lucy came from nearby Tuy, passed Spanish customs, crossed the great international bridge spanning the Minho, then Portuguese customs, and she went to Asilo Fonseca, a young women's college run by the Franciscans. There the meeting was scheduled.

In the parlour of the college there was a large sofa with an armchair on either side. Two separate conversations took place that day: at one end of the sofa sat Bishop da Silva speaking with the Mother Superior, while at the other end Canon Galamba questioned Lucy. Suddenly the Canon asked her: *"Why don't you reveal the third part of the Secret of Our Lady? Could you perhaps tell it to us now?"* Then Lucy gestured with her head to Bishop da Silva: *"Now, if His Grace wants, I can tell it to you."* The conversation between the Mother Superior and the bishop was over now and everybody was standing. Canon Galamba said to the bishop: *"Your Grace! Sister Lucy says that if you want, she can now reveal the third part of the Secret."* Immediately, the bishop answered: *"I do not want to do anything of the kind! I don't want to meddle in it!"* "What a shame!" Canon Galamba answered. *"At least tell her to write it down on a piece of paper and give it to you in a sealed envelope!"*

The idea was launched, and Bishop da Silva agreed to it in principle. However, it seems that he did not decide to give Sister Lucy an express order then and there. Likewise Canon Galamba is doubtless echoing later conversations when, at the end of his account, he already mentions 1960 as the date the envelope is to be opened. In reality things went much more slowly, as we shall see.

Nevertheless, this conversation at Valença had a decisive importance in the history of the third Secret. Had it not been for this reply of the seer, *«now, if His Grace wishes, I can tell it to you»*, Don José, who was always extremely reserved and even timorous when faced with his responsibilities in this domain, would have never dared to ask her to write the text. This is why this conversation certainly took place before Bishop da Silva's first initiative in this sense, on September 15, 1943. But on what precise date? Unfortunately, it is impossible to answer with any certainty. Father Alonso does not mention it in his account. Canon Galamba, whom I had questioned on this point, recently wrote to me: *«I do not remember the date exactly. I am certain that this celebrated and important conversation took place during the summer vacation, and while Sister Lucy was in good health. Moreover, I did not go to Tuy during the visit of His Grace the bishop during Sister Lucy's illness (December 15,*

1943).»⁴⁴

*BISHOP DA SILVA'S FIRST APPROACH
TUY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1943*⁴⁵

It was soon learned at Leiria that Sister Lucy was gravely sick once more. Once again she suffered from an infection produced from a badly done vaccination. Bishop da Silva and Canon Galamba were soon seized with disquiet: was Lucy going to leave this world and take the Secret with her? Bishop da Silva decided to visit her.

He came to Tuy alone on Wednesday, September 15. But Lucy was not even able to leave her bed to receive him, and the conversation took place at the infirmary. The bishop undoubtedly had come to ask her to write down the third Secret. However, he did not dare to give her the formal order. He was unwilling to take upon himself this responsibility. Lucy had recorded his hesitant statements for us, words which were to become the occasion of a terrible spiritual trial for her: «... *If I wanted, if I thought it good to write the part of the Secret still missing, it would not be to publish it now, but so that it would be written.*»⁴⁶ These words were soon to plunge our seer in a terrible anguish. They did not express an order given in the name of God but only a vague desire. They left Lucy to bear the whole weight of the decision to be made. In effect, although Bishop da Silva clearly wished her to write down the text, in the final analysis he left Sister Lucy free to obey her own inspirations. Heaven, mysteriously, was now silent.

A TERRIBLE NIGHT (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1943)

Meanwhile, Lucy had still not recovered. However, the infection which forced her to stay in bed was actually a blessing in disguise; for her pleurisy, which resisted all treatment, disappeared precisely because of the purulence it caused in her leg. It was necessary to operate. She arrived at Pontevedra on September 21, and on the 22nd she was hospitalized in Dr. Marescot's clinic. The operation was completely successful, and on the 26th she was able to leave the clinic to return to the Dorothean Sisters' house, where she had already spent several years. Finally, in the beginning of October she returned to Tuy, although it took her several more months to completely recuperate.

Concerning the writing down of the final Secret, her interior torment had still not been dispelled. No doubt she opened up to Archbishop Garcia y Garcia, and surely also to Bishop da Silva himself. Granted, it was understood that the text would not be divulged right away. Yet this reservation was not enough to settle her doubts, as she explained:

«It seems to me that to write it down is already in a way to disclose it, and I do not yet have Our Lord's permission to do that. In any case, as I am used to seeing the Will of God in the wishes of my superiors, I am thinking of obedience, and I don't know what to do. I prefer an express command which I can rely on before God, so that I can say in all security, "They

ordered me that, Lord.” But those words “if you wish” disturb me and leave me perplexed.»⁴⁷

Thus Sister Lucy decided not to write the Secret without an express order, through which her bishop, in the name of God, would command her to do so. The reason, she adds, is that «*although it is sealed, (writing it) is still revealing it*».

BISHOP DA SILVA'S DECISION AND SISTER LUCY'S LONG AGONY

In response to this request, and no doubt encouraged by Canon Galamba, Bishop da Silva made his decision: «*Finally, by a letter written in mid-October, Don José gave the formal order Lucy had requested.*»⁴⁸ She confided to the Archbishop of Valladolid: «*They have ordered me to write down the part of the Secret that Our Lady revealed in 1917, and which I still keep hidden, by command of the Lord. They tell me either to write it in the notebooks in which I've been told to keep my spiritual diary, or if I wish, to write it on a sheet of paper, put it in an envelope, and then close it and seal it up.*»⁴⁹

As always, of course, Sister Lucy was convinced that by obeying her superiors she was obeying God. She was prepared to obey in a filial spirit and submissively. However, from October to the end of December, she continued to experience unspeakable anguish. «She was often accustomed, however, to receive, as we have seen, clear confirmation from Heaven itself of such orders, and when on this occasion no such confirmation was forthcoming, Lucy suffered acutely. “Yet Heaven is now keeping silent”, she write. “Is God wishing to test my obedience?”»⁵⁰

A MYSTERIOUS IMPEDIMENT

Having received the formal order to write down the Secret in mid-October, two months later Sister Lucy still had not done so. This shows how much the writing of this text made her tremble. Indeed as she took up her pen, she found herself incapable of writing. For, as she added in her letter to Don Garcia asking for his advice, *she had wanted to obey several times, and she had sat down to write, without being able to.*⁵¹ This mysterious impediment still existed on December 24, 1943, where she makes it clear in a letter to Don Garcia «*that this phenomenon was not due to natural causes.*»⁵²

A question now comes to mind. Was not this writing of the Secret contrary to the will of God? Was it not due solely to the anxious curiosity of the hierarchical authority? This hypothesis must be discarded immediately, for as we will see, there is nothing in the subsequent facts to sustain it, quite the contrary.

The long agony Sister Lucy had to face before finally being able to write this message reminds us instead of her first crisis of doubt and anguish, which she already had to go through before the revelation of this same Secret on July 13, 1917. Undoubtedly we should see it as Satan's final outburst against the messenger of the Immaculate One, guessing what

a great weapon this prophecy would be, once it was set down in black and white, against his domination and his claim of being able to infiltrate the very heart of the Church... thus the seer's great trial was the measure of how great was the event about to be accomplished.

During several conversations at Tuy, Sister Lucy had confided her anguish to Don Garcia y Garcia, who advised her to bide her time instead. He wrote as much to her: this trouble will vanish; in the meantime she should write to Don José da Silva and explain her difficulties in obeying the order given her; above all she should stay calm, she was not disobeying Our Lord in any respect.⁵³

In spite of their kindness, these directives, which went contrary to the formal order given by Bishop da Silva, undoubtedly did nothing but increase Lucy's interior trial. Fortunately, these letters of mid-December 1943 did not reach her until the second week of January 1944, when the text had already been written. Father Alonso thinks that this delay was due no doubt to the intervention of the superior of Tuy, Mother do Carmo Cunha Matos, who after having read them preferred not to communicate them to the seer right away.⁵⁴ All things considered, it was a wise precaution: since Heaven's will was that the message be written, delaying its writing even more would only have prolonged the poor seer's inner martyrdom.

FINALLY, SISTER LUCY WRITES THE SECRET (JANUARY 2-9, 1944)

On Christmas eve, Sister Lucy wrote to Don Antonio «that although she had tried several times, she was unable to write what had been commanded her, and that this phenomenon was not due to natural causes...» Through another communication we know that by Christmas day she still had not been able to write what had been asked of her.⁵⁵

Finally, however, on a date we do not know, Sister Lucy managed to overcome the interior obstacle that for two and a half months had prevented her from writing the text of the famous Secret. On January 9, 1944, she wrote to Bishop da Silva:

«I have written what you asked me; God willed to try me a little, but finally, this was indeed His will: (the text) is sealed in an envelope and the latter is in the notebooks...»⁵⁶

So the final Secret was written before January 9, 1944. And, wonder of wonders, Sister Lucy regained her light and peace with the certainty that Bishop da Silva's order indeed corresponded to God's will. How did she know? Father Alonso does not tell us.

JANUARY 2, 1944: AN APPARITION OF OUR LADY

At this point we must follow the account of Canon Martins dos Reis. He informs us of an immensely significant event: it was the Virgin Mary Herself who came in an apparition, to finally dispel the seer's darkness and put an end to her painful trial. Our author writes:

«Before this apparition of the Mother of God, at the infirmary of Tuy, three times the seer had attempted to write the Secret in order to obey the order of Don José Alves Correia da Silva, but she was never capable. Only after this vision was she able to do so without the slightest difficulty, and at the same time was liberated from the great perplexity she found herself in, due to the different attitudes of the two prelates (Bishop da Silva and Archbishop Garcia y Garcia.»⁵⁷

In another one of his works, Father Martins dos Reis reproduces a photograph of the room where this apparition took place, with this caption: «Infirmary of Tuy. The bedroom where Sister Lucy was staying: at the bottom, her modest iron bed against the wall, before which *Our Lady appeared to her to tell her to write the famous Secret... in conformity with what had been asked of her.*»⁵⁸

Although Father Alonso adds no additional details, he too makes a veiled allusion to the event. He writes:

«Moreover, how are we to understand Sister Lucy's great difficulty in writing the final part of the Secret when she had already written other things that were extremely difficult to put down? Had it been merely a matter of prophesying new and severe punishments, Sister Lucy would not have experienced difficulties so great *that a special intervention from Heaven was needed to overcome them.*»⁵⁹

Let us mention one final detail, pointed out by Father Alonso: it was in the Chapel of Tuy, where Sister Lucy had received such important divine communications since the spectacular trinitarian theophany of June 13, 1929, that the third Secret was written.⁶⁰

THE PASSING ON OF THE SECRET: TUY, VALENÇA, LA FORMIGUERA, LEIRIA

As we have said, once the text was written Sister Lucy recovered her usual peace. However, the extreme care she takes to pass it on safely to its recipient is a new indication of the exceptional importance she attaches to this document. Bishop da Silva, no doubt at Canon Galamba's request, had proposed that she either write the text in her notebook containing her spiritual notes – somewhat like the way she had done for the first two parts of the Secret, inserted in her Third and Fourth Memoirs – or put it in an envelope sealed with wax. She chose this second solution.

THE MEMORABLE DAY OF JUNE 17, 1944. Sister Lucy would entrust this envelope neither to the Post Office nor to any messenger. She waited several months for the opportune occasion to see that it reached Bishop da Silva in all dignity and safety. Finally, Archbishop Manuel Maria Ferreira da Silva, Superior of the Missionary Society of Cucujaes and titular Archbishop of Gurza, came to Valença do Minho on Saturday, June 17, 1944, on behalf of Bishop da Silva. He was accompanied by his brother, Msgr. José Manuel Ferreira da Silva and Father Vernocchi. For her part, on this Saturday morning in the octave of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Sister Lucy had left Tuy. She was accompanied by one of her sisters, who

of course was ignorant of the true purpose of the meeting (as were the priests accompanying the Bishop of Gurza). They crossed the Minho and arrived at Asilo Fonseca around noon. The seer discreetly handed the Bishop of Gurza the notebook in which she had slipped the envelope containing the Secret.

That same evening, the bishop placed the envelope into the hands of Bishop da Silva, who was then at his country home of “La Formiguera”, not far from Braga. The bishop then transferred it to his episcopal palace of Leiria.⁶¹

III. THE THIRD SECRET AND THE CHURCH

June 1943 - June 17, 1944. One year had gone by, during which the Hand of God had been the sovereign director of events. Now that we have recorded the various episodes of this drama at length, we can better perceive its providential meaning.

A PRECIOUS TREASURE. God willed this writing down of the great Secret. But rather than ask it of the seer directly, He desired that the initiative come from a representative of His Church. This explains Lucy’s grave illness, where her life suddenly seemed threatened. Bishop da Silva then had the merit of faith and trust in Our Lady of Fatima. Sure that Her final message would some day be a source of inestimable benefits for the Church, he realized that he was responsible for the future of this precious treasure. During the conversation at Valença, Sister Lucy, who was surely speaking under God’s inspiration, confirmed him in this thought: yes, it would be a great shame if she died without having been able to pass on to the Church the great “Secret of Mary” in its integral tenor. This is the meaning of her reply to Canon Galamba: «Now, if His Grace wishes, I can tell it to you.»

THE AUTHORIZATION AND THE ORDER TO WRITE DOWN THE SECRET. When Sister Lucy’s life was in danger once more, Bishop da Silva took a step in the path opened before him. On September 15, 1943, *he authorized* Lucy to write the third Secret: “If she wants to”, she can do so.

But Heaven required something more of her, and knew how to lead Its servant to the very end of the path It had marked out. It permitted that after her physical illness, Its messenger, who was «completely abandoned into its hands», would be plunged into a terrible spiritual darkness and assailed by doubts, fears and anguish concerning the writing of this Secret. Surely frightened by the very content of such a message, of herself Sister Lucy could not resolve to put such a prophecy onto paper. Since Heaven inexorably kept silent, in her dark night Sister Lucy had only one recourse: she implored Bishop da Silva insistently for a formal order. In mid-October, the bishop gave way before her urgent requests, making a decision which was to have such great importance for the future: in the name of God, he ordered the Fatima seer to write down this final Secret of Our Lady. This was precisely what God willed.

A MYSTERIOUS IMPEDIMENT. This is the final phase of the drama which now opens: Satan is unchained to oppose the great design of God, which was about to be fulfilled. Sister Lucy,

who thought that with a formal order of her bishop her soul would have recovered its peace and that it would be easy for her to obey, then found herself mysteriously prevented from doing so. Her internal agony was to be prolonged for two more months.

OUR LADY'S INTERVENTION. But this failure to carry out the order and this impotence were also permitted, willed by God, so that soon He would be able to manifest His will more strikingly. Already, through this long agony of the seer, He allows us to perceive the extreme gravity of the message she had to pass on. Finally, on Sunday, January 2, 1944, Our Lady appeared to her, giving her light and the strength to accomplish the writing requested of her. So, on a date we shall undoubtedly know some day, she wrote down Our Lady's final prophetic words. To show that it really does concern a message of considerable importance, she expends the greatest care in passing it on.

A TREASURE OF GRACES ENTRUSTED TO THE CHURCH. Finally, on June 17, 1944, the precious document is officially, solemnly placed in the hands of the hierarchical authority that had the singular merit of asking for it. There is a very remarkable fact here: Sister Lucy revealed that Our Lady had given her a Secret. And Heaven willed that with trust and love, the leaders of the Church desire to know this Maternal warning, and themselves decide to divulge it to the world. Our Lady never ordered Sister Lucy to write or disclose this or that part of the Secret... No, She willed that the initiative come from the Church: confessors, bishop or Pope. Such was the case already in 1927, in 1929, in 1940 and 1941.⁶² In other words, the writing down and disclosure of the great Secret are placed entirely at the discretion of the hierarchy, like a supernatural treasure to be exploited and brought to fruition, for the salvation of the Church and the world.

Unfortunately, after his courageous decision of October, 1943, it seems that the Bishop of Leiria suddenly became frightened by the extent of the responsibilities he had taken upon himself... and he promptly sought to be relieved of them.

IN BISHOP DA SILVA'S SAFE

«At the time the Bishop of Leiria received the sealed document (Father Alonso writes), he was also given a letter from Sister Lucy in which she made a few suggestions. One was that the document should be kept in his own possession until his death, when it was to be given to the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.»⁶³ Receiving Sister Lucy's suggestions like an order from Heaven, Don José told Cardinal Cerejeira about them without delay. Was he already trying to entrust «the precious document» to the Cardinal Patriarch? It is quite possible. In that case, he surely suffered the same refusal as when further steps were taken for this purpose a few years later.

What is certain is that in his desire to be relieved of a document whose extraordinary importance he had guessed in 1944, Bishop da Silva had the idea of sending it on to Rome. Father Alonso writes: «Cardinal Ottaviani has told us that in 1944, when the Secret of Fatima was committed to writing, there was some suggestion that it be taken to Rome, but

that Vatican officials judged it more opportune to keep it in the episcopal chancery of Leiria.»⁶⁴

Bishop da Silva, who was forced to remain the caretaker of the Secret himself, on December 8, 1945, placed the envelope sealed by Sister Lucy in a larger envelope, also sealed with wax, on which he wrote in his own hand:

«This envelope with its contents is to be given to His Eminence Don Manuel, Patriarch of Lisbon, after my death. Leiria, December 8, 1945. José, Bishop of Leiria.»⁶⁵

Then the envelope was placed in the safe of the episcopal curia, from which it never emerged except on very rare occasions, to be shown to a few privileged souls. Thus it was photographed by M. Pazen, the reporter from *Life* magazine, which published it in its edition of January 3, 1949. We have reproduced this striking photograph where the aging Bishop of Leiria can be seen seated before a table on which the envelope containing the Secret was placed.⁶⁶ Let us add that, in spite of himself, Bishop da Silva remained the caretaker of the Secret until March 1957, a few months before his death.

Thus concludes the almost exhaustive account of everything known at present concerning the writing down of the third Secret. We must still answer several questions which are as important as they are controversial:

For whom was the third Secret directly intended?

Could Bishop da Silva have read it? Could he have published it in 1944?

In what circumstances and for what purpose was it transferred from Leiria to Rome?

Finally, the principal question: had Our Lady really requested that it be revealed to the world in 1960?

All these questions are very closely connected with each other. After retracing the history of Pius XII's pontificate to the very end, considering it in its relationship to Fatima, we shall be able to answer them better.



Bishop da Silva, from 1944 to 1957, was entrusted with keeping the third Secret. On the envelope containing the Secret – seen at the bottom of this photograph – he wrote with his own hand:

*Este envelope com o seu conteúdo será entregue a Sua Eminencia O Sr. Cardeal D. Manuel, Patriarca de Lisboa, depois da minha morte.
Leiria, 8 de Dezembro de 1945
† José, Bispo de Leiria.*

*This envelope with its contents shall be entrusted to His Eminence Cardinal D. Manuel (Cerejeira), Patriarch of Lisbon, after my death.
Leiria, December 8, 1945
† José, Bishop of Leiria.*

SECTION II: Rome between Fatima and Moscow (1942-1948)

INTRODUCTION

THE DISPARATE EFFECTS OF AN INCOMPLETE ACT

On the evening of October 31, 1942, for the closing of the jubilee of the Fatima apparitions, in all the cities and towns of the Land of Holy Mary, the Portuguese people, moved by a holy enthusiasm, had gathered in the churches and public places to listen to the Sovereign Pontiff's radio message. Everybody was awaiting it like a national event. What emotion it brought to hear him describe the miracle of grace already accomplished by the Queen of Heaven, Mediatrix of mercy, in favour of Her "faithful nation"! The Pope had also evoked «the immense tragedy» of the war then afflicting the world. At the end of our second volume we quoted this magnificent discourse in its entirety, a discourse full of fine allusions to Our Lady of Fatima's message, and in such perfect harmony with all its major themes.

Let us recall only the essential part of this discourse: the formula of consecration of the Church and the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Addressing Our Lady under the title She had given Herself at the Cova da Iria on October 13, 1917, the Pope addressed this solemn supplication to Her:

«Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Help of Christians, and Refuge of the human race, conqueror in all the great battles of God, we humbly prostrate ourselves as supplicants before Thy throne, certain of obtaining mercy and finding grace and opportune help in the present calamity... to You, to Your Immaculate Heart in this tragic hour of human history, we confide, we consecrate, we deliver, not only Holy Church, the Mystical Body of Your Jesus which bleeds and suffers in so many parts and is in so much tribulation, but also the whole world, torn by mortal discord, burning in the fires of hate, victim of its own iniquity.»⁶⁷

At Tuy, where she was living at the time, Sister Lucy did not have the happiness of hearing the Holy Father pronounce this consecration, the original inspiration for which had come from her. She had not even been informed of the event. When her Superior, Mother Corte Real, informed her of it shortly after November 8, she felt a very great joy...⁶⁸

THE DECISIVE QUESTION

Soon it was necessary to answer a very delicate question, although a question of capital importance: to what extent did this act of consecration of the Church and the world correspond to the exact requests of Our Lady? To what extent would it be acceptable to Heaven? What would its supernatural consequences be? According to her custom, Sister Lucy no doubt had to implore enlightenment from on high during her hours of nocturnal adoration before the Most Holy Sacrament.

On February 28, 1943, without further delay, and while certain people inflamed by too facile an enthusiasm were already announcing Russia's imminent conversion, Sister Lucy passed on Heaven's response. She wrote it to His Grace the Bishop of Gurza:

«The Good Lord has already shown me His contentment with the act performed by the Holy Father and several bishops, although it was incomplete according to His desire. In return, He promises to end the war soon. The conversion of Russia is not for now.»⁶⁹

In these few words, everything is said. If this text of the seer had been disclosed immediately, it would have dispelled a good many illusions. It also would have spared commentators on the message of Fatima the disturbing error which made them state that the Pope had fully obeyed Our Lady's requests, and that the world need only wait for the imminent fulfilment of Her promises...

«AN INCOMPLETE ACT»

Four months after the event, Sister Lucy spoke clearly. Granted, the Pope had just fulfilled one of Heaven's requests, but only one request, and the least of them. We recall that this consecration of the world with a special mention of Russia was finally requested by Our Lord on October 22, 1940, as by an act of condescendence, temporarily limiting His demands according to the cooperation of His hierarchical representatives.⁷⁰ But the great requests that constituted the essence of the message of Fatima, and which Sister Lucy had made known to Pope Pius XII in the opening months of 1940, and again on December 2 of the same year,⁷¹ remained unanswered. The Pope had made no reference to the reparatory devotion of the five first Saturdays of the month. And he had not accomplished the solemn and public act of reparation and consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, ordering all the bishops of the Catholic world to join with him. This would have been a really extraordinary initiative, but according to the promise of the Virgin most powerful, it would have obtained from the Divine Mercy the incomparable miracle of grace which the conversion of Russia will be.⁷²

CONSEQUENCES IN TWO PARTS

What fruits could be expected from this act of October 31, 1942? One might have thought that in response to this initial obedience to Heaven's requests on the hierarchy's part, there would correspond an initial fulfilment of the promises. Sister Lucy, however, is categorical. She does not say: "Russia will begin to be converted, the persecutions will grow weaker" ... No, in this domain it is all or nothing: «The conversion of Russia is not for now.» So the chastisement prophesied by the great Secret will continue to be fulfilled. Bolshevik Russia will be the instrument of the Divine Wrath, the instrument of chastisement for the entire world, nation after nation.

Then did the consecration of 1942 serve no purpose? It would be a grave error to think so. The seer states that «the good Lord has already shown His contentment at the act

accomplished by the Holy Father and by several bishops.» Although no doubt the special mention of Russia was undoubtedly discreet, Our Lord keeps His promise: «In return He promises to end the war soon.» We shall see that the months following this act did in fact mark the turning point of the war, whose end was in sight before long.

More profoundly, the act of Pius XII corresponded well to the great divine design for our century. «God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart». It contributed to this design in a powerful way, and consequently drew down «special graces of the Immaculate Heart of Mary» upon the Church and the world.⁷³ Sister Lucy underlines this fact again, shortly after October 31, 1942, writing: «I hope that the Immaculate Heart will not delay to show how pleasing such an act was to Her. I ask this (of the Immaculate Heart) with the confident certitude that my hope will not be disappointed.»⁷⁴

She will not be disappointed and a long chapter will be needed to give even a concise account of the marvels of grace poured out upon the Church in response to its fervent devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. But we must also retrace simultaneously the frightful progress of Bolshevism, which now became unstoppable. What a dramatic contrast! This too is the subject of another chapter; the material for this chapter, alas, is no less abundant.

In this growing opposition between the two cities, which both seem to make progress, each in their own domain before reaching the paroxysm of their power before the supreme confrontation, we have the key to the years 1942 - 1948. In the face of Moscow, capital of antichrist, Fatima rises higher and higher as the holy city of the Kingdom of Mary; its message stands out as the charter for the reconquest of immense territories, and multitudes of souls who have fallen into slavery of the adversary.

In this striking contrast between the Cova da Iria, its humble Capelinha and its white basilica, and Moscow's Red Square, disfigured by the gigantic portraits of the bloody executioners, the heroes of the Revolution,⁷⁵ we recognize the age old antagonism: the city of God faced with the empire of the prince of this world, the «mystery of iniquity» faced with the mystery of «grace and mercy», the «decisive battle between Our Lady and the devil», as Sister Lucy was to say soon.

If God permits Evil to progress to the point where it seems that before long it will be utterly triumphant, it is for the chastisement of guilty humanity, but also in a design of mercy: that the frightful menace open the eyes of the pastors of the Church, and lead them finally to enter into His ways, fulfilling the repeated requests of His most Holy Mother with exactness and fervour. For the lesson to be complete, God allows Evil to produce all its devastating effects within its own sphere, and the errors of the Revolution to produce all their poisoned fruits. But already God also manifests, with great splendour, the miraculous effectiveness of the remedy He proposes to the Church for the world's salvation: to the exact extent that Her cult and Her authentic message is proclaimed, the Immaculate Heart of Mary pours out a wonderful shower of graces of conversion and peace over souls and over nations...

Thus there are two pictures: the Revolution, invading fresh parts of the world, reducing them to slavery, persecuting religion – and the gentle, invincible, conquering radiance of Our Lady of Fatima. For the head of the Church, these two pictures constitute the most pressing invitation to correspond zealously and without delay to God’s great design over the world, such as the Queen of prophets had revealed it at the dawn of our century, in the Cova da Iria. Would Pius XII become, finally, “the Pope of Fatima” in full, the Pope who would fulfil all its demands and see the fulfilment of the miracles promised?

APPENDIX - SISTER LUCY’S SENTIMENTS AFTER THE CONSECRATION OF OCTOBER 31, 1942

The Bishop of Gurza had been Sister Lucy’s spokesman with the Portuguese bishops. It was he who got them, in July 1942, to decide to send a new petition to the Holy Father. Thus he had contributed very effectively to the fulfilment of the divine designs. Shortly after November 8, 1942, Sister Lucy expressed to him the joy she felt on learning the happy news. However, in her closing, she already discreetly pointed out to her director that still not everything had been done!

Here is this letter, which in a special way shows our seer’s simplicity and humility of heart:

«Most excellent and reverend Lord Bishop,

«I have here two letters from Your Excellency. I gratefully thank you for them. Your Excellency’s letters were the first to bring me the good news. After that, several other letters came from their Excellencies the Lord Bishops and the Reverend Mother Provincial. They all share my intense joy, and give thanks with me to our good Lord, to the Holy Father, and to the Immaculate Heart of our dear Heavenly Mother.

«I did not have the sweet consolation of hearing His Holiness’ voice. In this sense it is necessary that my sacrifice be complete; and thanks to God it is! These days of very great tribulation are going by here, at the house, in the greatest obscurity. Nothing, absolutely nothing, distinguishes them from the ordinary course of life; they even try to carefully hide from me all news of what is happening; but that is good. I am happy because in this way the good Lord and the Immaculate Heart of Mary are more for me and I for Them, and Them alone!

«As I read Your Excellency’s letter, I interrupted my reading to go and thank the good Lord and the Immaculate Heart of Mary for so great a grace. I examined myself to see if I have something to offer to thank Them, but I didn’t find anything. I offered my own poverty, and I asked the good Lord to accept my nothingness and supply for my incapacity. How good is God...! As I continued reading your letter, I found that Your Excellency said: “In fifteen days I will be free to say some Masses for you in thanksgiving.”

«O my God, how good You are...! It is You Who offers Yourself, to immolate Yourself as a victim in gratitude, through His Excellency's hands. Oh, how true is the sentiment engraved at the bottom of my heart: "It is God Who does everything." A thousand thanks to Your Excellency. May the good Lord recompense you for such goodness.

«With anguish I await His Holiness' order to the bishops, and then the grace of peace for the poor world.

«I ask you to be so good as to bless me.

Maria Lucia of Jesus.»⁷⁶

While filled with joy over what had been done, Sister Lucy still did not forget Our Lady's exact request: the solemn consecration of Russia by the Pope and all the bishops of the world, the sole means of obtaining the conversion of this nation whose salvation is entrusted to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and through this miraculous conversion, «peace for the poor world».

CHAPTER III
THE MIRACLE OF FATIMA:
A SHOWER OF GRACES OVER THE WORLD
(1942 - 1948)

In 1963, Father René Laurentin observed: «The Blessed Virgin Mary has come to have an extraordinary position in the Catholic Church of today, reaching its culmination with the Marian Years at the end of Pius XII's pontificate: definition of the dogma of the Assumption in 1950, centennial of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1954, centennial of Lourdes in 1958.»⁷⁷ The fact is undeniable! But what our author does not say is that this ardent devotion to Our Lady was engendered and developed in close relation with the message of Fatima, especially from 1942 to 1948.

In effect, although the majority of historians of Pius XII pass over the event in silence, or grant it a ludicrously minor place in the history of the pontificate, the consecration of the Church and the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on October 31, 1942 was behind this great movement of Marian devotion. From year to year, this movement was to grow almost until the very end of the pontificate, going hand in hand with a wonderful expansion of the Catholic Faith.

1942: THE DAWN OF A MARIAN ERA

Must we recall very briefly the most noteworthy events marking the jubilee year of Fatima?

April 8-13: Marian Congress at Lisbon with the first "tour of Our Lady", whose statue is triumphantly carried from the Cova da Iria to the capital of the Empire.

April 18: Cardinal Schuster reveals the major themes of the great Secret.

April-May: Appearance at Rome of the works of Father da Fonseca and Father Moresco. With one shot, these works will make the message of Fatima known in the entire world.

May 13: At Fatima, spectacular ceremonies of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first apparition. At Rome, the episcopal jubilee of Pius XII.

October 13: Blessing of the crown of gold offered to Our Lady of Fatima. Appearance of Canon Galamba's work, *Jacinta*, which reveals the exact text of the first two parts of the Secret.

October 31: Closing of the Fatima jubilee. Radio message of Pius XII to the Portuguese nation and consecration of the Church and the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.⁷⁸

It must be made clear that this consecration was in no way a mere formality without any consequences, something the Pope resigned himself to so as to satisfy the pressing requests

of the faithful. In the spirit of Pius XII, this act, which was a first official response to the requests of Fatima, was to orient and inspire the whole Church's devotion in the future. Later on, the Pope applied himself to recalling this act and underlining its importance.⁷⁹

THE CEREMONY OF DECEMBER 8. To stress the relationship of this act of consecration with Fatima, the Pope had wanted to accomplish this consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the occasion of the closing of the jubilee of the apparitions in 1917. But because the discourse was pronounced in Portuguese, there was the risk that it would pass almost unnoticed in the rest of the world. Pius XII decided to renew it very shortly after, so that it would have greater repercussions. On December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception, «a ceremony of expiation and supplication» took place in Saint Peter's basilica. In the presence of forty Cardinals, many bishops, the diplomatic corps, the clergy of Rome and a great crowd of pilgrims, the Holy Father read once more the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Responding to the most formal divine decree revealed at Fatima – «God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart» – he urgently invited the entire Christian people to unite themselves to the devotional act he had just accomplished towards Our Lady: bishops were to consecrate their dioceses to Her, parish priests were to consecrate their parishes, and the Faithful were to consecrate themselves.⁸⁰

This simple invitation from the Holy Father did not remain a dead letter. With beautiful enthusiasm, in the final days of 1942, many parishes of Italy consecrated themselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Some French dioceses followed this example: Annecy on December 13, Gap and Arras on Christmas day, Tulle on December 27, etc. In Spain as well, the dioceses of Cordoba, Coria, Astorga, Avila and Seville were consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary before the end of 1942. Some religious orders followed suit: the Franciscans, the Capuchins, the Servites.⁸¹

TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF THE DOGMA OF THE ASSUMPTION. The year 1942 had also witnessed the Sovereign Pontiff's first public decision in view of the proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin. To manifest the consensus of the Church, Pius XII confided to two Jesuits, Fathers Hentrich and de Moos, the task of reviewing and publishing all the petitions concerning the Assumption sent to the Holy See since the last century.

THE APOSTLE OF MARY HONOURED. Another important decision was made for the increase of devotion to Our Lady: on January 11, 1942, Pius XII had signed the decree "De miraculis", reopening the canonization process of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort. Moreover, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the manuscript, "Treatise on True Devotion to the Holy Virgin", the Montfort Fathers published a photographic edition of it. Pius XII granted them the favour of a manuscript presentation of the document.⁸²

All these actions and gestures committed the Church along the path of a more perfect response to Our Lady of Fatima's requests. The fact is remarkable: from 1942 until 1948 –

to stay within the period we are covering here – there is not a single year which isn't singled out by several decisive events for the development of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

1943: THE BEGINNING OF THE “GREAT RETURN”

On February 12, Pius XII published the decree introducing the cause for beatification of Pope Pius X. This decision was incomparably effective for the defence of the Catholic Faith.

THE PROGRESS OF DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

On April 15, the Pope once more ordered public prayers to the Most Holy Virgin to obtain peace. Repeating in his turn one of the themes of the Secret of Fatima, he invited the Faithful before all else to learn the lessons of the war:

«It is necessary first of all that everyone reflect and recognize that such a war, perhaps the greatest one since the creation of the world, in the final analysis is simply the well deserved chastisement from the outraged Divine Justice...»⁸³

The Pope then recalled the solemn act accomplished a few months earlier:

«In the month of October last, we devoted, entrusted and consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary the Holy Church, Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, torn by so many wounds, and at the same time the entire universe which, consumed by hatred and embittered by divisions, is paying the penalty for its own iniquities. *We have learned, with great consolation for our paternal heart, that this act of devotion had been renewed almost everywhere by bishops, priests, and the multitude of Christian people.* But if almost all Christians have spontaneously and gladly devoted themselves to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, they must also willingly and resolutely conform themselves to it, if they really desire that the Mother of God receive their prayers with kindness.»⁸⁴

While at Rome and in all Italy, the recent works of Father da Fonseca and Father Luigi Moresco, making known the message of Fatima, spread with wonderful speed,⁸⁵ Pius XII multiplied gestures that manifested his personal devotion. In March 1943, he himself blessed a reproduction of Our Lady of Fatima destined for the church of Saint James of Udine. In June, he accepted the request which Portugal had officially addressed to him, to construct at Portugal's own expense a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima in the new church of Saint Eugene, built at Rome in remembrance of his episcopal jubilee. This chapel was made entirely of Portuguese marble.⁸⁶

On June 29, in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, the epilogue of which was entirely devoted to «*the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the members of Christ*», the Pope concluded by recalling the new act of consecration to Her Immaculate Heart.⁸⁷ Finally, on November 25, he ordered that on the following December 8, for the first anniversary of this consecration in

St. Peter's Basilica, public prayers would once more be addressed to Our Lady, accompanied by works of penance accomplished in the spirit of expiation.⁸⁸

During the entire year, the movement of consecrations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary had continued to grow. In Spain, for example, not only dioceses but parishes and all sorts of religious, military or civil associations had performed this act of devotion to Our Lady. Father Alonso gives a list of 41 Spanish dioceses that made their consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1943, usually after publication of a pastoral letter where the bishop explained its meaning and close relationship with the Fatima message.⁸⁹

In France, also, the consecration performed by Pius XII bore wonderful fruits of grace: it inspired the "Great Return", «this extraordinary mystical event, undoubtedly the vastest homage given to the Mother of God on our land of France». The expression comes from Father Devineau, who after having been one of its principal organizers became its enthusiastic historian.⁹⁰

THE GREAT RETURN IN THE ROUTE OF OUR LADY

Everything had begun in 1938, on the occasion of the third centennial of the consecration of France to Our Lady by King Louis XIII. Four reproductions of the statue of Our Lady of Boulogne, sitting on its barque, had visited several hundred parishes in the north of France that year. Four years later, on August 15, 1942, one of these statues was at Puy-en-Velay for the pilgrimage that brought together 60,000 young people at the feet of the "Madonna of France". On September 7, it was received at Lourdes with honour. Then Our Lady of Boulogne was returned once more and everything seemed finished.

Shortly after December 8, 1942, Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris, made his *ad limina* visit. Pius XII surely spoke to him about the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary that he had just performed. On the Cardinal's return, the assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops of France fixed the date Sunday, March 28, 1943, for the consecration of every diocese in France to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Father Ranson, S.J., who had already been behind the first itinerant mission of Our Lady of Boulogne, decided to make a return journey. Father Devineau writes:

«This consecration was the charter for the Great Return. When on March 28, 1943, the Church in France, through the mouth of its spiritual heads made the Pope's act its own, Our Lady of Boulogne – who from now on was to be called Our Lady of the Great Return – left the rock of Massabielle for Her first stage on the roads of France: Lourdes-Bartrès. The prodigious journey began. It was to last six months, and by osmosis it spread to several countries of Europe, and from there to the rest of the world.»⁹¹

I have before my eyes one of the images distributed by the thousands as a souvenir. The date March 28, 1943, is printed in large characters, recalling the point of departure for the Great Return. On the other side is the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

pronounced by Pius XII in his radio message to the Portuguese people for the closing of the Fatima jubilee. It is followed by a brief formula of personal consecration.

This new kind of Marian mission, completely centred on consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was to visit over 16,000 parishes in 83 dioceses of France within five years. The program was simple:

«During the day there were long marches on foot from one parish to another, often involving immense processions in all seasons, in summer as in winter, under the sun, the frost, the snow... The nights were spent in the pulpit and the confessional. A few hours of sleep, and in the morning everybody left. It was Lourdes every day in several parishes of France: waves of grace were flowing.»⁹²

On the road, there was non-stop singing and praying for hours. Many walked barefoot.

In the evening, «around 10:30 p.m., there was a great prayer vigil in a packed church, in deep fervour. The people meditated on the mysteries of the Rosary, especially the Sorrowful ones... At midnight, there was a Mass of Communion⁹³ with a consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary».⁹⁴ «And the signed formulas of consecration to Our Lady were gathered: “to show my will to be more and more faithful to my God and my country, I consecrate myself to the Immaculate Heart of Mary” ...»⁹⁵

After the Mass, compact groups remained in the church for a vigil of adoration lasting the entire night, until the departure for another parish the following day.

Everywhere the crowds ran to welcome the Pilgrim Virgin «in an outburst of fervour and a demonstration of faith difficult to imagine today. During sixty months, between forty to fifty missionaries accompanied the fourfold Marian path, which went from the shores of the Gave to the coasts of Boulogne.»⁹⁶ Father Devineau wrote in 1963:

«It is difficult, after twenty years, to realize to what extent an entire people rose up in enthusiasm and fervour... Under the fragile appearance of statues which were passing by, the presence of the Mother of God was hidden. She was the great converter, the great missionary.»⁹⁷

Msgr. Théas wrote:

«From April 26 to July 4, 1943, the statue of Our Lady of Boulogne went all over the little diocese of Montauban. Night and day, Our Lady of the Great Return was honoured and acclaimed in the most unexpected and beneficent way... The confessionals and communion rails were besieged during these sacred nocturns, while recitation of the mysteries of the Rosary occupied the praying multitudes in the churches. In certain parishes there were striking conversions that had not been worked during the missions.»⁹⁸

The unexpected effectiveness of this Marian mission especially surprised the directors of Catholic Action. The Director of Public Works wrote, «The Great Return at Rheims reached

social circles that Catholic Action had never reached. It causes a good many problems for us (sic!).»⁹⁹

In effect, «The great journey of Mary, Queen and Patroness of France, across her fair domain», as Pius XII said shortly after, was also and above all, the great return of souls to Jesus through Mary, by means of the consecration to Her Immaculate Heart. Father Devineau writes, «The missionaries who followed Our Lady over the roads of France can testify that in the paths of Mary they heard the most sincere and loyal avowals.»¹⁰⁰

In the atmosphere of Marshal Pétain's "National Revolution", the success of the Great Return was complete. The civil authorities clearly showed their favour, and in spite of the patriotic character of this movement of popular piety, the German occupiers created no obstacle.

One of the images of the Great Return which was very widespread bore on the reverse side Saint Pius X's celebrated prophecy, which he uttered during the consistory of November 29, 1911:

«A day will come, and we hope it is not far off, when France, like Saul on the road to Damascus, etc.» The text continued, «On this day it is in our power to hasten the event, doing what the Holy Virgin has so expressly requested: 1. By amending our life; 2. By reciting the Rosary; 3. By consecrating ourselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.»

In a few words, the essence of the Fatima message had been proposed as the means of hastening this hour of France's complete conversion. This was also the period when the events of Fatima, which were almost totally unknown in France, suddenly aroused «a pious and avid curiosity» in the Christian people. The press broke its obstinate silence. Preachers mentioned it. In a few months the very important new edition of Canon Barthas' book, entitled *Fatima, merveille inouïe* was sold out.¹⁰¹

Before long, with the "Liberation", the Great Return encountered fierce opposition from the communists and freemasons, who had returned to power in force, but also from their accomplices, the Christian Democrats. We shall supply the proof of this opposition. The Christian Democrats were exasperated by this religion of the plain man and this Catholic nationalism, which they rightly perceived as a threat to the sacrosanct secular democracy... But we must not get ahead of ourselves.

Be that as it may, the Great Return made a powerful contribution to the very real Catholic renaissance that took place under Marshal Pétain's government, with his benevolent and effective help. If this movement was not entirely successful, at least it saved France during the years 1944-1947 from a complete communist takeover, which very nearly turned France over to the Bolshevik camp... Then also, for souls, the innumerable graces of conversion and all the merits they obtained at this period are supernatural treasures which have an eternal value.

1944: THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

In her letter to Pope Pius XII of December 2, 1940, at the end of her exposition, Sister Lucy wrote:

«Now, Most Holy Father, allow me to make one more request, which is but an ardent wish of my humble heart; that the feast in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary be extended throughout the whole world as one of the principal feasts of Holy Church.»¹⁰²

She confided the same vehement desire to Father Aparicio:

«Oh! Who will grant to me... that His Holiness may elevate the feast in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the rank of a principal feast of the first class, for the Universal Church! Pray for that, for the glory of our Good Lord and our Good Heavenly Mother.»¹⁰³

On May 27, 1943, she insisted once more, in a letter to the Bishop of Gurza: «In truth, this desire (for a feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary) is not just my own. Someone has put it in me. It comes from the most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.»¹⁰⁴

On May 4, 1944, this desire was partially granted: the Pope instituted the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to preserve, as he said, the memory of the consecration of the human race to this same Heart, accomplished by the Pope on December 8, 1942.

Here is the text of the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*:

«The liturgical cult of the Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of which the commentaries of the Fathers on the Spouse in the Canticle of Canticles show remote vestiges, and which was prepared more immediately by more numerous and holy persons, men and women of the Middle Ages and the modern period, was approved by the Apostolic See at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Pope Pius VII established that the feast of the most pure Heart of Mary was to be celebrated piously and in a holy manner on the Sunday after the octave of the Assumption, by all the dioceses and religious families which would request the faculty of celebrating this feast.

«But during this same century, the feast of the most pure Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary – which over the years spread more widely over the Catholic world – was enriched with a proper Office and Mass by order of Pius IX and the care of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

«Through this cult, the Church renders the honour due to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Under the symbol of this Heart, in effect it venerates most devoutly the eminent and unique sanctity of the soul of the Mother of God, especially Her most ardent love towards Her God and Son Jesus Christ, and Her maternal tenderness towards men, redeemed by His Divine Blood.

«Meanwhile, a zealous and ardent desire grew stronger in the souls of both the Faithful and their Pastors that the feast of the most pure Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary be extended to the whole Church.

«Therefore, having compassion on such painful trials which afflict the Christian peoples because of the cruel war that overwhelms them, our Most Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, in the year 1942, on the blessed day of the Immaculate Conception, consecrated the holy universal Church and the entire human race for all times to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, just as Pope Leo XIII had once dedicated them to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

«And to preserve the memory of this consecration (*consecrationis*) he decided to extend the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the universal Church. It is to be celebrated each year with its proper Office and Mass on August 22, in place of the octave day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, under the rite of double of the second class: so that with the help of the Blessed Mother of God, peace be granted to all nations and liberty to the Church of Christ, that sinners be delivered from their faults, and finally so that all the Faithful be strengthened in the love of purity and the practice of the virtues... May 4, 1944. Cardinal Salotti, Prefect.»¹⁰⁵

«God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.» The establishment of this feast marked new progress in the fulfilment of His designs of mercy for our century.

THE WARNING TO THE BISHOPS OF SPAIN

It was also in 1944 that the message of June 12, 1941, was finally passed on to many of the Spanish bishops. The first initiatives of Don Antonio Garcia y Garcia had been rather badly received, especially by the Cardinals of Toledo and Seville.

In the face of this failure of the Spanish prelate, Bishop da Silva decided to act. On February 10, 1944, he wrote the following letter to each of the bishops of Spain:

«I am the unworthy bishop of the smallest diocese in Portugal, but the diocese chosen by Our Lady for the apparitions of Fatima.

«Sister Lucy, one of the seers, still lives in a religious house in Spain. I have spoken to her and I have often corresponded with her. Not long ago, she wrote to the Most Excellent Lord Manuel, Bishop of Gurza, Superior of the Society of Portuguese Catholic missions, her former spiritual director, a letter, the contents of which I communicate to you.»¹⁰⁶

«Father Moran, S.J., who came to Fatima several times to preach the Spiritual Exercises presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon, insisted with me that I make known these words of Sister Lucy to Your Excellency.»¹⁰⁷

This intervention, which was so surprising coming from the Bishop of Leiria, was soon to have the happiest results.

THE RESPONSE OF THE BISHOPS. The Bishop of Badajoz, who was the first to respond to this circular letter, said to Don José:

«The words of Sister Lucy, the seer of Fatima, could not be more expressive and they express with all exactitude what is taking place among us. Consequently, to the extent my feeble strength allows, I will strive to follow Our Lord's warning to appease His justice, so offended by so many souls who live without fulfilling His holy law.»

Cardinal Segura, Archbishop of Seville, revised his opinion:

«How many truths these statements contain! We see it every day, and we unceasingly repeat it to our Faithful. May the Lord, through the mediation of Our Lady of Fatima, to whom the people of Spain profess such a tender devotion, deign to grant us the change of morals indispensable for the divine designs to be fulfilled among our people! A few months from now, a special chapel of Our Lady of Fatima will be erected here, near the diocesan monument of the Sacred Heart, in response to the desires of Sevillian piety. I thank Father Moran very much for his intervention on this subject. I have known him since my childhood, and I greatly esteem his virtues and his good qualities, his talent, his knowledge and his prudence.»¹⁰⁸

After that, the Cardinal was so convinced of the supernatural origin of the message communicated by Lucy that he dared to read it publicly in his cathedral, in the course of one of his celebrated Lenten conferences, which resounded throughout all of Spain.¹⁰⁹

The text was also published in the Spanish-English edition of *Voz da Fatima*, then reproduced by several popular reviews. Some bishops gave signs of a certain irritation but the majority received this severe warning with the greatest respect. Although some opposition created an obstacle to the bishops' meetings requested, Our Lord's message was widely diffused and on the whole the bishops made efforts to take it into account. Indeed, in 1947-1948, when the Virgin of the Cova da Iria began crossing the world as a missionary, it was in Catholic Spain that She experienced Her greatest triumph. There too, with greater generosity, She poured out Her miracles of grace, Her miracles of healing and conversion.

1945: THE PROGRESS OF DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

On March 2, 1945, Sister Lucy wrote to Father Aparicio: *«I rejoice at the progress that devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is making everywhere. In the present time, it is this devotion that will save us.»*¹¹⁰ As for the Pope, he lost no occasion to invite the Christian people to walk along this path.

On January 21, for the fiftieth anniversary of his consecration to the Most Holy Virgin in the Marian congregation of the Capranica college, the Pope explained to the members of the

Marian congregations of Rome what their role was, and the nature of true consecration to Mary.¹¹¹

On April 8, he alluded to the Immaculate Heart of Mary once more. On April 15, he published the encyclical *Communium interpretes*, ordering public prayers to Our Lady to obtain peace. Once more he insisted on the necessary reform of public and private morals which must accompany acts of devotion, coinciding with the themes of Our Lord's warning to the bishops of Spain:

«Since it is our sins which we commit before God (Baruch 6:1) that turn us away from Him and cast us into the throes of misfortune and ruin, it is not enough, as you are well aware, Venerable Brethren, to address ardent prayers to Heaven; it is not enough to come on foot in very great numbers to the foot of the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary to bring offerings, flowers, and supplications there; but it is absolutely necessary to renew both private and public life through Christian morals....»¹¹²

On October 8, Pius XII wrote to Father Cruvillier, Superior General of the Missionaries of La Salette, on the occasion of the upcoming centennial of the apparition of Our Lady:

«Our devotion towards the Most Holy Virgin, to the Immaculate Heart to whom we have consecrated the Church and the world, can only increase before the gentle perspectives, opened up to us by your letter, of the upcoming hundredth anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady of La Salette, whose canonical process, instituted by the diocesan authority in its time, proved to be favourable.»¹¹³

On December 8, in his allocution for the closing of the Spiritual Exercises at the Vatican, he made this disclosure:

«If, at times, we feel ourselves bending under the weight of the cross, if the incomprehension or injustices of the world fill our heart with bitterness, if the assaults of the enemies of God submit our courage and our perseverance to a severe trial, on this day devoted to the Immaculate Virgin we know where to find consolation and security: in our devotion to Mary, the Heavenly Queen, the Mother of God and our Mother. Trusting in Her intercession, we will walk confidently under the divine protection.»¹¹⁴

1946: THE WHITE DOVES OF THE IMMACULATE ONE, QUEEN OF PORTUGAL

After the jubilee year of 1942, in 1946 we reach a new summit of devotion to the Most Holy Virgin, and especially to Our Lady of Fatima.

TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF THE DOGMA OF THE ASSUMPTION. On May 1, 1946, the Pope sent confidentially to all bishops of the world the encyclical *Deiparae Virginis*, in which he asked each of them to give his opinion on the definition of the dogma of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin and its opportuneness.¹¹⁵

On June 30, speaking to the faithful in Belgium, he mentioned «the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother and Mediatrix».¹¹⁶ On July 16, he addressed a magnificent radio message to the faithful of Colombia, on the occasion of their national Marian Congress. The intense devotion to the Blessed Virgin, he explained, is what preserved the faith «in the regions colonized by the mother country, Spain». Because Our Lady of Carmel was to be crowned during the Congress, the Pope developed in his conclusion a theme which is the very essence of the message of Fatima. The Blessed Virgin Mary, and She alone, can gain the decisive victory over the unchained forces of evil:

«Our Lady of Carmel is the patroness of the seafaring people who every day risk their lives before the waves and the unstable wind! From our post as pilot of the barque of Peter, when we hear the tempest raging and before our eyes we see a furious sea leaping up as if to swallow our ship, we raise a trusting and serene glance towards Our Lady of Mount Carmel – *Respice stellam, voca Mariam* – and we pray to Her not to abandon us. *And although hell never ceases to assail us and the fury of the forces of evil is ever increasing, counting on Her powerful protection we will never doubt that victory will be ours.*»¹¹⁷

On July 31, the Pope wrote a letter on the Rosary to the Archbishop of Manila for the Marian Congress of the Philippines. On August 30 and September 4, he once again alluded to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.¹¹⁸ On November 22, he addressed an allocution to a group of directors of the Great Return.¹¹⁹ He encouraged them to continue their work: «Walk on always, but in the way you have committed yourselves to: this is the good road. It is the road of prayer and penance, the royal road of the cross.» Then he added:

«The most difficult thing is not the bursts of fervour in the nocturnal vigils, barefoot processions under a burning sun or in the snow, if they are only a passing episode. The most difficult thing is constant fidelity to even the irksome duties of the Christian, to pious practices, to the manifold sacrifices of daily life in the spirit of reparation, humility and love.»

After recalling the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the millions of individual consecrations accomplished on the roads of the Great Return, the Pope recalled their seriousness and importance:

«We can only recall here what we said on this subject on an anniversary dear to our heart: “The consecration to the Mother of God... is a total gift of self, for one’s whole life and for eternity; not a gift of pure form or pure sentiment, but an effective gift realized in the intensity of the Christian and Marian life.” (Disclosure of January 21, 1945 to members of the Congregations of the Holy Virgin).»¹²⁰

The year 1946 was also the year of Poland’s consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.¹²¹ But it is also and especially the great year of Our Lady of Fatima’s triumph in the “Land of Holy Mary”.

MAY 13, 1946: THE CROWNING OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

We have mentioned how for the jubilee of the apparitions, the women of Portugal had offered Our Lady of Fatima a massive crown of gold decorated with pearls and precious stones, which Cardinal Cerejeira had solemnly blessed on October 13, 1942. The ceremony of coronation, however, had been reserved for better times.

As the third centennial of Portugal's consecration to the Blessed Virgin was approaching, the bishops of the country decided to solemnize this national anniversary by the crowning of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. They addressed themselves to the Pope and asked him to send a papal legate. This favour was granted, and on January 18, a collective pastoral letter announced the program of celebrations for the tricentennial and invited all Portugal to the great national pilgrimage of May 13.

On the evening of May 10, before taking the plane put at his disposal by the Portuguese government, Aloysius Cardinal Masella, the legate *a latere*, had gone to ask the Holy Father for a final blessing. «*Think of the greatness of the mission you are about to fulfil*», Pius XII declared to him. «*You are going to crown Our Lady Queen of the world.*»

The welcome given to the legate at Lisbon and then Batalha by all the bishops of the country was already the occasion for spectacular demonstrations. On May 13, after the communion Mass, there was a parade of banners followed by the solemn procession of the Statue, which was carried from the Capelinha to the square before the basilica, where it was to be crowned. In spite of the wind and the rain, eight hundred thousand pilgrims were there, acclaiming their Queen with indescribable enthusiasm. The entire nation was organically represented. The litter for the procession was carried by the cadets of the military school, accompanied by their officers. For the coronation, the president of the League of Catholic Women who had offered the crown, presented it to the Interior Minister, the delegate of General Carmona, head of state. The general in turn handed it to the legate, who in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff placed it on the head of the venerated Image.

As Father da Fonseca recalls, «At that moment there was an irrepressible overflowing of the sentiments filling everyone's heart: applause, hurrahs, hosannas, supplications, tears of love, of devotion, of enthusiasm... Only a person who saw and lived through such exceptional moments in the history of Portugal and the world can have an idea of it.¹²² The consecration of Portugal to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was renewed. Then the chants, hosannas, and invocations to the Queen and Patroness broke out once more... But before long, at exactly 11:30 a.m., as if by magic, a profound silence returned to the vast square and the Pope's voice began to resonate.»¹²³

RADIO MESSAGE TO THE FAITHFUL OF PORTUGAL ON THE OCCASION OF THE CROWNING OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA¹²⁴

«Venerable Brethren, and dear children!

«Blessed be the Lord, the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, Who consoles us in all our tribulations!» (2 Cor. 1:3-4) And

together with the Lord, blessed be Her whom He has constituted the Mother of Mercy, our Queen and our most loving Advocate, Mediatrix of all graces, Dispensatrix of all His treasures!»

FROM THE CONSECRATION OF OCTOBER 31, 1942 TO THE CROWNING OF MAY 13, 1946

«When, four years ago, in the midst of the conflict and the most deadly war history has ever known, we found ourselves in your midst for the first time, going up in spirit even to this holy mountain, together with you we thanked Our Lady of Fatima for the immense benefits She had recently granted you, while all hearts joined in a *Magnificat*. At that time we had added a cry of filial confidence, that the Immaculate Queen and Patroness of Portugal complete the work She had so wonderfully begun.¹²⁵

«Your presence today in this sanctuary, in such an immense multitude that nobody can count it, bears witness that the Sovereign Virgin, the Immaculate Queen whose motherly and compassionate Heart brought about the prodigy of Fatima, has heard your supplications in a superabundant manner. An ardent and grateful love has led you here, and you have wanted to give it visible expression, giving it tangible form and symbolizing it through this precious crown, the fruit of so many acts of generosity and sacrifice. By this crown, through the hands of our Cardinal Legate, we have just crowned the wonder-working image of Our Lady of Fatima.»

I. THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN, QUEEN OF PORTUGAL

«If, in the eyes of the Heavenly Queen, this expressive symbol bears witness to your filial love and your gratitude, it reminds us first of the immense love manifested by the innumerable benefits which the Virgin Mother has poured out over Her “Land of Holy Mary.”»

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE KINGDOM TO ITS SOLEMN CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE ONE

«Eight centuries of benefits! The first five centuries went by under the sign of Saint Mary of Alcobaca, Saint Mary of Victory, and Saint Mary of Belem, in the epic struggles against the Crescent for the foundation of the Nation, and in those which were necessary to consolidate its independence; and finally in all the heroic adventures, the discovery of new islands and new continents by which your ancestors distinguished themselves, everywhere planting the Cross of Christ along with the national coat-of-arms.»¹²⁶

«The last three centuries went by under the special protection of the Immaculate One, whom the monarch, restorer of Portugal’s independence,¹²⁷ along with the entire nation gathered together in the Legislature, proclaimed Patroness of his kingdoms and domains, consecrating to Her his crown in tribute as Her vassal, and making the oath to defend even to the death the privilege of Her Immaculate Conception.¹²⁸ “With a great confidence in the

infinite mercy of Our Lord”, he declared, “and through the mediation of Our Lady, Patroness and Protectress of our kingdoms and domains, of whom we have the honour to declare ourselves vassals and tributaries, we hope to be upheld and defended against our enemies and to obtain a great increase of our realms, for the glory of Christ our God, the exaltation of our holy Roman Catholic Faith, the conversion of pagans and the submission of heretics.”»¹²⁹

THE MIRACLE OF FATIMA

«And the Most Faithful Virgin has not disappointed those who have placed their hope in Her. It is enough to consider the last three decades,¹³⁰ which in the crises passed through and the benefits received are equal to centuries. It is enough to open the eyes and to see this Cova da Iria, transformed into a wellspring gushing forth with graces, with physical prodigies and even more, with miracles of the moral order, which have been poured out in torrents all over Portugal, and from there, crossing its frontiers, are extending over the entire Church and the whole world.

«How could we not thank Her? Or rather, how can we thank Her worthily?

«Three hundred years ago, the monarch of national restoration, as a sign of love and gratitude for him and for his people, laid down his royal crown at the feet of the Immaculate One, who was proclaimed Queen and Patroness of his kingdom. Today it is all of you, the entire people of the “Land of Holy Mary”, along with the Pastors of your souls and your Government, who, with ardent prayers, with generous sacrifices, with eucharistic solemnities, with a thousand forms of homage dictated to you by filial and grateful love, have wanted to put together this precious crown to adorn the brow of Our Lady of Fatima, here in this blessed oasis imbued with the supernatural, where Her wonderful protection is felt more visibly, and where all of you feel closer to Her Immaculate Heart, which beats with an immense tenderness, a motherly solicitude for you and for the whole world.

«How precious is this crown, a symbol expressing love and gratitude!»

II. THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN, QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE

THE ASSUMPTION AND CROWNING OF OUR LADY IN HEAVEN

«However, this immense concourse of people, the fervour of your prayers, the echoes of your acclamations, all the holy enthusiasm stirring in you, and also the sacred rite which has just been performed in this hour of incomparable triumph of the Most Holy Mother, evokes for our mind other much more innumerable multitudes, other much more ardent acclamations, other triumphs much more divine: the hour eternally solemn, on that unfading day in eternity, when the glorious Virgin, entering triumphally into the heavenly Homeland, was lifted up through the blessed hierarchies of the choirs of angels even to the throne of the Blessed Trinity, which adorned Her head with a triple crown of glory, and

presented Her to the heavenly court, seated at the right hand of the immortal King of the ages, and crowned Queen of the universe.»

THE TITLES OF MARY IMMACULATE TO UNIVERSAL QUEENSHIP

«And the Heavenly Father saw that She was really worthy to receive honour, glory and empire; because She was more full of grace, more holy, more beautiful, and incomparably more divinized than the greatest saints and the most sublime angels, taken separately or all together; because She is mysteriously connected, in the order of the hypostatic union, with the entire Blessed Trinity, with Him Who alone is, by His essence, the infinite Majesty, the King of kings and Lord of lords, as eldest Daughter of the Father and most tender Mother of the Word, beloved Spouse of the Holy Spirit; because She is Mother of the Divine King, of Him to Whom the Lord gave, in His Mother's womb, the throne of David and eternal kingship over the house of Jacob; because He who proclaimed that all power has been given to Him in Heaven and on earth, the Son of God, caused the glory, the majesty and empire of His own Kingship to rebound upon His Heavenly Mother; and because, being associated as Mother and Assistant of the King of martyrs in the ineffable work of the Redemption of men, She remains associated with Him for all time, with an almost infinite power in the distribution of the graces flowing from the Redemption.¹³¹

«Jesus is the King of eternal ages, by nature and by conquest. Through Him, with Him, in dependence on Him, Mary is Queen, by grace, by divine association, by conquest, by singular election. And Her Kingdom is as vast as that of Her Son, Who is God, since nothing is excluded from His domain.

«This is why the Church greets Her as Sovereign and Queen of angels and saints, of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and martyrs, of confessors and virgins. This is why it proclaims Her “Queen of Heaven and earth”, “glorious and most worthy Queen of the universe”, *Regina coelorum, gloriosa Regina mundi, Regina mundi dignissima*. This is why the Church teaches us to invoke Her, day and night, in the midst of the laments and tears of our exile: “Hail Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope!” For Her Queenship is essentially maternal, essentially beneficent.»

QUEEN OF PEACE, PROTECTRESS OF PORTUGAL AND QUEEN OF THE WORLD

«Is it not precisely this Queenship which you have experienced? Have you not just proclaimed and recognized, today, the outstanding benefits, the innumerable testimonies of tenderness which the maternal Heart of your august Queen has graciously granted you?

«The most terrible war that ever desolated the world, for four long years gnawed around your borders but never crossed them, thanks especially to Our Lady, who from Her throne of mercy, which has been raised up here like a sublime watchtower in the centre of the country, watched over you and over your rulers; She did not allow the war to touch you,

only allowing you to suspect the unprecedented calamities from which Her protection preserved you.

«Yes, crown Her Queen of peace and Queen of the world, that She may help the world to find peace once more and rise up from its ruins! In this way this crown, a symbol of love and gratitude for the past, symbol of faith and vassalship for the present, will be, for the future, a crown of fidelity and hope.»

ENGAGEMENT IN THE SERVICE OF THE QUEEN OF THE WORLD..

«In crowning the Image of Our Lady, you have signed and attested your faith in Her Queenship, your loyal submission to Her authority, your filial and constant correspondence to Her love. You have done more: you have committed yourselves, as Crusaders, for the conquest or the reconquest of Her kingdom, which is the Kingdom of God; that is, you have bound yourselves before Heaven and earth to love Her, to venerate Her, to serve Her, to imitate Her, so as to better serve the Divine King; and at the same time you have bound yourselves to make Her loved, served and venerated among you, in the family, in society and in the whole world.»

... IN AN APOCALYPTIC BATTLE

«In this decisive hour of history, just as the kingdom of evil, deploying an infernal strategy, uses every means and unleashes all its forces to destroy faith, morals, and the kingdom of God; so also the children of light, the children of God must make use of everything, and all be employed in defending them, if we do not want to witness a ruin infinitely more grave and more disastrous than all the material ruins accumulated by the war.

«In this battle, there can be neither the neutral nor the undecided. What is needed is a Catholicism which is enlightened, convinced, without fear, a Catholicism of faith and action, of feelings and works, in private as well as in public, which can be summed up in the formula proclaimed four years ago at Fatima by the valiant Catholic youth: "Catholics one hundred percent!"

«In the hope that our wishes will be favourably received by the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and will hasten the hour of Her triumph and the triumph of the Kingdom of God, as a pledge of heavenly favours, to you, Venerable Brethren, and to all your clergy, to the most excellent President of the Republic, to the illustrious Head and members of the government, to the other civil and military authorities, to all of you, dear sons and daughters, pious pilgrims of Our Lady of Fatima, and to all those who are united to you in spirit in continental Portugal, and its isles and overseas possessions, with all our love and all our paternal affection we give the Apostolic Blessing.»

After the discourse of October 31, 1942, this radio message marked a new progress in official recognition of the Queen of Heaven's apparitions at Fatima. Indeed, Pius XII had not been afraid to use the strongest expressions, which no longer left any room for doubt: he dared to speak of the «prodigy of Fatima» and attribute to Our Lady of Fatima the miracle of peace with which Portugal was blessed. He evoked the place of the apparitions with enthusiasm: «This blessed oasis, impregnated with the supernatural», where people experience in a more tangible way the wonderful protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, «this Cova da Iria transformed into a well gushing forth graces, physical prodigies, and even more, miracles of the moral order», not only for Portugal, but for the entire Church and the entire world.

THE DOVES OF OUR LADY

NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 25, 1946

For the official closing of the tricentennial, planned at Lisbon for December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception, a procession of over 250 miles was organized. The statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which left the Capelinha on November 22, did not return there solemnly until a month later, on Christmas evening.

During the entire triumphal journey, men vied with each other for the honour of carrying the heavy pavilion as well as the dais of the bishop accompanying the statue. «The crowd occupied several miles of the road. There were never less than ten thousand pilgrims praying and singing; the number went as high as fifteen thousand.» The streets were strewn with flowers, decorated with triumphal arches, torches, and the light of Venetian lanterns. «In the churches there was nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, morning Communion Masses before the Mass on the public square or at the stadium before immense crowds, presided over by the local authorities. Such was the case at Leiria, Batalha, Porto de Mos, Caldas de Rainha, Peniche, Bombarral...»¹³²

During this triumphal journey towards the capital for the tricentennial of Portugal's consecration to the Immaculate Virgin by King John IV and its solemn renewal, the famous "miracle of the doves" took place for the first time.

Before long, the wonderful event had such great repercussions that the Patriarch of Lisbon alluded to it in his homily of December 8, 1946. The same year, he also devoted his entire Christmas radio allocution to the doves of Saint Mary. Later on he commissioned Father Domingos Fernandes to conduct a careful investigation, the results of which appear in an appendix to his "Pastoral Works". The following lines are borrowed from this document:

«On December 1, 1946, in the city of Bombarral, at the moment when the statue of Our Lady of Fatima left for Cadaval, six doves were released by two young women.

«They had been bought at Lisbon on November 28, at the Square of the Fig Tree by Mrs. Candida Ponces de Carvalho, who lives at 84 rua Braancamp, at the request of Mrs. Maria

Emilia Martins Coimbra of Bombarral. On the 29th, they were brought to Bombarral by a truck belonging to Capristano Enterprises.

«Of the six doves released by the young women, five came to place themselves at Our Lady's pedestal and remained there. At the exit of the city, three remained there, while the other two flew away. They were caught and placed back on the pedestal, and they did not budge until the city of Lousa. There they flapped their wings, and went to look for refuge under the weather vane of a roof-top.

«The others were seen by several thousand people from December 2nd through the 5th at Cadaval, at Torres Vedras, at Mafra, and at Loures. Each day, a torchlight procession was organized at nightfall to accompany the statue on its entrance into the localities. During the night the Image remained in the church, always accompanied by a multitude of believers. The doves remained on the pedestal, always nestled against the statue.

«On the night of December 4, the procession leading Our Lady's statue arrived in the rain at the church of Loures. Although they were wet, the doves were still nestled against the statue and did not budge.»¹³³

Here is Cardinal Cerejeira's beautiful commentary:

«A strange event for our myopic view as carnal creatures, is that of the doves who recently made their home at the feet of the white Image of Our Lady of Fatima, almost hidden under Her dress among the flowers. Many tens of thousands of people saw them there, pressed one against the other, turned towards the sweet Image with their little beaks touching the bottom of the dress, as if they wanted to kiss the feet of the Madonna. Sometimes they go away for a short flight. But they so like to abide in that place that neither the noise of the crowd, nor the sound of the music, nor the explosion of the fireworks, nor the rain, or wind, or cold, or day or night, or the petals or bouquets thrown there – nothing makes them come down from there.»¹³⁴

Now there is priceless testimony! Canon Barthas reports,

«At Lisbon, Our Lady was supposed to stay three days, December 5-7, in the very vast and recently built church of Our Lady of Fatima.

«On the square before the church, before entering, as if to prove to the huge crowd that they were not attached there, the doves went up into the air and then returned to their post. Turning towards Cardinal Cerejeira, they seemed to listen to the welcome address he pronounced on the threshold of the church. Then, to enter, they turned back again, so as not to turn their backs on the altar.

«The following day, which was the first Friday of the month, one of them went to perch himself on the crown as well, and turning towards the Holy Table from there, it opened its wings for the entire length of the communion of 3,000 Faithful.»¹³⁵

On the evening of December 7, the statue was to return to the cathedral. Two doves remained in the church, and only one followed the Madonna. A huge torchlight procession was organized, this one for men only: one hundred thousand of them! The procession was over three and a half miles.

On December 8, the pontifical Mass took place at the cathedral. Then, in the afternoon, there was «the official consecration of the country to the Immaculate Heart of Mary»,¹³⁶ in the presence of the Head of State, Marshal Carmona, Salazar, and all the members of the government. Finally, events closed with a solemn *Te Deum*.

Then began the return to Fatima, with the same wonderful events happening. The same dove remained faithful at the feet of Our Lady until December 9, and then disappeared.

«On the 10th, at Seixal, other doves were released, one of which parked herself on the pedestal. The procession of Our Lady's statue continued through Barreiro, Moita, Setubal, Montijo, Alcochete, Benavente, Salvaterra, on December 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. All these days and nights a dove could be seen by thousands of persons, curled up at the feet of Our Lady. At nightfall, on the 17th, at Benfica, near Almeirim, the dove flew away.

«As the procession made its way through Alpiarça, Chamusca and Colega, from December 19-21, nobody heard any more talk of doves until late afternoon on the 21st.

«On the 21st, while the procession entered the district of Torres Novas, before the “quinta” of Carvalhais, from the parish of Riachos, little Bernardino, the youngest son of José Raposo, released four doves in the direction of the pedestal; three were white and one black. This last one flew away, while the white ones made a niche for themselves at the feet of the statue. Thus to the surprise of everybody, the Image made its entry into Torres Novas decorated with three doves.»¹³⁷

On December 24, some time in the afternoon, the journey back to the Cova da Iria began. It was eleven in the evening when the procession entered the basilica of Fatima for the Christmas midnight Mass. The three doves, ever faithful since December 21, remained at the feet of Our Lady until three o'clock in the morning, when the statue was taken off the pedestal to be returned to its place in the Capelinha.¹³⁸

1947: “THE WORLD TOUR” THE IMMACULATE MEDIATRIX, MISSIONARY ALL OVER THE WORLD

THE “GREAT RETURN” OF SOULS TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

The “Great Return” had enjoyed such beautiful success in France that its methods were soon adopted by all of Europe and in the whole world.

IN ITALY: THE “PEREGRINATIO MARIAE”. It was Cardinal Schuster, whom we have already seen so eager to make known Our Lady of Fatima's message,¹³⁹ who had the merit of

organizing the first Marian tours in the peninsula. A plaque entitled “Peregrinatio Mariae”, of which millions of copies were made, defined its spirit:

«It is the triumphal passage from parish to parish of an image of the Madonna, in an uninterrupted succession of religious demonstrations, for the purpose of stirring the mass of the faithful in a salutary way, and to lead them through luminous paths to a renewal of Eucharistic and Marian piety, to a sincere and open practice of a real Christian life. More briefly: it is a spiritual movement of masses of people proposing a Great Return of souls to Jesus through Mary. The Marian tour now has a famous and unforgettable precedent in the Great Return such as it was done in France: the greatest contemporary event in the religious life of this country. It has assumed such importance that it requires the admiration and the desire of a holy emulation on the part of the Catholic world.»¹⁴⁰

The Marian tours criss-crossed Italy, from Umbria to Calabria, from the foothills of the Alps to Sardinia. The popular piety was indescribable. At Milan, in the episcopal city of Cardinal Schuster, there was an explosion of uncontrollable joy. As one witness reports:

«Unbelievable is the enthusiasm created by Mary’s passage. On May 11, 1947, thousands of pilgrims flowed from the ten gates of the old city of Milan. They had come to the cathedral square to acclaim the Madonna who entered in procession, escorted by the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre on a triumphal car reminiscent of the “carroccio”. Trumpets sounded at the passage of the Queen of Milan. Over one hundred thousand people had gathered in the square. Never had such a crowd been seen in that place. His Eminence Cardinal Schuster gave an historic discourse.»¹⁴¹

It is remarkable that it was the Cardinal of Milan, this erudite Benedictine, such a holy and wise liturgist, who became the promoter of this method of popular apostolate.

IN CANADA: THE PASSAGE OF “THE ARK OF THE COVENANT”. A great national Marian Congress had been planned at Ottawa for mid-June, 1947. To prepare the faithful for it, a “Great Return” was organized with the statue of Our Lady of the Cape, patroness of Canada. This Marian tour of “the Ark of the Covenant”, as She was so happily designated, created a vast movement of fervour, just as in Europe.

On June 19, Pius XII addressed a magnificent radio message to the participants of the Marian Congress, where he recalled the wonderful devotion to the Immaculate One which had flourished since the beginning of “New France”. The Pope recalled the name of the Chaplain, and also Saint Isaac Jogues and his companions, «consecrating to Mary, on December 8, 1635, all the present and future missions of Canada».¹⁴²

THE MARIAN YEAR IN HUNGARY. In spite of all sorts of shenanigans on the part of the Russians, Cardinal Mindszenty had been able to participate in the Marian Congress of Ottawa.¹⁴³ He returned with a spectacular project in mind: a Marian Year extended to all Hungary. The bishops of Hungary welcomed the idea enthusiastically. The Cardinal recalls in his Memoirs, «I opened this Holy Year at Esztergom, on August 15, 1947. All the bishops of Hungary and 60,000 pilgrims participated in the ceremony.»¹⁴⁴ All over the country on

the same day a million and a half of the faithful crowded various pilgrimage sites and sanctuaries dedicated to Our Lady.

During the entire year, the congresses and solemnities which followed each other almost uninterruptedly drew crowds of several hundred thousand of the faithful. With an ardent devotion to Mary, the indefatigable Cardinal Primate shored up the faith and courage of his people everywhere in the face of the menacing persecutions.

«The communists attempted in every way to impede the peaceful progress of the ceremonies and gatherings and to disturb the sermons and allocutions, especially those of the Cardinal. In the train stations, they no longer gave railway tickets to pilgrims; they confiscated the buses and trucks; on the pretext of an infectious epidemic the districts were put under quarantine. Claiming the necessity of assuring traffic safety, they dispersed groups of pilgrims; to disturb the open air ceremonies they turned on tractor motors; the use of loudspeakers and microphones were forbidden; water and electricity were cut off, etc.»¹⁴⁵

A few months later, on June 13, 1948, in Budapest, the police dispersed the procession in honour of Our Lady of Fatima.¹⁴⁶ In spite of all this, 4,600,000 believers took part in the festivities and pilgrimages of the Marian Year.¹⁴⁷

PIUS XII BLESSES AND ENCOURAGES THE PROGRESS OF DEVOTION TO THE MOST HOLY VIRGIN

After his message of June 19 to the Canadian Marian Congress, on October 12, Pius XII addressed a radio message on the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Argentine Marian Congress, meeting in the sanctuary of Lujan.¹⁴⁸ On December 7, there was a new radio message to the members of the International Congress of Marian Congregations, meeting at Barcelona.¹⁴⁹ But in this year 1947, his two most effective interventions in this domain were undoubtedly two particularly significant canonizations.

CANONIZATION OF SAINT LOUIS-MARIE GRIGNION DE MONTFORT. On July 20, «under the inspiration of divine grace», Pius XII granted the supreme honours of sanctity to the incomparable apostle of devotion to Mary. The following day, in a discourse to pilgrims who had come to Rome for this canonization, he reviewed the life of the great Breton saint of whom it could be said, he recalled, «that the Vendée¹⁵⁰ of 1793 was the work of his hands». Then the Pope recalled:

«The great strength of his entire apostolic ministry, *his great secret* for drawing souls and giving them to Jesus, was *devotion to Mary*.» «On Her he founded all his action; in Her is all his assurance, and he could find no more effective weapon at the time. To the joyless austerity, the sombre terror, the proud depression of Jansenism he opposed the filial, trusting, ardent, affective and effective love of the devout servant of Mary towards Her who is the refuge of sinners, the Mother of Divine Grace, our life, our sweetness and our hope. Our advocate also...»¹⁵¹

Like the canonization of Saint Pius X, this doctor of the Church for our twentieth century, the canonization of Saint Louis-Marie, prophet of the final triumph and reign of the Immaculate One preparing the reign of Her Son, was a decision of the highest importance.

CANONIZATION OF SAINT CATHERINE LABOURÉ. One week later, on July 27, Pius XII canonized the seer of Rue du Bac, «*the messenger of the Immaculate One*». While exalting her outstanding virtues and the merits of her hidden life, in his discourse to the pilgrims he highlighted «*the unique and wonderful mission which the Most Holy Virgin entrusted to her*», «*the extraordinary favours of Mary who made her Her confidante and messenger*». Then the Pope recalled the threefold request which Our Lady had ordered her to pass on: «To reawaken the fervour of charity grown cold in the two Societies of the saint; *to submerge the entire world in a deluge of little medals, carrying all the spiritual and corporal mercies of the Immaculate One*; to found a pious association of “Children of Mary” for the protection and sanctification of young women.»¹⁵²

A FIRM WARNING. While he encouraged true devotion to Mary indefatigably, Pius XII also firmly defended it, when occasion demanded, against its adversaries. On November 20, 1947, in his masterly encyclical *Mediator Dei*, on the sacred liturgy he insists on the pre-eminent cult due to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, who «gives us Her Son, and with Him all the help we need, for God has willed that we have everything through Mary». Among other pastoral directives he put the bishops on guard:

«Above all, Venerable Brethren, do not allow – as some do, who are deceived under the pretext of restoring the Liturgy, or who idly claim that only liturgical rites are of any real value and dignity (...) – that devotion to the Virgin Mother of God, a sign of predestination according to the opinion of the Saints, be so neglected, especially among the young, as to fade away and gradually vanish.»

The Pope went on to give a lively recommendation of the traditional pious exercises, especially the Rosary and the month of Mary, adding:

«Hence he would do something pernicious and full of deceit, who would dare to take it upon himself to reform all these exercises of piety and reduce them completely to the methods and norms of liturgical rites.»¹⁵³

OUR LADY OF FATIMA, A MISSIONARY ALL OVER THE WORLD

Finally, 1947 is the year when the “World Tour of Our Lady of Fatima” began. After this date, May 13, 1947, the Immaculate Mediatrix who appeared at the Cova da Iria criss-crossed the world almost uninterruptedly, adorned with white doves nestled against Her feet, to accomplish «a pilgrimage of miracles», as Pius XII said a little later on.

THE EUROPEAN TOUR (MAY 13 - DECEMBER 1947).¹⁵⁴ The idea of a “Great Return” of Our Lady across all of Europe had gradually made the rounds. Finally, it became a reality as the project of an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Father Demoutiez. Our Lady of Fatima would go

to Maastricht in Holland, to preside over the great Marian Congress of the three countries later called Benelux.¹⁵⁵

«The very night before departure, the directors of the Tour (Mrs. Teresa Pereira da Cunha¹⁵⁶ and her committee) and Father Demoutiez went to present to Sister Lucy (then at Vila Nova de Gaia) the beautiful statue they had specially bought for the Tour. She advised them to go ask His Grace the Bishop of Leiria for the one in his living room, for which she herself had guided the hand of the artist (Mr. José Ferreira Thedim), and propose that it be exchanged for the one they had bought. Lucy added: *“This (Pilgrim) Virgin will reach the very confines of Russia, and we must pray a great deal so that it arrives at Moscow. And after it completes its journey, it will be good to offer it to the Holy Father.”*

«With his customary goodness, Bishop da Silva gave up his beautiful statue. The following day, May 13, it was crowned at the Cova da Iria before the huge crowd of pilgrims by His Grace the Archbishop of Evora.»¹⁵⁷

In the afternoon, the procession took to the road. Although Father Demoutiez’s program had planned only very brief stops in Portugal, there was the same enthusiasm, the same fervour as six months earlier during the Marian tour from Fatima to Lisbon.¹⁵⁸

As for the welcome Spain reserved for Our Lady of Fatima, it surpassed all expectations. Father Alonso writes, «The first passage of the Pilgrim Virgin into Spain was, without any exaggeration, an apotheosis... (There was) one month of enthusiastic receptions during which the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and innumerable multitudes of the faithful, gave their filial homage of love and veneration to Our Lady of Fatima.»¹⁵⁹ At Valladolid, the episcopal city of Archbishop Garcia y Garcia, there was a magnificent triumph with over 100,000 believers! Canon Barthas reports:

«In all of Spain, the aldermen of the villages She was passing through piously laid down at Our Lady’s feet the baton which is the symbol of their authority; every two hundred yards two “civil guards” presented arms; the bishops received Our Lady upon Her entrance into their diocese and went to present Her to the bishop of the next diocese; the movies and theatres were closed during Our Lady’s stay; everybody was given the day off; the newspapers gave a great deal of space to the event, etc.»¹⁶⁰

Confessions and communions, processions, Rosaries, holy hours of reparation, consecrations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary followed one after the other. «The graces of miraculous healings multiplied prodigiously, Father Alonso states.

Finally, the procession arrived at San Sebastian, and on June 18, at Hendaye. Because of the scandalous blockade decided on after the Yalta and Potsdam accords by our Christian Democrats, friends of Stalin but implacable adversaries of Franco, the border of the Pyrenees was still closed. It had been closed for eleven years!

The welcome which France reserved for Our Lady of Fatima, unfortunately, was not as warm as Spain’s. The press had not announced Her arrival, «and the witnesses had the

impression that the French police had orders not to let Her enter». But with the attitude of Bishop Ballester of Vittoria and Bishop Terrier of Bayonne, who gave a fraternal accolade before the unanimous crowds who were singing the same canticles to Our Lady from both sides of the white line, «the police commissioner found a subterfuge to let Her enter, as an ordinary parcel to be “cleared through customs for Belgium”». ¹⁶¹

We shall come back to this underhanded opposition and this wall of silence, which deprived Our Lady of Fatima of the filial homage to which She had a right in the “kingdom of Mary”, and deprived France of the choice graces which her Queen surely would have heaped upon her.

On August 2, She arrived at *the Belgian border*. Tournai, Charleroi, Namur, Beauraing, Liege, Verviers, all welcomed Her in their turn with great fervour. On September 1, She entered *Holland* to preside over the Marian Congress at Maastricht as planned. On this occasion, Pius XII once again delivered a radio message. ¹⁶² In *Luxembourg*, the welcome was even more fervent: 100,000 Communions for a population of 250,000 inhabitants! After a brief passage at *Paris* on October 15, which we shall return to later, Our Lady of Fatima returned to Her itinerant mission in *Belgium*, always with the same success: Malines, Louvain, and Brussels, where 300,000 of the Faithful had gathered. After a round in Flanders, where the papers gave great prominence to the ceremonies in Her honour, the Pilgrim Virgin embarked for Anvers to return to Portugal. ¹⁶³

Within a few months, what a shower of graces had been poured out upon all those who had deigned to honour Her. Bishop da Silva declared: «None of us had foreseen the wonderful things which began happening as soon as the statue left the Cova da Iria.» ¹⁶⁴

Canon Barthas notes that «the news agencies in Spain and the Benelux countries (except our AFP), had everywhere publicized Our Lady’s route and Her marvellous works. The bishop’s palace of Leiria began receiving letters from all parts requesting a visit from Her.» ¹⁶⁵

On October 13, 1947, a statue of Our Lady of Fatima left the Cova da Iria for the Lisbon airport where it was installed in a place of honour on a plane departing... for America.

THE AMERICAN TOUR. The statue was solemnly received at the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Cape. It was blessed there by Archbishop Vachon of Ottawa before 100,000 faithful. There was a ceremony of crowning the statue; consecration to Her Immaculate Heart; a vigil of prayers; at midnight, Mass in the cathedral and in 124 churches of the diocese!

On December 8, on the spectacular site of Niagara Falls, the statue crossed the border between Canada and the United States. The Bishop of Buffalo received the venerated Image from the hands of the Bishop of Hamilton. It was welcomed at the cathedral, where 200,000 people came to pray although the city numbered only 50,000 Catholics! The same thing happened in all the dioceses and parishes of the United States that received Her. ¹⁶⁶

After this Marian tour in the U.S.A., and still in the same year, 1947, Msgr. Harold Colgan, parish priest of Saint Mary's in Plainsfield, N.J., seconded by John Haffert, a young journalist full of drive and enthusiasm, founded the "Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima" to spread Her message and work to put it in practice. The program was simple: the daily Rosary; devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with its two components, reparation and consecration; wearing of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel; accomplishment of the duties of one's state in the spirit of penance. These were done with the intention of obtaining peace in the world through the conversion of Russia.¹⁶⁷ In other words, at that period, the Blue Army promoted the authentic message of Fatima, without omission, dilution or contamination through suspect revelations completely foreign to the message passed on by Lucy. The movement enjoyed such rapid success that by 1950 it already counted a million members!

THE SECOND PORTUGUESE TOUR (OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1947).¹⁶⁸ Meanwhile, in Portugal, the missionary Virgin had left Her Capelinha to return to the road. This time She went through the southern part of the country, Alentejo and Algarve, which are the most dechristianized regions of Portugal. Even there, the white Image of the Immaculate One was received with moving enthusiasm and She dispensed innumerable graces of every kind.

Although during the preceding months, in spite of the size and fervour of the crowds, the astonishing miracle of the doves had not been repeated – neither in Spain, France, the Benelux countries nor in America –,¹⁶⁹ here in the Land of Holy Mary, it was renewed in a striking manner. The pages written by the witnesses read like a golden legend.¹⁷⁰ We give just one account:

«In the village of Gafanheiros, a man protested that the pigeons were attached to the litter and that he would believe they were free only if his own went there. He was asked to let them fly. He gave several to a lady and told her to free them only when he would tell her. Thus was it done when the litter was a dozen yards away. They all went and placed themselves on the litter and remained there the whole day.»¹⁷¹

At Vila Viçosa, the royal city where John IV, king and restorer of national independence, had offered his crown and consecrated his kingdom to the Immaculate One, there were thirteen doves.¹⁷² When the triumphal procession returned to the Cova da Iria on January 13, 1948, four ordinary doves and a turtle dove were still nestled at the feet of the Heavenly Padroeira.

1948: «IN THE DARK NIGHT WEIGHING HEAVILY UPON THE WORLD»

What an incomparable outpouring of graces! Was it not already the dawn of the Immaculate Heart of Mary's triumph? Especially since this movement seemed to keep on growing stronger and developing...

The year 1948 witnessed the wonderful events of Our Lady of Fatima's tour in Angola and Mozambique, and then in all of Africa. There was also the apotheosis of Her arrival in Madrid, where the workers of the city's outskirts gave Her a triumph, while a few days later She was received as the greatest of queens by the Caudillo, his family and his government.

Before long, Pope Pius XII himself observed with joy: «*From day to day the cult of the Immaculate Heart of Mary assumes a wonderful development.*»¹⁷³ Speaking to the parish priests of Rome and Lenten preachers, he uttered these significant words:

«In the dark night weighing heavily upon the world... the most encouraging sign of our times is the ever increasing demonstration, to the point of sometimes attaining spectacles of wonderful grandeur, of trust and filial love which leads souls to the most pure and Immaculate Virgin Mary.»¹⁷⁴

The richest text, however, the text which gives the best picture of Pius XII's sentiments at that period – when he was already announcing the upcoming celebration of a Holy Year for 1950¹⁷⁵ – is undoubtedly his letter of July 2, 1948, to Father Ranson, director of the Great Return. This was about to close a few weeks later with the return of four images of Our Lady to the city of Boulogne. Pius XII wrote:

«So have you understood and practiced our order: "Persevere! Persevere!" This is proven by the numerous public or private demonstrations, whose panorama ravishes us, through which the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is developed and intensifies in all sectors of society. Besides, have we not given the signal ourselves, like a providential complement of the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus?

«We have said and we love to repeat it: in the dark night weighing heavily upon the world, we see the dawn breaking, infallibly announcing the coming of the Sun of truth, justice and love. Indeed, not the least sign of hope and consolation is this extraordinary eagerness, in this tortured and troubled generation, to return to the fountains of living water gushing forth in great waves from the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

«We also congratulate you for taking this salvific Marian devotion to heart, propagating it around you, and making it the springboard of your apostolate. We would like to see in it the assured pledge of the conversion of sinners, the perseverance and progress of the Faithful, and the re-establishment of a true peace of all nations among themselves and with God.»¹⁷⁶

CHAPTER IV

THE RED PERIL:

«RUSSIA WILL SPREAD ITS ERRORS, CAUSING WARS AND PERSECUTIONS» (1939 - 1948)

«In the light of Fatima, we have the deeper explanation of the history of our times such as God sees it, and such as it really is.»¹⁷⁷ Thus spoke Cardinal Cerejeira. Now in 1917, when She predicted the Second World War, Our Lady of Fatima willed to speak only of Russia:

«If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If My requests are not granted, Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.»

These prophetic words must open our eyes on the true, supernatural meaning of the Second World War, on its determining causes and its most decisive consequences for the future.

«THE HISTORY OF OUR TIMES SUCH AS GOD SEES IT»

First of all, as we have shown, because Stalin's Russia was not converted, it was able to pursue its game of political double-dealing with diabolical machiavellianism. For this reason, after the Germano-Soviet pact of August 23, 1939, Europe was once more involved in war.¹⁷⁸

Once more the prophecy of Fatima draws our attention to an unquestionable fact, although the official history ignores it with obstinate blindness. By a series of shameless lies and abominable massacres cynically planned – for in this domain Hitler himself was preceded and surpassed by the tyrant of the Kremlin! – Stalin managed to conclude this war to the sole profit of the USSR and its Bolshevism.

This is true in many respects:

1. Inside the country, the Party's hold was notably strengthened. Solzhenitsyn made this sad observation: «In this unfortunate war, our victory only strengthened the yoke weighing upon us.»¹⁷⁹
2. Outside the country, the war was Stalin's opportunity to effect a formidable expansion of communism in Europe and before long in the Far East as well.
3. In the other nations, the so-called free world, after five years of war the forces of Marxist subversion had increased dangerously.

4. Finally, in the Catholic Church herself this war had the deadliest effects: it allowed the “Red Christians” to regain a power and influence which Pius XII never succeeded in taking away from them. This allowed them to actively prepare, albeit behind the scenes, the revolution of the sixties and throw the papacy onto the course of Ostpolitik desired by Moscow.

In hindsight, the truth of the Fatima prophecy appears more and more strikingly; no, the Second World War was not the just war, the heroic crusade of Good, Liberty and Right against Fascist and Nazi totalitarianism, which alone was responsible for all our evils and the only peril for humanity. As our sketchy demonstration will show, it was the great war of Bolshevism, consenting to a frightful slaughter – 55 million victims! – for the sole victory of atheistic, world enslaving and bloody communism.

Sister Lucy had already announced as much in December 1940, writing down the essential part of Our Lady’s Secret for the benefit of Pope Pius XII.¹⁸⁰ She repeated it the day after the incomplete consecration of October 31, 1942. No, she said at that time, the conversion of Russia is not for now, implying that instead of promises, the chastisements predicted would continue to fall upon humanity. She said it over again in February 1946, summarizing in one sentence the true meaning of the war and post-war events, according to the Fatima message. She explained to Father Jongen:

*«I think that now Our Lady’s words are being fulfilled: “If this is not done (she had just recalled ‘the exact request’ of the Blessed Virgin), Russia will spread her errors throughout the world”.»*¹⁸¹

Four months later, in her interview with William Thomas Walsh, she insisted again. The American writer reports:

«Sister Lucy said more than once, and with deliberate emphasis: “What Our Lady wants is that the Pope and all the bishops in the world shall consecrate Russia to Her Immaculate Heart on one special day. If this is done, She will convert Russia and there will be peace. *If it is not done, the errors of Russia will spread through every country in the world.*” “Does this mean, in your opinion, that every country, without exception, will be overcome by Communism?” “Yes.” It was plain that she felt that Our Lady’s wishes had not yet been carried out.»¹⁸²

In effect, this poignant drama revealed to us by Fatima is that this frightful war and its disastrous conclusion could have been avoided... Through a miracle of mercy, God was ready to spare humanity these things, if the Sovereign Pontiff had been willing to firmly commit the entire Church to the fulfilment of His Most Holy Mother’s humble requests.

Here we must make a brief flashback to underline how docile trust in Our Lady’s prophetic message and filial obedience to her requests would have been the supernatural light the Pope needed to discern right away the grave perils threatening the Church. It would have been a miraculous means of salvation to obtain from the divine mercy the grace of

preserving Christendom from these dangers through the all-powerful mediation of the Immaculate Virgin.

We recall that after Pope Pius XI's first refusal in 1931, chastisement had struck Catholic Spain. After his second refusal in 1937, Europe had foolishly hurled itself into a world war. And the blood-red glow that turned the night sky a deep purple on January 25-26, 1938 had been the tragic sign of the imminent catastrophe. In September 1939, the war was officially declared.

I. A NEW OPPORTUNITY LOST (SEPTEMBER 1939 - JUNE 1941)

It is important to point out at the outset how, during this first phase of the conflict, the hour of God had struck once more, and how favourable the moment was for the fulfilment of Heaven's designs. True, the world was at war. But under the sign of the Germano-Soviet pact: the two anti-Christian powers, Bolshevism and Nazism, had divided Poland between themselves, and on all the newly annexed territories both powers unleashed the most atrocious persecutions against Catholics.

THE NAZI PERSECUTION. German troops had invaded Poland on September 1. Immediately a merciless struggle against the Catholic Church had begun. Saint Maximilian Kolbe and thirty of his Brothers who had remained with him at the "City of the Immaculata" were arrested on September 19 for their first imprisonment. Let us cite only a few figures which are sufficient to demonstrate the atrocity of the anti-Catholic persecution in Poland: 4 bishops, 2,700 priests, and 200 religious, making up almost one third of the country's clergy, were eliminated by the Nazis.¹⁸³

THE COMMUNIST PERSECUTION. The Red Army had entered Poland on September 17, 1939. On November 1 and 2, Ukraine and Byelorussia had been annexed to the USSR, and immediately the persecution against the Church had been unleashed. Pius XII was quickly alerted:

«On the development of the persecution, the testimony sent to Rome by the metropolitan of the Ruthenians (in other words, the Catholics of Eastern Rite in union with Rome), Archbishop Sheptytsky of Lvov,¹⁸⁴ and Bishop Chomyszyn of Stanislavov are particularly eloquent: monasteries confiscated and religious communities dispersed, religious associations dispersed, seminaries and theology faculties suppressed. At Stanislavov, the Bolsheviks tried to poison the bishop, they killed several priests and deported others. Many of them hid in the forests to escape the general persecution which befell the entire population. The prelates describe well this atmosphere of informants, insecurity, hatred and violence instituted everywhere since the arrival of the Red Army... Archbishop Sheptytsky estimates that at least 500,000 Ukrainians were deported to Siberia during this period. The atrocities committed are such that the bishops considered the Bolsheviks "beasts inspired by the spirit of the demon" and ask that they be exorcised at a distance! In spite of the persecution and forced incorporation of seminarians, the clergy resists and

continues to take care of the Faithful, and Archbishop Sheptytsky, with the permission of the Holy See, secretly consecrates Archbishop Joseph Slipyj as his coadjutor (on December 21, 1939).»¹⁸⁵

After annexing Bessarabia and North Bukovnia in June 1940, in July the USSR seized the Baltic states: Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Now it was the turn of the flourishing Lithuanian Church – at that time the country numbered 2,500,000 Catholics, representing 80% of the population – to suffer an atrocious persecution just as in Latvia and Estonia, although Catholics were only a feeble minority in those two countries. In Lithuania there were the same massive deportations to Siberia.¹⁸⁶

At the same time, Stalin, who was already preparing the Sovietization of Poland, also deported 1,200,000 Poles from Ukraine and Byelorussia to Siberia.

This was the moment when he ordered the savage massacre of 15,000 imprisoned Polish officers, in the forest of Katyn. This abominable crime, committed in April 1940, was not discovered by the Germans until three years later, in February 1943.¹⁸⁷

THE HOUR OF FATIMA. Meanwhile, Heaven became more pressing. On January 21, 1940, Sister Lucy insisted that Father Gonçalves once more urgently request from the Holy Father the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The request actually reached the Pope between February and April 1940. Since nothing was done, new requests were addressed to him in June. We have described how finally, in December of 1940, Sister Lucy herself wrote the Sovereign Pontiff a letter which was a remarkable synthesis of the prophecies and requests of Our Lady of Fatima.¹⁸⁸ In his last work, Father Martins tells us that it was passed on to the Pope through Msgr. Tardini's mediation.¹⁸⁹ Pius XII undoubtedly read it with a certain benevolence, but nothing more.

Alas, how can we not regret this reserve! The publication of the Secret of Fatima, the solemn act of consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and reparation for Bolshevik crimes, if performed during this first phase of the war, would have been infinitely more effective for the salvation of Christendom than all the diplomatic efforts of the Holy See. These diplomatic efforts were doomed to certain failure since out of the leaders responsible for transactions, Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill, Hitler and before long de Gaulle, none of them were any more Christian than the others.

Pius XII has been reproached for his silence regarding Nazi atrocities. Many historians have underlined the extreme difficulties the Pope was faced with, and refuted the odious calumnies of the Judeo-Masonic and Resistentalist authors. However, it is interesting to imagine the attitude he could have taken had he been willing, in 1940, to pay attention to Our Lady's message. The Secret of Our Lady would have offered him the means of speaking out strongly at the most opportune moment.

Echoing the Secret of Fatima, and the extremely damning letters of the holy Ukrainian Bishop, Metropolitan Sheptytsky, the Pope could have continued denouncing first and foremost the persecutions and danger of Russian Bolshevism. At the same time, he could

have condemned Nazism in the most just and effective manner: as the criminal accomplice of atheistic, bloodthirsty communism, against which Hitler had pretended to lead Germany and all of Europe for ten years! Even more than in 1937, the joint condemnations found in *Divini Redemptoris* and *Mit brennender Sorge*¹⁹⁰ were relevant in 1940. Meanwhile, Rome was receiving accounts of the atrocious sufferings inflicted on the Catholic clergy and the Faithful, both in territories occupied by the Red Army and those occupied by Germany. In response to the urgent requests of the Ukrainian bishops on the one hand, and the Polish bishops on the other, could not the Pope have vigorously denounced the odious violation of the sacred rights of the Church committed both by the Russian communists and their Nazi accomplices?

Months passed... but Pius XII still was not ready to recognize in Our Lady of Fatima's prophetic words and requests, an extraordinary divine light which Heaven mercifully offered him. Yet Our Lady's words could have given light in the dark night of the world conflagration, and allowed him to direct the Church by avoiding the gravest pitfalls while contributing most effectively to world peace.

During the first few months of 1941 the Bishop of Gurza, who at the time was Sister Lucy's principal director, tried once more to draw the Sovereign Pontiff's attention to the importance of the Fatima message. We know this through a letter of the seer to Father Gonçalves, written on June 20, 1941:

«I have here two letters from His Grace the Bishop of Gurza. In the first one he tells me he knows nothing about the letter to the Holy Father. (But that it must have been given to him.) In the second one he tells me that the book *A Jacinta* has been sent to His Holiness along with the express request to read it.

«What would I not give to make His Holiness decide to take this step! By this act (the consecration of Russia) he would perhaps obtain from the Heart of Jesus, through the mediation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, peace for the world which is so troubled. But we have to wait a little longer still. Patience!»¹⁹¹

Unfortunately, it was already late... two days after this letter was written, on the morning of June 22, 1941, German tanks invaded Russian soil. The war entered its decisive phase, during which Our Lady of Fatima's requests became more difficult to fulfil, while the chastisements predicted continued to fall, even more tragically, on the Church and the world...

II. RUSSIA DELIVERED OVER TO COMMUNISM FOR GOOD

THE GREAT HOPE OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

«After the thunderbolt of June 22, 1941 (writes Solzhenitsyn), the entire hard-working people (with the exception of the young people, who had been turned into imbeciles by Marxism), began to breathe once more, in impatient expectation: "here it comes, the end of

our parasites! Soon we will be free! This cursed communism is over!" Byelorussia, the western Ukraine, and then the initial Russian provinces welcomed the Germans with joy. But it was the Red Army which showed the feelings of the people most openly... At the beginning of the first three months, nearly three million soldiers and officers had surrendered. There you have the sentiments of the people (or peoples) who had experience under communism, the one for twenty-five years and the other for just one year. *For all of them, the war represented the opportunity to rid themselves of the communist pest.*»¹⁹²

Alas, the double error or rather the double crime of the Germans and the Allies was, on the contrary, going to reinforce the inhuman yoke which had overwhelmed them since 1917.

THE GERMAN CRIME. Instead of entering the USSR as liberators, the Germans conducted themselves as merciless enemies. They were eager to oppress in their turn, and just as savagely, these Slavic peoples whom they despised in their stupid racism. Here is the testimony of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, writing to Pope Pius XII:

«After being liberated by the German army from the Bolshevik yoke, we felt a certain relief which lasted no more than one or two months. Little by little, the government instituted a really unbelievable regime of terror and corruption, which becomes more onerous and unbearable each day. Today the entire country agrees that the German regime, perhaps even more than the Bolshevik regime, is evil, almost diabolical. For at least the last year, there has not been a day when the most horrible crimes have not been committed, assassinations, thefts, rapes... The Jews are the first victims.» They were not the only ones: «Crowds of young people are shot without any plausible reason, a regime of servitude applied to the rural population... It is as if a band of madmen or fierce wolves had swooped down over this poor people...»¹⁹³

Solzhenitsyn notes for his part:

«To exploit the peasantry better, one of the first measures adopted by the Germans was to reinstate the collective farms, which had broken up on their own. Thus our people found themselves between the hammer and the anvil. Out of two ferocious enemies, it chose the one that spoke its own language. In this way communism succeeded in being carried along by our nationalism. For several years it pretended to be deaf to its own slogans and theories, to forget them, to forget Marxism. It began boasting about the merits of "glorious Russia" even going so far as to set up the (Russian) Church once more.»¹⁹⁴

THE CRIME OF THE ALLIES. The attitude of England and the USA *vis-à-vis* Stalin's Russia was no less criminal than that of Hitler. In the autumn of 1940, Churchill and Roosevelt had taken care to let the Soviets know that in case of a German attack against the USSR, they would immediately come to its aid. This promise was repeated many times in the opening months of 1941.¹⁹⁵

Secure in this assurance, the clever tyrant of the Kremlin was able to profit from this to the utmost. He did not allow the destruction of the Red Army, which would not have served him very effectively.¹⁹⁶ Indeed, the British and the Americans were panicking from the

Soviet defeats. Through a series of accords passed in the summer and autumn of 1941, without any return or conditions they granted him formidable military and technological aid.¹⁹⁷ Stalin was welcomed with open arms into the camp of the western democracies, without the slightest hesitation. He was going to make them pay dearly for his contribution to the victory.

«The enthusiasm of the West was unanimous (Solzhenitsyn notes), it then pardoned Russia for its bad-sounding name, it forgot all the bad memories of the past; for the first time the West became enamoured of her (paradoxically, on the day that Russia had ceased to be herself).»¹⁹⁸

With consummate hypocrisy, our Anglo-American democrats pretended to accept Stalin's propaganda, with its lies and vain promises, at face value.

“HOLY RUSSIA” ENROLLED IN THE SERVICE OF COMMUNIST POWER. In the war against Germany, the high-level Orthodox hierarchy, which had long been reduced to servitude vis-à-vis the Kremlin, proved itself to be the Kremlin's most precious asset in reawakening the ancient patriotism of the Russian people.

On June 22, the very day of the invasion, Metropolitan Sergius addressed a message to the members of the clergy and the faithful, urgently requesting that they all take part in the struggle. Before long, he organized collections which allowed the Dimitri Donskoi division to be equipped with tanks and airplanes. During the first two years of the war, Sergius published twenty-three pastoral letters preaching a sacred union behind the Bolshevik leaders.¹⁹⁹

Stalin now multiplied gestures of tolerance and even favours towards this church, which he had under complete control:

«The league of the Godless, which had planned to distribute over three million books and pamphlets against religion in 1942, was suppressed and its print shop was given... to the Patriarchate of Moscow, so that its journal could appear once more...! Everywhere offices began being celebrated, and schools of theology could be reopened.»²⁰⁰

Stalin was now an ally of the Western democracies. Clearly, his goal was to do everything he could to gain their trust, in order to obtain maximum advantages from them. This relative liberty granted *only to the Orthodox religion* became a master-stroke of his political game. For his propaganda purposes, Stalin had decided to do even more. With tireless patience, from 1941 to 1947 he returned to the policy of the outstretched hand towards the Vatican, which had served communist interests so brilliantly from 1917 to 1927! In this manoeuvre of détente and opening to the Vatican, he had an intermediary completely devoted to his cause. That person was Franklin Roosevelt, who for Stalin had the superb advantage of loudly proclaiming himself a «democrat» and a «Christian»!

III. PIUS XII BETWEEN FATIMA AND MOSCOW (JUNE 1941 - FEBRUARY 1943)

ROOSEVELT ASKS ROME NOT TO OPPOSE THE ALLIANCE WITH MOSCOW

In the beginning of July 1941, Roosevelt asked his permanent delegate at the Vatican, Harold Tittman, to approach Cardinal Maglione, Secretary of State, and the Pope himself. The purpose was to get Rome to abstain from any declaration favourable to the war against the USSR undertaken by Hitler.²⁰¹ In fact, Pius XII had no need of Roosevelt's "good advice" to firmly resist the continuous pressure of the Germans, who were trying to get him to publicly support their "anti-Bolshevik crusade". «The crooked cross (i.e., the Swastika) is not precisely the cross of the Crusades», Msgr. Tardini said at the time. On February 25, 1946, Pius XII summarized his line of political conduct during the war, caught between the various belligerents:

«On no occasion did We wish to say a single word which was unjust, or fail in our duty to reprove all iniquity, every act worthy of condemnation. Nevertheless We avoided, even when the facts would have justified them, certain expressions which by their nature would have done more harm than good, especially for innocent populations under the yoke of the oppressor. Our constant preoccupation was to moderate a conflict with such deadly effects for poor humanity. For this reason in particular, in spite of certain tendentious pressures, we did not allow our lips or our pen to pronounce a single word, a single indication of approval or encouragement in favour of the war undertaken against Russia in 1941.»²⁰²

Roosevelt, however, could not be content with this reserve. He expected much more from Rome. He had resolved to bring the USA into the war as early as possible on England's side, and in close cooperation with Stalin. But Roosevelt was encountering very strong opposition in public opinion, the great majority of which was isolationist. Catholics in particular were for the most part hostile to all American support for the USSR. Several bishops had made declarations in this sense. Like President Hoover, they thought that «*if we go further and join the war and we win, then we have won for Stalin the grip of Communism on Russia and more opportunity for it to extend over the world*».²⁰³ To justify this lucid position, they recalled the position laid down by Pius XI in *Divini Redemptoris*: «*Communism is intrinsically perverse, and no one who would save Christian civilization and the social order may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever.*»²⁰⁴

How can we fail to see that they were right? It was impossible to contribute to saving Christendom by making an alliance with its most implacable adversary. Was it not foolish, and criminal, to help the communist power, which for twenty years had been the incarnation of Satan's grip over the world, in order to throw off the German yoke more quickly? Did not supernatural faith and hope command a completely different attitude for Catholics? Would it not have been better to suffer the rigours of an unjust aggressor as chastisement, to profit from it to be converted, and await deliverance from God? That could have been done without neglecting to use all legitimate diplomatic and military means apt

to hasten the end of the trial. But whatever the cost, whatever the pretext, it was not permitted to contribute to strengthening satanic Bolshevism's domination over the world.

THE MISSION OF MYRON TAYLOR (SEPTEMBER 1941). Unfortunately, on this point, Pius XII gave way to American pressure.²⁰⁵ In effect, Roosevelt decided to complain to the apostolic delegate about the intransigent attitude of the Archbishops of Boston, Dubuque, Baltimore and Cincinnati. Archbishop Cicognani sent a report to Rome. Other bishops, such as Archbishops Hurley or Spellman, were supporters of Roosevelt, and they wished that the Holy See would authorize a wider interpretation of *Divini Redemptoris*. In September, Roosevelt decided to send Myron Taylor to Rome once more, to plead for his policy with the Pope.²⁰⁶ A long memorandum of Cardinal Spellman, an autographed letter of Roosevelt, promises of all sorts – everything was attempted to put pressure on Pius XII. Myron Taylor was received on several occasions by the Pope and Cardinal Maglione, and promised in the name of the United States that the Holy See would be included in the building of peace. Taylor spoke with the secretary for extraordinary affairs, Msgr. Tardini. He also wanted to meet Msgr. Montini, substitute (undersecretary) for ordinary affairs.²⁰⁷

In his letter of September 3, 1941, Roosevelt reminded the Pope that «the Soviet constitution proclaimed religious liberty, and that Roosevelt himself had personally intervened with Stalin to obtain complete freedom of worship in the USSR after victory was won». Msgr. Roche relates that «Pius XII, with a certain humour, asked Myron Taylor if Stalin had responded. "Not yet, but undoubtedly he will respond"».»²⁰⁸ Roosevelt affirmed: «The churches in Russia are open. I really believe it is possible that, because of the present conflict, Russia will recognize religious liberty on its territory...»²⁰⁹

Myron Taylor then asked for a response from the Pope on the subject of *Divini Redemptoris*. Msgr. Tardini, with great farsightedness, considered it inopportune to make any declaration to settle such a burning question as sending military assistance to Russia. But the other party, that of Cardinal Maglione and Msgr. Montini, carried the day, and Pius XII agreed to give a response in the sense Roosevelt was asking for. On September 20, Cardinal Maglione sent the apostolic delegate in Washington an instruction which lifted all objections in principle against American aid to Russia. Without any scruple Catholics could support Roosevelt when he aided Stalin against Hitler.²¹⁰

Meanwhile, the American ambassador to Moscow, Averell Harriman, wrote in a report to the President: «In spite of all the commentaries and all the requests, I leave with the impression that what the Soviets intend is to repay us with words and furnish a few examples to give the impression of détente, without making real changes in their present practices.»²¹¹ Roosevelt nevertheless continued to place complete trust in Stalin.

In December 1941, the destruction of the American Pacific fleet by the Japanese – six great battleships were sunk, and over 3,200 officers and soldiers killed – was Roosevelt's opportune and even desired (?) occasion for involving the USA in the war.²¹²

THE SECRET OF FATIMA CENSORED

In this political context – when at Rome there was strong American pressure to get the Pope to refrain from all condemnation or criticism of Russia – the Secret of Fatima was divulged for the first time. The two works published at Rome in the beginning of 1942 by Father da Fonseca²¹³ and Don Luigi Moresco²¹⁴ gave a lamentably mutilated and deformed text of the Secret.

Three audacious corrections had been introduced in Our Lady's words: 1. There was no longer any mention of the consecration *of Russia* to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, but only the consecration of the world. 2. Even more grave: it was no longer a question of «errors» which *Russia* would spread throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions, but only «great errors» which would spread in the world (Father Moresco), and an impious propaganda which would spread its errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions (Father da Fonseca). These vague and ambiguous formulas were intended to include both Germany and Russia. 3. Finally, by a grave indiscretion, the wonderful promise of Russia's conversion was maintained, but in a context absolutely foreign to the authentic Secret: «I will come to ask for the consecration *of the world* (No! Our Lady had said: “of Russia”!) to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays of the month. *If My request is heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace.*»

Distorted in this way, Our Lady's words were able to be used by the Allies – especially in England – in a sense absolutely opposed to the authentic message of Our Lady of Fatima. If Our Lady did not denounce the Bolshevik danger and if She promised the conversion of Russia on the sole condition that the world be consecrated to Her Immaculate Heart, collaboration with the Soviets no longer presented any danger...²¹⁵

Later on, Father da Fonseca tried to justify this inadmissible watering down of Our Lady's words. Because the two works were printed at the Vatican, he explained, there had to be nothing in the text which could give any of the parties in the conflict the slightest pretext for criticizing the Holy See: «The only dangerous phrase was perhaps the part of the Secret that spoke about the atheistic and warlike activity of Russia, and that is why its name is suppressed, substituting the anonymous phrase “impious propaganda” ...» Portugal's ambassador to the Holy See, who had been requested to write a preface, showed that he was satisfied with these changes. Father da Fonseca adds: «We know with direct certainty that when His Holiness received *Meraviglie di Fatima* in homage, and was informed of the small alteration of the text (sic), he too fully approved it.»²¹⁶

Once again it was politics – or at least a certain policy of ingratiating the liberal democracies, who themselves were accomplices of communism – which stood in the way of the publication and exact fulfilment of Our Lady of Fatima's requests.²¹⁷

1942: THE DECISIVE CHOICE – FATIMA OR OSTPOLITIK?

To what extent did the policy of ingratiating the democracies, allies of Stalin, prevent the Pope from fulfilling Our Lady of Fatima's requests? It is difficult to say. What is certain is that, during the year 1942, Sister Lucy, on Heaven's behalf, once more insistently requested

the solemn act of consecration of Russia and world-wide reparation for all the crimes of Bolshevism. On the other hand, Stalin – as though he were mysteriously aware of the supernatural danger threatening the future of communism! – multiplied his attempts to obtain a concordat or at least a *modus vivendi* with the Holy See. All his interests were riding on it. What would the Pope do faced with these two series of requests, which came from contrary Spirits and were mutually exclusive?

TOWARDS A ROME-MOSCOW ACCORD? The “Acts and Documents of the Holy See related to the Second World War” as well as Hansjakob Stehle’s vitally important book, *Die Ostpolitik des Vatikans 1917-1975*, reveal the Kremlin’s numerous diplomatic efforts to gain Pius XII’s favour.²¹⁸

In the summer or autumn of 1941, Father Braun, the American Assumptionist who took care of worship in the parish of Saint-Louis-des-Français at Moscow (the only one remaining in the capital), let himself be convinced by Soviet propaganda. The moment had come, he explained, for the Vatican to establish direct contact with the Kremlin to reach the signing of a *modus vivendi*.²¹⁹

In mid-December 1941, a French Dominican, Father Michel Florent, wanted to establish himself at Moscow as “General de Gaulle’s representative”. Fortunately, the Vatican prevented him. «The good people will be offended to see a priest accredited with Stalin», Msgr. Tardini explained to him. «Adversaries in Moscow will blame the Holy See and make it bear the consequences.»²²⁰ Were the scandal of the “good people” and the risk of German reprisals the only obstacles to an accommodation between Rome and Moscow?! Do we not have the impression that Rome was beginning to give way to the combined Anglo-American and Gaullist pressure in favour of Stalin?

HEAVEN INSISTS. Meanwhile, in the beginning of March 1942, Sister Lucy felt interiorly moved to write a second time to the Holy Father. She told her director, the Bishop of Gurza, about this desire. The bishop responded that it was useless, unless she had something new to communicate to the Pope. In a very important letter – which unfortunately remained unpublished until September 1984 – the seer explained to the Bishop of Gurza where this idea of insisting with the Holy Father came from:

«With the permission of my superiors, I have the custom of remaining in the chapel with Our Lord until midnight, from Thursday to Friday. In these hours of greater and more prolonged intimacy with Him, with greater insistence I implore peace for the poor world.

«During this night of March 5, 1942, Our Lord seemed to make me feel more vividly that He refused to grant peace because of the crimes that continue to provoke His justice, *and also because He is not obeyed in His requests, especially for the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, although He has inspired His Holiness’s heart to accomplish it.*

«From there the thought came to me of renewing my request. But according to Your Excellency’s advice, I find it good to be silent.»²²¹

The A.D.S.S. informs us that «on March 31, 1942, Ambassador Cameiro (Portugal's ambassador to the Vatican) and his wife had hinted to the substitute (i.e. undersecretary of State) that according to Sister Lucy, Our Lady had manifested the desire for such a consecration (A.E.S. 2967/42)». ²²² Pius XII had decided to speak about it in his letter of April 15, addressed to Cardinal Maglione, where he requested prayers to Our Lady to obtain peace. On April 4, he gave Msgr. Montini the following directive on this subject: «... *To insert a phrase recommending a consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as so many have suggested and requested.*» ²²³ Unfortunately, and curiously, «the phrase relating to the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was deleted by order of the Pope when he revised the minutes». ²²⁴ And nothing was done.

The Pope even lost the wonderful opportunity that Providence offered to him: the double jubilee of May 13. The Church would be celebrating at the same time the anniversary of his episcopal consecration, received twenty-five years earlier in the Sistine Chapel, and the first apparition of Our Lady at the Cova da Iria, which took place on the same day, at the same hour. We have already said that six more months went by before the Pope made the slightest allusion to Fatima – six months during which the “children of darkness” did not remain idle!

THE KREMLIN STRIVES TO CONVINCING THE POPE. On February 9, 1942, Osborne, a British official, tried to convince the Secretary of State that «the USSR does not seek to Bolshevize Europe and that after the war it will respect the rights of nations». ²²⁵

In March, there began circulating the famous “Letter of Stalin to the Pope”, in which the Kremlin gives assurances regarding the Catholic Church and proposes the establishment of diplomatic relations. To highlight the Russians' goodwill, the Anglo-Saxon press gave wide publicity to these propositions. This letter, which caused a great stir, was undoubtedly a trial balloon, for the Vatican declared it had never received it and Moscow maintained its silence. ²²⁶

In July, the Soviets went to Roger Garreau, head of General de Gaulle's French representatives at Moscow. They informed him that they desired to reach an accord with the Vatican. The apostolic delegate in Syria, Archbishop Leprêtre, passed on this offer to the Secretariat of State. ²²⁷ On August 8, in a documentary note intended for the Pope, Msgr. Tardini wrote:

«After the repeated affirmations of atheism as the fundamental principle of communist doctrine, after the encouragement and aid given to atheist propaganda for so many years, after such a long and grave persecution against religion, and especially against Catholicism, which they attempted to almost completely destroy, before anything else it would be indispensable to observe in practice how religious liberty has been respected and safeguarded by the Russian government. After a suitable lapse of time for this experimentation, the Holy See could decide on its attitude with full knowledge of the case. Naturally, *such a decision* – whether in itself or in its outward circumstances – would have

to be and appear to be motivated solely by higher religious interests, and not inspired by advantages and political favouritism.»²²⁸

This note of Cardinal Tardini – who represented the most anti-communist tendency in the Pope's entourage – demonstrates that Pius XII had not absolutely ruled out the idea of a *modus vivendi* with the Soviet Union. «This corresponded to the continuity of the Vatican Ostpolitik», Hansjakob Stehle remarks. However, «Pius XII preferred a shorter note to give his directives to the apostolic delegate and that it not be sent through the so-called intermediary (Maglione to Leprêtre, August, 14, 1942)».²²⁹

In any case, with tenacity the Soviets multiplied their diplomatic approaches. In the beginning of August 1942, they approached Professor Stanislaus Kot, former Moscow ambassador of the Polish government at London. The latter passed on their advances to the apostolic delegate at Tehran, Archbishop Marina: «In my opinion, the moment is favourable for a rapprochement... Something could be done for the good of many Catholics who live in this country, etc.»²³⁰

THE INTERVENTION OF THE PORTUGUESE BISHOPS. In July, 1942 the Bishop of Gurza informed Sister Lucy that the Portuguese bishops had decided to ask the Holy Father once more for the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In her reply, after having expressed her joy to her spiritual director at hearing this request, Sister Lucy added:

«Oh, may God grant that His Holiness finally take this desired step to put an end to such a great chastisement hanging over the world; but God permits that it be delayed still longer to punish humanity for its crimes. Patience! My poor prayers and my sacrifices go up to Heaven in supplication for peace and pardon.»²³¹

The following month, she reiterated her request to the Bishop of Gurza:

«For some time I have felt the interior inspiration to write another letter to the Holy Father, insisting on the request for the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I have not dared to speak about the inspiration for fear that I be ordered to write the letter, but by keeping silent I fear that I am making myself responsible for resisting grace. This is why I am making a decision. I do not know what the importance or value can be, for the Holy Father, of a letter coming from me. To me it seems there would not be any; but sometimes the good Lord loves to use what is valued the least to realize His designs.»²³²

The Bishop of Gurza undoubtedly replied that the initiative with the bishops was sufficient, because Sister Lucy did not write to the Pope. This is most regrettable, for at the same time the seer would have reminded him of the essential part of the Secret, and Our Lady's prophecies concerning Russia. This reminder of the Bolshevik danger was more urgent than ever for the Pope in this autumn of 1942, when attempts were being made to convince him that Stalin's Russia was no longer a danger for Europe.

THE AMERICANS PLEAD IN FAVOUR OF OSTPOLITIK. At the end of August 1942, Roosevelt had decided to send ambassador Myron Taylor to Rome once more. Taylor was in Rome

from September 17 to 28. He was received in audience three times by Pius XII, spoke with Cardinal Maglione, with Msgr. Tardini, and at length, several times, with Msgr. Montini.²³³

On September 19, Taylor read and commented to Pius XII on a long memorandum presented as a «basis upon which the parallel efforts of His Holiness and President Roosevelt for a just and moral peace (sic) can rest». Roosevelt was undoubtedly aware of German initiatives with the Holy See in view of a compromise peace settlement.²³⁴ He wanted to prevent the Pope from supporting any project of this kind. Once more, Roosevelt's spokesman multiplied promises on the guarantees offered the smaller nations after the war, and the role the United States wished to see the Vatican have in the negotiations for a peace treaty. These facile promises were not going to be kept.

During the audience of September 22, Taylor gave Pius XII a second memorandum explaining America's plans for the postwar. As usual, the ambassador pleaded Stalin's cause, trying to parry the Pope's objections and get him to take a more accommodating attitude towards the Kremlin. After the pontifical audience, Taylor related the same claptrap to Msgr. Tardini. The same evening, Tardini jotted down his impressions:

«This memorandum on Russia demonstrates the error and illusion of the Americans. They believe it is possible that once the communist government is victorious, it will enter the family of European nations like a gentle lamb. The truth is completely different. If Stalin is victorious in the war, he will be the lion who will devour all Europe. I said to Taylor that neither Hitler nor Stalin can stay calm and tranquil in a family of European nations. I am astonished that such obvious things cannot be perceived by rulers and such high political figures.»²³⁵

Msgr. Tardini was a man of great faith, and common sense. He had no illusions about communism.

But on this same September 22, the advocate of Ostpolitik had found once more, in the person of Msgr. Montini, a much more complacent interlocutor. Here is the written account of their conversation concerning the USSR:

«Russia. Concerning Russia, ambassador Taylor declared that in the spirit of the representatives of the American government. it is a duty for all to try to reform Russia and bring it back into conformity with its quality as a member of the family of nations rather than to try to continue isolating it. In all postwar reconstruction, an isolated Russia will immediately present itself as a powerful enemy, menacing the peace which everybody hopes can be a lasting one. There are already, Mr. Taylor said, many indications that progress is being accomplished in this sense; at Washington there is more and more confidence that Russia will prove to be a useful collaborator after the war, and that the generally unacceptable characteristics of the Russian system are in the process of disappearing. Communism as such is in the process of disappearing; the principle of private property is recognized once more, at least partially; the attitude towards religion is changing considerably, even if religious liberty still does not exist; immediately after his departure from Rome in 1941, Taylor had instructions sent to Mr. Harriman who was then

at Moscow, ordering him to make every effort to guarantee such an evolution.²³⁶ Since then, Mr. Taylor added, other official visitors at Moscow were equally preoccupied with this question. There is widespread belief in Washington that considerable progress has been realized. In the final analysis, Mr. Taylor concluded, there are few reasons for being discouraged; in the postwar world Russia will need the assistance of other powers and these powers will require her cooperation. He insisted again on the fact that the important aspect of the situation is the necessity of doing everything possible to make Russia a friend rather than an isolated enemy.»²³⁷

According to Msgr. Roche, a “Moscow-Rome accord”, preliminary to the 1962 agreement, was concluded in 1942, an accord «*whose protagonists were Msgr. Montini and Stalin himself*». Msgr. Roche, a confidant of Cardinal Tisserant, went on: «This accord appears to me of considerable importance.»²³⁸ Indeed! But at what moment was this compromise signed? What were its exact contents? Msgr. Roche tells us nothing. In any case, in a letter of September 22, 1942, to ambassador Myron Taylor, Pius XII alludes to a stupefying promise he apparently agreed to accept on the subject of the USSR:

«I fear that the articles on liberty of conscience or religion that you have promised, in the name of your government, to include in future agreements between the Allies and Soviet Russia, will not appear there. You have given me the relevant acts, but, knowing what I know about communism, I have the greatest doubts about this illusion of your government. *At the request of President Roosevelt, the Vatican has refrained from all polemics against the communist regime, but this silence which weighs on our consciences has not been understood by the Soviet leaders, who continue their persecutions against the Church and the faithful in the USSR and the countries occupied by Red Army troops. May God grant that the free world may not have to regret my silence one day!*»²³⁹

A POPE TORN BETWEEN ROOSEVELT'S OSTPOLITIK AND FATIMA

«This silence which weighs on our consciences ...» Yes, Pius XII was torn, hesitant... Certainly the message of Fatima impressed him. And like his friend, Cardinal Schuster, and Msgr. Tardini as well, he perceived the grave danger for Europe and the world if Stalin won too sweeping a victory.²⁴⁰ But he also had a great deal of sympathy and admiration for the great democratic and moral principles proclaimed by Roosevelt. He also feared displeasing Roosevelt, and some of his own entourage – among others, Cardinal Maglione and Msgr. Montini, not to mention the clan of French Gaullists grouped around Cardinal Tisserant, Msgr. Julien and Msgr. Fontenelle – surely influenced him in this direction.

Now, contrary to appearances, which made him seem a very authoritarian and independent person, Pius XII was by nature sensitive and impressionable. He was strongly susceptible to the influence of those around him. We can hardly do better here than quote the perceptive testimony of his most intimate, devoted and selfless collaborator, Msgr. Tardini. These few lines written in 1959 shed a great deal of light on all the shortcomings of Pius XII's pontificate.

«Pius XII had a gentle and rather timid temperament. *He was not made for struggle.* In this he was very different from his great predecessor Pius XI, who seemed, apparently at least, to relish a struggle. Pius XII, on the contrary, visibly suffered from them, This inclination, which led him to prefer solitude and calm, disposed him to avoid rather than face the battles of life.

«His great goodness led him to *please everybody and irritate no one*; to prefer the ways of mildness to those of severity, persuasion to force. *The candour of his soul did not even permit him to suspect a lack of veracity or sincerity in somebody else. Humble as he was, he believed that everyone was like him: just as devoted to truth, just as selfless as he was.*

«Sometimes, at the most difficult moments, his penetrating intelligence, applying itself to the situation, made him see promptly and clearly all the possible solutions. Immediately there appeared to him the pros and cons, the advantages and disadvantages, the possible favourable or unfavourable consequences. Then he would remain *uncertain, hesitant, as if he were not sure of himself.* Then he had to be left to reflect and pray. *But not everyone acted in this way... One person suggested one thing and another suggested something else.* Everyone – as often happened – claimed to have found the just solution, the only solution, the solution the Pope had to follow. *All that troubled him.*

«Once the decision was made, it had to be executed: this too was a delicate step, *especially if the decision was by its nature displeasing to some.* In this case, Pius XII loved – as he himself used to say – “to sweeten the pill”...

«A question can be asked here: is it possible for a man not only to conquer himself, but to destroy and even annihilate his own natural dispositions? I don't think so. Given human frailty, something of the temperament remains in the depths of the psychic structure of man, and at certain moments emerges at the surface once more.

«*Moreover, a person who occupies an elevated post very frequently encounters, among those who approach him, somebody clever enough to exploit his weak side. The interest of the exploiter, his ideas or his friends profit from the superior's weak side. Pius XII himself cannot be entirely exempted from this common law of human existence.*»

In writing these terrible lines, was Cardinal Tardini thinking of the influence Msgr. Montini exerted on Pius XII? It is very probable, for the lively tensions between the Pope's two closest collaborators reveal that Cardinal Tardini did not appreciate his colleague's encroachments and hazardous initiatives.²⁴¹

Msgr. Tardini added: «In his exquisite amiability, the Pope desired to see those whom he received in audience leave him with a grateful memory... *At certain moments he was unable to say no.*»²⁴² As it concerned President Roosevelt and his special envoy, Myron Taylor, this real weakness of Pius XII was undoubtedly combined with a debatable political view: the Pope did not want to risk gravely displeasing the powerful American democracy, on which Europe's fate principally depended after the war.

THE CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY. It was in a similar context that, faced with contrary pressures, on October 31, 1942, Pius XII performed the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was a half-measure, an incomplete act, as Sister Lucy said not long afterwards. The Pope had wanted to do something to obey Our Lady of Fatima's requests. Yet he had not dared to do everything She requested. An explicit mention of Bolshevik Russia, and a solemn act of reparation to finally obtain its conversion, would have provoked strong displeasure from Stalin's allies. The Pope undoubtedly feared these reactions.

*THE GREAT TURNING POINT OF THE WAR
(NOVEMBER 1942 - FEBRUARY 1943)*

As we have said, Sister Lucy revealed without delay the disparate effects this «incomplete act» would have: The good Lord «promises in return to end the war soon»; but she immediately adds: «the conversion of Russia is not for now.»²⁴³

Remarkably, the months from November 1942 to February 1943 effectively marked the turning point of the war, leading to its conclusion by an Allied victory.²⁴⁴

On November 3, 1942, after ten days of terrible and uncertain fighting, in Egypt there was the German debacle of El Alamein. On November 8, British and American troops landed in North Africa. Finally, on February 2, 1943, the Sixth German Army of Marshal Von Paulus surrendered at Stalingrad. This defeat, even more than the others, clearly showed that the end of the war was in sight.

A GRAVE ERROR. That being said, are we, with certain apologists of Fatima, to celebrate the Allied triumph as a miraculous victory granted by Our Lady of Fatima in response to the Sovereign Pontiff's act? Father Payrière, for example, writes: «... The debacle of the swastika began at the moment when Pius XII, at the Vatican, consecrated the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary...» He goes on to stress the fact that «the victorious campaign of Tunisia ended on May 13, 1943, at noon» and that «the victory of Garigliano, which was to liberate Rome», took place on May 13, 1944.²⁴⁵

This facile “concordism” is a grave misreading of the true significance of the prophecies of the great Secret. For in the Second World War, far from announcing a wonderful and miraculous peace, Our Lord only promised His messenger that in response to the act of consecration requested, «*the days of tribulation would be shortened*». This expression refers us back to the terrible prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem: «And unless those days had been shortened, no one would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect they shall be shortened.» (Mt. 24:22; Mk. 13:20) In this sense, the months following October 31, 1942 marked the turning point of the war, a war which could have been even deadlier had it been prolonged still more.²⁴⁶ But although these months brought the end of the war in sight, it was a tragic and unfortunate end. Sister Lucy did not fail to announce it, clearly: «*The conversion of Russia is not for now.*» Such is the sad prophecy she repeated often, beginning in 1943. For to her eyes the future was clear. The Holy Father had not accomplished the

only request of Our Lady which could have obtained from Heaven the promised miracle of Russia's conversion. Hence, the chastisements predicted by the great Secret would implacably continue coming to pass.

GULAG OR CHRISTENDOM: A POIGNANT APPEAL TO THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF. In the beginning of 1943, the political analysis of the most farsighted persons coincided perfectly with the prophecies of Fatima. We must quote here at least a few excerpts of an admirable text which deserves to be widely known and reflected on. It is a poignant appeal addressed to Pope Pius XII on February 23, 1943, by President Kallay, head of the Hungarian government:²⁴⁷

«The world is threatened with destruction by the war; it is in danger of being crushed by Bolshevism. This danger can only be parried by the strength of Christendom. The Anglo-Saxon powers themselves will not succeed in removing the danger. They have neither the necessary strength nor the resolution. Only the Vicar of Jesus Christ possesses the ability, the strength, and the power.

«Already once before, in a moment of peril, my country implored the assistance of the Holy Father, and it obtained from him the assistance which the bells of all the churches in the world were called to commemorate each day at noon.²⁴⁸ A nation posted as a sentinel on the limits of Christendom towards the East, and with it the whole world, requests Your Holiness once more to sound the alarm...

«I place within the hands of Your Holiness, leader of the Christian world, the fate of some hundreds of thousands of Christians. Among them, I have the heavy responsibility of representing perhaps the most modest of these peoples, but in any case the most faithful of them, the country of the Holy Virgin, to my knowledge the only country in Europe where the situation of the Church was not harmed during the present war, in which, on the contrary, the Church was able to make its voice heard on the moral plane as well as in the constitutional and economic domain.

«Therefore, for the safeguarding of all these values, I permit myself to address the head of Christendom, praying, imploring him, as a believing Catholic, to enlighten those who err in the darkness and do not see, to speak, to fight and to get involved, not in the interests of this or that nation, but in the name of all Christendom, and above all to assist us, we, the outermost ramparts of Christendom, not forgetting that what threatens us today in such proximity, might one day arrive at the very confines of Rome.

«The danger was not so imminent when the Holy See, with prodigious farsightedness, had already drawn the entire world's attention to the danger of Bolshevism. Why then does it not refer to it again, on the eve of the catastrophe...?

«In the name of His most serene Highness, the regent of the kingdom of Hungary, in the name of the royal Hungarian government and the entire Hungarian nation, I humbly beseech Your Holiness *to deign to pursue the struggle against communism as did your august predecessors... Never before has Christendom been exposed to such a menace... The*

world has nowhere to turn to ask for help except towards the Vicar of Christ, and it can no longer receive help but from him alone... Only the strength of the Holy Spirit can enlighten this world on its way to perdition, for it seems to us that the final hour has struck. We cast ourselves at the feet of Your Holiness, beseeching you to address the world once more, not so that certain people may be spared from perishing, but for the kingdom of God on earth, so that the Christian world itself may be saved.»

To this anguished appeal, and so many others like it which the Vatican was receiving at the time,²⁴⁹ clearly there was only one adequate response, the divine response: official approval of the message of Our Lady of Fatima, and the eager, fervent and exact accomplishment of all Her requests. Alas, the Pope was still not disposed to do so. In response to this request, on March 3, 1943, Cardinal Maglione contented himself with noting: «The Holy See is attentively following the situation.» On March 7, he responded in substance to President Kallay: «*The Pope is not unaware of the Bolshevik peril, but he cannot renew the condemnation of communism without renewing that of Nazism.*»²⁵⁰ It is true that only the very words of the Queen of Peace would have allowed the Holy Father to rise above the inextricable political difficulties of the hour, in which he was imprisoned for lack of seeking the miraculous help which Heaven was offering him.

Msgr. Tardini, at least, redoubled his efforts to enlighten the Anglo-Saxons on the imminence of the red peril. He multiplied his letters and his reports.²⁵¹ But he was a voice crying in the wilderness. On June 13, 1943, speaking to 20,000 Italian workers, Pius XII pronounced an exhortation entirely directed against communism. Still, he did not even designate it by name, and he made no allusion to Russia. Moreover, this warning lacked the solemnity needed to be heard outside of Italy.²⁵²

Thus the Allies continued, undisturbed, their foolish policy of unconditional alliance with Moscow, without provoking the public, firm and resolute opposition of the Vatican, which alone could have diminished its disastrous effects for the world.

IV. «THE CRUSADE OF THE DEMOCRACIES»... FOR A BOLSHEVIK PEACE (JANUARY 1943 - AUGUST 1944)

On January 20, 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill, meeting at Casablanca, had communicated to all the Axis powers their demand for unconditional surrender. They had deliberately spurned the attempts of the most perceptive politicians, Pius XII, Franco and Salazar. These men, conscious of the extreme danger of a Bolshevization of Europe, on the hypothesis that Germany would be completely crushed and Stalin would gain a total victory, strived to obtain as early as possible a compromise peace with a Germany relieved of Hitler.

THE MASSACRE OF KATYN: «LYING AND HOMICIDAL» COMMUNISM. With a perfect clarity of views, and diabolical machiavellian cunning, Stalin continued to actively prepare his communist peace. For this end, he was ready to profit from all opportunities. In February of 1943, the Germans discovered in the forest of Katyn the mass grave where 15,000 Polish officers were buried. They had been massacred by the Russians in April 1940.²⁵³

Shamelessly, Stalin immediately accused the Germans of this abominable crime, for which in reality he alone was responsible. Then he reached the heights of cynicism: on April 16, 1943, when the Polish government in exile in London (the government of the Polish anti-German resistance, recognized by all the Allies, including the USSR) asked the International Red Cross to investigate this massacre, the Kremlin boss had the audacity to use this pretext... to break off his diplomatic relations with this government which was too nationalistic! Already Stalin was forming the embryo of the future Polish communist government, constituted at Moscow's orders.

We must read the Soviet note of April 25, 1943, which explains the motives for the diplomatic rupture:

«While the peoples of the Soviet Union, shedding their blood in abundance in the struggle against Hitler's Germany,²⁵⁴ neglect no effort to fight the common enemy of the Russian and Polish peoples, and all freedom-loving peoples (sic), the Polish government, in order to satisfy the tyranny of Hitler, has traitorously attacked the Soviet Union.» How did they manage that? By having the audacity to pay attention «to Hitler's abominable calumny», accusing the Soviets of having «committed a monstrous crime against the Polish officers». Therefore, since «the Polish government has in fact broken off its relations with the USSR and adopted a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union», the Soviet government, offended by this calumny, decided on the rupture.²⁵⁵

Here is the man in whom Roosevelt and Churchill had complete confidence, and considered a generous, frank and loyal ally – a real henchman of the “Prince of lies”. «I like this man», Churchill declared in 1945, at the beginning of the Potsdam conference. It goes without saying that our three accomplices obstinately refused to tell the truth about the Katyn massacre. At the Nuremberg trials, after vainly attempting to attribute this crime to the Germans, they decided not to speak about it any longer. Churchill himself made this admission.²⁵⁶

Stalin was advancing his pawns for the forced Bolshevization of all Poland – half by direct annexation and half by means of a “popular democracy”.

THE BOMBING OF GERMAN CITIES. So that postwar Germany would be more vulnerable to communist propaganda, it was necessary to multiply massacres and acts of destruction. Stalin insisted with Churchill that the RAF intensify its bombing of German cities, which brought such atrocious carnage. In August 1942, during the first visit of the British minister to the Kremlin, Stalin had cynically declared to him: «It is very good to bomb the factories, but it is at least as important *to destroy as many workers' dwellings as possible. Entire cities must be razed.*»²⁵⁷

In April 1943, Churchill promised to satisfy him: «... I can assure you that our bombing of German cities will intensify from month to month.» Stalin was not content with these promises. In the final days of May, he sent eight Red Army officers to England as observers. On June 11, they followed the bombing of Düsseldorf, which was particularly atrocious.²⁵⁸ «Churchill had reached his goal. As soon as Stalin learned through his observers the

merciless character of the bombing war, when the Kremlin learned what had taken place at Düsseldorf, at least one Western Army received congratulatory messages from the East: the Bomber Command of the RAF.»²⁵⁹ Without any strategic utility,²⁶⁰ the Allies continued to bomb systematically, and criminally, the residential quarters of German cities.

THE COMINTERN IS DISSOLVED. Meanwhile, «American politicians and experts avidly sought the least sign of what was being called in the West the transformation of communism into Russian nationalism. These hopes increased after May 1943, when Stalin ordered the dissolution of the Communist International, which for a long time had been a fictitious organization... This extremely skilful manoeuvre on Stalin's part provided the Soviet Union with immense possibilities for expansion in the postwar period.»²⁶¹

For our blind democrats accepted at face value this lying propaganda which, they believed, excused their unpardonable complicity with Moscow. The Gaullist Christian Democrat, Maurice Schumann, triumphantly wrote on May 25, 1943, that this decision of Stalin «constituted perhaps the most important political act of the world war, because it favours beyond our hopes union between the victorious countries, and union within the victorious countries».²⁶²

What news – Stalin solemnly giving up all Marxist propaganda in foreign countries! It fully justified our good apostles of Christian Democracy, who within the Resistance were becoming increasingly chummy with the communists, and surrounded and dominated by them. The same year, 1943, the crypto-communist Jean Moulin was ordered by de Gaulle to unify the various movements of the Resistance in France, and he founded the National Council of the Resistance. Before long, at the “Permanent Bureau” composed of five members, the communists had a majority of three to two.

AN OUTSTRETCHED HAND TO THE VATICAN. Meanwhile at Moscow, in the sinister Lubianka prison where he was still being kept, curious propositions were being made to Father Walter Cizek. The year before, he had been condemned to fifteen years of forced labour: now his jailers offered to free him and send him as chaplain to the Polish troops fighting on the Russian side against the Germans. What sudden solicitude!

Then it was even proposed that he «go to Rome to arrange a concordat between the Pope and the Soviet Union». With admirable courage and farsightedness, the American Jesuit roundly declined: «No deal interests me; let's not have any more talk of all your propositions.»²⁶³

STALIN, PROTECTOR OF RELIGION. Above all, Stalin was careful to keep up his propaganda with the Allies. He accentuated his liberal policy towards the Orthodox religion. On September 3, 1943, he officially received Sergius, Metropolitan of Moscow, who was accompanied by Nicholas and Alexis, the Metropolitans of Leningrad and Kiev. All three were unconditional servants of the Kremlin. Stalin then authorized the nomination of a new “Patriarch of all Russia”, for Tikhon had died in 1925 without having a successor. On September 8, Sergius was elected by a synod of bishops. At the same time, the government set up a “Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church” to assure the relations

between the Patriarchate and the State. A supreme irony: as head of this Council they named G. Karpoff, who until then had been head of the "League of the Godless"!

In reality, these measures were intended to prepare the forced reunion of millions of Eastern Rite Catholics to an Orthodox Church now restored as a State Church. Stalin, of course, tried to give these acts the greatest possible propaganda effect in favour of the regime, declaring:

«From the most ancient times, the Russian people have been penetrated by a religious sentiment. The Church, since the opening of operations against Germany, has shown itself under a better light. The ecclesiastics fight courageously at the front, and give us proof of their patriotism every day. The Communist party of the USSR can no longer deprive the Russian people of its churches and its liberty of conscience.»²⁶⁴

In all the churches, prayers were instituted for the tyrant's good health. The master of the Kremlin had officially become the great protector of the Orthodox religion. He could now come to the Tehran conference with this showy religious policy as an invaluable trump card with the Allies...

TOWARDS A SOVIET PEACE: THE TEHRAN ACCORDS. The year 1943 was marked by conferences between the Allies: at Casablanca in January, at Quebec in August, at Moscow in October, at Cairo in November, and above all at Tehran from November 28 to December 1, where Stalin had insisted on coming in person.

«Roosevelt brought up the problem of the United Nations, which was so delicate in his eyes. Stalin acquiesced. In reality, he had given his adherence in principle, but principles mattered little with him. It was more tangible realities that interested him. He took advantage of the good impression he had produced to formulate his requests, which never seemed exorbitant. He had so many accomplices in Mr. Roosevelt's entourage! Harry Hopkins asked only what was in (Stalin's) interests, and the freemason Henry Wallace, Vice-President of the United States, spoke only of favouring the revolution in Europe to serve the human community. Stalin was the great ally, the sincere friend. He knew it and took advantage of it. Mr. Roosevelt even played the role of "cheerful giver" with such great success that out of tactical prudence, Stalin pretended to accept the proffered presents.»²⁶⁵

Betrayals multiplied, with the heaviest consequences for the future. First came Yugoslavia: «At Tehran, General Mikhailovich's resistance movement began to be sacrificed to Tito's partisans... Two months later, in February 1944, Mikhailovich was no longer receiving arms.» Not long after, he was the victim of a dastardly assassination by orders of the communist boss. «Poland and the Baltic countries were not treated any better. The Anglo-Saxon statesmen were completely aware of the series of deportations carried out by the Soviet police... But Churchill ended up agreeing that Stalin could annex eastern Poland up to the Curzon line...» Stalin demanded more and obtained the creation of a second front *in France*, which left him complete freedom to "liberate", in his manner, the countries of Eastern Europe. He made them all satellites of Moscow, under communist direction. As Georges Ollivier observes:

«Stalin was decidedly a fortunate man. At the price of his adherence to the United Nations (the Masonic whim of Roosevelt, Master at the Holland Lodge since 1911 and 32nd degree Mason at Albany since 1929), he saw all his hopes come to pass... For three days in a row, Roosevelt and Churchill banqueted with Stalin, and the wine flowed generously. Only once did Churchill get angry; that was when “the Marshal” proposed a toast to the 50,000 Germans he planned to execute without trial. Roosevelt, however, intervened, laughing: «Perhaps we could reach an agreement on a lower figure. Let’s say 49,500.»²⁶⁶

In the months following this sinister meeting, from December 1943 to December 1944, Stalin had over a million persons from the Caucasus and Crimean regions deported to the East. Once again the operation cost tens of thousands of victims.²⁶⁷ Meanwhile, for Western consumption, he continued to play up the farce of détente.

A CATHOLIC PRIEST AT THE KREMLIN (APRIL-MAY 1944). In the final days of April 1944, Stalin received a strange visitor at Moscow: Father Stanislaus Orlemanski, an American Catholic priest of Polish origin exercising his ministry in Massachusetts. Orlemanski was naive, or rather, cleverly manipulated. He believed he had the historic mission of contributing to a twofold reconciliation: between the Kremlin and the Vatican on the one hand, and between Russia and Poland on the other. For this purpose he had requested at New York an entrance visa to the USSR to be able «to study the religious question in Poland». Later on, Stalin had invited him out of the blue to come and speak with him «about the religious persecution in the whole world»! With the accord of the American Secretary of State, Orlemanski had departed for Moscow through Alaska and Siberia.

At the end of April, he was received with open arms at the Kremlin: Stalin and Molotov spoke with him for two hours! On April 28, an article in *Pravda* gave an account of the audience with a photograph of the priest in the company of the two communist leaders. That evening he was invited to give an interview with Radio Moscow: «Not only did I find a friend in Stalin, but I must make an historic declaration which will be confirmed by the future: Stalin is a friend of the Roman Catholic Church», he declared.²⁶⁸

After this interview, Orlemanski was given another two hour audience with Stalin. Isaac Deutscher reports that he even obtained «a solemn declaration, written in Stalin’s hand, in which the Kremlin boss offered his collaboration to the Vatican leader. And he left Orlemanski free to use it at his discretion.»²⁶⁹ Let us add that Stalin sent a letter on this subject «to his dear friend», President Roosevelt, and then a telegram to thank him for having made possible this voyage of Orlemanski to Moscow.

Orlemanski, intoxicated with his success, hastened to give a press conference on his return to the USA (May 12, 1944). He described how Stalin had treated him in an «open and democratic» manner, that he had «spoken with him man to man», that he had been able to explain to him the importance of the religious question and that Stalin had declared himself ready to collaborate with the Pope «in the struggle against oppression and persecution of the Catholic Church», for «as a defender of freedom of conscience and religion», he judged a policy of persecution «inadmissible». With surprising promptness, *Pravda* repeated these

declarations of Orlemanski on May 14, giving them an official character.²⁷⁰ *The New York Times* had reported the event on May 13, and «Roosevelt himself considered receiving Father Orlemanski at the White House. Cordell Hull had to use a great deal of effort to dissuade him from taking this initiative.»²⁷¹

No doubt the trap had been too obvious for Rome. Orlemanski had undertaken these negotiations without any permission. He was punished with “suspension *a divinis*” by his bishop, who promptly sent him to a convent to do penance for his extravagances. But Stalin was no fool. His deceitful declarations had found in the West a public eager to listen and take him at his word. As gross as they were, these repeated lies contributed to creating the atmosphere of infatuation for the Soviet allies which reigned in Europe and America for the final months of the war. These few months allowed the Bolshevik bear to extend its paws over a dozen nations, without it occurring to the Allies to oppose it... In May of 1944, the future of Europe was about to be decided. Through the Allies’ fault, it was in Moscow’s favour.

MAY 13, 1944: A FRUITLESS VICTORY. On May 13, 1944, at Garigliano, the fourteenth German Army of Von Mackensen was defeated by General Juin’s African Army. Three weeks later, Allied troops were able to enter Rome.

This magnificent French victory opened up new strategic possibilities to the Allies which General Juin proposed be exploited as early as possible. It was sufficient to continue the offensive through northern Italy and to cross the Brenner to penetrate into Austria up to Vienna and before long into southern Germany, and finally even to Dresden and the Elbe valley, This ingenious plan had three advantages: it would shorten the duration of the war, spare France, and above all allow the Allies to occupy Vienna and Berlin well before the Russians. It was rejected by Churchill, Roosevelt and de Gaulle who did not want to upset their great friend, Stalin. Hence on July 22, 1944, the French expeditionary corps was dissolved and the victory in Italy was not exploited.²⁷² This gives an idea of the extent to which Stalin was the sovereign master of the war after the disastrous Tehran accords, directing operations to the sole profit of the Soviet Union. The horrible drama of the Warsaw insurrection was about to furnish a new proof...

AUGUST 1 - OCTOBER 2, 1944: STALIN ORGANIZES THE MASSACRE OF 250,000 POLES. First of all, we give the version found in the official history – that of our manuals and encyclopaedias – no doubt reviewed and corrected by the services of the KGB, so discreet and complacent is it regarding Stalin’s crimes: «The insurrection unleashed at Warsaw by General Bor Komorowski, head of *Armia Krajowa*, *criticized and assisted hardly at all by the USSR (sic!)*, was crushed after two months of terrible fighting (August-September 1944), which aggravated even more the disagreements between the communists and the London government.»²⁷³ Now, here is the horrible truth which it is important to make known to show how odious, inhuman, and satanic communism is.²⁷⁴

On July 31, 1944, Red Army troops were just outside Praga, a suburb of Warsaw on the right bank of the Vistula. The Polish capital was on the left bank, just a few hundred yards

away. The roar of nearby Russian artillery made the city walls tremble. For ten days, almost every night Soviet planes had come to bomb the German positions in the capital. General Bor, leader of the clandestine units of the Polish Army depending on the government in exile, was convinced that the Russians, who were so close, were about to attack the city at any moment. Besides, on July 29, at 8:15 p.m. Radio Moscow had broadcast a call to arms in Polish: «Poles! The hour of liberation is approaching! Poles, to arms! Make each Polish household a fortress in the struggle against the invader! There is not a moment to lose.»²⁷⁵ On the following day, the leaders of the Polish government in London could hear a similar appeal, also coming from Moscow: «... For Warsaw, which has never abdicated or given up the battle, the hour for action has struck...»²⁷⁶ Word also came on July 31 that Polish Prime Minister Mikolajczyk, after arriving at Moscow, was received by Stalin.

«The radio appeal was so clear, the Russian army so close, Mikolajczyk's visit so comforting» (Bliss Lane), that General Bor, in agreement with his government, ordered his forces within the country to attack without delay. Would not this active participation in the imminent liberation of the capital be an important trump card for nationalist Poland in the ensuing peace talks? The Poles could not imagine that Stalin could be diabolical enough to set a deadly trap for the entire population of Warsaw, which like him, was fighting the same German enemy. Yet this is what happened. When the insurrection broke out, the Reds stopped their offensive at the city gates, and their planes stopped flying over Warsaw.

In spite of everything, the uprising seemed to have the advantage the first week. But before long, the German Army turned all its might and fury against the insurgents. A grim and desperate battle began. The Poles were suffering from a tragic shortage of weapons and food. On August 8, their Prime Minister, who was still in Moscow, begged Stalin to intervene. Lying through his teeth, Stalin claimed at first that it was only a "tall tale", that there was still no serious proof that a battle was going on at Warsaw!²⁷⁷ Then he promised help from the Red Army... which did not budge. On August 14, the TASS news agency declared that it was inopportune to aid the city, and that it was high time to condemn the useless bloodshed imposed by the Poles (i.e. the government in exile) in London.

On August 22, the women of Warsaw addressed a heartrending appeal to Pope Pius XII through the radio: «... Most Holy Father, nobody comes to our aid. *The Russian armies, which have been at the gates of Warsaw for three weeks, have not advanced a step.* The aid coming to us from Great Britain is insufficient. The world ignores our struggle. God alone is with us...»²⁷⁸

For over forty days and forty nights, the Poles continued to battle heroically, with only the tiny assistance parachuted in by a few British planes departing from distant bases. For the British planes had a limited range which made coming and returning extremely perilous. For the operation to succeed, it would have sufficed if the Allied planes, after dropping their material over Warsaw, had been allowed to land on Russian bases near the capital. Stalin refused. On August 14, Churchill and Roosevelt renewed their request. On the 16th there was a new refusal.²⁷⁹ In September, when the insurrection was virtually crushed, the USSR authorized a few planes to land.

It was too late. For lack of provisions, the insurrection ended on October 3, 1944. The Red Army stood around Warsaw from September to mid-January, 1945. During these four long months, the Germans had the time to avenge themselves, burning and destroying the city street by street and house by house. Stalin's plan had succeeded perfectly. The Polish government in London was discredited. The Polish Army inside the country had been decapitated. In other words, Moscow's henchmen, who had been ordered to set up a communist government, no longer had any enemy to fear. As the American ambassador to Poland concludes: «The unbelievable betrayal was complete. What did it matter to its authors that a great city was in ashes and that 250,000 inhabitants had been massacred? They had achieved their ends.»²⁸⁰

V. THE CHURCH'S GREAT TRIAL (JUNE - DECEMBER 1944)

Meanwhile, Allied progress continued on all fronts. On June 4, 1944, they made their entry into Rome. On the following day, Pius XII received General Juin, who brought a message from General de Gaulle. On June 8, he welcomed General Clark, commander of Allied forces in Italy. On the 19th, he thought it good to send a telegram to Roosevelt to affirm the close connection between the ideals of Christendom and those of American democracy. Unfortunately, President Roosevelt's ideals were those of his Judeo-Masonic and crypto-communist entourage! On the same day, June 19, Myron Taylor arrived in Rome where he tried to get the Vatican's Ostpolitik going once more.²⁸¹

THE "LIBERATION", THE PURGE, AND COMPLICITY WITH MOSCOW

PIUS XII AND THE LIBERATORS. On June 30, Pius XII received General de Gaulle. The Gaullist clan solidly implanted in the Vatican obtained this audience while the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Valerio Valeri, was still at Vichy with Marshal Pétain. «The Sovereign Pontiff spoke especially of Europe's future to General de Gaulle. He feared that communism would soon represent a very grave danger for Christian Europe. To parry the threat the Pope desired a close union of European states inspired by Catholicism: Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Portugal.»²⁸² The Pope was equally insistent on another point, on which the future of France was to depend. «"General, your duty is to come to an understanding with the Marshal." De Gaulle responded: "That would be contrary to my honour." To which Pius XII retorted: "General, one must not confuse honour with self-love."»²⁸³ Clearly, if the Resistance leader had thought of the good of the Church and France for a single instant, he would have made efforts to follow the two counsels Pius XII gave him. He obstinately followed a completely different policy, a policy of extensive purges within the country and cold hostility to Catholic Spain and Portugal, in scandalous contrast with the enthusiastic alliance concluded with the USSR.

THE PURGE, A CRIME AGAINST FRANCE AND AGAINST THE CHURCH. In 1943, a declaration was made within de Gaulle's entourage: «France must undergo a purge such as

no country has ever known at any time.»²⁸⁴ This sinister project was implacably brought to pass by the Christian Democrats, to whom the communists and socialists had left their dirty work. France numbered no less than 100,000 innocent victims, condemned for the sole “fault” of having loyally obeyed the legitimate government of France. Besides, they were in perfect conformity with the wise and firm directives of the French episcopate and Pius XII himself.

This crime against France, which in this way was deprived of an elite most dedicated to the country’s good, doubled as a crime against the Church. The so-called liberators had also decided to purge it before reducing it to utter servitude. General de Gaulle was demanding from Rome the recall of nuncio Valerio Valeri and the replacement of twenty bishops! Pius XII gave way in the case of the nuncio, whom he replaced with Archbishop Roncalli, and stood firm for the bishops of France.²⁸⁵ Still, the blackmail in the purge of the episcopate had had its effect. The bishops, who themselves were threatened, were silent while the blood of Frenchmen and Catholics flowed profusely and the prisons filled with innocent people. There was no episcopal voice to denounce the scandalous injustices of the Christian Democrats in power, as there should have been. Rome, too, was silent.

THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, PAVING THE WAY FOR COMMUNISM. Meanwhile, Stalin invited General de Gaulle to Moscow. De Gaulle arrived there on December 1, accompanied by Georges Bidault. On December 10 they signed, in the name of France, a treaty of alliance and mutual assistance with the USSR. One would have to read the newspapers of that time to have an idea of the unbelievable euphoria and blindness which held sway at the time. Here is how the Christian Democrat, Georges Bidault, presented the great diplomatic success of his career, this “marriage of love” between Paris and Moscow: «People understand and feel that France, in this affair, has done something other than a marriage of convenience... This is why General de Gaulle and Marshal Stalin, France and the Soviet Union, easily found an accord, etc.»²⁸⁶

This was the era when one could read in *La Croix*, under the pen of Father Merklen, the following lines: «*Honour to the Russians*, who had an essential part in the trials and combats. Whether they were aware of it or not, *they rendered a service of the highest order* not only to France and to Europe, but to religion and the Church, a service which history can never forget, etc.»²⁸⁷

This was the period when Maurice Schumann wrote in *L’Aube*, the Christian Democrat daily:

«At the moment when the victorious army of the continent’s greatest power – to which the new France is bound by an alliance of at least twenty years – comes closer to its triumph and, at the same time, to the West, nobody any more asks the question which once weighed heavily upon the coalition: “*Does Russia want to Bolshevize Europe?*” For the question is now decided, not only by gestures like the dissolving of the Comintern, but by the facts.

«The Soviet armies have already liberated, in whole or in part, several countries between Germany and the USSR. *Yet in none of these countries, where Russian influence is*

*predominant or rather exclusive, has this influence taken the form of Leninist or even Stalinist communism.»*²⁸⁸

This author goes on to give as wonderful, unquestionable proofs of great Marshal Stalin's obvious goodwill the two examples of Hungary and Poland! In this way, the Christian Democrats all over Europe were blindly, and criminally, paving the way for communism.

SUBVERSION IN THE CHURCH. There was something even more grave. The subversion entered the very heart of the Church, particularly in France. The "Red Christians" of the prewar era, who at that time were a negligible minority, drew the maximum profit from their involvement in the Resistance on the side of the socialists and communists. Against the hierarchy, which had remained faithful to Marshal Pétain to the very end, they had chosen the good camp, the victorious one. They were on the side of the victors, on the side of the men in power, and their influence – and their responsibility! – was multiplied tenfold by a single blow. While the purge eliminated the Catholics of the right, confiscating their journals, it cleared the way for these "progressive Christians", who were making the winds of reform and revolution blow over the Church. Meanwhile, the «higher clergy, terrorized by a handful of politicians who wielded a permanent blackmail over it... let these black sheep contaminate the flock.»²⁸⁹

At Rome, it must be said that Pius XII arguably lacked the supernatural foresight and firmness he would have needed to stand up resolutely, heroically, to this obsession for Liberty, the rights of Man and Democracy – which was euphorically expected to bring peace and happiness to the entire world. He could not see that this was the transparent manoeuvre of the occult forces of Masonry and communism. These forces were extolling the democratic utopias to better fight – or in the name of this misleading ideal, prevent from being revived – the only strong governments capable of resisting them.

THE FINAL SECRET OF FATIMA, DIVINE LIGHT FOR THIS TROUBLED ERA?

Before we show the disastrous effects for the Church of these tragic months following the "liberation", we must return to Fatima or rather to Tuy. There Heaven's messenger, a few months earlier, seemed to be supernaturally warned of the grave pitfalls the Holy Father would have to overcome. In May 1944, she wrote:

«I think a great deal of the Holy Father; I have a great deal of pain on the subject of His Holiness; I offer my poor prayers and sacrifices for him. And Spain! I have spoken with the Archbishop of Valladolid, but there are so many difficulties» (to accomplish Our Lord's requests with exactness!)²⁹⁰

Before long, when her director, the Bishop of Gurza who was a friend of Pius XII, was preparing to go to Rome, she desired to do more. Sister Lucy was bold enough to write to him:

«If the Holy Father questions you about me and about what I would like to tell him, you can answer that it would please me to speak to His Holiness concerning the consecration of Russia and regarding the bishops of Spain.»²⁹¹

This proposition is not astonishing for us. The project was not an idle dream. Sister Lucy was not yet cloistered, and the Dorotheans had frequent contacts between their houses in Spain and Portugal and the general house in Rome.²⁹² Did she desire to insist with the Pope on the danger of Bolshevik expansion prophesied by Our Lady? Undoubtedly. Probably she desired also, and above all, to speak to the Pope about an even graver subject: the third Secret, which Our Lady had asked her to write down in her apparition of January 2, 1944. The text had still not been given to Bishop da Silva. Besides, the bishop had decided not to read it.

We have seen that the third Secret was offered to the Holy Office. In other words, Sister Lucy would have been happy if the Pope had become aware of this terrible warning right away. True, we know through other sources that the third Secret was not intended for the Pope in the sense that it was explicitly and exclusively addressed to him. Still, it is clear that because it concerns the salvation of the world and the Church, it concerns the Pope more than any other person. If Pius XII had seen it at that moment, as Sister Lucy undoubtedly desired, he surely would have found light and strength from on high. This light and strength would have allowed him to resist, victoriously, the great current of revolutionary errors – «Russia will spread its errors», Our Lady had announced – which swept over the Church like a great storm in these troubled years 1944-1945.²⁹³ Unfortunately, the project was not to be. For the time being, Our Lady's great prophetic message remained useless, buried in the safe at the chancery of Leiria. Meanwhile, at Rome, the Sovereign Pontiff was hearing advice other than that given by the Mother of Good Counsel.

THE RADIO MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS 1944: PIUS XII BEFORE THE UTOPIAN AND REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY

This was the period when the Kremlin's propaganda, spread by all movements issuing from the Resistance, was summarized in three points: 1. The Fascist and Nazi dictatorships were alone responsible for the war. 2. The democratic government of the Soviet Union has always been fundamentally peaceful, and seeks to promote peace. 3. To guarantee this peace, we must be armed against the Fascist peril by establishing democracy everywhere.

Instead of denouncing these lies, whose deadly effects the future was about to show, Pius XII saw fit to solemnly "baptize" this "democracy" which everybody was demanding as something obligatory. While in his discourse to the Sacred College, the Pope evoked the dangers of Marxist errors²⁹⁴ in vague and mysterious terms, this same day, December 24, 1944, he delivered a "radio message on democracy" to the entire world. It is a blot on the collection of his pontifical discourses,²⁹⁵ notably different from the rest of his discourses by its strangely naturalistic vision of the war, as well as its disconcerting optimism.²⁹⁶

A NATURALISTIC VISION OF THE WAR. The radio message is silent on the bid for hegemony by Stalinist communism, allied to Hitler's pan-Germanism, which were both fundamentally anti-Christ. It is silent on the blind pacifism of the liberal democracies, soon to be followed by a furious and equally senseless thirst for war. The democracies too were manoeuvred by an anti-Christ power, the Judeo-Protestant and Masonic plutocracy.

More curiously, in this radio message, war no longer appears as the terrible chastisement for an apostate humanity rebelling against its God, as it is depicted in so many other discourses of Pius XII. Nor does peace appear as a miraculous gift from Heaven, graciously granted through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin. What then are the causes of the World War? The cause is simple. It is dictatorship, the lack of democracy:

«The troubled multitudes, shaken in their deepest convictions by the war, have today acquired the inner persuasion – once perhaps vague and confused, but now unshakeable – that if there had been a possibility of controlling and correcting the activity of the public authorities, the world would not have been led into the disastrous whirlwind of war, and that to avoid a similar catastrophe being repeated in the future, effective guarantees must be created within the people itself.

«In this state of mind, should we be astonished that the democratic tendency is spreading among the peoples and is widely obtaining the support and consent of those who desire to collaborate more effectively in the destiny of individuals and society?»²⁹⁷

A DISCONCERTING OPTIMISM. In effect, at the end of this war, «a dawn of hope is arising», the universal aspiration for «a profound renewal», for «a total reorganization of the world» according to the democratic ideal.

In the wake of the war, «the peoples awoke from a long torpor. Before the State and their rulers, they took on a new attitude, a questioning, critical, defiant attitude. Taught by bitter experience, they opposed with greater vehemence the monopoly of a dictatorial, uncontrollable and untouchable power, and they demand a system of government more compatible with the dignity and liberty of citizens.»²⁹⁸

«At a time when peoples are facing their duties as perhaps they never have at the turning points of their history, they feel welling up in their tormented hearts the impatient and as it were innate desire to take their own destiny into their hands with greater autonomy than in the past; in this way, they hope to defend themselves more easily against the periodic eruptions of the spirit of violence which, like a torrent of incandescent lava, spare nothing of what is dear and sacred to them.»²⁹⁹

The Pope attempts to lay the foundations, to “baptize” this aspiration for «more democracy and a better democracy», an inspiration considered – without any further examination! – as a fact of universal experience, and in addition, fundamentally good!

The continuation of the pontifical radio message is strangely reminiscent of the utopias of Marc Sangnier, condemned by Saint Pius X in his magisterial “Letter on the Sillon”. To reach

«a truly sound and balanced democracy», it is simply required that “the people” not be a passive, inert “mass” in the hands of individuals who exploit its passions, but “a true people”, “conscious of its own responsibilities” and having “the true understanding of the common good”. It would also be necessary that the deputies perfectly represented the entire people, and that all be endowed with intellectual and moral qualities and eminent Christian virtues. As for world peace, it would be guaranteed by a democratization of international life, in the framework of an all-powerful United Nations which would not embrace any injustice, or infringe on any right to the detriment of any people... The Pope concludes: *«If the future belongs to democracy, a prominent role in putting it into practice must be given to the religion of Christ and the Church.»*³⁰⁰

It goes without saying that the elements of pure Catholic doctrine scattered throughout this radio message (for example, the reminder that all power comes from God and must be exercised according to His law), pass unnoticed and remain ineffectual. One can only see in this text a pontifical blessing graciously accorded to existing democracies and the Christian Democratic parties recently brought to power in France and Italy: a cordial *entente* with the Masons, communists, and socialists of every description.

In any case, the year 1945 was unfortunately about to furnish the cruellest denial, the most concrete and tragic refutation of this ill-fated discourse. It was marred by blind optimism and was silent on the most crying injustices as well as the most fearsome perils of the hour. Far from being a solution to save the Church and Christendom, the democratic ideology, cleverly utilized by Stalin’s propaganda, was to be the most effective instrument of the Bolshevik revolution’s world-wide expansion.

VI. 1945: THE DEMOCRACIES: STALIN’S ACCOMPLICES FOR THE GREAT CRIMES OF THE WAR

Although Roosevelt could work no more than four hours a day due to old age and illness, he nevertheless decided to run for President once more in 1944. The clan which had been using him since 1932 did not want to abandon the White House when victory was in sight! So on January 20, 1945, for the fourth time he took the oath of office as President. O democracy!

FEBRUARY 4-11, 1945: THE YALTA CONFERENCE. The Yalta conference, where Roosevelt was already gravely ill, had not studied any of the dossiers and was ready to make every possible concession, unquestionably marked the war’s most tragic and shameful hour. Of course, no representative of the Vatican was admitted there. Without a regular mandate, without consulting anyone except the few advisors who accompanied him – and who were emissaries of Stalin, it was later learned! – Roosevelt secretly signed the extremely important accords, in which the world’s future hung in the balance.

Let us recall them in a few words: Stalin annexed the Baltic countries (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania) and the whole eastern part of Poland. All of eastern and central Europe was also

given over to him, with this hypocritical clause: Stalin was given the responsibility of seeing that democratic governments were set up there – loyal friends of Soviet Russia!

Among other things, by a particularly odious clause, the Allies promised to deliver over to Stalin's reprisals all the anti-communist nationals of Russia and its satellite countries.

«Hundreds of thousands of Russians, Cossacks, Tatars and Caucasians were thus sacrificed (Solzhenitsyn writes). They were not allowed to go over to the Americans; they were delivered over to repression and the executioner's post in the USSR.

«Even more stupefying: the English and American armies delivered over to communist repression hundreds of thousands of peaceful inhabitants, former prisoners of war or work deportees. They were delivered by force, in spite of the suicides committed under (the officers') eyes. The English detachments even made use of their weapons, slashing and cutting to pieces these men who refused – one wonders why – to return to their country. But what is even more stupefying – not only did the Americans and British officers receive neither blame nor sanction, but the free, proud, independent Anglo-Saxon press ingenuously passed over in silence this felony of its rulers for over thirty years...

«One had to believe at the time that there was every advantage in concluding an eternal peace with the communists, paying for it with a million or two stupid victims.»³⁰¹

Thus in the name of the democratic alliance, 2,800,000 refugees were delivered by force to communist reprisals: 800,000 were executed on the spot. 1,500,000 were deported to Siberia.³⁰²

THE FIREBOMBING OF DRESDEN (FEBRUARY 13-14, 1945). Stalin had demanded another slaughter, which our accommodating democrats hastened to grant him shortly after Yalta. In 1945, the city of Dresden numbered over 500,000 inhabitants. A rumour had been started (by whom?) that an accord had been concluded between the belligerents to spare Dresden and Oxford. Before long, hundreds of thousands of refugees from Eastern Europe who had fled before the Red Army had settled, as best they could, in the great German city, which was still unharmed: «Since the beginning of the Soviet offensive of January 1945, millions of refugees were leaving the eastern provinces of Germany for the centre of the country. In a few days, at Dresden there were over 500,000 camping out in the streets or sleeping under the straw roofs of immense refugee centres... Dresden, this Florence of the Elbe, drew them like a magnet and they were to cause its ruin, for *they constituted the true objective of the great attack.*»³⁰³

The fact is now beyond question. Dresden was neither an industrial city nor a centre for the gathering of German troops. There was no munitions plant; military men observed as much. Yet, on the orders of Churchill himself, on the night of February 13-14, 1945, British and American forces began bombing the city. The catastrophe was frightful. The city was to a great extent destroyed. All the churches were burned. There were close to 135,000 dead and as many wounded.

The following day, February 14, 1945, the BBC broadcast this official declaration of the British government: «In the course of the preceding night and this morning, British and American bombers dealt, at the centre of Germany, *the powerful blows promised by the Allied leaders to the Russians at Yalta.*»³⁰⁴ In vain was this detail removed from all later bulletins. It is certain that Churchill ordered the operation at Stalin's request, for the sole purpose of exterminating several tens of thousands of anti-Bolshevik refugees.

«From the military point of view, this attack against Dresden constituted veritable nonsense.» The only two objectives that presented some strategic interest were not even given priority: the marshalling yard was barely hit, and the railway bridge over the Elbe remained intact. «Three days after the attack, the two-way traffic functioned as perfectly as before.» But on the morning of February 14, after the two waves of night-time bombing, as tens of thousands of survivors rushed out of the burning city, a third attack was unleashed at noon. The columns of fugitives had been assigned as objectives to the pilots.³⁰⁵

THE FAR EAST DELIVERED TO COMMUNISM. Roosevelt was not content to shamefully deliver nearly two million anti-communist refugees to Stalin's reprisals, and at the same time abandon all of central Europe to him, leaving Stalin the responsibility of instituting democratic states there. Once more, in the name of this same democracy, Roosevelt was about to offer the Soviets immense regions of the Far East, and provoke a new slaughter which was as criminal as it was useless.

«Two days before his departure for Yalta, he had received a forty page message from General MacArthur passing on a Japanese surrender proposal, an offer so generous that it included the surrender of Japanese forces, the occupation of all islands, the abandonment of Manchuria, Korea and Formosa, control of industry and the handing over of those whom the Americans might consider war criminals. Only one request was formulated: that the emperor keep his throne.

«It was unexpected. President Roosevelt brushed off this proposition, saying: MacArthur is our greatest general and our poorest politician.»³⁰⁶

This was the first unpardonable crime. It was followed by a second inexplicable error: Roosevelt was convinced that he needed the Russians to defeat the Japanese. This was entirely in line with the Kremlin's plans. Stalin therefore promised to enter the war against Japan three months after the German surrender. In return for his promise, he managed to get the most advantageous concessions for communist expansion in the Far East.

In effect, Roosevelt gave him Manchuria (once promised to Chiang Kai-shek), inner Mongolia, North Korea, the Kurile Islands and the southern part of Sakhalin. For practical purposes Chiang Kai-shek had been sacrificed and China placed in communist hands. In addition, the Americans furnished the Russians with gasoline, means of transport, equipment for 1,250,000 men, 3,000 tanks and 5,000 planes! After Yalta, on his return to his headquarters, Stalin was able to boast of having obtained everything he desired.³⁰⁷

Roosevelt died on April 22, 1945, before having a chance to see all the disastrous effects of his policy of appeasing Moscow. One day, he had summarized this policy in a sentence: «If we give Stalin everything we can, without demanding anything in return, he will not seek to acquire more and will work loyally with us for peace and democracy.»³⁰⁸

THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE (JULY 17 - AUGUST 2, 1945): 100,000 VICTIMS... OF DEMOCRACY. The Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact had not yet been broken, when during the Potsdam conference, which included Truman, Stalin and Churchill, the Japanese government proposed to send Prince Konoe to Moscow to open peace talks. Stalin informed Truman and Churchill of the Japanese proposition, explaining that it did not contain what the Allies were waiting for, i.e. unconditional surrender. Once more they rallied to Stalin's opinion, and the proposition was rejected.³⁰⁹ The tragic results are well known.

On August 6, the Americans dropped their atomic bomb on Hiroshima: 72,000 dead, 80,000 wounded. After this disaster, Japan once more offered to surrender, on the sole condition that the emperor's rights be respected. In the name of sacrosanct democracy, the Americans refused once more and decided to drop a second atomic bomb on the country.³¹⁰ At Churchill's request, Kyoto was spared because of its artistic treasures. And, as if by chance, it was Nagasaki, the flower of Japanese Christendom and Catholicism which was chosen as the target of the second bombing, on August 9: 26,000 dead, 40,000 wounded.

To crown the blindness, although Truman had decided at the end of July to finish off Japan with the atomic bomb, he stubbornly insisted to the very end on imploring Soviet assistance in the Far East, according to the plan set up at Yalta! Stalin had promised to intervene towards the middle or end of August.

To keep from missing out on the fruits of the victory, on August 8, two days after Hiroshima, the Kremlin declared war on Japan, which surrendered on August 14. Nevertheless, the Red Army continued its offensive until August 23, occupying in succession all the key points of Manchuria and North Korea down to the 38th parallel. «Stalin meticulously stocked all the weapons abandoned by the Japanese and gave them to Mao Tse-tung, who could offer himself the luxury of conquering China which Chiang Kai-shek, guilty of having refused unity with the communists, was incapable of defending, since all arms shipments to him had been suspended between August 1945 and 1947, then resumed at a ludicrous pace the following years.»³¹¹

In reality, «the Potsdam conference was a diplomatic triumph for the Soviets, surpassing that of Yalta.»³¹² The terrifying bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, instead of intimidating Stalin as the Americans anticipated, seemed on the contrary to fill him with ease. When Truman informed Stalin of his project at Potsdam on July 26, to the great surprise of his interlocutor, Stalin «began smiling a happy smile», as Churchill related. Leahy, who was also watching from a distance, noted the same happy expression... "Very good", he answered the American without manifesting the slightest surprise, "make good use of it against Japan."³¹³ Stalin was right: the atomic bombings allowed him to harvest the

fruits of victory in the Far East after a campaign of only three months! Then also, after the crimes of Nazism, Bolshevik propaganda would now have this capitalist crime to denounce unceasingly! As for the atomic bomb itself, the Kremlin boss knew that his espionage services were closely following the affair, and before long would be bringing the ultimate secrets of the bomb back from the West!³¹⁴ In short, the Soviets were gaining in all areas. It must be said that the American democracy had been facilitating their task for many years.

THE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY IN SOVIET HANDS. «On November 2, 1945, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover sent the White House an important report formally accusing a dozen state officials of having furnished Soviet agents with classified information; in particular Harry Dexter White...»³¹⁵

After this moment, the hidden secrets of Roosevelt's disastrous policy began to be discovered... In fact, since June 1941, the USSR had almost enjoyed *carte blanche* in the United States, and the network of Russian spies had suddenly grown immensely. For almost the entire duration of the war, thefts from American industry knew almost no limits. Stalin explained to his agents, «Presently we have an unexpected opportunity which we must take advantage of quickly and in all areas, to quickly bring our industry to a level at least as high as the Americans.»³¹⁶ And Kravchenko reports in his memoirs, «It was by the thousands that Soviet agents of all types worked in the United States»... Even at the highest levels.

Even Roosevelt's personal advisors... were agents of Stalin! At Yalta, the two principal American experts with the ailing president «knew what they had to do. They had been well prepared, but by a government other than that of the United States, by the Soviet Republic.»³¹⁷ Harry Dexter White and Alger Hiss were both agents of the Kremlin.³¹⁸

Roosevelt had long been deaf to all warnings, allowing his whole administration to be infiltrated by communists: they were in the press, the radio, and even in the State Department, where 203 employees had to be dismissed in 1947 due to espionage.³¹⁹ In 1953, the Justice Department revealed that there were 766 espionage cases pending.³²⁰

Still, it took years for the truth to leak out. The scandal which had been denounced in 1945 did not break until 1948. Meanwhile Stalin had his hands free to set up, in all territories occupied by the Red Army – always in the name of sacrosanct democracy! – communist governments, who enslaved their peoples, persecuted religion, and in any case were dominated by the Kremlin.

VII. TOWARDS THE BOLSHEVIZATION OF EUROPE?

In 1939 the USSR was still the only communist state in the world, and Stalin was reeling from a crushing defeat in Spain, where the Catholic Crusade had come away with a hard but striking victory over the Reds. Six years later, after this tragic war, undoubtedly the most disastrous war in history, several nations were erased from the map, absorbed by the Soviet empire, a dozen countries entered Moscow's orbit and retained only the appearance

of liberty, while others were agitated by internal wars or gravely threatened by communist subversion. The prophecy of Fatima was being fulfilled to the letter.

THE ANNEXED COUNTRIES

In 1944, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine were occupied once more by the Red Army and shortly after definitively annexed by the USSR. After a few months of tranquillity, the persecution resumed.³²¹

Let us take only the example of Ukraine, which is especially tragic. The project of annihilation of the Catholic Church was sealed by an even closer union and total subjection of the Orthodox Church to the communist government. On April 10, 1945, Patriarch Alexis (recently elected to succeed Sergius) and Metropolitan Nicholas were received by Stalin. The account of this audience, published in the journal of the Patriarchate, shows how far the odious servility of Orthodoxy's leaders to Stalin went:

«It is with a very understandable emotion that we awaited the day of this visit to the great Stalin... Filled with happiness at the sight of him whose name is pronounced with love and veneration, not only in every corner of our country, but in all countries that love liberty and peace, we expressed our gratitude to Josef Vissarianovich... The conversation was that of a father with his children, free of all constraint. Overcome by the joyous emotion of being received by the greatest man of the contemporary period, the brilliant leader of a State with millions of citizens»,³²² etc.

This grandiose account would simply be grotesque if it did not hide the essential object of the conversation between the diabolical persecutor and his apostate accomplices. For, on the day following this interview, there began the most terrible persecution the Ukrainian Catholic Church ever had to suffer. We can do no better here than quote the testimony of Cardinal Slipyi, who for several months had replaced the holy Archbishop, Andrew Sheptytsky, who had died on November 1, 1944. Archbishop Slipyi reports,

«On April 11, 1945, I was arrested with all the other bishops. Less than a year later, over 800 priests had followed us into captivity. From March 8 to 10, 1946, the illegal Synod of Lvov took place. Under atheist pressure it proclaimed the "reunification" of the Ukrainian Catholic Church with Orthodoxy ruled by the Soviet regime. This "reunification", and, by this fact, the official liquidation of our Church, were effected by brute force. The bishops were deported to every corner of the Soviet Union. Almost all of them have died since then, or were killed in captivity. Each one of us must climb his Calvary... I thank the Almighty for having given me the strength to carry this cross for almost eighteen years, and respectfully render my homage to ten colleagues in the episcopate, to over 1,400 priests and 800 religious, to tens of thousands of the Faithful who in captivity sealed, by the sacrifice of their life, their fidelity to the Pope, the Roman Apostolic See and the Universal Church.»³²³

It was also during these years immediately following the war that several priests formed at the Russicum, who had taken advantage of the war to penetrate into Russia, obtained the palm of martyrdom.³²⁴

«God will punish the world for its crimes by means of war, *famine* and persecutions», Our Lady had predicted. In its destructive rage, Bolshevism was not content with persecutions against the Church. Already once before, around 1920, and a second time around 1930, it had cynically planned horrible famines. «In 1947, famine once again struck a large part of the land. It affected regions that had submitted to the German occupation.» According to the usual scheme, collectivization, dekulakization and deportations created innumerable victims in these years of drought and created an atrocious famine. The state mercilessly demanded that the peasants furnish it with exorbitant quantities of grains. In Ukraine, there were cases of cannibalism. «The famine took close to a million human lives.»³²⁵

This was also the period when the Gulag empire was reaching colossal proportions. Inmates condemned to forced labour were numbered by the millions: 8 million according to the lowest estimate, 15 million according to others, 10 million according to the estimate of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which can hardly be suspected of exaggeration!³²⁶

THE SATELLITE COUNTRIES

Contrary to the blind optimism of the Allies, Stalin's project was clearly to "Bolshevize" all territories whose reconquest would be entrusted to him. Hence, one of the Kremlin's major preoccupations had been to extend the Red Army's exclusive zone of action to the maximum. Once more, Roosevelt and Churchill had given way.³²⁷ The consequences of this abandonment were disastrous. After the war, practically all territories controlled by the Red Army fell under Moscow's yoke. The operation was carried out firmly, implacably, but not without cunning and prudence,³²⁸ with more or less violence and rapidity according to local circumstances. Yet everywhere the final solution was identical.

Is it necessary to enumerate these nations, which perhaps Our Lady of Fatima designated, announcing that «various nations will be annihilated»? Torn from their age-old traditions, and from their Church, their society destroyed by the great Bolshevik machine, in effect, these countries are no longer themselves. They are undergoing the worst *alienation* that could possibly exist – the one inflicted by Marxist tyranny.

There is Albania, where the persecution against the Church began in 1945.³²⁹ There is Hungary, with its 7 million Catholics out of 10 million inhabitants, where the apostolic nuncio was expelled in April 1945. On November 1, the prince-primate, Cardinal Mindszenty, felt obliged to denounce, in the name of the country's bishops, the flagrant bad faith of the Church's adversaries who had come into power.³³⁰ There is Poland (22 million Catholics), where in, September 1945, the government decided to break the concordat.³³¹ There is Czechoslovakia, where out of 12 million inhabitants, almost nine million were Catholics.³³² There is Orthodox Romania with its valiant minority of 3 million Eastern Rite

faithful, where the government awaits the favourable hour to perform the same forced integration to the schismatic Church as in Ukraine.³³³ There is Bulgaria, where the Church numbers only 57,000 Faithful.³³⁴ There is Tito's Yugoslavia (still allied to Moscow), where a bloody persecution began in June-July 1945. With courage, Archbishop Stepinac, leader of the country's bishops, denounced communist injustices and atrocities.³³⁵ There is East Germany and Austria, part of whose territory was occupied by the Russians.³³⁶ In the Far East there is North Korea, where General Kim Il-Sung, after arriving in the wagons of Soviet troops, transformed the entire country into a frightful bloodbath.³³⁷

There were other disastrous effects of the Yalta and Potsdam accords: China, with Mao Tse-tung, was in the process of toppling into the communist camp while Moscow fomented the communist insurrection in Vietnam. In Europe, Greece was still shaken by the civil war, and the communist guerrillas were still menacing. The Bolshevik menace, however, was most alarming in Spain.³³⁸

A UNIVERSAL CONSPIRACY AGAINST SPAIN (1944-1947)

In the beginning of 1943, when Sister Lucy made known Our Lord's grave warnings to the bishops of Spain,³³⁹ the possibility of a new danger could not even be foreseen. One year later, events once more confirmed, in a striking way, the message passed on by the Fatima seer.

The first alert came in September 1944. The Reds of Spain, who had taken refuge in France in 1939, soon became involved in the Resistance. They soon proved to be formidable terrorists. With the help of French communists, and the complicity of de Gaulle's government, twelve thousand armed men gathered near the border between Spain and France, notably at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, at Oloron, at Vielle and in the regions of Toulouse and of Pau.

«The invasion began through Col de l'Hospitalet, at the outskirts of Val d'Aran. The attackers penetrated as far as Viella. They were in for a severe disappointment. First of all, Spanish troops were on their guard and blocked their way. The collaboration of the civil population was absolutely lacking to them... the Spanish people desired peace. Far from revolting at the arrival of the "liberators", they did not budge. Certain peasants denounced them to the authorities or themselves fought the republican detachments. General Yague, who commanded the Pyrenean troops, had little trouble capturing or forcing into retreat the unfortunate men who, deceived by their leaders, had thrown themselves into this adventure.»³⁴⁰

However, the grave peril did not lay there. Stalin had a fierce determination to use his victory to demand Franco's downfall from the Allies. As the Sovietologist George F. Kennan soon explained to the American government: «The Russian Communist Party and Soviet secret police were heavily involved in the civil war, much more than in any other country. And they lost... Their resentment is immense and they have no intention of burying the past.»³⁴¹

This much was clear at the Potsdam conference. During the dinner which was to be their first encounter, Stalin wasted no time explaining to Truman what he had most at heart: «Franco is a tyrant... the enemy of the Allies, an impostor, a usurper, a phony, the public enemy, the ogre of Europe. We must get rid of him as early as possible!» An intimidated Truman did not know what to respond.

The Spanish question returned to the order of business on July 21, during the meeting of the Big Three. Churchill was noncommittal, anxious to preserve British commercial interests in Spain. Stalin was furious. He insisted: «“You say you have no sympathy for Franco... Prove it! If we leave here without publicly condemning Franco, what will the peoples of the world say...? *I repeat, Franco’s Spain constitutes a danger for Europe.*” “I agree with you”, Truman interrupted.» Unbelievable!³⁴²

During the conference, Churchill had been replaced by Atlee. Atlee had been a firm supporter of the Reds in the past, and now declared that his comrades, the Spanish republicans, «had to be supported now under Franco’s dictatorial regime.»³⁴³ Stalin prevailed more easily: in the final communiqué of the conference, Spain was not invited to join the United Nations. Why? Because «its government, by reason of its origin (the victorious crusade against Moscow!), its nature (a strong, national and Catholic power!), and its close association with the aggressor states (this is calumny, as Nerin Gun himself admitted!)³⁴⁴ do not justify such a measure».

The Kremlin had succeeded. Banned from the society of nations, Spain was dangerously isolated. Franco had the entire world against him – Stalin and Truman, Atlee and de Gaulle – and subversion was given a free hand. Shortly after Potsdam, «on August 17, 1945, the motley remains of the republican Cortes – a hundred deputies – met at Mexico. The government of the Republic in exile was reorganized.»³⁴⁵ In early February 1946, its leader, José Giral, sought help from Washington. He explained to Dean Acheson:

«“We have at our disposal weapons hidden throughout Spain; guerrillas are ready to intervene, and unions are ready to proclaim a general strike; Spanish refugees who fought with the underground during the civil war are massed at the French border, awaiting our signal. If the pressures of the (other) powers intensifies and if our government is installed in France (Giral continued), Franco will understand that the game is up for him...” Giral concluded: “The army is with us, and eleven generals in exile are waiting to assume command”.»³⁴⁶

Giral then went to Paris, where an important Soviet military mission was supervising the setting up of armed groups, while Georges Bidault was hastening to relaunch the diplomatic offensive against Franco. Shamefully, Christian Democracy placed itself in Moscow’s service, contributing to deliver Catholic Spain over to the bloodthirsty vengeance of the Bolsheviks. One can only imagine what the return of the Reds to Madrid would have been like!

«On February 28, 1946, the French government decided on a severance of communications between France and Spain, the closing of borders and other policy and economic matters.

Simultaneously, Georges Bidault, Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a note to the British, Soviet and American governments which practically demanded an armed intervention of the powers to drive Franco out of Spain.»³⁴⁷

«Franco's present political line – declared the Christian Democrat minister, faithfully echoing Stalin – is a challenge to the principles of international law and democratic ideals, and risks creating a situation which would compromise international peace and security.»³⁴⁸

After this “courageous” act in favour of the democratic cause, G. Bidault received felicitations from the patrons of the Kremlin: «... We are in complete agreement with the French government, and hope for an urgent examination of the question by the U.N. Security Council.»³⁴⁹ Bidault, pressed by Bogomolov, the Soviet ambassador in France, could no longer dare to backpeddle. Thus the preparations for the revolutionary coup in Spain continued with the active complicity of the French government. Let us give only one proof: a Russian ship, the *Klim Vorochilov*, arrived at Marseilles, loaded with arms and munitions for the Reds in Spain. The unloading took place under the protection of French police and customs officials, in the presence of the port authorities and the Soviet ambassador in person. Meanwhile, armed groups multiplied all along the basque frontier, interspersed with Soviet officers,³⁵⁰ while Stalin continued his diplomatic offensive.

Nerin Gun writes, «The Soviets, pulling the strings of their Polish marionette, had a motion presented before the United Nations on April 8, 1946, demanding that the “Spanish question, a threat to peace among the nations” (sic!) be placed on the agenda. The Polish request was accepted, the USA not having dared to oppose it publicly.» The United Nations then named a subcommittee to investigate, and after months of palaver, on December 13, 1946, the General Assembly voted on a motion recommending that its members recall their ambassadors or their ministers posted at Madrid. Alger Hiss, then director of special political affairs at the State Department (and later on tried and convicted as an agent of Stalin), ordered the American delegation to vote against Spain and informed Moscow of his manoeuvre. Indeed, France, the USA and England voted with the USSR and its satellites for the exclusion of Spain from the international community.³⁵¹ Foreign diplomats left Madrid. Only the apostolic nuncio, the Portuguese ambassador and the Swiss ambassador remained at their post.

A MIRACULOUS PROTECTION. Thanks to God and the effective help of Our Lady of Fatima, these ignominious measures against peaceful and Catholic Spain, far from ushering in the expected revolution, produced the opposite effects. The people unanimously replied to this condemnation with striking demonstrations of fidelity to the head of state. Franco had only to recall the persecutions and crimes committed in twelve nations of Europe, who only yesterday had been independent, to denounce the manoeuvre of Moscow, which wanted to make one more satellite out of Spain.

«The situation of the world and its shameful acts (he declared) give still more meaning to our glorious Crusade. We must think of what would have happened without it in these

times which are calamitous for Europe. Let us unite the power of our unity with the great power of our reason. With them and with God's protection, nothing or nobody will be able to subvert our victory.»³⁵²

On July 6, 1946, the law of succession proposed by Franco, which envisaged the future restoration of the monarchy, received the approval of over 92% of the Spanish people. On June 18, 1947, as we have seen, the statue of Our Lady of Fatima was the first to cross the Spanish border.³⁵³ Eight months later on March 2, 1948, G. Bidault himself was forced to ask the legislature to re-open the border. Closing the border had proved useless. On the contrary, the French businesses were the ones who had suffered heavy losses.³⁵⁴ Spain had come away with a new and striking victory over the Kremlin and its many powerful accomplices.

Following Father Alonso, who lived through these events, we are not afraid to recognize in these events a miracle of Our Lady of Fatima's protection. In the conclusion of his work, *Fatima, Espana, Rusia*, the Spanish expert writes:

«... It is Our Lady who saved Spain from the communist scourge which threatened it "for the second time". In effect, at the end of the Second World War, when the shameful Yalta and Potsdam accords had delivered us inexorably into Russia's hands, this scourge hung over us once more like a fateful sword of Damocles. The leaders of the western bloc worked in a suicidal manner – which happened again so many times in later years – demanding of Spain a democratization. God, through the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, delivered us from this infamous chastisement.»³⁵⁵

Let us add that this miraculous protection is visible, tangible, easily perceptible. How was Spain saved from the Red terror? Unquestionably through its wonderful national unity, which presented no opening, no handle for the manoeuvres of subversion. This is precisely what disturbed Franco's adversaries. It is equally unquestionable that the solid unanimity of the bishops behind the head of state was the guarantee and the soul of the enthusiastic fidelity of an entire people. Imagine what would have happened if a dozen or so bishops – basing themselves, for example, on Pius XII's radio message on democracy – had joined the chorus in the international campaign against Franco! Spain, torn by its internal struggles, would have been lost. This did not happen. The fact is remarkable at a time when so many churchmen, intoxicated by the deleterious current of Christian Democracy, so powerful then, were going around repeating that the Bolshevik danger had disappeared, and dared to denounce «the irrational fear of communism».³⁵⁶ We know the reason for this rare farsightedness of the Spanish bishops: the solemn warning which Sister Lucy had passed on to them from Heaven a few years before. The bishops had received it with the greatest respect.³⁵⁷ They had undertaken «the true reform among the people and the clergy» demanded by Our Lord, and being divinely warned about the terrible scourge threatening them once more, they were able to understand the seriousness of events and react prudently, for the good of the Church and peace of their country. Yes, in all truth we can say that in these postwar years, God miraculously saved Spain from the Bolshevik peril through

the mediation of Our Lady of Fatima and Her humble messenger.

FRANCE ALSO MIRACULOUSLY SAVED?

The fact is not well known, although it cannot be questioned. In 1947, France, in its turn, was seriously threatened by a communist revolution, and was preserved from it.

“MARIANNE AGAINST THE VIRGIN MARY.” Although France too had benefited from Mary’s most motherly protection, she had hardly deserved it. While its tripartite, demo-Christian and socialo-communist government was odiously betraying the West and Christendom, within the country anticlericalism raised its head once more. The “Great Return” of Our Lady of Boulogne, which was still in progress, began encountering violent opposition. The most stubborn opposition came from the communist municipalities of the Paris suburbs. In the provinces it was Freemasonry, revived by de Gaulle during the “Liberation”,³⁵⁸ which strived – very much in vain, for that matter – to create obstacles to the passage of Our Lady, who continued to draw the multitudes to Her path.

At Verdun and Trouville, confronted by this wave of popular piety, “Free Thought” convoked all its troops. It suffered a crushing defeat. At Beauvais, where we quote only this one example among many others, this significant cry was raised: «Lay representatives of all political nuances, freethinkers and their sympathizers, everything the Republic counts as its defenders raised a cry of “let us defend Marianne against the Virgin Mary”.» At Houilles there was the same pressing invitation in the name of the “republican laws”. There too as at Rheims, where the freemasons had managed to gather no more than a dozen or so militants to face a procession of 35,000 people following the Madonna, the fiasco was total. «These Marian Tours, which crisscrossed France in every direction, released such piety, such religious conviction... that an opposition could not hold up.»³⁵⁹

The communists, socialists and Masons in power were well aware of it. Thanks to the cowardly complicity of the Christian Democrats, who were ready for any compromise in exchange for being kept in the government, they did everything possible to see that the experience was not repeated.

FRANCE CLOSED TO OUR LADY OF FATIMA. Departing from the Cova da Iria on May 13, 1947, the statue of Our Lady of Fatima on its way to Holland had triumphantly crossed Portugal and Spain.³⁶⁰ Would She arouse in France the same enthusiasm of the crowds, who were hearing about the marvels of grace and miracles worked by Her in Spain and Portugal? This was the fear at Paris, and a decision was made to keep Her out. Shortly before Her arrival at the frontier of Henday, Canon Barthas reports, «the Catholic daily of Paris had published an announcement that a statue of Our Lady, given to the Pope by Portugal, was crossing Spain, and added that *it was desirable that it return to Italy through the Mediterranean!*»³⁶¹

Why this scandalous exclusion? Think of it! How could the France of G. Bidault venerate an Image coming from Salazar’s Portugal and from this cursed Spain, against which

democratic France had unleashed all the thunder of its diplomatic and economic sanctions! The order was given to the police commissioner at the border post to forbid Our Lady of Fatima's entrance into France.

Barthas writes, «We are certain that the pretext for this prohibition was not only the legal closing of the border, but the fear that the street processions and open-air Masses – which took place during the Great Return of Our Lady of Boulogne the preceding year – *were a sort of preparation for Fascism.*»

Fortunately, as we have said, the fervour of the Basque people prevailed over the Parisian prohibitions and the Virgin of the Cova da Iria was able to enter France all the same.³⁶² At Lourdes and a few other far-between places it was received eagerly. So too at Paris, where She arrived on October 15, 1947. As Canon Barthas reports, «The transport strike did not prevent the Portuguese and Russian Catholics of the capital (who were joined by the Orthodox) to welcome Her on the square in front of Notre Dame.»³⁶³ In the presence of Cardinal Suhard, Father Devineau spoke of the marvels she had just accomplished in Spain.³⁶⁴ The following day She was received at the Russian Catholic Church at rue Francois-Girard, before returning to Belgium.

What a humble, almost ludicrously small triumph, which the kingdom of Mary offered its Queen! It must be added, to the shame of the Church in France, that several bishops refused Her entry into their diocese, while in the entire press the conspiracy of silence was scrupulously respected. Canon Barthas reports, «A command was given to the French press in June 1947... It is not yet opportune to say who was responsible.» Henceforth, *La Croix* did not deign to speak about Fatima any longer, and systematically refused to publish the communiqués Canon Barthas sent on to it.

It was also at this period that Otto Karrer, a German theologian strongly suspected of modernism,³⁶⁵ became an ardent propagandist for Dhanis' theses against Fatima. He wrote a small work entitled *Fatima*, «which circulated notably at the level of the episcopate. A French translation was made for the French episcopate.»³⁶⁶

DECEMBER 1947: "FRANCE IS IN DANGER". In this sad context, there took place what is perhaps Our Lady's most recently dated visit to the land of France. The visit was very humble, very discreet, but extremely salutary for this land in the hour of its greatest peril.

At l'Île-Bouchard, a small suburb of Touraine, not far from Chinon, from the morning of December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception to Sunday, December 14, four little girls reported having seen the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to them in the parish church. It is not within our scope to describe these wonderful events, whose authenticity seems highly probable, although they have not been made the subject of a definitive judgment by the Church.³⁶⁷

Here at least is the essence of the message, repeated several times by Our Lady:

«Tell the little children to pray for France, she is in great need of it.» «Pray for France, which in these days is in great danger.» «I have not come here to work miracles, but to tell you to pray for France.»

The perfect coincidence of these words with the grave events of which the children were surely ignorant, is striking.

TOWARDS A SOVIET-COMMUNIST COUP D'ÉTAT? «Everyone speaks of the “Prague coup” without knowing that another coup had been planned in France before it, or in any case simultaneously, and in the same conditions... In the spring of 1947, everything was prepared.» At that time the Soviets had from 1500 to 2000 agents in their pay, independently of the troops of the French Communist Party and the C.G.T. «Only a very few initiates on the former national staff of the F.T.P.F. were aware of these events, as well as two or three members of the Politburo of the French Communist Party. In all, that amounted to less than ten or twelve communist personalities. Between them and the foreign apparatus in France there were easy liaisons...»³⁶⁸

After the dismissal of the communist ministers in May, preparations continued for a Bolshevik coup using force, during the summer and autumn. Soon the news came that in Poland, on September 22-23, the Cominform, or “Bureau of Communist Information”, had been created. Duclos and Fajon had represented the French Communist Party there.

«Then the strikes began. From Marseilles, Grenoble, Saint-Étienne, and Lyons they gradually extended to Toulouse, Saint-Nazaire, Paris, and then the mining basin of the North, and Pas-de-Calais... The country was soon paralyzed. There were no more transports. There was sabotaging as well. Then armed groups rose up... The hour of the “finishing off” was approaching, when arms were going to do the talking. Veritable insurgent Communist Parties were installed, some in their labour unions, some in the municipalities acquired for the communists, some in secret... A report to the interior minister voiced concern over the effervescence of Spanish “republican” circles in the Toulouse-Pyrenees region, and up to Aude. In all, three million strikers suddenly paralyzed the country.»³⁶⁹

At the end of November, the American ambassador at Paris obtained this private disclosure from his communist source:

«Moscow wants to overthrow the Schuman cabinet. In its place, before the end of the year it wants to install a government completely subservient to itself. Stalin has given a precise order to Maurice Thorez and Georges Dimitrov, whom he summoned to Sotchi, in the Crimea: “Make the Marshall Plan fail!” The general strike in France is organized by a special agent of the NKVD! The communists are going all out.»

Nerin Gun continues: «The alarming information is coming from everywhere. Witness this dispatch (D.S. 850-20-102347) which quotes the declarations made to the American diplomat by General Revers, head of the high command of the French army: “The high

command thinks that the USSR will launch the conflict in the very near future. The tactics of the French Communist Party and the Cominform reinforce our fears ...”

«Jules Moch, Minister of the Interior, a socialist known for his firmness in the repression of subversive strikes and demonstrations, is keeping the ambassador informed of what he is learning through his own sources of information. Thus he confirms that Thorez came back from Moscow with a formal order: “Do everything you can to sabotage the Marshall Plan. American aid to France and Italy must be neutralized. The Party must change its tactics and not be content to act within the law. It must go on to revolutionary action. Stalin is convinced that the United States will not intervene militarily.”»³⁷⁰

A MIRACULOUS PROTECTION? Why, finally, did this skilfully arranged coup d'état fail to materialize? As far as we know, it is for reasons impossible to assess. Was it due to the farsightedness and firmness – completely unexpected on their part – of socialists like Jules Moch, who on March 28, 1948, announced he had uncovered a communist plot? Possibly. According to Nerin Gun, the Soviet “antennas” in the USA apparently informed the Kremlin that President Truman had decided to intervene. But would he really have intervened? Nothing is less certain. In any case, Stalin surely feared this eventuality and backed off, and the communist coup d'état did not happen. This was precisely in December 1947.³⁷¹

We may also believe that God allowed Himself to be moved by the prayers which the little children had addressed to Him in the urgent request of His Mother, who had come once more to Her land of France. No doubt also He was touched by the prayers and praise of the crowds during the Great Return. Perhaps He was also touched, lastly, by the humble but fervent welcome granted a few months earlier to Our Lady of Fatima at Henday, Lourdes and even at Paris in front of Notre Dame by several thousand believers, and some representatives of the French clergy – notwithstanding the Republic's prohibitions and the progressive mafia's directives. Mercifully, a new respite had been granted this land, a new space of time had been given to it for its conversion.

A GREAT DESIGN OF MERCY

It seems that during these pivotal years, the hour of mercy had struck for the entire Church as well. Why? Because Our Lady of Fatima, especially after Her solemn crowning as Queen of the World on May 13, 1946, multiplied Her marvels of grace and mercy – wherever Her Image was received, or wherever it was venerated with trust and love. There was also another reason. At Rome, the Pope was becoming increasingly aware of the danger menacing the Church «in these apocalyptic times».³⁷² He found himself constrained by the very course of events to recognize Fatima as the world's ultimate salvation, and its great hope.³⁷³

All this meant that there was greater reason than ever to hope for the swift implementation of the Queen of Heaven's requests, and the fulfilment of Her wonderful promises: «*In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted and a period of peace will be given to the world.*» Would Pius XII be this

Pope? Would the Holy Year of 1950 mark the dawn of this triumph?

CHAPTER V
THE SEER OF FATIMA
FROM TUY TO THE CARMEL OF COIMBRA
(1942 - 1948)

Fatima, Rome, Moscow. For a moment we must lose sight of these three capitals, where in this turning point of the century, the future of the Church and the world was going to be decided, and return to our seer in the humble city of Tuy. There her soul was completely absorbed by the *angor ecclesiae, by the great concerns of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Who continued to confide in Lucy*. She also had to bear another pain, lead another struggle, a more intimate and secret struggle but a very painful one to perfectly correspond, finally, to her divine and original vocation: to be a Carmelite. But before recalling the difficult paths by which God willed to lead her, we can do no better than quote here from some of her letters from this period. These letters express very well both the secret of her soul and the very heart of the great Secret revealed by Our Lady of Fatima at the Cova da Iria.

THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, OUR FINAL SALVATION

In May 1943, the Bishop of Gurza announced to her the consecration of a parish or a community to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the context does not tell us which. On May 27, the seer answered him:

«I am very grateful and I thank Your Excellency for your letter and the printed matter I received the day before yesterday; I was pleased with them and I thank you for it.»

LOVE IS NOT LOVED. «The news of the consecration they are making over there – with all the details you give me – gave me great pleasure, because it reveals a great deal of love for the Immaculate Heart of our Heavenly Mother who is so good, and through Her, for our Good Lord. They love us so much! What they desire the most is to see Their love known, and to see us correspond to it. This is one of Their common complaints: *“I love, and I am not loved; I manifest Myself, and I am not known; I give and nobody responds (to My advances).”*»

THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY. «I desire very ardently the institution for the Universal Church of an office in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When I stated this request in my letter to the Holy Father, I presented it as a simple desire of my poor heart, and so I felt it to be; but in reality this desire is not only my own; Someone has placed it in me. It comes from the Most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.»

DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY, SALVATION OF SOULS. «They love and desire this cult because They use it to draw souls to Them, and this is Their whole desire: *To save souls, many souls, all souls, salvar almas, muitas almas, todas as almas.*³⁷⁴ Our Lord told me a few days ago: *“I desire very ardently the propagation of the cult and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because this Heart is the magnet which draws souls to Me,*

the fire which makes the rays of My light and My love beam out over the earth, and the inexhaustible well causing the living water of My mercy to gush over the earth.”

«If these communications are certain (I feel that they are, in spite of so many fears), I do not want to prevent them from being communicated to souls. This is why I give them to you. They are not mine; I myself am nothing. Do with them what you feel will be the most useful for the glory of God.

«On the 31st, I will be there in spirit. I ask you to be so good as to bless me.»³⁷⁵

“THE GREAT PROMISE WHICH FILLS ME WITH JOY”. Shortly afterwards, on April 14, 1945, Mother Cunha Matos, Superior of the house at Tuy since October 1944, was getting ready to leave for Fatima. Sister Lucy wrote her this charming letter, where she opens her heart like a daughter and at the same time forcefully expresses the wonderful promise which is the very essence of the message of the Immaculate Virgin at Fatima:

«... I hope that you will not forget me there, over there at the feet of our little Heavenly Mother, and that you will tell Jacinta at length of my tender feelings for her, and how I miss her... Do not think I am sad that I too cannot go there. I offer this sacrifice with pleasure, because with this we save souls and I always remember the great promise which fills me with joy: *“I will never leave you alone. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way which will lead you to God.”*»

«I believe that *this promise is not for me alone*, but for all souls who wish to take refuge in the Heart of their Heavenly Mother, and let themselves be led along the paths traced out by Her... It seems to me that such are the intentions of the Immaculate Heart of Mary: to make this ray of light shine before souls once more, to show them once more this harbour of salvation, always ready to welcome all the shipwrecked of this world...

«As for myself, while I savour the delicious fruits of this beautiful garden, I strive to make access to it easier for souls, so that they satisfy there their hunger and thirst for grace, comfort and help.»³⁷⁶

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE SOURCES: LUCY AT FATIMA (MAY 21-22, 1946)

On May 13, 1946, the extraordinary solemnities of the crowning of Our Lady by the papal legate took place at Fatima. Canon Galamba recalls, «Two short weeks of this glorious series of events and impressions had just gone by, when the news was given to us in a hushed voice: Sister Lucy is coming to visit Fatima, Aljustrel and the Cova da Iria. It was true.»³⁷⁷

ADIEU, SPAIN! On the afternoon of May 16, Sister Lucy had been asked to prepare to leave Valença do Minho to spend the night at l’Asilo Fonseca. On the 17th, she arrived at the college of Sardao, one of the Portuguese houses of the Dorothean Sisters located at Vila

Nova de Gaia, a little south of Porto. On May 20 came the departure for Fatima, in the company of the Reverend Mother Vicar and the Mother Provincial. Arriving at the Cova da Iria at nightfall, the religious had just a little time to pray a bit at the Capelinha and the basilica.

Next morning, when Bishop da Silva arrived, after they exchanged greetings the Mother Provincial told the bishop that the Mother Vicar had decided Sister Lucy was to stay in Portugal. Thus, as she listened to this conversation, the seer learned that she would not return to Tuy. What news!

Sister Lucy attended the bishop's Mass, and afterwards, Canon Galamba's Mass. She took her breakfast with Bishop da Silva, and then had a long conversation with him.³⁷⁸

A WONDERFUL PILGRIMAGE. That afternoon, everyone went to the Cabeço and to Aljustrel, so that Lucy could point out the blessed places where the Angel had appeared. These places still were not known with certainty, because the hill presented many places which could possibly fit the seer's description. Canon Galamba had the privilege of accompanying Sister Lucy on this pilgrimage, the first for her since her departure for Porto in 1921. Here is his description:

«There she was, joyfully stepping across the road to the Loca do Cabeço. The local Superior of the Dorothean Sisters was accompanying her. We followed the short cuts to avoid unhealthy curiosity, or the bothersome attitude of the indiscreet.

«After some long detours, we went up the slope of the Cabeço from the southwest side, stepping over the soft carpet of dry foliage, half rotted by time and covered by a great variety of wild flowers. Sister Lucy loves flowers a great deal and now, led here by Divine Providence to the places of her childhood, she feels like a little girl once more; she begins gathering flowers and making bouquets with the same avidity as of old. We were protected from the sun's heat by the cool shadow of old oak trees and other leafy trees, which cover the slope in part. We felt content at having her present there, although only for a few moments.

«When she arrived at the top, she sat down. Near her was the Superior, and at her side, the other members of the group. This was the place of the first vision of a strange personage who did not reveal himself, but had come in advance to prepare her for the apparition which would be seen not far from there, shortly afterwards.³⁷⁹ She described the past events once more.

«While answering some rather tricky questions, she stressed the objective reality of the apparitions, denying the possibility of a dream or an illusion: "No, I was very much awake, and I saw (the apparition) as I see Your Reverence now." And concerning the Communion at the Loca she insisted once more; "I felt the physical contact of the Sacred Host on my mouth and on my tongue."

«The effort of the walk and the climb, the joy of this long-desired contact with nature, the beauty of the flowers and the panorama, the unspeakable memories of that day long ago, the scenes of old brought back to life, the gentle light of sunset, all give her countenance an unexpected grace. Her soul reflected onto her face a resplendent and transforming light. In her glance there was reflected something indescribably mysterious, luminous, joyous, anxious, an expression of hope and certitude, Heaven and earth mingling and joined together so well that I never saw the like nor shall I see it again. Lucy was different. It is the happy spontaneity of the moment that I publish in this text.

«Then we went around the mountain, and when we approached the place where the Loca was thought to be, spying her actions and her face, we saw her go away without any further explanations: “Wait, I will come right back.” Then she continued walking until she was in sight of Aljustrel. A little while later, she came back and invited us to follow her without stopping there. We found that a little strange, and we asked her a natural question: “The Loca is not here?” “No!” Then she took the pathway she had found, and which no one had walked over since her departure for Porto. We followed her, astonished and curious. Then, for the first time, we contemplated with our eyes the rude stones of the Loca do Cabeço, sanctified by the contact of the Angel of Portugal and made famous by Her apparitions to the three shepherds of Aljustrel, chosen in their humility by Divine Providence to be the protagonists and instruments of the most transcendent and wonderful religious events of modern times.

«Not without profound emotion, we heard her repeat the account, indicating the spot where each of the participants of this great hour was: the Angel and the shepherds. Then she knelt; we too knelt and, in a murmur, we repeated with the seer, with great feeling, the words that the Angel had taught for the first time in this same place. My presence there, in such circumstances and in such company, undoubtedly constitutes a high point of my life. Leaving this blessed place, the heart seems to bleed somehow. The Sister took a little stone with her...³⁸⁰ On the way down, we went through Valinhos and we stopped there a little while...»³⁸¹

Next, they went to Aljustrel. They visited the well where the Angel had appeared in the summer of 1916; then the parish church of Fatima; and finally the cemetery where Jacinta and Francisco’s mortal remains reposed. They then returned to the Cova da Iria, where Sister Lucy was able to watch the film of the jubilee celebrations of 1942. She was also shown the rich crown of Our Lady.



Sister Lucy, during her pilgrimage to Fatima and Aljustrel, May 21-22, 1946.

PIUS XII AND THE THIRD SECRET. The following day, Lucy saw her sisters, Maria dos Anjos, Teresa, Gloria and Carolina. She spoke with Father De Marchi, and late in the morning, with Canon Formigao. Some of the words exchanged at that time are worth reporting. We know about them from the account published shortly afterwards in the review Stella:

«“When do you expect to return to Spain?” “I must leave these places tomorrow *without knowing where I shall go...*”»³⁸²

Then the Canon added these words, which are vitally important for the history of the third Secret:

«It occurred to us that on this occasion the seer might perhaps be called to Rome *to tell the Holy Father, Pius XII, the third part of the Secret of Our Lady of Fatima*, to which she refers in her latest writings.»

Father Martins dos Reis adds this comment:

«Very probably Canon Formigao was not ignorant that *it was, in fact, believed the seer would go to Rome. To this end, even the necessary contacts were begun and facilitated. She herself entertained some hopes of success, which in the end could not be realized.*»³⁸³

THE LONGING FOR CARMEL... AND THE RETURN TO VILA NOVA DE GAIA. From the house of the Dorothean Sisters, Sister Lucy could see the Carmel of Fatima, a bit higher up on the

hill. It had been founded recently, not far from the basilica. In the charming account of her journey she notes:

«Who would have granted me to go to Carmel, which I saw through a window...! But I well knew that this permission would not be granted me... It was more prudent not even to ask for it.»³⁸⁴

After a farewell to the Capelinha, and a stop at Leiria, it was time to return to Porto. They arrived at one o'clock in the morning at Vila Nova de Gaia, at the college of Sardao, where Sister Lucy was to reside for almost two years.

However, her inner resolution had already been made. Under the impulse of grace, she felt moved to request her admission to Carmel. Was this the moment she forwarded her request to the Pope? We do not know with certainty.

A NEW LETTER TO THE POPE. Nevertheless, Vilalta Berbel reports, «in the month of July (1946) Lucy wrote a letter to Pius XII; she certainly manifested to him her desire to see him and speak with him personally. Or did she write to him also to request authorization to be transferred into the cloister of Carmel...?»³⁸⁵

THE VOCATION TO CARMEL

It must not be imagined that this was a sudden whim on the part of our seer. Like Charles de Foucauld, whom God had called to leave La Trappe, Sister Lucy was very happy at Tuy and was loved very much there. Later on she had this to confide to Archbishop Garcia y Garcia, her former director, writing: «I have a lot of nostalgia for the beautiful years spent at Tuy. These are the days awaiting us in Heaven.»³⁸⁶ Her Spanish entourage knew it, to the point where it caused them to be mistaken. Thus «the holy Don Luis Varela, who knew her very intimately», told Father Alonso that «Sister Lucy would never have left the Dorotheans if she had remained at Tuy».³⁸⁷ Might she have left them because of her transfer to the college of Sardao?

This supposition is certainly inexact, for we know through other channels that the question of her vocation was a long and painful calvary for Lucy. It lasted almost twenty-five years. We have described how at Asilo de Vilar, around 1923-1924, she had already seriously considered the Carmelite life.³⁸⁸ However, the superior of the institute, Mother Magalhaes, had dissuaded her from it. Without giving the precise dates, Canon Galamba reveals that she also thought for a moment of joining the new community formed by Canon Formigao, to correspond to the Most Holy Virgin's final requests to Jacinta, during the latter's stay at Lisbon.

«Lucy considered herself called to this work of reparation, and she had practically resolved to enter it. Who intervened to make her change her mind? This is what we do not know, and perhaps only Lucy herself knew, and out of charity did not say.

«Her uncertainty lasted a long time. Why did she not go there? It is not hard to believe that the religious of the new foundation made all the sacrifices possible to have among them the only survivor of the three shepherds of Fatima.» Yet, it did not happen.

With immense modesty and perfect purity of intention, the seer submitted to the authorities on whom she depended: «The religious, the spiritual director and the whole limited group of her relations were unanimous in saying: “A religious? Perfect! But where, if not with the Dorotheans?”» So Sister Lucy entered the postulancy. Canon Galamba writes:

«She continued her immolation and her total self-sacrifice. Like the college of Vilar, the novitiate was a long and intense school of abnegation and humility. Only God knows how many unknown moral sufferings are mingled with the history of these years, so fruitful for the rest of her life. Only God knows well His designs and His plans in what concerns each soul...

«The month of October 1928, when she was to make her first vows, had arrived. She had decided. She would consecrate herself to God in the institute of Saint Dorothy.»

Her trial did not abate at all. Sister Lucy opened up to her superiors, who did not understand:

«For some of these good religious, all this yearning for contemplative life was only a temptation. They were upright souls, well intentioned, but dominated by the idea and the desire of having the seer of Fatima in their congregation.

«An example is given to us by a certain superior, who told her one day: “Listen, my sister, I think that is a temptation. But since I have a great desire to see you with us, and since I have a great deal of love for you, I fear that this may be the reason I think so. It seems to me that the best thing is for you to open up to His Grace the bishop, and follow all his advice.³⁸⁹ If you want to write a sealed letter I give you complete permission, and if you want to speak with him tell me; I myself am ready to ask permission for you to go there; and if you know that such is the will of God, tell me, I am ready to ask for all the authorizations to help you at every step. Still, it will cost me a great deal to convince myself that such is the will of God.”»

As the year 1934 approached, the year when she was to make her perpetual vows, the thought of Carmel once more powerfully imposed itself. In 1933, she writes:

«I have received a letter from Father Aparicio in which he tells me that he will come to Tuy as soon as I return there. *I hope that he will bring me some decision concerning the Carmelites. May God grant that it be for me to go there*, although I am a little afraid because of my health, but I have confidence that if the Good Lord permits it so, He will give me the strength; frail though in reality I am, it also seems to me that I have more the reputation for being so than the privilege.»

Still, Sister Lucy obeyed once more: on October 3, 1934, she pronounced her perpetual vows at Tuy in the presence of Bishop da Silva.³⁹⁰ Canon Galamba continues, «The Lord has prepared her for her life as a Carmelite by innumerable sacrifices, through inaccessible, rocky, and difficult paths. On the last ten years there is nothing to say. It was an arduous and secret struggle.»³⁹¹

Father Alonso notes for his part, «The years 1946-1948, right up to her entrance into the Carmel of Coimbra, were hard trials for Lucy's virtue. She saw that she was almost forced to directly request the Pope for her transfer to Carmel.»³⁹²

THE MESSENGER OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY (1944-1948)

While grace drew her more and more to the silence and solitude of the cloister, Sister Lucy did not therefore forget her mission as messenger of the Immaculate One: «Jesus wishes to use you to make Me known and loved», Our Lady had told her on June 13, 1917.

We have described how, at the beginning of 1944, she had expressed the desire of speaking personally with the Holy Father. Undoubtedly, what she had in mind was to talk about the third Secret, which she had just written down, the warning intended for the bishops of Spain, and the consecration of Russia, which still had to be accomplished according to Our Lady's exact requests. The Bishop of Gurza had to answer her that he could do nothing, there were too many difficulties, etc.

Sister Lucy never rebelled against the authority on which she depended. Still, she did not resign herself to inactivity. On March 2, 1945, she wrote to Father Aparicio:

«I rejoice at the progress which devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is making everywhere. *In the present times, this is what will save us.*

«It would be necessary to greatly intensify prayer and sacrifice for the conversion of Russia. Although the consecration of this nation has not been done in the terms requested by Our Lady, we will see if we will obtain its return to God. I have great hopes, because the Good Lord knows the many difficulties.»

She also knew, however, that in the end everything depended on the decisions of the Pope. Hence she added:

«Over there (Father Aparicio was a missionary in Brazil at the time) do they pray for the Holy Father? It is necessary to pray unceasingly for His Holiness. Days of great affliction and torment still await him.»³⁹³

While awaiting the great salutary decisions which the Pope alone could provide, Sister Lucy discouraged no effort, however small, that went in the same sense as Our Lady's requests. She also rejoiced that priests and the Faithful were taking to heart the conversion of Russia.

Three priests wrote to her on the subject. A French priest, Father Terrier, even came to Tuy personally. Nevertheless, as Sister Lucy explained to Father Aparicio on January 11, 1946:

«I didn't speak to him and I didn't answer the others, which was rather painful for me, since it concerned the conversion of Russia. I was unable to do so because now more than ever, I have rigorous orders for correspondence and visits. That does not astonish me. God's works are always persecuted. The only thing that pains me is that for this purpose, the devil has used a Father of the Society (of Jesus).³⁹⁴ I don't know what things he told the Reverend Mother Provincial. But, the poor man, let us leave him be! I believe he thinks he is doing a good thing.³⁹⁵ The Good Lord will be able to work everything to His own glory.

«As for writing to the Holy Father, who am I? I so recognize my incapacity and unworthiness that I do not dare to do it except out of obedience.»³⁹⁶

«The Good Lord will be able to work everything to His own glory»? In effect, three weeks after the seer wrote these serene words concerning the campaign of critics mounted against her, Father Jongen, a Dutch Montfort Father, arrived at Tuy. He had come expressly to perform his own inquiry on the spot, to respond to Father Dhanis' objections with exactitude. He remained at Tuy on February 3 and 4, and was able to interrogate Sister Lucy at length. The account of this interview was published shortly afterwards in the review *Médiatrice et Reine*.³⁹⁷ It already constituted a serious refutation of the false allegations of Father Dhanis, the adversary of Fatima. Sister Lucy also took advantage of the occasion to firmly recall Our Lady's exact requests concerning Russia.

Three months went by. On May 13, the occasion of the crowning of Our Lady of Fatima, Pius XII pronounced a magnificent radio message. As we have said, it was seriously considered at the time that Lucy go to Rome to speak with the Pope. Unfortunately, this project was abandoned; we do not know why.³⁹⁸ Sister Lucy had to content herself with writing to the Pope. Her letters to the Holy Father were monitored and corrected by her superiors; it just was not the same!

On July 15, the seer once again insisted on the subject of Russia before another questioner, William Thomas Walsh.³⁹⁹ After expressing her pain that the Pope and the bishops still had not obeyed Our Lady, she summarized in one sentence what Our Lady expects of all the Faithful: «The people must recite the Rosary, do penance, receive Communion on five Saturdays in a row, and pray for the Holy Father.»⁴⁰⁰

The few months she spent at Vila Nova de Gaia, at the college of Sardao, were for Sister Lucy a period of intense literary activity and testimony on the apparitions. In the beginning of July 1946, she received Father da Fonseca.⁴⁰¹ At the same moment she answered a long questionnaire sent to her by a Frenchman, J.-J. Goulven.⁴⁰² On August 12, 1946, she received a disalced Carmelite accompanied by John Haffert, the future co-founder of the Blue Army.⁴⁰³ On October 17 and 18, she received Canon Barthas.⁴⁰⁴ She answered new interrogations and corrected several works that she had been requested to reread. In February 1947, she spoke with Father Mac Glynn, who was preparing to sculpt the great

statue of Our Lady for the facade of the basilica. She repeated to him, with insistence, the precise request for the consecration: «No, no! Not the world! Russia, Russia!»⁴⁰⁵

For the solemnities of 1947, the thirtieth anniversary of the apparitions, she requested people to pray especially for this poor Russia. During the solemn Mass on May 13, a beautiful prayer – composed by Miss Irene Posnoff, who was soon to intervene so effectively for the realization of Our Lady’s requests – was recited in Russian, while the text was distributed to the pilgrims in French and Portuguese.⁴⁰⁶ Little by little, then, the truth was coming to light. Fatima was being understood as the world’s great hope, because it was the final recourse to obtain the conversion of Russia from Heaven.

Father A. M. Martins relates that in 1947, somebody had the idea of promoting a campaign of prayers for the conversion of Russia at the national level, and had a few leaflets printed up. A friend of Sister Lucy told her about this campaign and sent her some copies of the leaflets. Sister Lucy answered:

«I am very grateful for Your Excellency’s letter, and the little leaflets you have been good enough to send me; I thank you very much. This pleased me very much, and if this is to be propagated, and you would send me some more, I will have the opportunity to distribute them to some people who will gladly join this campaign of prayers, which is so necessary. Yes, it is necessary to save Russia at the price of prayers and sacrifices. For this purpose, the greater the extent of the campaign, the better it will be.»

This campaign of prayers was intended at the same time to obtain from the Pope the decision for a real consecration of Russia. Indeed it was arranged that in 1948, the Patriarch of Lisbon would offer the Holy Father the large album containing all the promises of prayer and penances made by the faithful, for the conversion of Russia.⁴⁰⁷

Moreover, we know that in this summer of 1947, Sister Lucy again desired to speak to the Holy Father.⁴⁰⁸ She wrote on September 7, 1947:

«As for the request I desired to make of His Holiness, asking for the world-wide day of prayer and reparation for Russia, according to Our Lady’s request...»⁴⁰⁹

MARCH 25, 1948: ENTRANCE INTO CARMEL

On August 27, 1947, the Secretariat of State, in the name of Pope Pius XII, asked the Bishop of Porto to facilitate Sister Lucy’s passage from the congregation of Dorothean Sisters to the order of Carmel. «On this occasion, Pius XII was really a father for her», a relative of the seer recently confided to me.⁴¹⁰ In spite of this personal intervention of Pius XII, the seer’s entrance from Fatima to Carmel was not brought about without stubborn opposition. As Father Alonso reports.

«When her superiors, as well as the Bishop of Leiria, put up the greatest difficulties for this change, Lucy threatened to withdraw to a Carmel of Spain which the Archbishop of

Valladolid had just founded at Tordesillas on June 23, 1945. The decision came like lightning: she would enter the Carmel of Coimbra. In effect, she entered there on March 25, the day of the Annunciation and Holy Thursday of 1948.»[411](#)

Her most cherished desire had been fulfilled: she was finally going to be a Carmelite. If Bishop da Silva was unhappy about it, he had to resign himself to it. He wrote to her:

«I have had the consolation here of knowing that you are in a Carmel I have known since my student life, because I went to the church to celebrate Mass there almost every day. From there, you will go up almost straight to Heaven when Our Lord shall call you.»[412](#)

A few weeks later, on May 13, 1948, the seer of Fatima took the habit of a Carmelite, and received the name of “Sister Mary Lucy of the Immaculate Heart”. She made her one profession, a solemn profession, on May 31, 1949. From then on she was dead to the world, but always just as solicitous to see the Queen of Heaven’s requests accomplished.

SECTION III: The hour of Fatima had sounded once more (1948-1950)

CHAPTER VI
THE HOLY YEAR, A CRUCIAL YEAR
(1948 - 1950)

Fatima's hour had struck once more at the approach of the Holy Year of 1950, just as in 1929 - 1931. As we have shown, the rise of the increasingly menacing Red peril, and in striking contrast, the wonderful rise of the Church – thanks to an intense Marian devotion and the increasing influence of the papacy – rendered the saving decisions easier. Everything was really moving Pius XII to become “the Pope of Fatima” in full. The gathering of an Ecumenical Council at that time would have been the ideal occasion to finally accomplish, with exactitude, all of Our Lady's requests. As we shall see, in February 1948 Pius XII was considering it. He made the decision and promptly ordered the preparatory work to begin.

I. TOWARDS THE TRIUMPH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY?
(1948 - 1949)

THE GREAT MOVEMENT OF MARIAN FERVOUR CONTINUES TO GROW

«From day to day, the cult of the Immaculate Heart of Mary assumes a wonderful development», Pius XII observed with joy on September 19, 1948.⁴¹³ Could anyone have imagined that during the years 1948-1949 alone, no less than eight Marian Congresses would have met? Or that in December 1948 the “Marian Congregations”, pious and apostolic movements intended for the laity, would number 8 million members divided among more than 75,000 groups?⁴¹⁴ It must be said that Pius XII encouraged their development. In his discourses, he also multiplied his references to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Reminding the Polish bishops of the consecration they had just performed, he continued:

«The necessity of receiving one's strength and finding one's refuge in this Sacred Heart appears more pressing than ever today. For our Heavenly Mother does not only shine gently, like the morning star, but She is also this strong Woman who, to avenge the rights of Her Divine Son, has risen up several times in the Church, “terrible as an army set in battle array”.»⁴¹⁵

Nor did Pius XII lose any opportunity to recall the consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary made in 1942, «at the time when all human resources and hopes seemed useless and incapable of settling a conflict of this gravity».⁴¹⁶ He recalled this consecration once more on March 10 to the parish priests of Rome and lenten preachers, and again on April 6.⁴¹⁷ Yet again on May 1, in the encyclical *Auspicia quaedam*, the Pope insists even more:

«We desire that if opportune circumstances suggest it, *this consecration* (to the Immaculate Heart of Mary) *be made in dioceses, as well as in every parish and in families*, and we are

confident that from this private and public consecration heavenly benefits and favours will result in abundance.»⁴¹⁸

Shortly afterwards, the city of Rome was solemnly consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.⁴¹⁹ And while the definition of the dogma of the Assumption was being actively prepared, the white Image of Our Lady of Fatima continued her missionary tour around the world.

MAY 23-30, 1948: A SHOWER OF GRACES OVER THE CAPITAL OF SPAIN

«The most extraordinary apotheosis ever recorded in the annals of Fatima, and certainly one of the most spectacular ones ever given the Most Holy Virgin, took place in Madrid in May 1948». So wrote Father da Fonseca.⁴²⁰

In 1948, Archbishop Eijo y Garay of Madrid was celebrating his twenty-fifth year as a bishop in the capital. Wishing to transform this solemnity into a homage to the Blessed Virgin, he decided to celebrate a Marian Congress during the first nine days of May. He requested Bishop da Silva to lend him the statue venerated at the Cova da Iria, so that it might preside over the sessions. As the Bishop of Leiria refused, Archbishop Eijo y Garay insisted on sending his request through diplomatic channels. At the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, Bishop da Silva granted the favour requested. He even came to take part in the Marian Congress. The Bishop of Gurza and Cardinal Cerejeira also participated.

On May 23, at the gates of Madrid, which then included 800,000 inhabitants, Our Lady of Fatima found a million and a half believers to acclaim Her! It was the greatest gathering in Her honour ever seen. She was carried to the Plaza Major and then to the cathedral, where the Faithful came running to Her feet, day and night.

In the following days, the missionary Virgin visited the suburbs of Madrid. Father Alonso writes that «the people manifested an indefatigable fervour never seen in these quarters, and the graces of conversion and healing multiplied prodigiously».⁴²¹

Father da Fonseca reports, «The wife and daughter of the head of state came every day to visit Our Lady in the various churches where She was stationed. In the afternoon of the 26th, the Image was transported to the residence of the head of state who, with all his family and all the civil and military personnel of his household, received Her in the chapel of the Palace which was richly decorated with flowers. The Rosary was recited, followed by the singing of the *Salve Regina*. Then the chapel doors were opened, and the people came *en masse* to show their love for Our Lady.»⁴²² Our Lady then made special visits to the seminary and the university.

«In all the streets She passed through (Father Alonso recalls), the enthusiastic multitudes noisily acclaimed Her. In spite of everything, the most remarkable demonstrations took place on the Plaza de la Armeria, transformed into a royal altar of the Virgin. The Mass of

May 29, with the 10,000 sick people who attended it surrounded by an imposing multitude, with its series of miraculous healings,⁴²³ was a religious high point which it is impossible to describe.

«The whole thing was finally crowned by the Pontifical High Mass of Sunday, May 30. The Patriarch of Madrid officiated and the most eminent Cardinals of Toledo and Lisbon assisted him. In special raised platforms were the Caudillo, his wife and daughter, and the entire government. There were also numerous prelates and other civil and military authorities.»

Cardinal Cerejeira's discourse was particularly eloquent.

«The image of Our Lady of Fatima (he declared) reminds me of the final merciful intervention of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Her voice is the haunting cry of a mother, who sees unfathomable abysses of misery opening up before her poor, terrified children. *It is an appeal, it is a hope, it is salvation in this apocalyptic hour. Fatima has become the hope of nations...* What, precisely, is the message of Fatima? I believe that it can be summarized in these terms: it is the revelation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the present world... I repeat what I have often said: Fatima will be for the cult of the Immaculate Heart of Mary what Paray-le-Monial was for the cult of the Heart of Jesus. Fatima, in a certain way, is the continuation, or better, the conclusion of Paray-le-Monial: Fatima reunites these two Hearts which God Himself united in the divine work of the Redemption.»⁴²⁴

«All Madrid (writes Father Alonso) seemed to have gathered together to say its adieu to Our Lady. From the "Paseo de Rosales", Auxiliary Bishop Morcillo received the Image to carry it to Toledo. From there it returned to its Capelinha in the Cova da Iria.»⁴²⁵

On his return to Lisbon, the Patriarch avowed that he had seen an extraordinary *élan* of faith and devotion in Spain: «Spain has surpassed anything that can be imagined. What I saw at Madrid almost dazzled me. I saw the soul of Spanish Catholicism in its finest manifestation.» He concluded: «Our Lady willed to give proofs of love for Spain by miracles which were accomplished there.»⁴²⁶

For his part, the Bishop of Madrid sent his thanks to Bishop da Silva for lending the statue from the Capelinha:

«I cannot find words expressive enough to describe to Your Excellency... the marvel of the thrice-blessed Image's passage across the streets and squares of Madrid during these nine days, in which we had the happiness of possessing Her. Days of Heaven! A wave of the supernatural, dominating, triumphant, superior to all human expression...! Only Mary can draw souls this way and win them for Her Divine Son.

«As soon as She entered my diocese, She never ceased conquering souls, gathering multitudes of hundreds of thousands of believers and even poor unbelievers: all bowed down before the Image, acclaiming it, weeping, praying, singing pious canticles. Never, never was such a thing seen at Madrid!...

(Throughout the country) «people speak only about Our Lady of Fatima, Her passage to Madrid, Her numerous miracles, the innumerable conversions... I would give my twenty-five years of the apostolate here for these nine days...

«... During the whole time, the priests never left the confessional. The parish priests of the suburbs told me that over forty percent of the people who asked to go to confession had not done so for fifteen, twenty or thirty years, etc.»⁴²⁷

We have failed to point out that nowhere more than in Catholic Spain was the miracle of the doves more striking, more overwhelming for the countless crowds who were able to observe it. During the entire Congress, Our Lady was never seen in the streets or in the churches without this white honour guard, often very numerous. On this subject, the moving testimonies quoted by Barthas have to be read.⁴²⁸ Let us listen, for example, to Father José Luis Castilla, director of the review *Reinado social del Sagrado Corazon*:

«May the Virgin pardon me, I wanted to find out for myself if the doves were free or attached, to tell the readers of *Reinado social*. I went up the steps of the altar on Plaza de la Armeria, I approached them and tried to grab them. They defended themselves valiantly, not wanting to leave their Queen; they pecked at me furiously. I succeeded in taking some of them and with all my strength I hurled them as far as I could. (Let it be said in passing that Father Castilla is a giant and a veritable Hercules!) They went no further than two yards, and brusquely returning, they went like arrows to Mary's throne, drawn by a powerful and mysterious magnet.

«At another moment, still possessed by the same idea, I thought there might be secret, invisible threads holding them down. As if they had guessed my thought, several took their flight at the same moment, circled the royal palace several times, and finally came to place themselves on the altar, some on Her crown, others at Our Lady's feet.»

Here is one more, very touching example:

«Father Vermeer, O.M.I, who accompanied the statue, told us that a sick young girl expressed her regret that she could not leave her bed to admire the doves. When the procession passed before her room, a dove entered through the open window, remained some time on the wood of her bed facing her, and when the whole household had talked about its nice visit, it left to rejoin its companions.»⁴²⁹

The following year, on May 4, 1949, Father Gorricho had an audience with the Caudillo. He proposed to Franco the solemn consecration of Spain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Franco answered by extending his arms, like someone who ardently desires something: «I desire it! But that must come from the hierarchy!»⁴³⁰ The bishops were a long time in deciding, but nevertheless it did happen during the Marian year of 1954. Let us note that on October 26, 1949, during an official visit, Franco made a pilgrimage to Fatima. Photographs show him assisting at Mass, missal in hand, at the feet of the Virgin of the Capelinha.⁴³¹

It cannot be denied that during those years, Spain experienced an incomparable Catholic renaissance. On this point, Father Alonso's enthusiastic pages must be consulted. «It was a period of authentic re-Christianization of Spain», he tells us. He went on to furnish solid proofs: the seminaries and religious scholasticates were filled and new ones had to be built. The popular missions multiplied and bore their fruits; assistance at the offices notably increased. Once again Spanish missionaries departed in great numbers for every point of the globe, especially South America. With reason, Father Alonso attributes this wonderful rise to the head of the Church, Pius XII. He attributes it also to Her who was «the soul and spiritual motor» of this great movement of return to God, «this little white Virgin, a pilgrim and missionary who (in the years following 1948) went through each and every one of the regions of Spain».⁴³²

THE MARVELS OF THE "WORLD TOUR"

Our Lady not only passed through the highways of Spain, but those of the entire world. In effect, in April of 1948, Our Lady of Fatima visited successively, always with the same miraculous successes, the island of Madeira, Cape Vert, and Portuguese Guinea. In June, She visited the Azores; in July, Sao Tome, then Angola. Everywhere in these Portuguese provinces, the miracle of the doves caused the crowds to marvel:

«All across the country (Barthas recalls), there was the same fidelity of the doves. In the diocese of Luanda, the French Sisters of Saint Joseph direct several establishments: at Bailundo, Caconda and Sambo. Their monthly bulletin, *Au Service de la moisson*, informs us that everywhere the doves surrounded Our Lady's statue.

«At Bailundo, seven thousand Negroes awaited Her arrival. "At the moment the statue was placed on the litter, our students released five white doves; they flew around a few moments and then went to gently place themselves at Our Lady's feet; they remained there during the procession, Rosary and benediction. The shower of flowers which fell upon them incessantly did not frighten them."

«At Caconda, there was the inauguration of the Chapel of Our Lady of Fatima, a great feast for the community and its friends: there were very many Europeans, over 8,000 natives, 1,600 confirmations, 11,800 Communions. "One of our doves curled up at the feet of the statue, and on its own took a place in the plane carrying its Heavenly Queen."

«In all the missions and churches there were similar ceremonies, and always the doves.⁴³³

On September 30, Our Lady made Her departure for Mozambique. A remarkable fact was observed:

«In all of eastern Africa and in all predominantly Moslem countries, this gracious winged guard at the white statue's side was no longer seen... In the magnificent celebrations marking the passage of the "World Tour" across South Africa, Rhodesia, Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, etc, it could be seen that the Moslems were more numerous and at times more

fervent in their acclamations than the Catholics, but nowhere did anybody see the doves give the slightest sign of veneration to the Pilgrim Virgin... In Eritrea, in Sudan, in Egypt and in Libya, there were no more doves next to Our Lady.»⁴³⁴

The fact is highly symbolic. Although the missionary Virgin pours out Her graces everywhere, the doves of peace which mysteriously accompany Her in a Christian land can no longer follow their Queen in a heretical or pagan country. Undoubtedly this is to show us that in Christendom, and only in Christendom – where the true faith in the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, where the reign of Jesus Christ and His divine Mother are officially recognized and proclaimed – can the Immaculate Mediatrix dispense the divine gift of peace to the nations as a true Queen. This true peace cannot be experienced by any country as long as it remains under the yoke of error and discord of the Prince of this world, who was «a liar and a murderer from the beginning» (Jn. 8:44). What a pressing invitation, then, to work so that Christendom, the temporal Kingdom of Jesus and Mary, finally extends to the very limits of a world at peace: «And a period of peace will be granted to the world!»

THE “TOURS” OF ASIA AND OCEANIA. After returning to Portugal in July 1949, Our Lady’s statue left the Lisbon airport once more on November 24. She arrived at Bombay on the 27th, and from there went to Goa by sea. After the visit to India, She was received triumphantly at Pakistan, returned to Bombay, visited Ceylon and returned to the Cova da Iria by August 13 of the following year. Meanwhile, several statues bought by the vicars-apostolic of Hanoi, Phat Diem and Haiphong during a pilgrimage to Fatima went through Vietnam. In 1951, the tour went through Australia and Oceania.⁴³⁵

Shortly after, mentioning this journey of Our Lady of Fatima across the world, Pius XII was able to say:

«At Her passage in America and in Europe, in Africa and in India, in Indonesia and Australia, blessings poured down from Heaven, marvels of grace were multiplied in such a way that we could hardly believe our eyes.»⁴³⁶

As Our Lady of Fatima travelled as a missionary all over the world, did She not wish to give the Pope and bishops a striking proof of Her all-powerful intercession in the conversion of souls and nations? Was it not already the pledge of Her incomparable promise? Yes, She would convert Russia if Her requests were obeyed! It was high time to do so. From the Cova da Iria, the humble and gentle missionary Virgin left to dispense the torrents of Her graces and mercies to distant lands. At the same time, atheist Bolshevism, led by Moscow, continued its implacable advance, bringing other ancient Christian countries under its anti-Christ yoke and, wherever possible, undermining the Church’s supernatural faith, hope and charity from within, by the contagion of its revolutionary ideology and its carnal messianism.

II. THE RISING DANGERS COMMUNISM, PROGRESSIVISM AND NEO-MODERNISM

The “Liberation” of 1944 and the installation of the Christian Democrats in power created within the Church, especially in France, a sort of ideological revolution whose deadly effects are still with us. At the seminaries and Catholic universities, in this period, Blondel, Bergson or even Sartre were often preferred to Saint Thomas Aquinas. This was the hour of triumph for the Maritains and Mouniers, who were unable to hide their admiration and sympathy for communism. It was the hour when modernism raised its head once more, with Fathers de Lubac or Danielou, while the poisonous writings of Teilhard de Chardin circulated surreptitiously, thanks to the complicity of many. It was the moment when Father Congar, already imbued with his false and chimerical ecumenism, was preparing his masterpiece, *True and False Reform in the Church*. This tiny intelligentsia, which at that time was as feeble numerically as it was restless, underhanded and hypocritical, already formed «*a tumour in the very bosom of Christendom*», as Pius XII said on June 2, 1948. Referring to the Christian progressives, the Pope called them «*these numerous deluded souls*», whose «*duplicity*» he condemned. He denounced «*the objectively pernicious character of their conduct*», because while they continued calling themselves Christians «*they fight at the same time as auxiliary troops in the ranks of those who deny God.*»⁴³⁷ Their treason was all the graver because in these years 1948 - 1950, Bolshevism continued its implacable advance, in the most alarming manner for the Church and Christendom. Is it necessary to recall, in a few words, the series of tragic successes it won on almost all fronts?

From February 17 to 25, 1948, there was the famous “Prague coup”, the typical example of a communist coup d’état. It toppled the government of Czechoslovakia, throwing it into Moscow’s domination for good. In Italy, the upcoming elections were awaited with anxiety, for the danger of a communist victory was real. On March 31, the Soviets took another step in the Cold War: they took the first measures which on June 25 were to result in the total blockade of Berlin. In Italy, on April 18, the communists won only 30% of the votes in the general elections. But that was already a lot, and this percentage continued to be disturbing.

In Romania, with the active complicity of Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and the entire Orthodox national hierarchy, the communists decided on the liquidation, pure and simple, of the Greek-Catholic Church, which numbered 1,600,000 Faithful at the time. «Towards the end of October 1948, they proceeded to arrest the Byzantine Catholic bishops, vicar generals, canons, and the majority of priests, about 600 in all. The government then proceeded to the confiscation of churches, and convents of monks and religious, in spite of their resistance.» On December 1, the communist government published the decree suppressing the Eastern Catholic Church.⁴³⁸

In France, a series of strikes broke out in October-November which once again assumed the character of an uprising. In Hungary, Cardinal Mindszenty was arrested by the communists on December 26, and incarcerated at Budapest. On February 8, 1949, he was condemned to a life sentence in prison. In August 1949, the Catholic Church of Czechoslovakia underwent the same forcible suppression in favour of Orthodoxy as the Catholic Church of Ukraine and Romania.

On September 21, Mao Tse-Tung proclaimed the People's Republic of China while the world learned that the USSR now possessed the atomic bomb. In October came the creation of the "German Democratic Republic". On December 16, Mao Tse-Tung arrived at Moscow for the colossal celebrations of Stalin's 70th birthday, and also for important negotiations which a few months later resulted in the Sino-Soviet treaty. In January 1950, the Soviet Union recognized the Vietnamese government of Ho Chi-Minh. There was an even graver event, at least for the immediate future: on June 25, communist troops from North Korea crossed the 33rd parallel and invaded South Korea. It was the beginning of the Korean War. In other words, everywhere communism was advancing and nowhere was it being rolled back. Would it ever meet with an obstacle?

III. AN EXTRAORDINARY REMEDY: THE CONVOCATION OF AN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL IN THE SPIRIT OF FATIMA AND SAINT PIUS X

The most important event of Pius XII's pontificate is practically unknown: in March 1948, the Pope decided to prepare a new Ecumenical Council. We can say in hindsight that if this Council had met as planned in 1950-1951, it would have had a decisive mark on Church history for the last half of the century. Twelve years later Vatican Council II did exactly the same thing, but certainly in a completely different sense.

THE PREPARATORY WORK (1948-1949)

The initiative for the Council had come from Cardinal Ruffini, Archbishop of Palermo. Later on he described how:

«Twenty years ago, at the feet of Pius XII, I, the least of his priests, dared to invoke an Ecumenical Council. It seemed to me that this was urgently required by the circumstances, and that there were as many questions to handle as at the Council of Trent. The venerable Pontiff did not refuse my proposition; he even made a note of it, as he was accustomed to do for important questions. I know that later on he spoke to a few prelates about it...»

This memorable audience took place on February 24, 1948.⁴³⁹ Cardinal Ruffini was one of the most remarkable Cardinals in Holy Church, thanks to his grasp of theology and his perceptiveness on modern errors. He had surely spoken about the project beforehand with Cardinal Ottaviani, then the assessor of the Holy Office.

«On Thursday, March 4, 1948, during an audience with Msgr. Ottaviani, the Pope himself brought up this subject, recalling that Cardinal Ruffini had spoken to him about the necessity and appropriateness of convoking a Council. Msgr. Ottaviani highlighted in turn *the necessity of clarifying and defining certain points of doctrine before the mass of errors which were spreading on the philosophical, theological, moral and social level...* A Council would also have proven extremely opportune for the desired proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption.

«In the course of this audience, the Pope decided to begin the preparatory work. Out of prudence, he desired that this work be done at the Holy Office and under the strictest secrecy.»⁴⁴⁰

Ten days later, a limited commission of consultors was formed under the direction of Msgr. Ottaviani, and it went right to work. A preliminary catalogue of themes to be treated was drawn up, commissions were formed and the members chosen.

«After completing these three tasks, the preparatory commission was able to submit the results of its first four months of work to a plenary meeting of Cardinals of the Holy Office on July 9, 1948... During an audience of July 22, Pius XII confirmed his desire to see the work continue, adding that above all they must be careful about choosing a good president and a good secretary for the Central Commission.»⁴⁴¹

On February 24, 1949, the Pope chose as president Archbishop Borgongini-Duca, apostolic nuncio in Italy, and as secretary Father Pierre Charles, S.J., professor of dogmatic theology at the college of Louvain. The Central Commission was then created and its president, Archbishop Borgongini-Duca, prepared a circular letter intended for a limited number of bishops, to consult them secretly about the future Council.

THE SPIRIT OF THE COUNCIL

«On May 13, 1949 (must this happy coincidence be stressed?), during the fourth meeting, the Commission definitively approved the letter which had to be sent to the bishops, whose list was reviewed once more and approved.» Here is this document, which is enough to clearly indicate the spirit of the future Council – the spirit of Pius IX, Vatican I and Saint Pius X:

«*The quagmire of dangerous errors, as well as the grave perils with which the Church and society are still threatened* – which led to the convocation of the solemn Vatican Council eighty years ago – *far from going away and diminishing, seem on the contrary to be growing worse.*

«As the impediments which had forced Pius IX to suspend the Council now seem for the most part to have been removed, His Holiness Pope Pius XII, now happily reigning, has judged it extremely opportune and perfectly worthy of his charge and supreme pastoral solicitude *to resume this Council and lead it to its conclusion at the desired time. The soul and the charity of His Holiness, the mandate entrusted to him by Christ to protect and feed the sheep, as well as the other sheep which must be led to the one fold and one shepherd, compel him to act in such a way that all may be able to enjoy the superabundant fruits of the Redemption together and in security.*

«Moreover, among the questions of faith and morals which had been prepared for the (first) Vatican Council, *those which were defined were few*, although grave. Many, on the other hand, were put off. Among these latter, some are outmoded. Others were provided

for by decrees of the Holy See later on, but *there are some which are still awaiting their solution. To these are added new and very grave questions which today arise everywhere, to oppose themselves to Christ, His doctrine, and His Church...*

«Please say simply, therefore, in a few very clear sentences, before the Lord and under the strictest secrecy of the Holy Office, what you judge is particularly worthy of now being submitted to the future Council and, if need be, *of being defined by it, amongst doctrinal or practical questions, moral, juridical or social questions*, those concerning the discipline of the clergy and the Christian people, or the extension of God's kingdom by the missions.

«This, Eminence, is what I had to communicate to you at the request of His Holiness. Please give your response, which is awaited as early as possible. Deign to accept...»⁴⁴²

There is no need to quote excerpts of the preconciliar work. This preliminary letter is sufficiently explicit. Father Caprile deplors it, observing, «The general proceeding of the work and the tone of the documents – which were to have been prepared or actually were prepared – *appear to be dominated above all by the preoccupation of warning against errors and condemning deviations.*»⁴⁴³

In other words, it would have been a traditional Council, in the spirit of the Council of Trent⁴⁴⁴ and Vatican I, whose work it was intended to complete. It would have been a dogmatic Council, and by that very fact infallible. It would have swept the modernist and progressivist heresies out of the Church for good, and contributed powerfully to the recovery of the West by firm condemnations of Marxist doctrines and praxis, and all collaboration with it. In short, an Ecumenical Council in 1950 under Pius XII would unquestionably have been a Council of Counter-Reform and Counter-Revolution.

In 1964, even before Pius XII's project was known to the public, our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, wrote concerning the evolution of Vatican Council II:

«It was not unavoidable. The same Fathers could have been convoked in Council by Pope Pius XII (as I had dreamed back then), to respond to the urgent needs of Christendom. The Pope would have placed on their agenda the condemnation of collectivism and laicism, the proclamation of the message of Fatima and the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the analysis of progressivism and its condemnation, the placing of Teilhard and a few others on the Index. Some great Doctor would have reminded the Fathers at the beginning that they were neither diviners nor prophets, but a Magisterium in the service of a Tradition, and Pastors responsible for their sheep. They would have had to inform themselves and then answer, in conscience, some precise questions according to their faith and not according to their opinion. What do you think would have happened? Fifty or so progressives would have pleaded for the novelties, for liberty, for adaptation to the world . . . A hundred excellent theologians would have luminously recalled the Church's faith, and shown her salutary opposition to the errors ravaging Christendom and preparing her to capitulate before satanic communism. Then all the saving decrees would have received the lively adherence of an immense majority. Unanimous with the Pope, they would have pointed the way to the mental and moral recovery of humanity. The persecuted Church

would have been supported in its faith, and Christendom would have received graces, light and strength for its spiritual recovery and the necessary conversion of lukewarm souls.»⁴⁴⁵

The most detailed analysis of the declarations and decisions of Pope Pius XII, in these decisive years from 1948 to 1951, confirms this estimate on every point. It is sufficient to read the pontifical documents of Pope Pius XII during this period to discover what would have been the great orientations of the Council being prepared according to his directives. Father Caprile confirms this, informing us that «it appears that Pius XII took into account the material elaborated, and used it in several of his documents, *especially in the encyclical Humani Generis, and in certain of his discourses having a major doctrinal importance.*»⁴⁴⁶

The Pope was increasingly alarmed by «the quagmire of dangerous errors and by the grave perils with which the Church and society were threatened», and since 1947 had in part begun to make a series of courageous decisions to remedy the situation. He engaged the Church in a reaction, in a triple effort which could have borne fruit and become extremely effective in the framework of the projected Ecumenical Council. At issue was the defence of the Catholic Faith in the very spirit of Saint Pius X, and the combat for the safeguarding of Christendom in the light of Fatima. At the same time the Pope wanted to promote, especially on the occasion of the Holy Year, a true reform of morals among the people and the clergy, for the salvation of a greater number of souls. How can we fail to see that these three major concerns of Pius XII, attested by so many documents from the years 1949-1950, which also would have been the documents of the Council, corresponded precisely to the three parts of the Secret of Fatima?

THE BATTLE FOR THE FAITH, IN THE SPIRIT OF SAINT PIUS X. Pius XII had an admiration and unlimited love for his holy predecessor. If we read all the discourses for canonizations and beatifications, we will find that none of them was warmer, more enthusiastic than the one he pronounced in honour of the holy Pontiff. It is important to stress that, while he asked the Holy Office to work on preparations for the future Council, he decided to speed up the canonization of Saint Pius X.⁴⁴⁷ In contrast with the mortal hatred which the ringleaders of neo-modernism and progressivism bore the holy Pope,⁴⁴⁸ Pius XII wished by his canonization to impose his example and his doctrine on the entire Church.

Let us quote here a few excerpts from the important beatification discourse. It expresses the constant thinking of Pius XII. Reading these lines, we discover not only the figure of the holy Pontiff, but also the thinking and ideal of his successor. Along with some moving recollections, there is also this affirmation of the highest importance: Pius X is, *par excellence*, «*the Pope of the twentieth century*», and his providential mission in the service of the Church extends well beyond the limits of his pontificate. He dominates his century. He also would have dominated an Ecumenical Council called by Pius XII.

«This Pope of the twentieth century, in the formidable hurricane stirred up by the deniers and enemies of Christ, from the beginning was able to show consummate experience in governing the barque of Peter.»

Pius XII then evokes the Good Shepherd, always indifferent to himself, simple from his childhood days until the hour when Providence incited the mind and heart of his peers to:

«Place the shepherd's staff, which had fallen from the weakened hands of the great, aging Leo XIII, into his own fatherly firm hands. *At that time the world needed precisely such hands.* But once he pronounced his "fiat", this humble man, who had died to earthly things and aspired with all his being to the things of Heaven, demonstrated the indomitable firmness of his spirit, the manly vigour, the grandeur of courage which are the prerogatives of the heroes of sanctity. From his first encyclical, which was like a luminous flame rising up to enlighten minds and hearts...

«Have not you too experienced this ardour, dear children who lived through these days and heard from his lips *the exact diagnosis of the errors of his epoch, and at the same time the means and remedies needed to heal it? What clarity of thought! What force of persuasion!* It was indeed the knowledge and the wisdom of an inspired prophet, the intrepid frankness of a John the Baptist and a Paul of Tarsus; it was the paternal tenderness of the Vicar and representative of Christ watching over all necessities, solicitous for all the interests, all the miseries of his children...»

Pius XII was not afraid to bring up the underhanded criticisms expressed by the adversaries of the holy Pope. But it was to refute them immediately, and with what vigour!

«Is it true, as some have said or insinuated, that in the blessed Pontiff's character force often prevailed over prudence? Such was perhaps the opinion of adversaries, the majority of whom were also enemies of the Church. To the extent, however, that it was shared by others, who still remained admirers of Pius X's apostolic zeal, this estimation is shown to be contradicted by the facts...

«Now that the most thorough examination has gone over all the acts and vicissitudes of his pontificate, now that the results of these events are known, *no hesitation, no reservation is possible any longer. It must be recognized that even in the most difficult and hardest periods, the periods heaviest with responsibilities, Pius X – assisted by his most faithful Secretary of State, the great figure of Cardinal Merry del Val – demonstrated this enlightened prudence which is never lacking to the saints, even when in its applications it finds itself in painful but inevitable contrast with the misleading dictates of human and purely worldly prudence.*

«With his eagle-eye, which was more perceptive and sure-sighted than the short-sighted views of myopic reasoners, *he saw the world such as it was, he saw with the eyes of a holy Pastor what his duty was in the midst of a de-Christianized society, a Christendom infected or at least threatened by the errors of the time and the perversion of the century.*

«Illuminated by the clarity of eternal truth, guided by a delicate, lucid conscience of rigid uprightness, he often had intuitions and decisions to make concerning his present duty that *disturbed those who were not endowed with similar lights.*

«By nature, no one was more gentle, more lovable than he, no one more fatherly. But when the voice of his conscience as shepherd spoke, nothing counted any more except the sense of duty; the latter imposed silence on all the considerations of human weakness; *it put an end to all hesitations and decreed the most energetic measures, as painful as they were to his heart.*

«The humble “country priest” – as he sometimes liked to call himself (and to call him that does not lessen his stature)... knew how to stand up like a giant, in all the majesty of his sovereign authority. His non possumus made the powerful ones of the earth tremble and at times retreat, reassuring the hesitant at the same time and galvanizing the timid.

«To this unshakable strength of his character and conduct manifested from the first days of his pontificate *must be attributed the stupor, then aversion of those who wished to make him the “sign of contradiction”, thus revealing the darkness of their souls...*

«Defender of the Faith, herald of eternal truth, guardian of the holiest traditions, Pius X revealed a very keen sense of the needs, the aspirations and energies of his times.»

This was the example which Pius XII desired and would have liked to follow.

Pius XII goes on to praise his predecessor as «the incomparable promoter of the sacred and profane sciences», and the true author of the new Code of Canon Law. Finally, let us quote the conclusion of the discourse, which is directly related to our purpose:

«What did the name of Pius X signify, We asked ourselves at the beginning? Now We see it clearly. *Through his person and through his work, God wanted to prepare the Church for the new and difficult duties which an agitated future reserved for it.* In an opportune way, he wanted to prepare a Church united in doctrine, solid in discipline, efficient in its Pastors; a generous lay people, a people well instructed; a youth sanctified from its first years; a vigilant conscience regarding the problems of social life. If today the Church of God, far from retreating before the forces destructive of spiritual values, suffers and fights, and through the divine power progresses and redeems souls, *this is due to the farsighted action and holiness of Pius X.* It is manifest today that his entire pontificate was supernaturally oriented according to a design of love and redemption, *to dispose our spirits to face our own struggles and assure our victories and those of generations to come.*»⁴⁴⁹

Yes, everything leads us to think that a Council called in 1950 would have worked according to the teachings and spirit of Saint Pius X. Besides, many statements and decisions of Pius XII were already going in this sense. For example there was the warning against ecumenism, recalling the absolute prohibition of all *communicatio in sacris*⁴⁵⁰ There was also the pressing invitation given the parish priests of Rome and Lenten preachers on March 23, 1949, to continue preaching the doctrine of hell without any attenuation, such as Christ revealed it, and there is no circumstance of time which can diminish the rigour of this obligation.⁴⁵¹ There was the long exhortation *Menti nostrae* to the clergy of the world,⁴⁵² and above all the encyclical *Humani Generis* of August 12, 1950.⁴⁵³ Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, believes that this encyclical is the most recent in date of the documents of the

Church's infallible magisterium, along with the definition of the dogma of the Assumption three months later, on November 1. If the condemnations and warnings found in *Humani Generis* against all the errors of neo-Modernism and progressivism had been solemnly expressed by an Ecumenical Council, as had been planned, their effectiveness would have been much greater, and no theologian could have remained in the Church without completely submitting to them.

THE BATTLE FOR CHRISTENDOM IN THE LIGHT OF FATIMA. If we go through the pontifical documents of 1949-1950, we can see that instead of the chimeras of Ostpolitik, the Pope's attitude towards Bolshevik Russia now corresponded perfectly to Our Lady of Fatima's demands. On almost every page, we find a mention of the enemies of Christ and the Church, and the faithful undergoing their persecutions. Let us retain only the most significant text: "The apostolic exhortation to the bishops, authorizing a votive Mass in reparation for the crimes caused by the hatred of God." Does not this letter of February 11, 1949 already essentially correspond to "the solemn and public act of reparation" requested by Our Lady of Fatima since 1929?

«The struggle between the good and the wicked, whose conduct and actions taken together still constitute the history of the human race, has rarely and perhaps never been as violent as in our time.

«If, from this citadel of the Vatican, We look at the earth in every direction, We have reason to be filled with admiration and joy, seeing the resplendent virtues of the compact groups of good men who are reminiscent of the earliest ages of Christianity, especially through the merit of their courage and the glory of martyrdom; but on the other hand *We are overwhelmed with sadness and anguish, seeing that the wickedness of perverse men has reached a degree of impiety that is unbelievable and absolutely unknown in other times.* We are horrified to speak of this disgrace, Venerable Brethren, but by reason of the duties of Our apostolic office, we cannot be silent.

«The haughty and scornful disdain for the things of God which was the first crime of man, who refused to obey the order from on high, is the seditious source of all evils, and in our own epoch it is spreading and being unchained like a virulent evil over almost all the earth, but in certain regions especially, because of the conspiracy raised up "against the Lord and against His Christ" (Ps. 2:2), it engenders absolutely innumerable evils... We are referring to atheism, or more exactly, *the hatred of God.*

«In their sovereign impudence, those who hate the name of God take advantage of all kinds of helps and methods. Books, memoirs, journals, radio programs, meetings, rallies and private conversations, sciences and the arts, they use everything to spread hatred for holy things. "There came out of the pit smoke, like that of a great furnace, and the air was darkened by the smoke from the pit." (Apoc. 9:2) We believe, Venerable Brethren, that such events are not taking place *without the perfidious intervention of the infernal enemy, whose characteristic is to hate God and harm mankind.*

«Let there be nothing more urgent, therefore, for you, your priests and the Faithful entrusted to your care than to stir up a rivalry of zeal to defend this name of God which the angelic powers venerate while trembling; raising the standard of Saint Michael the Archangel and repeating the exclamation “Who is like unto God?” oppose those who insult the supreme Majesty with the most energetic determination to affirm, to love and to preach the name of God...

«If therefore atheism and the hatred of God constitute *a monstrous sin which besmirches our century, and justly makes it fear baleful chastisements*, the blood of Christ contained in the chalice of the New Covenant is a purifying bath in which we can efface this execrable crime, and after having asked for pardon for the guilty, we can dispel the consequences of this crime and prepare a magnificent triumph for the Church.

«While We meditate on these thoughts, it has seemed opportune to Us that on Passion Sunday of this year, you and all priests be authorized and even exhorted to celebrate a second Mass, which will be the votive Mass for the remission of sins...»⁴⁵⁴

On February 14, 1949, Pius XII convoked an extraordinary consistory to solemnly protest against the condemnation of Cardinal Mindszenty on February 9.⁴⁵⁵ On February 20, Passion Sunday, during the Mass celebrated before Saint Peter’s basilica, the Pope developed the same themes:

«Can the Pope be silent when in a nation, churches united to Rome, the centre of Christendom, are torn away from it by violence or by fraud; when all the Greek-Catholic bishops are imprisoned because they refuse to apostatize from their faith; when priests and Faithful are persecuted and arrested because they do not consent to being separated from their true mother, the Church? Can the Pope be silent when... etc.»⁴⁵⁶

In Czechoslovakia, the communist government had founded a Catholic Action in the pay of the regime. On June 20, 1949, the Holy Office, in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff,

«reproves and condemns this movement fraudulently called “Catholic Action”, and at the same time declares to be schismatics and apostates all ecclesiastics and lay people who knowingly adhere to it now or in the future... They have incurred and will incur *ipso facto* excommunication reserved to the Apostolic See.»⁴⁵⁷

On June 13, 1949, titles of this nature could be read in one of the journals: «Rome against Moscow. Under pain of excommunication, Catholics are forbidden to aid the Communist party.» (*Le Figaro*). In fact there had been a decree of the Holy Office approved by the Pope on June 30, and promulgated on July 1. Here is its content:

1. «Communism is materialistic and anti-Christian: although the communist leaders sometimes declare in words that they do not attack religion, they show this in fact by their doctrine and by their acts, which are hostile to God, to the true religion and to the Church of Christ. Therefore it is forbidden to register as a member of a communist party or favour it in any way.»

2. «Reviews, journals or flyers supporting the doctrine or action of the communists are condemned by the law itself (cf. canon 1399). Thus it is forbidden to publish them, spread them, read them or write for them.»

3. «The Faithful who knowingly and freely violate these prohibitions cannot be admitted to the sacraments.»

4. «The Faithful who profess the materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine of the communists incur by the law itself, as apostates from the Catholic Faith, excommunication specially reserved to the Holy See.»⁴⁵⁸

In this atmosphere, not only of cold war but an open struggle to the death between the Vatican and Moscow, between the Church and the synagogue of Satan, between light and darkness, the preparations for the Council continued, while the Holy Year was opened.

THE PROGRAM OF THE HOLY YEAR: THE TRUE REFORM OF MORALS. Better than preceding ones and incomparably more so than following ones, this Holy Year really influenced the life of the Church. It is necessary to read the bull *Jubilaem maximum* of May 26, 1949 and the radio message to the world of December 23, which set out the program of the Holy Year and make clear its spirit. It is the spirit of the message of Fatima.⁴⁵⁹ Indeed Pius XII remarked as much to the Portuguese pilgrims on several occasions: «The heavenly message of Our Lady of Fatima which was announced over there, but with the intention of being passed on to the world, is almost the anticipated message of an unending Holy Year.»⁴⁶⁰ This program would also have found its full realization within the framework of an Ecumenical Council.

At the same period, by a decree of December 21, 1949, Bishop da Silva appointed the diocesan tribunal to conduct the informative process on the heroic virtues of Jacinta and Francisco.⁴⁶¹ This decision opened the canonical process of the little seers of Fatima. We may believe that it was not made without the Holy Father being informed, and giving at least his tacit consent.

THE CHURCH'S GREAT HOPE

The jubilee year of 1950 unquestionably marked the high point of Pius XII's pontificate. Perhaps never before had the papacy enjoyed such prestige, such moral authority, such universal influence. In 1925, the Holy Year pilgrimages had led 800,000 of the Faithful to Rome, the highest number of pilgrims ever reached. In this year, 1950, over three million came to venerate the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. Every week, on Wednesday and Saturday, often drew 30,000 to 40,000 Faithful to Saint Peter's basilica.

A HAPPY OMEN: OUR LADY OF FATIMA AT MOSCOW. In January 1950, a Fatima Pilgrim Virgin statue blessed at the Cova da Iria on October 13, 1947, was introduced into Russia by Father Brassard, an American Assumptionist and chaplain of the diplomatic corps. The statue «found its place of rest in the city of Moscow, in an oratory from which the Kremlin's

towers were visible at a distance. At night, the two red stars shining before the communist fortress were like the lamps of an icon, one on each side of the statue, silently honouring the Queen of Russia.»⁴⁶²

Was this presence of the Immaculate Virgin in the centre of Moscow the sign heralding Her triumph through the conversion of Russia? Everything depended on the salutary decisions made by the Pope during this Holy Year. To make these decisions, he would have to overcome a second opposition: the secret, hypocritical, underhanded but implacable opposition from the supporters of neo-Modernism and progressivism, who were against both Fatima and the great project of the Ecumenical Council.

IV. SHADY MANOEUVRES

AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST FATIMA

The progressive intelligentsia bitterly deplored the increasing credence the Pope seemed to give the apparitions and message of Fatima. In the critical studies of Father Dhanis, they had found an effective propaganda instrument. In 1948, Msgr. Journet, the future Cardinal and friend of Msgr. Montini, used these studies to write an extremely violent article against Fatima, an article studded with gross errors and utterly lacking any value.⁴⁶³ Meanwhile, a condensed version of Dhanis' theses was circulating among the bishops. Before long, Father da Fonseca reports, the most bewildering rumours were circulating in Germany, Belgium, and elsewhere:

«Rome's attitude towards Fatima, it was said, had substantially changed. A short period of consideration and enthusiasm was followed by coolness, disinterest, disillusionment. Somebody even dared to affirm that His Holiness had declared to a highly placed member of the hierarchy (?) that Fatima was "the greatest disillusionment of his pontificate, and that naturally he didn't want to hear any more talk about it."»

In France, during a great meeting of the clergy, this news was given by a conference speaker:

«The Sovereign Pontiff or perhaps the Superior General of the Jesuits appointed a commission presided over by Father Dhanis, S.J., a distinguished professor at the faculty of Louvain, to study the case of Fatima. The commission, it was said, pronounced unanimously against it.»

In Germany, similar rumours were being spread among the clergy. All these lies seemed to be perfectly orchestrated; where were they coming from? It is difficult to say.

All the same, it is astonishing that in such a context Father Dhanis was promoted at Rome. Indeed, it was precisely in 1949 that he was appointed professor at the Gregorian University. At the very least, he must have had powerful protectors back then. Was Msgr. Montini, who later on made Dhanis one of his confidants, protecting him already? In any

case, Father Janssens, who had been elected Superior General of the Jesuits on September 15, 1946, was also Belgian; he was a former student, professor and rector of the theological college of Louvain, and greatly esteemed Father Dhanis. We have good reasons to believe that he covered for Dhanis in his offensive against Fatima.⁴⁶⁴

UNDERHANDED OPPOSITION TO THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The preparatory work, undertaken with such enthusiasm and effectiveness under Msgr. Ottaviani's direction, continued. However, unforeseen difficulties came up. Apparently Father Charles, secretary of the Central Commission and a Jesuit from the very liberal University of Louvain, had skilfully contributed to bringing the work to an impasse. Father Caprile writes:

«Third period of the preparation (July 1949 - January 1951). During this period of about a year and a half, the Central Commission met very rarely. The secretary general had returned to Louvain, and *he came to Rome only two or three times.*»

Now that is really astonishing! Did not the preparations for an Ecumenical Council have the most absolute priority over every other activity?

True, during this time at the Holy Office, the subcommissions continued to accomplish very important, even abundant work, each in its own domain. «The theological and biblical subcommissions were each preparing a vast doctrinal schema.» The subcommission for moral and social questions was preparing a schema very theological in nature and clearly theocentric, while the subcommission for discipline and liturgy examined, among other things, projects for reform of the Mass and breviary. All this was certainly excellent.

Unfortunately, Father Charles and his friends in Rome and Louvain had other ideas, which they tried to make prevail to avoid the worst in their eyes: the full success of a dogmatic council where on all controversial points Catholic truth would be infallibly defined and modern errors vigorously condemned, while at the same time in the biblical, pastoral and liturgical domains, the Church would show a wise openness to the progress of exegetical and historical sciences, and prudent readiness to promote useful reforms, but in the strict Roman discipline. This type of Council was not on the agenda of the few liberals or liberal minds called to participate in the work. Father Caprile continues:

«This progress in the preparation caused differences and increasing difficulties to appear. Two tendencies manifested themselves in the Central Commission, holding different opinions on the organization and the very basis of the Council.»⁴⁶⁵

V. THE GREAT TURNING POINT OF THE HOLY YEAR

PIUS XII AND THE COUNCIL. Nothing was lost, however, at the dawn of the year 1950. On the contrary, there was every reason to hope that, concerning the Council, the Pope would

take the position of the men of doctrine and tradition. The Holy Office was still all powerful, and it would have sufficed if Pius XII, informed by some perceptive advisor, had quashed the tortuous plans of the handful of opponents. Then the Council would be able to meet and rapidly succeed. The hierarchy was more ready than ever for it, since the death of Saint Pius X.

PIUS XII AND FATIMA. As for the insidious campaign launched against Fatima, the Pope had firmly reacted in the beginning of 1950:

«I know with complete and immediate certainty (Father da Fonseca reports) that when His Holiness was asked if the phrase attributed to him about “the greatest disillusionment of my pontificate” had some foundation, he exclaimed: “The things people make up!” And he immediately authorized a categorical denial, an authorization he later gave on several occasions.»⁴⁶⁶

This authorization was given in the most solemn manner, notably to Father Suarez, Master General of the Dominicans, who declared publicly at Fatima, on October 12, 1952:

«If someone tells you that the Sovereign Pontiff is disappointed by Fatima, know that it is not true! Not too long ago, during the Holy Year of 1950, while visiting our houses of central Europe I heard in several places that the Pope said that confidentially. On my return, I requested a special audience, and I told the Holy Father what I had heard.⁴⁶⁷ To that the Holy Father responded: “I never said or thought such a thing! What new proofs do you want the Pope to give you of his love for Fatima?” “Can I tell my religious that?” “*Tell them that the Pope’s thinking is contained in the message of Fatima.* Tell your religious to continue working with the greatest enthusiasm promoting the cult of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima!”»⁴⁶⁸

Fortified by this encouragement, Father Suarez immediately decided to install Dominicans at Fatima. On October 12, 1951, he blessed the cornerstone of the convent. On October 12, 1952, he was at the Cova da Iria again for the inauguration of the new house, intended to become the novitiate and house of studies for the Dominican Province of Portugal. He declared: «We will remain at Fatima to propagate the Rosary as long as Our Lady wants. Dominicans will come here from everywhere and as they leave, they will bring devotion to Our Lady of Fatima to the whole world!»⁴⁶⁹

Certainly, in the beginning of this Holy Year Pius XII was not sparing in his encouragement for Fatima apostles, quite the contrary. The Blue Army of Msgr. Colgan already numbered a million members, and it had just launched the publication of *Soul*, its review promoting Fatima. On May 8, Msgr. Colgan was received in a private audience by Pius XII. The Pope, who had on his table the first issues of the magazine, declared to the founder of the Blue Army:

«*As the world’s leader against communism, I gladly give my blessing to you and all the members of the Blue Army... Now, the time for doubting Fatima has passed. The hour for action has arrived.*»⁴⁷⁰

PIUS XII AND THE “NEW THEOLOGY”. The Pope continued to invite the Faithful insistently to amend their lives, to pray and make atonement for the sins of the world, sins undoubtedly graver, he affirmed, than in any century past. In this way the Faithful could obtain from the divine mercy «the great return of humanity, which has rebelled against the laws of God and the Church».⁴⁷¹ At the same time, the Pope continued the struggle against the errors of the time. On May 13, he had the Biblical Commission publish an “Instruction on the Teaching of Holy Scripture in Seminaries and Religious Institutes”, which was directly in line with Saint Pius X’s directives in this domain.⁴⁷² On June 30, during a message to the Marian Congress of Rennes, he proposed devotion to the Most Holy Virgin as a remedy for modern pride: «*De Maria numquam satis*». One can never speak enough about Mary... Yes, in our time especially, when we are faced with proud and pagan doctrines which exalt the greatness of man against the sovereign rights of God and the designs of His mercy.»⁴⁷³

Finally, on August 12, he published the encyclical *Humani Generis*, certainly the most important encyclical of his whole pontificate, and the most salutary. Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes writes:

«The proscriptions of Pius XII no doubt were too discreet, too benign. They were enough to drive the likes of Teilhard, de Lubac, Danielou, Rahner, Chenu and Congar underground in view of their cowardice, and preserve the Faithful from the contagion of their neo-modernism. They ducked out of sight, hypocritically.»⁴⁷⁴

The neo-modernists even tried to convince people that they were not being referred to in the encyclical!⁴⁷⁵



Pope Pius XII, proclaiming the infallible definition of the dogma of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin.

On August 14, *L'Osservatore Romano* announced the proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin, which took place on November 1, 1950. On September 3, Pius XII ordered publication of the decree on Pope Pius X's heroic virtues. This text was published by *L'Osservatore Romano* and reproduced in *Documentation catholique*. There we can read one particularly well-chiselled phrase, which must have made the small minority of progressive theologians gnash their teeth. They were already visibly irritated by *Humani Generis*:

«In the struggle against modernism, which is *the synthesis of all heresies*, the servant of God skilfully discovered all its *venom*, penetrated *all its ruses, subtleties and trickery*, condemned

it and triumphed over it and thus he delivered the Church from this *pestilential contagion*.»⁴⁷⁶

Again on September 23, Pius XII had addressed «to the clergy of the Catholic world» the long and vigorous exhortation *Menti nostrae*, very much in the spirit of Pius X. In conclusion, the Pope strongly recommended devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to all priests and he entrusted them all to Her, as to «the Mediatrix of Heavenly Graces».⁴⁷⁷ On October 11, he delivered a beautiful allocution to Carmelite tertiaries on the significance of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.⁴⁷⁸

On October 23, the first International Congress on Mariology opened at Rome. Nine Cardinals and thirty Archbishops and bishops participated. The opening discourse was pronounced by Cardinal Pizzardo and was a good indication of the feelings of the bishops as a whole, just before the dogma of the Assumption was defined, and while the preparatory work for the Ecumenical Council was still continuing. In the history of Marian theology, the Cardinal explained, this definition constitutes a point of arrival. But it is also a point of departure. The Cardinal then announced that further light was needed on the dogmas of Mary Co-Redemptrix and Mediatrix of all graces.⁴⁷⁹

WAITING FOR GREAT DECISIONS. Nevertheless, on the subject of Our Lady of Fatima's precise requests, in this Holy Year the Pope still seemed hesitant about committing himself any further. To be sure, a few mentions of Fatima and its message can be found in the pontifical discourses of 1950.⁴⁸⁰ But they are simple allusions, not very rich in content. It is hard to dispel the idea that the Jesuit plot against Fatima – for something of the kind did exist – made an impression on the Pope all the same, at least in this sense: he knew from now on that decisions too openly favourable to Fatima would arouse resistance, fierce opposition, and that, even in his immediate entourage, several people would judge these initiatives unfavourably. Pius XII remained indecisive.

Now it seems that in this decisive hour, when everything suddenly hung in the balance, while awaiting the great decisions the Sovereign Pontiff was to make regarding both the Council and Fatima – and these two holy causes were intimately linked with each other – it seems that Heaven really did intervene to enlighten the Pope, to encourage the Church's Supreme Pastor to act forcefully and with prudence, so as to correspond fully to the great designs of mercy of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Sister Lucy had very much wished for this intervention from Heaven, and implored it on many occasions. We remember that in 1936, she said to God in her prayer:

«But my God, the Holy Father will not believe me *unless You Yourself move him with a special inspiration*.»⁴⁸¹

In 1940, she wrote concerning the consecration of Russia by the Pope:

«Our Good Lord could *through some prodigy show* (the Holy Father) *clearly that it is He who asks it*, but He takes this opportunity to punish the world with His justice for so many crimes, and to prepare it for a more complete return to Him.»⁴⁸²

In the beginning of 1942, Our Lord had informed His messenger that He had given the Holy Father the inspiration to fulfil His requests, but that the Holy Father still hesitated.⁴⁸³ In the autumn of 1950, the hour of mercy had come once more.

*THE MIRACLE OF FATIMA AT THE VATICAN
(OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 8, 1950)*

On October 29, the statue of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, which had just visited several nations of Asia, arrived at Rome. On the following morning, October 30, 35 Cardinals and over 450 bishops had met in consistory around the Sovereign Pontiff, who for the first time officially informed them of his intention of defining the dogma of the Assumption very soon. At the end of his allocution, he consulted the successors of the Apostles one last time: «Is it therefore pleasing to you, Venerable Brethren, that we proclaim and solemnly define as a dogma revealed by God, the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven?» After receiving their unanimous assent, the Pope gave thanks.⁴⁸⁴

On the very same day, Monday, October 30, after this solemn decision, while the Madonna of Fatima had stopped for three days in the church of Casaletto, right behind the Vatican gardens on land belonging to the Holy See,⁴⁸⁵ on the anniversary of the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary eight years earlier – it was given the Holy Father to contemplate the same extraordinary spectacle that 70,000 pilgrims had seen at the Cova da Iria, on October 13, 1917. Here is the account written shortly afterwards by Pius XII himself.⁴⁸⁶

«It was October 30, 1950, two days before the day of the solemn definition of the Most Holy Virgin Mary's Assumption into Heaven, the day which the entire Catholic world was awaiting impatiently. (On this 30th of October), around four o'clock in the afternoon, I took my usual walk in the Vatican gardens, reading and studying various official papers as usual. I went up the esplanade of Our Lady of Lourdes to the top of the hill, in the passage on the right near the walls.

«At a certain moment, having lifted my eyes above the papers I had in my hand, I was struck by a phenomenon I had never seen before. The sun, which was fairly high, looked like a pale yellow opaque globe completely surrounded by a luminous halo, which nevertheless did not prevent me at all from staring attentively at the sun without the slightest discomfort. A very light cloud was before it.

«The opaque globe began moving outwards, slowly turning over upon itself, and going from left to right and vice-versa. But within the globe very strong movements could be seen in all clarity and without interruption.⁴⁸⁷ The same phenomenon repeated itself on the following day, October 31 ...»

THE SOLEMNITIES OF THE DEFINITION OF THE ASSUMPTION. On this vigil of All Saints Day, which was also the vigil of the long-awaited day, a great popular procession had triumphantly carried the venerable Image of the Madonna, called *Salus populi romani*, from Ara Coeli to Saint Peter's Square.

Sister Pasqualina reports in her memoirs that after returning from his walk on October 30, the Holy Father immediately described the superb spectacle he had just witnessed. She then went through the account, almost identical to the one we have just read, but she adds a very interesting unpublished testimony:

«The following day was a Sunday.⁴⁸⁸ Full of hope, we too went to the gardens in the hope of seeing this spectacle too, but we came back disappointed. The Holy Father immediately asked: "Did you see it? Today it was exactly like yesterday!"»⁴⁸⁹

On the following day, November 1, at six o'clock in the morning, a compact crowd pressed into the doors of the Vatican basilica. Before long, at Saint Peter's square, the via della Conciliazione and the banks of the Tiber surrounding it were occupied by the multitude of 600,000 to 700,000 pilgrims. Sister Pasqualina recalls that the weather was splendid: «Was it a May day breaking, so pure and serene, or was it really November 1? A silent joy broke out in the soul: "*Ave Maria!*"»⁴⁹⁰

At eight thirty, the Sistine choirs intoned the litany of the saints, while the long pontifical procession of 36 Cardinals and over 600 bishops entered Saint Peter's square through the bronze doors. The spectacular ceremony began on the square in front of the basilica. In the name of the entire Church, the Cardinal dean addressed the Sovereign Pontiff, asking for the dogmatic definition. The Pope responded, and after the chant of the *Veni Creator* pronounced the infallible words, proclaiming «*and defining that it is a dogma divinely revealed that Mary, the Immaculate and ever Virgin Mother of God, at the end of Her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.*»

The crowd immediately broke out into endless applause, while Cardinal Tisserant thanked the Holy Father and asked him to order the publication of the dogmatic bull. The Pope then intoned the *Te Deum*. He then spoke a brief allocution to the faithful, which he ended by reciting on his knees a prayer to the Virgin of the Assumption.

Here once more is Sister Pasqualina's account:

«A deep blue sky extended above the cupola of Saint Peter's. *Beside the sun one could also see the crescent of the moon, just above the cross of the cupola!* How was this possible? The others saw it and were astonished: "Who is this... fair as the moon, beautiful as the sun...!" we recite on Prime of that day. Already it was most extraordinary that the day was so warm and so clear, and this crescent of the moon over the cupola of Michelangelo at this hour of the feast created the effect of a wonderful symbol.»⁴⁹¹

After the solemn apostolic benediction given to the crowd by the Sovereign Pontiff, the ceremony continued in Saint Peter's basilica by the chanting of None and the Papal Mass,

where for the first time was chanted the admirable office opening with the words of the seer of Patmos: «*Signum magnum apparuit in coelo, Mulier amicta sole et luna sub pedibus eius... A great sign appeared in Heaven, a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath Her feet...*» (Apoc. 12:1).

On the afternoon of this memorable day, which was «the crowning and apogee of the Holy year»⁴⁹² and even the entire pontificate, the Holy Father once again took his usual walk in the Vatican gardens. Here is the end of the account, where he reports his vision of the “dance of the sun”:

«The same phenomenon took place the following day, October 31, and on November 1, the day of the definition, and then on November 8, the octave day of the same solemnity. Since then, nothing more.

«Several times, on other days at the same hour and in identical or very similar atmospheric conditions, I tried to look at the sun to see if the same phenomenon would appear to me, but in vain; I could not stare at the sun for an instant as my vision was immediately blinded.

«Such is the pure truth, in brief and simple terms.»⁴⁹³

Sister Pasqualina also recalls:

«The Holy Father saw (this prodigy) again on the day of the proclamation of the dogma and one more time on the octave of the feast. We would have loved to see it ourselves, but that was not granted us... Pius XII had some inquiries made with Specula (the director of the Vatican Observatory), but there, too, nobody knew anything and nobody had seen anything. Other inquiries made with outside sources at the Holy Father’s request also had no results.»⁴⁹⁴

Thus Pius XII was the only witness of this prodigy. For this reason it is not possible to impose it on the consideration of the savants as an indisputable historical fact, like the solar miracle of October 13, 1917, observed by over 70,000 pilgrims and curious souls, all unanimous in their testimony. Pius XII’s account is of a different order. Still, we are convinced of the authenticity of the facts, both because of the intrinsic solidity of the testimony as well as the august quality of the witness. For how – *especially* if one is a Catholic – can we place in doubt such testimony furnished by the Holy Father himself, with this precision, this assurance and this solemnity? Thus we are convinced that on four occasions Pope Pius XII saw a wonderful phenomenon which renewed the miracle of the Cova da Iria before his eyes. Now the question arises: what was the meaning, what was the significance of this authentic intervention from Heaven in the Sovereign Pontiff’s life?

THE SIGN OF THE VIRGIN OF THE ASSUMPTION. First of all, as Cardinal Tedeschini later said, no doubt echoing what the Pope had confided to him, it cannot be denied that this wonderful vision was «*a reward*» for the Pope, «*a sign showing that the definition of the dogma of the Assumption was supremely pleasing to God*».⁴⁹⁵ The coincidence of this extraordinary phenomenon with the infallible proclamation of the dogma highlights this

point in all clarity. For the Pope had contemplated the dance of the sun on October 30, the date of the official announcement of the definition, on October 31 and November 1, the vigil and very day of the proclamation, and finally on November 8, the octave day of the solemnity.

We recall that already on December 8, 1854, during the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Venerable Pope Pius IX – let it be said in passing that Pius XII ordered the work for his beatification resumed⁴⁹⁶ – Heaven had manifested itself to the Sovereign Pontiff. At the moment of pronouncing the infallible words, Pius IX had felt that suddenly his voice was mysteriously strengthened and amplified, to the point of resounding throughout the basilica. At the same instant, although it had been raining heavily up till then, «precisely at the moment when the Pontiff pronounced the words of the definition, heaven opened and a ray of light came to illuminate the Pontiff».

Finally, were not the apparitions of Lourdes themselves the divine recompense granted to the Church by the Immaculate Virgin, in response to Her glorification by the Sovereign Pontiff? Saint Bernadette took it this way, writing to Venerable Pope Pius IX: «How good is Our Lady! One could say that She came to confirm the words of Our Holy Father.»⁴⁹⁷

Was not the vision of the dance of the sun for Pius XII a comparable heavenly “confirmation” of the dogma of the Assumption? No doubt it occurred to him, when in his encyclical *Fulgens corona* he repeated the same expression as the seer of Lourdes: «It appears that the Blessed Virgin willed in some way to confirm by a prodigy the sentence which the Vicar of Her Divine Son had pronounced.»⁴⁹⁸

THE SIGN OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA. Besides being a heavenly confirmation of the dogma of the Assumption, the vision of the “dance of the sun” also had a more precise and pressing significance. It was the miracle of 1917 which was renewed thirty-three years later, before the eyes of the Holy Father at the Vatican. This grace, Cardinal Tedeschini later said, was «a heavenly testimony destined to authenticate the connection of the marvels of Fatima with the Centre, the Leader of the Truth and the Catholic Magisterium.»⁴⁹⁹ Yes, it was Our Lady of Fatima who, no doubt in answer to Her messenger’s humble supplications, gave the Holy Father direct, spectacular proof of the reality of the apparitions and the urgency of Her message. «The time for doubting Fatima is past. The hour for action has arrived», the Pope had declared a few months earlier.⁵⁰⁰ Our Lady of Fatima came to encourage him to walk resolutely along this road. The sign She gave him was the most pressing invitation to give his assent to Her message, without any more reservations or hesitations. It was also a very clear indication that the hour had come to finally carry out all Her requests.⁵⁰¹

THE SIGN OF THE VIRGIN MOST POWERFUL. This “dance of the sun” manifested the all-powerful mediation of Our Lady, «*pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol, terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata*, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array». It was undoubtedly the promise of a very special protection for the Holy Father, and the extraordinary help of the Queen of Heaven in all his battles. It was the pledge of victory. After the publication of *Humani Generis* against all the modern errors, after the firm

decision taken by the Pope to conclude the canonization process of Pius X in spite of all opposition, after the solemn exercise of his infallibility in proclaiming the dogma of the Assumption, did not Heaven want to encourage the Pope to continue in this sense without fearing anything or anyone any longer?

Indeed, this striking sign appearing in the heavens was at once the richest of rewards, the most pressing encouragement, the most wonderful promise and the announcement of final victory. The preparations for the Council were continuing; was this not the occasion to announce its upcoming convocation to the hundreds of bishops gathering in Rome? Surely, in the atmosphere of intense Marian devotion then reigning, the Portuguese bishops would not have failed to make petitions; these petitions would have encountered the vastest of audiences in the bishops of the world; and Our Lady of Fatima's requests finally could have been accomplished by a unanimous Council.

Unfortunately – perhaps through excessive prudence and distrust of himself – Pius XII did no such thing; he preferred to wait. On November 23 and December 10, he made two brief allusions to Fatima, and that was all.⁵⁰² Yet the hour was grave.

THE QUESTION OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL: THE DECISIVE CONFRONTATION

At the end of the Holy Year and the beginning of 1951, the question of the Council was becoming urgent. Was the preparatory work going to continue or would it be interrupted? The hour had come when the Pope had to decide between publicly announcing the upcoming meeting of the Council (the fifteen hundredth anniversary of the Council of Chalcedon presented a happy coincidence), or abandoning the project for good.

THE MANOEUVRING AND ODIOS BLACKMAIL OF THE INNOVATORS. On January 4, 1951, during a meeting of the preparatory commission, Father Charles, the secretary general, made this strange declaration under the guise of giving a rundown of the work completed at the Holy Office:

«The task of our commission is to prepare the matter which can be submitted to the future Ecumenical Council, which we have already done to a great extent, *perhaps superabundantly*. The subjects which have been proposed concerning the errors to be condemned, the tightening and adaptation of discipline, the foreign missions, the meaning and the value of Sacred Scripture, the protection and inculcation of moral precepts *in effect surpass by their number and their importance what can be handled by just one Council.*»⁵⁰³

Astonishing! After three years of work ordinarily done under his control, the secretary general suddenly believed that the matter prepared was too vast and that this would compromise the very possibility of the Council!

What was actually going on? Father Caprile tells us enough to give us a very clear picture. The secretary general and a minority of commission members wanted, at all costs, to

prevent the Council from solemnly condemning all the modern errors denounced by Pius XII in *Humani Generis*. These people, who secretly belonged to the progressive and semi-modernist party, or at least wanted to protect it, put forward all sorts of specious reasoning to get Pius XII to decide to abandon the project. They pretended to desire a brief council, «to avoid the disadvantages of a prolonged absence of the bishops from their dioceses, and the problems which would be caused by 3,000 bishops staying in Rome with their theologians. They also believed that the Council ought to give the world a solemn testimony of unity and unanimity...»⁵⁰⁴

These, of course, were only vain pretexts, which the innovators used to justify presenting a counter-project. In fact, they desired a completely different Council than the one Cardinal Ruffini had been inspired to suggest, that Pius XII had decided to call, and that the Holy Office had docilely and actively prepared with Msgr. Ottaviani, Archbishop Borgongini-Duca and Msgr. Tardini.⁵⁰⁵ They were already dreaming of something else...

As Archbishop Borgongini-Duca remarks in his final report:

«According to those who were of this tendency, “the Council could have for its principal purpose, not the handling of the Church’s internal affairs (in other words, to condemn with precision and firmness the heresies developing there since 1944) – for which the encyclicals, constitutions, codes, etc. published by the Apostolic See sufficed (which is false! In moments of grave crisis, general councils always proved to be extremely useful and even indispensable) – but to recall to Peter’s fold the dissidents and infidels of the whole world (this was making the ecumenical attraction, the natural fruit of a fully successful dogmatic and disciplinary Council, the primary purpose of the Council which would tend to exclude others!). In this case the assembly of bishops would have to take on particular characteristics.»

In short, they above all did not want an infallible council which would pronounce anathemas, and raise up a new Syllabus of modern errors. So Father Charles proposed a new kind of council which would follow a completely original procedure... to reach the desired results:

The commission, he suggested, would have to «write up a brief and complete text which would present clearly and *in a positive manner* the *principal* truths professed by the Church and considered particularly *important for today’s world*. This text should not enter *into any controversy*, so as to be unanimously acceptable by the Council, even by acclamation.»⁵⁰⁶

In fact, the ten point project proposed by Father Charles in the beginning of January 1951, under the title «*Authentic Declaration on the Ecumenical Council*», was deliberately vague and absolutely foreign to the dogmatic spirit in which the work had been proceeding until then. Infallibility had been removed in favour of a simple «authentic declaration», which left complete liberty to leave the area of revealed truth... and speak of something else...

«We find there a condemnation of all discrimination based on colour, race, or nationality; a confirmation of the dignity of woman and her equal rights with men; an affirmation of the

dignity of work and workers... There is a reminder of the common missionary responsibility of pastors and the faithful. On certain points that it brings up, this document is a prelude to what later became the Constitution on “the Church in the modern world” of Vatican Council II...»

All in all, it was already the spirit of *Pacem in terris* and the famous “Schema XIII”. However, the innovators pretended not to rule out the idea of pronouncing condemnations. With consummate skill, Father Charles simply proposed that they be put off for later on... in other words, *after the Council!* Before disbanding, the Council would merely indicate its opinion on these questions, but decide nothing. Especially nothing infallible! Father Caprile continues:

«At the same time, *but separately*, the Fathers could have been presented a list of errors to be condemned and *reforms to be instituted*, leaving in this area also wide opportunities and a great liberty to propose amendments, additions, suggestions, etc. *Once the Council ended*, the decrees on these matters could have been prepared by the departments of the Roman Curia, with the help of commissions and in the spirit of the Council (a Council deliberately and necessarily unanimist, ecumenical and irenic, as we have seen!).»⁵⁰⁷

And so, there you had it! Rome would go no further than *Humani Generis*, for the pontifical documents published by the departments of the Curia would have no greater authority than an encyclical from the Pope.

Father Charles went on to lay heavy stress on the one and only advantage of this revolutionary solution: according to this procedure, he affirmed, the Council could last no more than three or four weeks at the most! It could be completed before Easter, 1951.

«For this reason (Father Charles wrote), I humbly (!?) suggest that this procedure be submitted to the Sovereign Pontiff, who with authority and prudence will decide *if we can continue our work* and bring it to a happy and *prompt conclusion*. *If not*, I strongly fear that the immense material that we have prepared *may prove to be unsuitable for the conciliar “form”*.»⁵⁰⁸

In other words, the secretary general was throwing all his moral authority behind this innovative solution. He went further, and let the Pope know clearly that for him and his friends, it was this or nothing. Pius XII would find himself forced to choose between this stupid, unacceptable project, and the pure and simple abandonment of the project of the Council. What good was it to have 3,000 bishops come to Rome to vote by acclamation for a hollow, fine sounding discourse intended to please the world, but without any authority or effective doctrinal content for the defence of the Church’s Faith? Father Charles and his accomplices were engaging in odious blackmail.

In opposition to them, the president, Archbishop Borgongini-Duca, Msgr. Ottaviani, Msgr. Tardini and the majority of the commission members wanted a real Council, which would have examined and infallibly settled real questions. They had worked for it, they saw its importance and they ardently desired it to become a reality.

After explaining the counter-project of the innovators, Father Caprile makes an admission:

«But others, *who were more numerous than the first group*, thought differently within the Commission. According to them, *the Council had to follow the traditional method*, in other words it would first of all require a long period of preparation. Only when this period had been completed would it be possible to consider setting a date for the Council. *As for the duration of the Council, no limits could be imposed on it*. The Fathers had to be left in complete liberty, and at all costs they should not be given the impression that everything had been settled beforehand by the Roman Curia.»⁵⁰⁹

What must be said is that if Father Charles had organized and encouraged all the preparatory work, as he should have done – instead of creating obstacles, and elaborating, with a few accomplices, a project for a new kind of Council – the preparatory work could have been terminated in 1951-1952. At this period, the most traditional procedure would rapidly have resulted in a striking unanimity for the texts prepared by the Holy Office, in the spirit of Pius XII. Because it feared this certain success, the tiny minority of the progressive clan attempted, by the most tortuous methods, to undermine this great Ecumenical Council, which would have brought about the downfall of the progressives.

In early January 1951, Father Charles and his friends decided to give Pius XII a brutal presentation of the grave opposition now dividing the preparatory commission into two antagonistic parts, to the point where work was practically paralyzed:

«As everyone saw (Father Caprile writes), the divergences within the Commission went much further than questions of organization. Since they resulted from a different manner of conceiving the meeting of the Council, their incidences made themselves felt on all the work immediately at hand: its scope, its duration, the form of documents to be prepared... During the last meeting on January 4, 1951, it was decided to put the question before the Holy Father, *who ordered no more work to be done on the project.*»⁵¹⁰

This decision put an end to an immense hope. We know that after three years of work, Pius XII resigned himself to calling off the Council only with great regret. Why then did he make this decision? On this point Father Caprile cites the testimony of Father Giacomo Martegani, S.J., who as director of *Civiltà cattolica* from 1939 to 1955 was received by the Pope in audience every fifteen days:

«I well remember (he declares) that *Pius XII ended by giving up this idea against his better judgment*, for two fundamental reasons which he repeated several times: 1. *His already advanced age*; 2. His physical strength was too weak to attend to his ordinary work, which was always overwhelming. “This will be for my successor”, he concluded. We have an identical testimony from another source. A group of Italian bishops recommended the usefulness of a Council, and several times Pius XII answered them: “*It’s true, it’s true, but I am too old; it will be my successor who does it*”.»⁵¹¹

«I am too old»? It is true that at the beginning of 1951 Pius XII was pushing seventy-five. But he was not afflicted with any grave illness, and he could reasonably hope to enjoy

sufficient health for several more years.⁵¹² Granted, the Holy Year had been trying, but it had also been a time of grace and abundant activity. Sister Pasqualina attests to it:

«When the Holy Year began (on December 24, 1949), Pius XII had been governing the Church of God for over ten years. *He was still fresh, alert, and almost like a young man in spite of his seventy-three years.* With all his soul and with indefatigable zeal, he devoted himself to all those who desired to take advantage of the benefits of the Holy Year, those who desired to see him and receive his blessing.»⁵¹³

In fact, by putting forward his advanced age, Pius XII was no doubt giving a pretext which was not decisive, for he could not have forgotten to take this into account three years earlier, when he had given the order to begin the Council's preparation. If he really considered himself "too old", he never would have made this decision. Clearly, the unforeseen difficulties which came up during the preparation made him think twice. If the preparatory commission had accomplished its work with diligence and enthusiasm, and in unanimity, it is very probable that Pius XII would have persevered in his design. But the counter-project put forward by Father Charles brought before his eyes such grave and profound divisions among the commission members that the Pope would be forced to re-examine the whole work himself. This would lead him to make painful decisions, which he was not used to resolving himself to do...

In effect, how could the Pope get out of this impasse, except by openly disavowing the man he had chosen three years earlier as his trusted aide, confiding to him the role of secretary of the Central Commission? Yes, it was necessary to make a choice between the two parties before everyone, resolutely removing those who had created obstacles to the progress of the work. But this minority enjoyed powerful protectors, some of whom were undoubtedly among the Pope's most intimate collaborators. To unmask their hypocritical and perfidious manoeuvres and continue, with that much more firmness, his great design by assembling the already planned and prepared Council without delay, the Pope would have had to act with heroic courage. He would have needed an increase of supernatural light and strength. Without any doubt, Our Lady of Fatima would have granted them to him abundantly, if in all humility and trust he had resolutely committed himself to the path She had marked out for him, graciously permitting him to contemplate the great miracle of the sun at the Vatican. But Pius XII had hesitated, procrastinated. And a few months later, a *coup de majesté* became necessary to ward off the ambushes of the Council's adversaries. The Pope backed off.

Today we can see it better: this abandoning of the project of the Council by Pius XII, finally giving way before the tenacious opposition of a handful of innovators, was going to have the most fatal consequences for the preservation of the Faith in the Church. The clan of liberals, progressives or semi-modernists had just come away with its first victory. It was a sizable one, and it had great consequences. The great hope of the pontificate was extinguished, and at the same time, the most favourable opportunity for the implementation of the Fatima message. After this crucial year, 1950, the decline was going to begin. To be sure, the final years of Pius XII's reign – like those of King Louis XIV after

1689, the parallel is striking⁵¹⁴ – were still glorious years, and ever so fruitful for the Church! They still shine brightly with the splendour of the peak years. But they are already tragically clouded by shady manoeuvres of the unvanquished adversary, giving reason to fear frightful storms.



Pope Pius XII welcomes the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima in St. Peter's Basilica.

SECTION IV: Pope Pius XII... «Like the King of France» (1950-1956)

CHAPTER VII

«THEY FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE KING OF FRANCE BY DELAYING THE EXECUTION OF MY REQUEST...» (1950 - 1953)

«Make it known to My ministers that, given they are following the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My request, they shall follow him into misfortune. It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.»⁵¹⁵

This revelation of Our Lord, which Sister Lucy passed on to her bishop on August 29, 1931, and repeated several times since then, really furnished the deepest, most exact explanation of the final years of Pius XII's pontificate. Like King Louis XIV after 1689, the Pope was deprived of the abundant extraordinary graces and miraculous assistance promised by the Immaculate Heart. He did not succeed any more than the king in decisively crushing the haughty and proud heads of his enemies, those from without and especially those from within, traitors to Christendom and perfidious adversaries of Catholic Truth. This impotence of the Sovereign Pontiff before the unchained forces of evil finally drew down "misfortune" upon the Church and upon the papacy itself.

Yet, at the dawn of 1951, all was not lost; far from it! It was still not too late. Although Pope Pius XII, unfortunately, had not seized the best occasion offered him to accomplish Heaven's requests – the Holy Year and the projected Ecumenical Council – Heaven does not seem to have rigorously demanded that. New requests, new appeals, and new miracles insistently reminded him of Our Lady of Fatima's double message: Her wonderful promises, and the terrible chastisements announced if men continued turning a deaf ear to Her requests. Indeed only in hindsight are we able to recognize 1950 as the great turning point. In many respects, the pontificate of Pius XII was a great one right up to the end, and on many occasions, as we shall see, the saving decisions were still possible.

I. TOWARDS A TRUE CONSECRATION OF RUSSIA? (NOVEMBER 1950 - JULY 1952)

A HOLY INITIATIVE OF RUSSIAN CATHOLICS

On November 21, 1950, in the wake of the blessed days of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption, about a hundred Russian Catholics from different countries arrived at Rome for the jubilee year. The instigator and soul of this pilgrimage was Miss Irene Posnoff, a doctor in letters long devoted to the two holy causes of the Marian apostolate and the conversion of Russia. On November 26, the pilgrims attended a solemn Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite, celebrated in Saint Peter's basilica by the Melkite Patriarch of Antioch and sixteen Eastern Rite bishops. The Pope assisted at the Divine Liturgy,⁵¹⁶ and then received in audience the Russian pilgrims, who offered him a magnificent reproduction of an ancient icon.

But that was not the essential:

«After praying together in the basilicas, catacombs and other sanctuaries of Rome (Miss Posnoff recalls), the pilgrims met for some study days. The accomplishment of Our Lady's desires contained in the Fatima message preoccupied them all.»⁵¹⁷

Miss Posnoff had even written to Sister Lucy, and had received from her this very simple, but touching and profound response:

«Our Heavenly Mother loves the Russian people and I love them also; uniting myself to the secret designs of Her Immaculate Heart, I ardently desire their return to the right road which leads to Heaven. I know that the Russian people are great, generous and cultured, that they are capable of walking on the paths of justice, truth and good.

«No sooner had I seen the kindness of the Mother of God in their regard than I began to look on them as brothers, and I wish nothing more than their salvation. I know that the true faith, the Christian faith is alive among you; I know that there are chosen souls among you who serve God and sacrifice themselves to obtain the salvation of those who have left Him. Nobody can and nobody must fulfil this great mission better than the very members of your country. It is a task which will take not just one day, but many years of work and prayer. But in the end, the Immaculate Heart of Mary will triumph, and it will be our happiness to have worked a little and suffered for Her triumph. Do not cease doing everything you can for the salvation of your people and your homeland.»

However, an unforeseen difficulty arose for the pilgrims. Miss Posnoff continues her account: «We learned that the content of this message was contested by theologians: “The Holy Virgin could not have asked the Holy Father to make this consecration since Russia was schismatic. Lucy, not being sufficiently instructed, had distorted the message.” But this theological hypothesis caused protests.» For excellent reasons, our valiant Russian pilgrims decided to pay no attention to Father Dhanis' objections, for once again he was behind it! «It was unanimously decided to send a petition to the Holy Father setting out our point of view, and asking him to make the consecration of Russia requested by Our Lady of Fatima.»

Bishop Meletieff, a Russian Orthodox bishop now converted to Catholicism and a participant in the pilgrimage, approved the project. The pilgrims also informed Father Wetter, S.J., rector of the Russicum. And now, a stupefying fact: Father Wetter «showed himself completely disposed to associate himself with our initiative, along with the whole seminary, on the condition that Father Dhanis, a professor at the Gregorian University, who did not admit that the Pope could consecrate “a schismatic country” to Mary, made no opposition.» The fact is indicative of the scandalous influence exercised by Father Dhanis within the Society in everything concerning Fatima. Clearly, in the eyes of the Father General – we will furnish still more proofs – he was the sovereign authority in the matter, in preference to his colleague, Father da Fonseca. Father da Fonseca had been following the events since 1930, and had become one of the best specialists on the question – but under the generalate of Father Ledochowski!

Miss Posnoff made a visit to Father Dhanis, who listened to her eloquent plea kindly and concluded with this promise: «Your point of view is defensible. I will not make any opposition.» Still, as later events show, the adversary of Fatima was not convinced. But above the Father General was Pius XII, and since courage was not one of Father Dhanis' strong suits, he preferred to keep silence and continue working underground. He had even more reason, since the petition was not addressed to the Holy Father right away: «It was decided to wait another year so that the Russian Catholics who had not participated in our meeting could be informed, and could send in their adherence as well.»⁵¹⁸ We will soon describe how this holy enterprise turned out.

PIUS XII CHOOSES FATIMA FOR THE CLOSING OF THE HOLY YEAR JUBILEE

In his radio message of Christmas 1950, Pius XII announced to the world that in conformity with tradition, during the year 1951 the privileges of the Holy Year jubilee would be extended to the whole world.⁵¹⁹ On May 13, 1951, Portugal learned – with great enthusiasm! – that the Holy Father had made another decision: the solemn closing of this Holy Year “extra Urbem” (outside Rome) would take place the following October 13 at the Cova da Iria. It was to be preceded by an “International Catholic Congress on the Message of Fatima.” This congress lasted three days, and in three public sessions it was to talk about Fatima and peace in the family, in the workplace, and in the world.⁵²⁰ Thus, as we will see a little further on, Pius XII answered an immense campaign of phony peace propaganda launched by Moscow with Fatima. In this way, he once more highlighted his confidence in Fatima and the universal character of its message.

FATHER DHANIS REFUTED. In May, Father da Fonseca, S.J., who no doubt was comforted and reassured by this decision of the Holy Father, published a detailed response – finally! – to the anti-Fatima articles of Father Dhanis and the numerous articles of all those who had slavishly, blindly, repeated his arguments like parrots. The response was firm and well informed. It must be noted however, that it did not appear in Rome in *Civiltà cattolica*, the great Jesuit review, but in Portugal in the review *Broteria*, which greatly limited its diffusion in European intellectual circles.⁵²¹

“THE POPE OF FATIMA? THAT’S ME!” On the occasion of his episcopal jubilee, the Catholic people of the world had offered the Sovereign Pontiff the sum necessary for the construction of a new church dedicated to his patron, Saint Eugene. On June 2, 1951 Pius XII proceeded to the consecration of the high altar of this new Roman basilica. On June 3, the beatification of Pope Pius X had taken place and the Holy Father pronounced the magnificent discourse from which we have quoted ample excerpts.⁵²² On the following day, he received a group of Portuguese pilgrims who had donated the altar of Our Lady in the new basilica, an altar dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima. On that occasion Pius XII spoke to them at length about Fatima:

«From the beginning of the Holy Year, We often had the opportunity of welcoming ambassadors from the Land of Holy Mary who had come to find Us, and recalled to Us *the*

heavenly message of Our Lady of Fatima which was announced there, but so as to be passed on to the world, and which was almost the anticipated message of an unending Holy Year.»

Pius XII was even bold enough to mention for the first time in an official discourse the providential coincidence which had marked his episcopal consecration on May 13, 1917:

«You have wanted – and how happy was the inspiration of your filial devotion – you have wanted the commemorative monument of Our episcopal consecration to recall at the same time *the providential coincidence that marked it*. On this great date which was a formidable one in Our life, perhaps in the secret designs of Providence, without our being able to suspect it, another even greater date was being prepared, the day when the Lord would place upon Our shoulders the care of the Universal Church. *But on this date at the same hour, in the mountain of Fatima, the first apparition of the white Queen of the Most Holy Rosary was being announced*, as if the Most Loving Mother wanted to make Us understand that in the stormy times of Our pontificate, in the middle of one of the greatest crises of world history, We would always have the maternal and vigilant assistance of *the great Woman who is victorious in all the battles of God* to envelop Us, protect Us and guide Us. We know that this is your inner conviction and likewise the conviction of all those whom you represent here. This is why you wanted to express it and eternalize it in the marble of the altar consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima. And is it not true that We felt and even sensibly touched the manifest protection of the Virgin, not only in the marvels which the Pilgrim Virgin is in the process of distributing in abundance throughout the world, but also in the providential design which permitted Us to consecrate this very world to Her Immaculate Heart, and define Her glorious Assumption?...

«Dear children, while we manifest to you once more the most lively gratitude of Our paternal heart, We lift it up to God with the most ardent wishes that Our Lord, *through the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, continue to grant you the wonderful assistance and extraordinary benefits with which She has filled you...»*

Then, addressing himself to the “Servites of Our Lady”, who took care of the sick during the pilgrimages, the Pope continued:

«We do not know if anyone among you has received a miraculous cure. But we do know that your example of sacrifice and charity springing from the heart is *one of the miracles of Fatima* and not the smallest...

«Continue then untiringly your work of a most exquisite Christian charity; do not forget however that today the great “patient” is the world itself. Unceasingly request for it the miraculous intervention of the most high Queen of the World, so that the hopes for an era of true peace are fulfilled as soon as possible, and that *the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* ushers in more quickly the triumph of the Heart of Jesus in the Kingdom of God.»

It is a well known fact that at the end of this moving audience, a pilgrim exclaimed with enthusiasm: «*Long live the Pope of Fatima!*» And with a smile, Pius XII answered: «*That’s me!*»⁵²³

On September 15, he published the encyclical *Ingruentium malorum*, dealing entirely with the devotion of the Holy Rosary, which he indicated as «the most effective means» «for healing the evils which afflict our century».⁵²⁴

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE MESSAGE OF FATIMA AND PEACE took place in Lisbon from Sunday, October 7 to Thursday, October 11. The opening session took place at the palace of the National Assembly, under the presidency of Mr. Craveiro Lopes, President of the Republic. Participating were five Cardinals, over forty bishops, government ministers, ambassadors, members of parliament, theologians, in all close to ten thousand participants of the Congress from forty-three nations.

«On Wednesday (Canon Barthas reports) especially notable was the report of Mr. Douglas Hyde, former director of the *Daily Worker*, the journal for English communists.» He had been converted after reading and meditating on a book about Fatima, which had been sent to Hyde so he could refute it:

«One day (he said) I received a copy of a book entitled *Our Lady of Fatima* by Msgr. Ryan. A note accompanied it, drawing my attention to pages 90 and 92, where it dealt with Russia and communism, and asked me to refute them. I brought the book to my house and placed it in my library among the works of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and other Marxist writers. I have now been a Catholic over three years and this book, with the sender's note which I grafted onto it, is one of my most precious treasures. I have it here at Lisbon, and I would be happy to show it..»

«For me, the message of Our Lady of Fatima is the only foundation for a hope that soon communism which divides this world will be overcome, and Russia will be converted. Without this hope there is no hope, since in less than thirty years, communism has come to dominate a third of humanity, and its progress continues... Only this certainty that prayer and penance are the way of salvation, saves from despair those who know the nature, strength and diabolical character of communism, because communism is diabolical and perhaps the worst thing the world has ever known.»⁵²⁵

Next, Canon Barthas read his report, which we will come back to later. At the evening session, which was presided over by Cardinal Tedeschini, the papal legate, the principal orator was Bishop Fulton Sheen, at that time auxiliary bishop of New York:

«He showed a sort of striking parallelism between the stages of Russian communism and the evolution of the mystery of Fatima, which made it very clear that Fatima is the remedy brought from Heaven by Our Lady to heal the world of the infernal toxin of Marxist atheism.»⁵²⁶

On Friday, the congress members went up to the Sanctuary of the Cova da Iria for the pilgrimage closing the Holy Year.

OCTOBER 13, 1951: A GREAT PILGRIMAGE OF PRAYER AND PENANCE. Close to a million pilgrims had come to Fatima. Under a thin, cold rain, a large crowd spent the whole night in

prayer. Even more than usual, they prayed for Russia. Salazar's government had invited the pontifical Russian College in Rome to participate in the pilgrimage of October 13, and the government paid for their expenses. At seven o'clock on the morning of the 13th, the crowd attended a solemn Liturgy for the conversion of Russia, celebrated by Bishop Meletieff in the Russo-Byzantine Rite. Father Wetter, rector of the Russicum, and Father Koren concelebrated with the Russian bishop who had converted from Orthodoxy,⁵²⁷ while the choir of seminarians performed the chants of the Liturgy in honour of the Most Holy Virgin; for on October 13 – by a wonderful coincidence! – the Russian Church celebrated a feast in honour of Our Lady.⁵²⁸

CARDINAL TEDESCHINI REVEALS PIUS XII'S VISION. Then began the solemn Mass presided over by the Cardinal legate. One passage from the homily made the greatest impression on hundreds of thousands of pilgrims:

«*Signum Dei!* We have seen the sign of God!" Such was the reflection which the stupefied crowd made on October 13, 1917. Mary, "clothed with the sun" had, so to speak, shaken the edge of Her heavenly mantle for just a few instants. The sun had obeyed Her orders, and in obeying Her had imprinted on the messages of Fatima a more striking seal than any emperor ever could have made. Everything here is extraordinary, everything is worthy of the Queen of Heaven! It is a marvel never before seen!

«However, and on a purely personal basis, I would like to tell my old and my present Portuguese friends, and all the pilgrims with them, something even more wonderful. I will tell them that another person saw this miracle. He saw it outside of Fatima. He saw it many years later. He saw it at Rome. And this person is the Pope, Pope Pius XII himself!

«Was this grace *a reward* for him? Was it *a sign showing that the definition of the dogma of the Assumption had been supremely pleasing to God?* Was it *a Heavenly testimony, intended to authenticate the connection of the mystery of Fatima with the Centre, the Head of Truth and the Catholic Magisterium?* It was all three things at the same time.»

«This took place at four o'clock in the afternoon on October 30 and 31, and on November 1 of last year, 1950: and once more at the same hour on the octave day of November 1...⁵²⁹

«Was it not Fatima being transported to the Vatican? Was it not the Vatican being transformed into a new Fatima? Thus the combined names, Fatima-Vatican were manifested more than ever during the jubilee of the Holy Year 1950.»⁵³⁰

After this memorable homily the Mass continued, at the end of which the pilgrims listened to a message from the Pope, as had already been done on October 31, 1942 and May 13, 1946. Here are the principal excerpts:

RADIO MESSAGE TO THE PILGRIMS OF FATIMA
(OCTOBER 13, 1951)

«Venerable Brethren and dear children!

«*“Magnificat anima mea Dominum!”*

«These are the words that come spontaneously to our lips, to express the feelings which inundate our soul in this historic moment of the present solemnities, at which we preside in the person of our Cardinal legate; solemnities, we say, or rather a spectacular hymn of thanksgiving which your enlightened piety wanted to address to the Lord, for the inestimable benefit of the worldwide Holy Year, *on this privileged mountain of Fatima, chosen by the Blessed Virgin as the throne of Her mercies and inexhaustible wellspring of graces and marvels...*

«Today the Jubilee, extended to the whole world, is about to close. And, as we look at it in retrospect, another no less consoling vision presents itself to our mind. It is no longer, or no longer only, the Angel of the Lord, it is the Queen of Angels who, going forth with Her miraculous statues from the most celebrated sanctuaries of Christendom, and especially from this sanctuary of Fatima – where Heaven has granted us to crown Her “Queen of the World” – goes through all Her domains in a jubilee visit.

«*At Her passage, in America as in Europe, in Africa and in India, in Indonesia and in Australia, the blessings of Heaven rain down, marvels of grace are multiplied in such a way that we can hardly believe our eyes.* And it is not just the children of the Church, the obedient and the faithful, who redouble their fervour; there are prodigal children who return to their father’s house, overcome by the memory of motherly caresses; there are even, in countries where the light of the Gospel has scarcely begun shining (who could have imagined it?) men still enveloped in the darkness of error, who in throngs, rivalling Christ’s faithful await Her visit, welcome Her and acclaim Her with enthusiasm, venerate Her, invoke Her, and obtain from Her signal graces...

«This is why We joyfully agreed to preside in spirit over these solemnities, and We mean to entrust this Holy Year to Mary, so to speak in a perceptible manner, certain that our thanksgiving, passing *through Her Immaculate Heart*, will be more acceptable to the Lord, and that the salutary fruits of the Jubilee in Her blessed hands, far from promptly vanishing, will be preserved, blessed and multiplied...

«*Our Lady, in Her Message, which having become a “Pilgrim “ She repeats as She goes all over the world, indicates to us the sure way to peace and all the means necessary to obtain it from Heaven, for human means are hardly to be trusted in.* When, with particular insistence, She asks us for the recitation of the family Rosary, She seems to tell us that the secret of domestic peace is in the imitation of the Holy Family. When She exhorts us to preoccupy ourselves with our neighbour as ourselves, even praying and sacrificing ourselves for his spiritual and temporal good, She indicates to us the truly effective means of re-establishing concord between social classes. Finally, when Her maternal voice, sad and suppliant, asks us for a general and sincere return to a more Christian life, is She not reiterating to us that only in peace with God, and in respect for justice and the eternal Law, can the edifice of

world peace be solidly established? For if God does not build it, in vain do the builders work.

«Dear Children, who have come today in such great numbers to this Marian Sanctuary, oasis of blessings, etc.»⁵³¹

THE “PORTUGUESE MIRACLE” CONTINUES. These spectacular ceremonies of October 13, 1951 were unquestionably a new high point in the promotion of the message of Fatima.⁵³² At the same time they gave the striking proof of the wonderful Catholic restoration – but also the political, social and economic restoration – going on in the “Land of Holy Mary” under the sign of Fatima. Before the anti-Christ powers of communist atheism and plutocratic, liberal, Judeo-Protestant, laicizing Freemasonry, Salazar’s Portugal continued to stand out like a peaceful and wise island of Christendom restored, the “showcase of Our Lady”.⁵³³ The reason for this success was the felicitous harmony and cooperation between the two powers – «the Church and the State happily co-operating», as Saint Pius X had said.

AN UNJUSTIFIED OPTIMISM

It must be observed, however, that in the analysis of the world’s situation, an unjustified optimism was little by little winning over the majority of Fatima experts. This optimism was as illusory as could be, and was soon to have the most fatal effects. Professing an absolute confidence in the Holy Father without restrictions or limits, exactly as if he enjoyed the double charism of impeccability in all his acts and infallibility in all areas and on all occasions, *they did not dare insinuate that the Pope had not yet obeyed all of Our Lady’s requests*. Had he not consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Yes, but he had done nothing more! To avoid the risk of displeasing him, it was necessary to be silent on Heaven’s other demands. Thus for years writers continued publishing Our Lady’s great Secret in the diluted version published in 1942.⁵³⁴

While the impression was created that the Pope had already fulfilled all the requests of Our Lady of Fatima, efforts were made to show that Her promises were in the process of being fulfilled. Thus Canon Barthas, in his communication to the International Congress of Lisbon in October 1951, tried to explain that since 1945 and the worldwide spread of the Fatima message since that year, «*Our Lady was beginning to build world peace*»!⁵³⁵ John Haffert wrote in a similar vein in *Russia Will Be Converted*, published in the USA in 1951. Likewise Bishop Fulton Sheen, on the day after the spectacular ceremonies of October 13, 1951, wrote these euphoric lines which are very sad to read today, as communism’s implacable advance continues before our eyes:

«None of those who were among these million penitents of October 13 doubts that Our Lady of Fatima wishes to give peace to the world... Communism was defeated on October 13, 1951, but the news hadn’t leaked out yet (sic)... When historians look for the event which turned the world upside-down and brought it peace and prosperity, they will discover that it was not a battle but a prayer, and not a day, but a night... the humid night of

October 12-13, 1951... the greatest religious event in the history of the modern world.»⁵³⁶
(Quoted in the review *Soul*, November-December 1951).

It is the root of this illusory optimism that we must denounce. For although this optimism was unceasingly and cruelly refuted by later events, we will see it continually springing up again. The root is not hard to find: it is an error on Our Lady's precise requests and their real accomplishment by the Sovereign Pontiff. This deplorable error itself has its source in a deliberate determination to affirm *a priori*, as if it were a dogma of faith, that the Holy Father has necessarily always done his entire duty, and accomplished all of Heaven's requests. This was forgetting that neither just obedience, nor the loving and filial trust which are due the Holy Father as Vicar of Christ and visible head of the Church, can authorize the faithful to fail in the absolute respect due the truth. If the Blessed Virgin has spoken, if She has expressed requests, nobody has the right to deform their meaning; to attribute to Her words which She never spoke is lying. It is also deceiving the faithful and harming Our Lady's honour to announce the imminent fulfilment of Her promises, when the requests which are the conditions of the promises have not yet been fulfilled by the Pastors of the Church.⁵³⁷

Yes, there are many occasions when we have to deplore the errors, the inaccuracies, the undue silence and at times the lies which have enormously harmed the cause of Fatima. Yes, how many priests, bishops, and Cardinals could have and ought to have spoken to humbly echo the true demands of the Queen of Heaven, but were silent out of cowardice. Fortunately the seer of Fatima, in spite of the grille of her Carmel, in spite of so many contrary pressures, in spite of the extreme reserve imposed on her by her vow of religious obedience – the orders of her superiors often severely limited her liberty of speech⁵³⁸ – in spite of so many obstacles, Sister Lucy managed to make her voice heard. A favourable opportunity presented itself precisely in this autumn of 1951. Sister Lucy did not let the opportunity pass without courageously profiting from it.

OCTOBER 1951: SISTER LUCY PASSES ON A MESSAGE TO THE HOLY FATHER

The day after the pilgrimage when so many prayers had been offered for «poor Russia», Father Wetter, S.J., Rector of the Russicum, came to the Carmel of Coimbra. He was accompanied by one of the Russian seminarians, Pavel Bliznetsoff, and Bishop Meletieff, the converted Russian bishop. During the audience, Sister Lucy asked: «*Are you able to pass on to the Holy Father the message that what Our Lady of Fatima requested has not yet been done?*» Father Wetter said yes.

We have a sure witness of this fact, who was living at the Russicum at the time, and affirms that Father Wetter effectively passed on this request to the Pope, probably through Father Leiber, who was also a Jesuit and was Pius XII's private secretary.

On December 15, 1951, in a letter to a friend, Sister Lucy wrote in the same sense:

«*Our Lady's request concerning Russia has not been done.* According to what X... told me, the bishops of Russia sent a petition to the Holy Father asking for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, such as Our Lady requested it. May God grant that this actually be true and that everything comes to pass. But it is a little late... patience!»⁵³⁹

THE PETITION OF THE RUSSICUM AND THE RUSSIAN CATHOLICS

At this juncture, the end of 1951 or the beginning of 1952, the Pope received the petition of the Russian pilgrims, the petition they had decided to send the year before in Rome. However, contrary to Lucy's hopes, this petition still did not ask for the consecration of Russia «*such as it was requested by Our Lady*».

Recently Miss Posnoff wrote to me:

«Unfortunately, we did not know at the time that this consecration had to be done in union with all the bishops, because in the text we possessed, after the words "consecration of Russia", there were some dots indicating that some words had been omitted.»⁵⁴⁰

This omission on the part of our Russian pilgrims was certainly involuntary, but how regrettable! In spite of that, it is a moving request and vigorously expresses the antagonism between the two cities, the implacable struggle of the two forces fighting for souls and nations: Satan, the Prince of this world, and the Immaculate Queen of Heaven, Mother of God and men. Here are some excerpts from this text:⁵⁴¹

«We the signers of this letter, bishops, priests, and lay Russian Catholics, as well as the College of the Russian seminary of Rome, "the Russicum", met with everybody present in November 1950, during the pilgrimage of Russian Catholics on the occasion of the Holy Year.»

After expressing their filial gratitude to the Sovereign Pontiff for defining the dogma of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin, the Russian Catholics continued:

«*All of us together dare to ask Your Holiness for a special consecration of our country, Russia, which has suffered so much, to Our Lady, the Queen of the World, that is, to Her Motherly and Immaculate Heart pierced by the sword.*»

Then they go on to explain the reasons for their initiative:

«The deliverance of our country, followed by that of the whole world from the terrible slavery of Bolshevism, cannot be obtained only by the material forces of arms and money. It is becoming clearer and clearer that the struggle undertaken against God and Holy Church by the Bolsheviks is not led by mere human powers. These forces have as their source Satan himself and the spirits of darkness under him, who conduct their battle more and more openly, and the hour is not far off when perhaps Satan's face will appear before us

unveiled, and no longer disguised by the human hands who act under his impulse and under his direction.

«In addition, mere material arms – money and weapons – are powerless against the direct action of Satan. Another force is needed, another support. We need a heavenly force, a supernatural force. This force, this support we have in the Most Holy Virgin...»

The letter goes on to explain the striking contrast between atheistic communism's progress in the world and the great movement of Marian devotion which was continually increasing:

«... The truly active and fruitful movements of our time... all advance under the standard and protection of the Most Holy Virgin.»

«Thus, going parallel to the increasing strength of atheistic materialism is a profound submission to the Most Holy Virgin, with a better understanding of this submission. Does not this parallelism tell us where the evil is and where the force capable of overcoming it is? The evil is Satan, who has assumed the appearance of Marxist-Bolshevik atheism, and the force capable of overcoming it is our Holy Queen and protectress, the Mother of our God...»⁵⁴²

«It is important and necessary that Russia, the true Christian Russia, commit itself to the Army of the Most Holy Virgin for the final and definitive battle against the Serpent. This is the pledge of humanity's salvation. From time immemorial Russia was called the house of the Most Holy Virgin, and the principal church, located within the Kremlin walls – profaned by the Bolsheviks – is dedicated to Her glorious Assumption.

«But who at present can make this consecration in the name of Russia, which has been profaned and enslaved? We see only one solution, and we express it in our humble request. We ask that this consecration be done by the Vicar of Christ on earth, successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Peter, Sovereign Pontiff of the Universal Church, the Pope of Old Rome ...»

The representatives of the Russian Church, at least, had done everything in their power to obtain the accomplishment of Our Lady of Fatima's requests. She, in turn, demonstrated that She was pleased with their request...

AGAIN HEAVEN INTERVENES

For, if we can believe a bulky Italian work on the consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary published in 1960, apparently the Most Holy Virgin appeared to Sister Lucy again in May 1952:

«The Madonna appeared to Lucy: "Make it known to the Holy Father that I still await the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart. Without this consecration Russia cannot be converted, nor can the world have peace."»⁵⁴³

AGAIN FATHER DHANIS GETS INTO THE ACT

Although he had promised Miss Posnoff not to oppose the Russicum's petition, Father Dhanis took up his pen once more. No doubt he was acting at the instigation of people more highly placed in the hierarchy than he, and close enough to the Holy Father to guarantee impunity for Dhanis. In the June issue of *Nouvelle revue théologique*, he pretended to refute Father da Fonseca's correction published in May of the previous year.⁵⁴⁴ Those who reread the explanation of his theses in our first volume⁵⁴⁵ will see how this article, published in the University of Louvain's theological review at the very moment when the Pope was insistently being asked for the consecration of Russia, sought to dissuade him from accomplishing it by creating a contrary campaign in the European intelligentsia. Dhanis quoted his 1945 text once more:

«There is no need for long reflections to see that it was *practically impossible for the Sovereign Pontiff to make such a consecration*. As Head of the Church, the Pope can consecrate it to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; as Vicar of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who for this reason has the responsibility of leading the whole human race to salvation, he can consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart; absolutely speaking, he can also consecrate to Her a country such as Russia, since it is part of the world. *But in the concrete, things appear more difficult*. Schismatic as a religious unity, and Marxist as a political unity, Russia could not be consecrated by the Pope, *without this act taking on the air of a challenge, both in regard to the separated hierarchy, as well as the Union of Soviet Republics*. This would make the consecration *practically unrealizable*. It is clear that we are talking only about the moral impossibility of the consecration, due to the reactions it would normally provoke... But could the Most Holy Virgin have requested *a consecration which, taken according to the rigour of the terms, would be practically unrealizable?...* This question indeed seems to call for a negative response.»⁵⁴⁶

In short, Father Dhanis was reaffirming his thesis: it is impossible to make the consecration of Russia. And this is so evident to him that he even comes to doubt the authenticity of this request.

Fortunately, when the article appeared, it was already too late. Pius XII had already ordered Father Hermann, a Jesuit of the Oriental Institute, to prepare the text by which he would consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On June 30, he received the Russicum in audience, no doubt to announce that he had granted their request. On July 7, on the occasion of the feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius, apostles of the Slavic peoples, he published the Apostolic Letter *Sacro vergente anno*, of which these are the essential passages:

APOSTOLIC LETTER TO THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA (JULY 7, 1952)

«Dear peoples of Russia, health and peace in the Lord!

«While the Holy Year was happily coming to a close, after it was granted us, by a divine disposition, to solemnly define the dogma of the Assumption into Heaven, body and soul, of the Holy Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, many were those who from every part of the world expressed the liveliest joy to us; *many among them, as they sent us their letters of gratitude, urgently requested us to consecrate the entire Russian people, who at present are undergoing such sufferings, to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary.*

«*This supplication was most agreeable to us, for if our paternal affection embraces all peoples, it embraces in a particular manner those who, although for the most part separated from the Apostolic See by the vicissitudes of history, still preserve the Christian name, but are in such conditions that it is very difficult for them to hear our voice and learn the tenets of Catholic doctrine, and they are even pushed by deceitful and pernicious devices to reject the faith and the very idea of God.*»

I. ROME'S CONSTANT BENEVOLENCE FOR THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

In a long, historical part, the Pope brings up the uninterrupted relations between Russia and the Sovereign Pontiffs. Finally, he recalls the ceremony of March 19, 1930, at Saint Peter's in Rome, requested by Pope Pius XI for the conversion of Russia and his decision henceforth to offer the prayers after Mass for this intention. Pius XII adds:

«We confirm and willingly renew this exhortation and prescription, since the present religious situation of your country is no better, and we are animated by the same ardent affection and solicitude for these peoples.»

After recalling the meaning of his action in favour of peace during the Second World War, the Pope adds that if he must condemn communism, it is for the good of the Russian people:

«When it is a question of defending the cause of religion, truth, justice and Christian civilization, certainly we cannot be silent... By the mandate of Jesus Christ, Who entrusted the entire flock of the Christian people to Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles – whose unworthy successor we are – we love all peoples with an intense love, and we desire to assure the earthly prosperity and eternal salvation of each of them... If some among them, deceived by lies and calumnies, profess a pronounced hostility in our regard, we continue to be animated by the greatest pity and love for them...»

«No doubt we have condemned and repulsed – as the duties of our office demand – *the errors which the promoters of atheistic communism teach or strive to propagate* for the greatest harm and detriment of the citizens; but far from rejecting those who have been led astray, we desire their return to the truth, in the right road. Even more: *we have unmasked these lies, which often stem from a simulated truth*, because we love you with the heart of a father and seek your good...»

II. THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, HOPE OF RUSSIA

THE DEVOTION OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE TO THE MOST HOLY VIRGIN

«We know that many of you preserve the Christian Faith in the secret sanctuary of their own conscience; that in no way do they support the enemies of religion. We also know that they ardently desire not only to believe in secret, but also, as befits free men, to publicly affirm, if possible, the Christian principles which are the only sure foundation of the life of the city. *We also know, and it is a great hope and great consolation for us, that you love and honour the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with an ardent affection, and that you venerate Her images.* We know that in the very city of Moscow, a temple has been built – taken away, alas, from divine worship – dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven; and this testifies very clearly to the love which your ancestors and you yourself bear for the Most Holy Mother of God.

«But it is evident for us that wherever the Most Holy Mother of God is venerated with a sincere and ardent piety, the hope of Salvation can never be lacking: *although even powerful and cruel men make efforts to tear away the souls of their fellow citizens from holy religion and Christian virtue; although Satan himself seeks by every means to stir up this sacrilegious struggle,* as the Apostle of the nations says: “... for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and Powers, against the princes of this world of darkness, against the spirits of wickedness...” (Eph. 6:12); *however, if Mary’s protection opposes, the gates of hell will never have the upper hand.* She is the most merciful and all-powerful Mother of God and Mother of all men. Never has it been heard that those who have recourse to Her, tenderly imploring Her aid, have not felt the help of Her protection. Continue then, as you are doing, to pray to Her with devotion, to love Her ardently, to invoke Her with these words, which you are accustomed to saying: “To You alone has it been given to always be heard, most holy and most pure Mother of God.”»⁵⁴⁷

PRAYERS FOR THE END OF THE PERSECUTIONS, THE LIBERTY OF THE CHURCH, PEACE, AND THE CONVERSION OF THE PERSECUTORS

«Uniting ourselves to you, we address suppliant prayers to Her so that in the Russian people, the Christian faith, the honour and support of human life be increased and strengthened; *that all the deceits, errors and trickery of the enemies of religion be removed and repulsed far from you;* that public and private morals be modelled in your country on the principles of the Gospel; *above all that those who profess their Catholic Faith among you, even if they are deprived of their pastors, be strong before the assaults of impiety and resist fearlessly even unto death;* that there be granted to all, as it ought, the just liberty befitting them as men, citizens and Christians: first of all to the Church, to whom it belongs, by the Divine command, to teach truth and virtue to all; and finally that true peace shine brightly over your most dear nation and over all humanity...

«May the beloved Mother deign to regard with goodness and mercy even those who organize the groups of soldiers for atheism and direct their activities; may She deign to

enlighten their minds with light from Heaven, and by Divine grace orient their hearts towards Salvation.»

CONSECRATION OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

«And we, so that our fervent prayers and yours may more easily be heard, and to give you a special testimony of our particular benevolence, just as a few years ago we consecrated the entire human race to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, *so today we consecrate and in a most special manner we entrust all the peoples of Russia to this Immaculate Heart*, with the firm hope that soon, thanks to the all-powerful patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the wishes which we form with all of you and all good men may be happily fulfilled, for a true peace, fraternal concord and the liberty due to all, and in the first place to the Church. Thus by our prayer, united to your own and that of the whole Christian people, the Kingdom of the Saviour Jesus Christ will be firmly established over all the earth: “A Kingdom of truth and life, a Kingdom of holiness and grace, a Kingdom of justice, love and peace.»⁵⁴⁸

«And we suppliantly ask this most merciful Mother, to obtain from Her Divine Son heavenly light for your minds and for your souls, the strength and courage by which, being supernaturally upheld, you will be able to repulse and overcome all errors and impiety.»⁵⁴⁹

A HALF-MEASURE. Clearly, by pronouncing this consecration where Russia was finally named explicitly, Pius XII had made an effort to secretly satisfy Our Lady of Fatima’s requests. By doing so he inflicted a formal refutation on the objurgations of Father Dhanis, claiming that the request passed on by Sister Lucy was «practically unrealizable». Pius XII had pronounced it, and nobody would be able to say any more that this consecration of Russia and it alone designated by name was impossible! From this point of view, *Sacro vergente anno* marks a new and very important stage in the accomplishment of the Fatima message by the Sovereign Pontiffs. Unfortunately, it was still only a half-measure...

AN INCOMPLETE CONSECRATION

We can do no better than to quote, before anything else, Father Alonso’s well informed opinion: «Can it be said (he asks) concerning *Sacro vergente anno*, that all the conditions requested by Heaven and communicated to Sister Lucy were fulfilled? *Historically, no!*»⁵⁵⁰

What was lacking in this new act of the Sovereign Pontiff for it to correspond perfectly to God’s designs revealed at Fatima? This is very clear:

1. Pius XII made no allusion to Our Lady’s request, although it was very urgent, for something which also had to contribute powerfully to obtaining from God the miracle of the conversion of Russia: the practice of *the reparatory devotion of the five first Saturdays of the month*, a practice which is so simple and so salutary for souls.

2. *The solemn act of reparation*, requested at the same time as the consecration of Russia, is only indirectly suggested in the Apostolic Letter.

3. Finally and above all, the Pope did not dare to give *all the bishops of the Catholic world* the order to join with him in this solemn act of reparation and consecration.

4. Consequently, the consecration of Russia on July 7, 1952 – which was not distinguished by any special ceremony – utterly lacked *the solemnity needed* to correspond to the most explicit supernatural finality. Expressing his great design of mercy for our century, Our Lord told His messenger in May 1936: «I want My whole Church to recognize this consecration (of Russia) as *a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*, so as to extend its cult later on and place devotion to this Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Divine Heart.»⁵⁵¹ No, in reality, after July 7, 1952, the Church was still far from having corresponded to this design of «grace and mercy» for our time!

In effect, since the Pope had accomplished this consecration alone, and only by the publication of a text, it seemed to concern only the peoples of Russia. It had not been announced, and no preparations were made for it. It was immediately forgotten.⁵⁵²

PIUS XII MISINFORMED? Granted, as we have seen, the Russian Catholics were misinformed: in their petition they had asked only for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Sovereign Pontiff. Can it be said therefore that Pius XII was misinformed, that he did not know that he had to make the consecration in union with the bishops of the whole world? It would be nice to be able to say so...

However, it seems very improbable to us that Pius XII was completely ignorant of Our Lady's more precise requests. He had been approached so many times before, more explicitly! There was Bishop da Silva's request addressed to Pius XI in 1937, that of Sister Lucy in 1940, those of 1942, the seer's public declarations in 1943, and in 1946 to Father Jongen and William Thomas Walsh, among others, and no doubt several requests directly addressed to the Pope in their aftermath. We have cited the one passed on by Father Wetter after October 1951, and a final request by Sister Lucy in June 1952. To be sure, nobody addressed to Pius XII the public, official, clear and precise request to accomplish the consecration in union with all the bishops of the world, such as Our Lady had asked for it, and that is most regrettable! Still, Pius XII had surely heard it spoken about, and in several instances. And if he had decided to fully correspond to Our Lady of Fatima's desires, all he had to do was go to Father da Fonseca – who had prepared his radio messages to the pilgrims at Fatima on October 31, 1942 and May 13, 1946 – to learn all the necessary details from him. Besides, Pius XII was well aware that the seer of Fatima had desired in the past to meet him, so as to speak with him directly.

In short, we have the impression that the offensive of Father Dhanis, who was covered by powerful protectors, had borne its fruits.⁵⁵³ Just as ten years earlier – faced with the demands of the Allies, Stalin's accomplices – in 1952 Pius XII did not dare to go head on against the adversaries of Fatima in all matters. It is remarkable that although some passages in *Sacro vergente anno* are the faithful echo of the Russian Catholics' petition, we

do not find the slightest mention or even the slightest veiled allusion to the Fatima message. This silence was certainly deliberate: Pius XII did not want to be accused of having accomplished this act of consecration of Russia in response to a “private revelation”! What a shame!

SISTER LUCY'S DISAPPOINTMENT AND FATHER SCHWEIGL'S MISSION TO PORTUGAL

In a letter written shortly after July 7, 1952, Sister Lucy said:

«I also thank you for the magazine clipping which reports the consecration of Russia. *I am pained that it still has not been done as Our Lady requested.* Patience!... Let us hope that Our Lady will deign to accept it, as a good Mother.»⁵⁵⁴

At Rome, Father Schweigl, an Austrian Jesuit (1894-1964), professor at the Gregorian University and the Russicum, was aware of the Russian Catholics' petition. He was preparing to leave for Portugal and meet Sister Lucy there. We know by a reliable source that Father Schweigl too was very disappointed by «the hardly solemn character» of the consecration done by the Pope.

As for his mission to Portugal, of which historians were long ignorant, it continues to be mysterious. In a text distributed to the Council Fathers (of Vatican II),⁵⁵⁵ Father Schweigl describes how on March 27, 1952 he had received permission from Pius XII to speak with Sister Lucy of Fatima «about 31 questions concerning the conversion of Russia».

It is important to stress, however, that he did not leave for Portugal until August 17, and therefore *over a month after the publication of Sacro vergente anno.*⁵⁵⁶ For his part, Father Alonso writes: «On September 2, 1952, authorized by the Holy Office, as he himself declared, Father Schweigl did an interrogation of Lucy.»⁵⁵⁷

In a 1956 study,⁵⁵⁸ Father Schweigl points to his stay of a few weeks in Portugal, Coimbra, Fatima and Lisbon. No doubt he met the Bishop of Coimbra. Did he also visit Cardinal Cerejeira? The apostolic nuncio at Lisbon? The Bishop of Leiria? Probably. In effect, even if initially he had decided to make this trip on his own,⁵⁵⁹ it is very likely that after publication of *Sacro vergente anno* Pius XII entrusted to him a mission.

In 1982, one of Father Schweigl's friends gave us this testimony:

«Yes, he was the secret envoy of His Holiness Pius XII to Sister Lucy. He refused categorically to speak about what Sister Lucy had said or what the Holy Father had asked. In the past numerous personalities came to see him and tried to get him to talk, without success.»

In effect, Father Schweigl himself recalls in 1963, in his text reserved for the Council Fathers, that «*in 1952, the Archbishop of Coimbra demanded that the replies given by Sister*

Lucy not be published without authorization of the Holy Office; up to the present this authorization has not been given.»

Why did the Holy Office refuse permission to publish this interrogation? It is easy to guess: when questioned by Father Schweigl, Sister Lucy surely explained to him where the act of July 7, 1952 was still incomplete, and what still had to be done to really enter into Heaven's designs. Father Schweigl was a holy priest and had a great devotion to Our Lady of Fatima – his writings and the testimony of those who knew him prove it – and it is practically certain that he faithfully transmitted the information he had received to the Holy Father.⁵⁶⁰ Yet, he was too late. We have the disturbing impression that in the mind of Pius XII, *Sacro vergente anno* was in some way a stopping point. Also, Father Schweigl's mission in autumn of 1952 was more than an information gathering mission; perhaps it consisted in giving precise orders at Coimbra, Leiria and Lisbon to no longer publicly ask for this consecration of Russia, which Church authorities at Rome wanted to consider as already having been done. Hence, this summer of 1952 marks a new turning point in Pius XII's pontificate.

After this moment, the Pope also began to be tried very severely by illness. Here is the testimony of his physician, Dr. Galeazzi-Lisi:

«He continued in fairly good health right *until the end of the month of August 1952*, when suddenly he began coming down with symptoms of a grave poisoning.

«It may seem paradoxical if I say that Pius XII made himself gravely ill through his excessive scruples concerning the cleanliness of his teeth. For a fairly long period, and without my being informed of it, each morning the Pope had applied pure chromic acid to his teeth and gums. Out of carelessness, the poison had been left there with other instruments in the Pope's bathroom by the dentist who once and only once used it for a treatment which Pius XII had needed. I think that the unadvised, inexpert and renewed use of chromic acid by the Pope was behind the first serious troubles of his stomach, which because of his constitution was already predisposed to gastritis – troubles which, later on, took their toll.»⁵⁶¹

On December 15, 1952, in his encyclical *Orientalis Ecclesias*, devoted to the persecutions in the countries of the East, the Pope made a brief allusion to the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on July 7. After that he no longer spoke about it.

In addition, this year 1952 also seems to us imprinted with a dramatic sorrow. Already in January of 1951, the Pope had given way to his adversaries, resigning himself to abandoning the preparations for the Council. Contenting himself with only accomplishing the Fatima message by half measures, whilst ensuring this did not become generally known, the Pope once more retreated. It was a new victory for the adversaries of the Church, those from without, but also their accomplices from within who since 1950 – as we will show in an appendix to this chapter – dared to lift up their heads once more with increasing audacity, bringing their perfidious plots even into the Holy Father's antechamber. Their purpose was to render ineffectual all the Holy Father's acts which were

contrary to their liberal ideas, their semi-modernist, ecumenist, and progressive friends and their communist interlocutors – with whom they were flattered to converse.

Over a year went by, and once again Our Lady intervened. She came to manifest Her immense sadness: yes, the perils were grave, graver than ever; but «it will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary». Such undoubtedly was the message which at Syracuse (in Sicily) the Immaculate Virgin and Mediatrix «of grace and mercy» silently wished to send the Holy Father and all his people. Would they deign, finally, to listen to Her?

II. AT SYRACUSE, OUR LADY WEEPS (AUGUST 29 - SEPTEMBER 1, 1953)

The facts are simple and clear; the miracle is undeniable and scientifically demonstrated. Indeed, perhaps never before was a Divine intervention recognized so rapidly and declared authentic by the hierarchical authorities. But let us remark at the outset that, in 1953, *Our Lady did not come to give a new message, new secrets, or new prophecies. She did not come to express new requests.* No, She came only to recall, in the most convincing and earth-shaking way, the essential message of Fatima: the revelation of Her «Immaculate Heart, outraged by the sins of men and requesting reparation».⁵⁶²

The prodigy took place for the first time on Saturday, August 29, the octave day of the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was at Syracuse, in the quarter of the suburb Santa Lucia, the poorest in the whole city. Sanctified in ages past by the martyrdom of Saint Lucy, this neighbourhood had been the cradle of Christianity in Sicily and the West before becoming a red zone, won over by the leprosy of communism. Among the most humble streets of this populous neighbourhood was that of Saint George's Gardens, and the most modest house on this street was at No. 11. It was inhabited by poor and hard-working labourers, the young Giusto-Iannuso couple.

In their bedroom, a plaster bust had been offered to them as a wedding present by a parent, and attached to the wall a few months earlier. It was the statue of *Our Lady showing Her Heart* – and it is worth noting, the statue did not show Our Lady's Heart according to the most common depiction, pierced with a sword of sorrow as in the prophecy of old Simeon. No, the Heart of the Madonna of Syracuse is *surrounded with thorns and flames come up from it as from a burning furnace, according to the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima on June 13, 1917, and then at Pontevedra and Tuy in 1925 and 1929.*



Our Lady of Syracuse.

On Saturday, August 29, this humble but moving image suddenly began shedding real tears. That morning Antonina, the young spouse, who for several months had been suffering from a difficult pregnancy, had to stay in bed, She was the first to perceive the astonishing miracle. She was followed by her sister-in-law, Grazia Iannuso: «I saw that the Madonna was weeping, she was weeping copiously, tears were flowing from Her eyes.»⁵⁶³ Some neighbours and before long a small crowd observed the phenomenon as well. On this morning of Saturday the 29th, Our Lady wept six or seven times, and She wept again in the evening, shortly after the husband, Angelo, had returned from the fields: «Then I got on my knees and prayed.»

On Sunday, August 30 and Monday, August 31, the same prodigy was observed by thousands of witnesses. The plaster bust did not weep the whole time but at irregular intervals, with interruptions of a few minutes or several hours; and not only in the bedroom of the Iannuso house but also outside on the courtyard wall, and afterwards on a little altar facing it, on which the statue was exposed.

AN UNQUESTIONABLE MIRACLE

On Tuesday, September 1, at eleven o'clock in the morning, a commission of experts appointed by the archdiocesan chancery appeared on the scene. It was composed of several doctors, an engineer, and Father Bruno, the parish priest. Here is the essence of the report drawn up under oath:

First the bust was carefully wiped with cotton. «Thus only a single teardrop remained, at the internal angle of the left eye, which was removed with a .10 cubic centimetre pipette. Then other teardrops began gushing from the eyes from the same place (where we were able to verify with a magnifying glass that the tears came from the eyes at the tear duct, and from there only), and these tears were collected too. While their contents were being deposited in a glass tube, other tears came out of the eye, and gathered in the cavity formed by the hand holding up the Heart, from which they were also removed. In all, a little over a cubic centimetre of liquid was brought to the laboratory.

«It must be noted that the examination of the internal angles of the eye with a magnifying glass did not let us pick up any porosity or irregularity on the surface of the varnish. The part of the image of imitation majolica was detached from the black supporting tube and it could be observed that the image is made of plaster about one or two centimetres thick, varnished in various colours on the outside and unpolished on the inside, where it shows an irregularly white surface, which appeared completely dry at the moment of the examination (there follows the list of signers and witnesses, chosen from among the most eminent personalities of the city).

«Syracuse, December 9, 1953.

Joseph Bruno, parish priest. »[564](#)

Let us add the testimony of Dr. Bertin, a chemist who was also present, although he was not officially part of the commission:

«I was able to attentively observe the phenomenon of the shedding of the tears in all its tiniest details, from a perfectly dry eye right up to the formation of the tears; I say attentively, because I was holding the Madonnina in my hands.»[565](#)

Once the experts' report was completed, the prodigy ceased. It was Tuesday, September 1. One week later, Syracuse celebrated the Nativity of Our Lady, patroness of the Cathedral and the city, while at Rome the Pope published the encyclical *Fulgens corona*, announcing the Marian Year, which was to commemorate the centennial of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

The miracle was so evident and all fraud so absolutely impossible that on Wednesday, September 2, Archbishop Baranzini of Syracuse appeared on the scene to interrogate several witnesses of the facts himself. On September 8, he went officially to that street with

the members of the episcopal Curia and the chapter. After reciting the Rosary, while still reserving his final judgment, he explained to the faithful the meaning of the event.

«*Darkness continues to cover the world, because the rebellion of sin and apostasy continues and increases, and behold the Lord sends Mary to save a society wandering into error, and our souls which are being lost.*

«In these last two centuries, many are the apparitions of the Madonna and the prodigious appeals which this divine Mother pronounces to a world led astray. Recall the recent triumphs of Mary's Great Return among our peoples: we know that the passage of the Holy Virgin was a triumph of love, goodness and mercy; the return to Jesus of very many souls. The designs of God's mercy were and are shown through Mary's intervention.

«And now it seems that Mary has chosen our city of Syracuse to demonstrate Her power, Her goodness and Her mercy to us... No, Mary's tears are not tears of joy, *they are tears of affliction, of sorrow. They are a warning for me, for my clergy, for all you faithful, that we become better, that we return to the good path of our individual, family and social duties... Immaculate Heart of Mary, have pity on us!*»⁵⁶⁶

Immediately after the miraculous shedding of tears, extraordinary healings took place. On September 9, the laboratory consulted published the detailed report of the microanalysis performed on the liquid flowing from the plaster statue's eyes. The response was earth-shaking: this liquid was *like human tears in every respect.*⁵⁶⁷

On September 10, Archbishop Baranzini sent the narrative of the facts to Cardinal Pizzardo, secretary of the Holy Office. On the 19th, he transferred the *Madonnina* to a nearby location and installed Her in a niche. Again he addressed the crowd: «Let us think also of the tears of the Church, who suffers like a tender mother because of the persecutions to which her faithful children are subjected; above all She suffers because of *the loss of faith, the apostasy of the masses who are being poisoned.*»⁵⁶⁸

During the months of September and October, over a million pilgrims could be seen filing past the statue. On September 24, Archbishop Baranzini went to Rome. He met Cardinal Pizzardo and Cardinal Ottaviani, pro-secretary of the Holy Office, and was received by Pius XII on the 27th. Next he went to Milan to consult with Cardinal Schuster. On October 7, he appointed a medical commission to study the many cases of healings brought to his attention. Finally on December 12, the bishops of Sicily meeting under Cardinal Ruffini were able to give their judgment in an official communiqué. The Cardinal explained this decision in a radio message:

«The Madonna was seen weeping for four days, August 29, 30, 31, and September 1; and She wept so abundantly that these tears impregnated many cotton balls and were able to be examined scientifically by experts.

«The bishops of Sicily, in their meeting at Bagheria in villa San Cataldo, after attentively examining numerous depositions made under oath by witnesses above all suspicion, and

considering the positive results of diligent chemical analysis to which the tears from the holy image were submitted, *have unanimously pronounced their judgment that the reality of the facts cannot be questioned.*

«Consequently, they have expressed the desire that such a merciful manifestation of our Heavenly Mother provoke the whole population to a salutary penance, and a *livelier devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*, wishing that a sanctuary be constructed without delay to perpetuate the memory of the prodigy.»⁵⁶⁹

It was indeed unquestionable, indisputable: at Syracuse the Madonna had wept. And thanks to Cardinal Ruffini – whom we will mention later because he was the Council's most prestigious theologian, and strived to have the dogma of Mary Mediatrix proclaimed – the Church had been able to pronounce its judgment with exemplary certainty, firmness and rapidity. This new intervention of the Immaculate Heart of Mary which was so striking and moving was an immense grace, not only for souls but for the entire Church. On the evening of August 29, shortly after returning from the fields, Angelo Iannuso had seen the Madonna shedding tears, and had asked: «*Madonnina, why are you weeping?*» The priests, the bishops and the Pope had also received a great grace through these silent tears. They too were all invited anxiously to ask themselves the same question.

«*THE MYSTERIOUS LANGUAGE OF THESE TEARS:
A FINAL MESSAGE OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY*»

These tears of the Blessed Virgin were the most eloquent discourse possible. And the bishops, be they the Archbishop of Syracuse, Cardinal Schuster or Cardinal Ruffini, were immediately able to explain the profound meaning of the tears to the faithful. Remarkably, all these commentators are in perfect harmony with the message of Fatima, even when they do not explicitly refer to it. Why was the Madonna weeping? Because of the atrocious persecutions the Church was undergoing in its vast regions, Cardinal Schuster answered. She was weeping also because of the heresies which continued to tear the Church apart and sow discord; because of the tepidity of such a great number of Catholics; because of the secularism of governments «which instead of helping the Church repress errors and vices, give free rein to harmful propaganda». The Madonna was weeping because of *the tepidity of too many consecrated souls, «who still have not understood the gravity of the hour, and because too rare are those who preoccupy themselves with reforming themselves and reforming the Christian people entrusted to them.»* Finally, Our Lady was weeping, the Cardinal said, because «very few souls take the narrow road which leads to eternal Life, and thus many are lost.»⁵⁷⁰

A few weeks after the event, the Archbishop of Syracuse declared: «If the Madonna shed tears, She did it *to address a reproach or at least give a grave warning to us.*»⁵⁷¹

FROM SYRACUSE... TO FATIMA. Everybody wonders, Cardinal Ruffini explained, «why the Most Holy Virgin wept in this way for four long days... *If we recall the celebrated apparitions of Lourdes and Fatima*, the answer is simple... And She wept at Syracuse, in Sicily, because

here, Her tears were not to be shed in vain; because here a multitude of souls *would strive to console Her* and get others to console Her.»⁵⁷² These words of the Cardinal went straightway to the essential: Syracuse cannot be understood except in the wake of Lourdes and Fatima, which reveal its significance.

Yes, beyond question the Immaculate Virgin's message to Sister Lucy at Fatima, Tuy and Pontevedra best explains the significance of these tears. As Our Lady told Her messenger on December 10, 1925:

«Behold, My daughter, My Heart surrounded by thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude, without there being anybody to make an act of reparation to remove them. You, at least, try to console Me and announce that all those who on the first Saturday of five consecutive months will go to confession, etc.»⁵⁷³

Once again Our Lady had shown Her Heart pierced with thorns when She had come to ask for the consecration of Russia, on June 13, 1929.

When in 1953 a plaster bust shed miraculous tears – a bust with nothing to distinguish it except that it discreetly recalled these apparitions – was it not before anything else an anguished reminder of these two requests by Our Lady, requests as yet unfulfilled? Yes, the mysterious language of these tears – to repeat an expression of Pius XII – was clear, if only men reflected on it ever so little. Our Lady, this all good Mother, was speaking to all Her children, but especially to the Pope and the bishops. And Her tears said: “They have delayed the execution of My requests... This is the reason Russia continues to spread its errors everywhere, causing wars and persecutions in the world. They have scorned My words and spurned My help, this is why great trials, great misfortunes will henceforth threaten the Church and the papacy itself. But as they see Me weeping here, on the very soil of their own country, will they perhaps believe My tears? They will be moved. They will weep with Me. They will seek to console Me. Then, perhaps, will they finally listen to Me?”

APPENDIX I - THE ALARMING PROGRESS OF SUBVERSION IN THE CHURCH (1950 - 1953)

On June 1, 1950, while preparations were being made at Rome for the canonization of the Pope who had condemned the pernicious and chimerical doctrines of the “Sillon”, at Paris, a solemn funeral service at Notre Dame was being granted to Marc Sangnier, honorary president of the M.R.P. It is remarkable, however, that at first *Documentation catholique* felt bound to a certain discretion on the founder of the Sillon, contenting itself with describing the event very briefly.⁵⁷⁴ Would anyone dare to brave the vigorous condemnations of Pius X? To deliver our Paris progressives from all fear, nothing less was needed than the intervention of two highly placed members of the hierarchy, who were both called to the most brilliant future. They were Archbishop Roncalli, then the Nuncio at Paris, and Msgr. Montini, substitute for the Secretariat of State. In this summer of 1950, both of them

deliberately took the side of the innovators against the reigning Pope.

AT PARIS, THE FOUNDER OF THE SILLON REHABILITATED

On June 6, Archbishop Roncalli sent this letter of condolences to Mrs. Sangnier, which strongly resembled an act of allegiance to the Movement and ideas of the Sillon:⁵⁷⁵

«Madame,

«I first heard of Marc Sangnier at Rome around 1903 or 1904, at a meeting of Catholic youth. The powerful fascination of his words, of his soul, had thrilled me, and the liveliest memories of my entire priestly youth are for his person and his political and social activity.»

I interrupt our quotation, for this stupefying text is worth reading over and commenting upon. At Rome in 1904, Father Roncalli was not, as was the young prelate Pacelli, enthralled by the zealous soul and fiery words of Pope Saint Pius X.⁵⁷⁶ No, he was thrilled by «the powerful fascination» of Marc, «of his words, of his soul» and his «political and social activity», which was inseparable from his doctrine.

«His noble and great humility in accepting, later on, in 1910, *the affectionate and benevolent admonition of Pope Saint Pius X*, gives the true measure of his greatness in my eyes.»

Jean Madiran rightly comments, «Let anyone reread this letter *Notre charge apostolique* of August 25, 1910, and they will see to what extent the way Nuncio Roncalli speaks manifests a total effrontery.»⁵⁷⁷

It is true! As a fallacious reinterpretation of events, it seems difficult to do better! For in the end, Saint Pius X – after many fatherly admonitions, it is true – completely condemned the grave errors of the Sillon and unmasked the culpable obstinacy of its leaders.⁵⁷⁸

The end of the letter is a lyrical praise of the founder of the Sillon, who «accepted», with «a noble and great humility», the pontifical «admonition»... without changing the doctrine of the Sillon by one iota, and obstinately continuing his action in the service of this «condemned ideal»!

«Souls capable of keeping themselves as faithful and respectful of the Gospel and Holy Church as he was are made for the highest ascents which assure their glory here below with their contemporaries and with posterity, to which *the example of Marc Sangnier will remain as an instruction and an encouragement.*

«On the occasion of his death, my spirit was very comforted to see that *the most authoritative voices able to speak in the public life of France* came together, unanimously, to wrap Marc Sangnier in the honourable cloak of *the Sermon on the Mount*. A more eloquent homage and praise could not be rendered to the memory of this outstanding Frenchman,

whose contemporaries were able to see in him the candour of a profoundly Christian soul, and noble sincerity of heart.»

In short, Archbishop Roncalli, in a letter clearly intended to be circulated in French political circles, canonized the founder of the Sillon, rejoicing that, for their part, «the most authoritative voices in French public life», Masonic, laicizing and socialist voices, also canonized him in their own way.⁵⁷⁹

Through his excessively complacent letter, Archbishop Roncalli was surely going beyond Roman directives. It must be noted, however, that in spite of Pius XII's immense admiration for Pius X and his firm will to impose Pius X's doctrine and example on the Church, since 1944 Pius XII had rallied over to Christian Democracy, of which Marc Sangnier was the undisputed master. Pius XII never dared – not a single time in the innumerable discourses which fill the twenty bulky volumes of his pontifical documents – to recall the vitally important teaching in the “Letter on the Sillon”.⁵⁸⁰ This silence says a great deal about the fidelity of Pius XII himself to the spirit of the holy Pope granted by God to the Church for our century! Unfortunately, this fidelity was very incomplete!

AT THE VATICAN, NEO-MODERNISM APPROVED, ENCOURAGED, PROTECTED

While at Paris Nuncio Roncalli was rehabilitating Marc Sangnier, at Rome, three weeks after the publication of *Humani Generis*, the Pope's most intimate collaborator was encouraging and protecting the neo-Modernists.

On September 8, 1950, Msgr. Montini received Jean Guitton. After reciting the praises of Pastor Boegner and Pastor Thurian, Guitton recalls that «he spoke to me about the sincerity, the good faith, the piety of the separated Christians, the respect he had for their research...»⁵⁸¹ Then they spoke about ecumenism, and the conversation went from there to the encyclical *Humani Generis*. With an unbelievable audacity, the substitute Secretary of State explained to Guitton that «the French theologians» were «*wrong to take as condemnations what was only a warning, a call to prudence, maturity, to go more slowly. This is the sign of a paternal direction, which is inspired by admiration.*»⁵⁸² In other words, there was nothing to be afraid of. Pius XII would go no further, he would not condemn the innovators by name – Msgr. Montini would guarantee that. As for himself, Montini encouraged them to continue, and what is more, he «*admired*» them, he «*envied*» them (sic).⁵⁸³ What effective support given to the subversion of the Church by one of the highest Vatican authorities, in the Pope's own antechamber!

Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, reports: «I heard Guitton the following October describing this audience to the upper crust of French modernism... He explained: “I saw Pius XII, of course, who reproves the errors. But I saw Msgr. Montini, who told me: “*Do not worry, as long as I am here, he will do nothing, I will prevent him. And I tell you: Continue!*” That is word for word. I still have it in my ears.

«He left no doubt that Msgr. Montini, with winks and complicitous looks, was beginning to betray Pius XII and pose as the advocate and powerful protector of the modernists. After his return from Rome, Guitton let the whole clan know: they had a very highly placed friend, who left the way open.»⁵⁸⁴

This friend «left the way open» to the innovators, and as far as he could, paralyzed the action of the Holy Office, to preserve the modernists from all condemnations or warnings. Guitton himself furnishes an example which is of the highest interest for us, since it concerns Marian devotion and theology. His testimony reveals to us Msgr. Montini's personal thinking, and in what sense he used his influence with the Pope: it was in the ecumenical, anti-Marian and anti-Fatima sense, on the side of Father Dhanis against Father da Fonseca, with Father Janssens, Jesuit Superior General, against Father Suarez, Master General of the Dominicans, with the French bishops and theologians against the Spanish, the Argentinians and the Italians of the Curia.

Guitton had come to Rome to plead the cause of the French theologians. But he had also come to pay a visit of gratitude. In effect, «the occasion (of this first encounter with Msgr. Montini) had been a book which I had published in 1950 on the Virgin Mary... I had tried to write an ecumenical book about the Virgin, addressed first and foremost to the dissenters, those of the rationalists, and those also, so numerous since the (Protestant) Reformation, who see the cult of Mary as a remnant of superstition. The book was dedicated "to our Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox brothers, so that the Virgin of Cana hasten the hour of reunion" ... It had not been well received in certain Roman circles. I had wanted to retrace *the development of the Virgin's awareness, to show that She had not understood right away, that She had needed some time to admit (sic) the divinity of Him who She had in Her arms: L'Osservatore Romano had condemned this fragile "theology of a layman".*»⁵⁸⁵

It was in fact a very clever book with a long-winded style, vaporous ideas, subtle implications, an ecumenical book destined to please the enemies of the Blessed Virgin Mary by its audacious concessions... to their errors.⁵⁸⁶

The book had not pleased Pius XII, and he made it known to his friend, Msgr. Grente. Msgr. Parente wanted to put it on the Index.

In this context, Msgr. Montini's enthusiastic words to the author on September 8, 1950, take on all their significance:

«I very much liked your book on the Virgin, (the undersecretary declared to him). It is Our Lady who brings us together today. Since Newman's pages in his famous letter to Dr. Pusey, I do not believe I have read on the subject of Our Lady *pages which have satisfied me so much*. It is necessary to be ancient and modern at the same time, to speak according to tradition and also to speak in conformity with our own sensibility.»⁵⁸⁷

Msgr. Montini was not content with these nice words; he intervened effectively. Guitton reminded him of the fact later on. «*You yourself saved me from the clutches of Msgr. Parente,*

*who wanted to put my book on Mary on the Index, and this was the origin of your benevolence for me.»*⁵⁸⁸

Was it chance? A consequence of Nuncio Roncalli's letter or the Guitton-Montini interview? In any case, in its issue of September 24, 1950, four months after Marc Sangnier's death, *Documentation catholique* presented under the form of a press review an impressive series of eulogies of the founder of the Sillon.⁵⁸⁹

THE OPPOSITION TO THE COUNCIL

«Falconi, who was so well informed, dates "Montini and Urbani's policy swing" from this Holy Year of 1950.⁵⁹⁰ Moreover, in this very same year, Msgr. Montini made an unexpected and most enigmatic visit to this defrocked cleric in his bachelor's pad at Rome.⁵⁹¹ (p. 54). From that time on, in any case, Msgr. Montini declared himself more and more openly favourable to progressivism, in opposition to his Patron. In the antechamber, discourses could be heard contrary to those heard in the Pope's office; thus Montini began a clandestine opposition to the policy of Pius XII, which marked him as his successor...»⁵⁹²

This was also no doubt the period when Msgr. Montini sided with Father Charles and his friends to create obstacles to the preparations for the future Ecumenical Council. Msgr. Tardini was decidedly favourable to the idea of a Council and made it known. Tardini was the first, in a press conference on the subject of Vatican Council II, to reveal to the general public Pius XII's decision to call a Council. Then he brought up the preparatory work done from 1948 to 1951, «*work which can be used*», he stated.⁵⁹³ It was in fact used during the time Cardinal Tardini still supervised the preparations for Vatican Council II.

If Msgr. Montini had himself enthusiastically collaborated in the preparations for this Council under Pius XII, he would have had countless opportunities to refer to it later on. Yet he always kept absolute silence on this subject, and when in 1967 Father Caprile published his historical study, "Pius XII and a new project for an Ecumenical Council",⁵⁹⁴ he does not cite the name of Msgr. Montini a single time.

We have described how on January 4, 1951, Pius XII resigned himself to abandoning this project against his better judgment, declaring: «This will be for my successor.» Surely Msgr. Montini had been of the same opinion also, since the beginning of the preparatory work.

THE DIALOGUE WITH MOSCOW

At the end of January, 1951, Msgr. Montini received the following letter:

«Paris, January 26, 1951.

«Excellency,

«The World Council for Peace requests Your Excellency to be so good as to present to His Holiness Pius XII the letter it addresses to him in the name of the Second World Peace Congress.

«We beseech you, Excellency, to accept the expression of our respectful esteem.

«For the World Peace Council.

«Signed: F. Joliot-Curie,
President.

«To His Excellency Msgr. Montini,
Secretary of State, (sic!).
Vatican-Rome.»⁵⁹⁵

Now who was the author of this strange letter, which professed such a «respectful esteem» for Msgr. Montini, and with obvious complacency granted him the title of Secretary of State, a title Pius XII had gone out of his way to avoid giving him? It was an agent of Moscow! And what was the letter all about? A great political design for which Stalin desired, if not official support, at least benevolent silence from the Vatican.

Since 1948, Stalin was undertaking an immense campaign of international peace propaganda – Soviet-style peace, of course! A similar campaign had already been launched by the Comintern between 1935 and 1939, which had resulted... in the Germano-Soviet accord, through which the USSR had plunged Europe into war.

In 1949, Moscow sponsored a Congress at Prague centred around pacifist themes. Meanwhile, at Paris, communists founded the “*World Committee of Supporters of Peace*”. In March 1950, at Stockholm, after vehement attacks against American policy, the committee made public, on Moscow’s orders, the famous «*Stockholm Appeal*», «demanding the absolute prohibition of atomic arms», and «the establishment of rigorous international control» to assure its application! The first of the signers was the president of the above-mentioned committee, Mr. Frederick Joliot-Curie, Msgr. Montini’s friendly correspondent.

Joliot-Curie, a notorious communist, made a declaration during the French Communist Party Congress in 1950. One has to read this grandiloquent text, in which comrade Joliot-Curie, appointed in 1945 “commissioner of French atomic energy”, expresses his enthusiasm for the astonishing progress accomplished by knowledgeable Soviet atomic scientists, «capable of striking decisive blows against the aggressors»! Already in 1933, 1936 and 1945, Joliot-Curie had visited Soviet laboratories. But during his last trip, in 1949, he was «strongly impressed by the considerable progress made in only four years» by Moscow’s specialists. He concluded: «This is why progressive scientists, communist scientists, will never give away a bit of their knowledge for the making of war against the Soviet Union.»⁵⁹⁶

After this scandalous declaration, the president of the Committee of Peace Supporters was really too suspicious; on April 28 he was finally relieved of his functions as atomic energy commissioner by the French government!

The pacifist manoeuvre of the Stockholm Appeal was so transparent that to the question, «Should it be signed?» *La Croix* answered on May 14: «Stockholm is a publicity trap. We must not fall into the trap.» Even in *L'Aube* of May 18, one could read: «In all, it is always the same imposture, always the same trap offered us by a dialectic founded on the densest lies.»⁵⁹⁷

But once again, with insistence, the communists extended their hand to Christians. Before long, forty or so progressive intellectuals, priests and lay people, agreed to sign. Among others there were Canon Kir, Fathers Chenu, Montuclard, Mandouze and Montaron, and *tutti quanti*. In May, several bishops explained to their faithful why it should not be signed. But the declaration of the Cardinals and Archbishops of France was deplorably weak: it contained no formal condemnation of the communist initiative and gave no directive. Finally in June, two articles in *L'Osservatore Romano* vigorously denounced Stalin's odious manoeuvre.⁵⁹⁸

At dawn on June 25, 1950, by a lightning attack, Moscow launched the Korean War, while continuing to support the Vietnamese rebellion. Nevertheless, comrade Joliot-Curie, "President of the World Committee of Supporters of Peace", continued multiplying his "appeals" to public opinion against the aggressors and warmongers responsible for the Korean conflict. Who were they? All those who had refused to sign the Stockholm Appeal!⁵⁹⁹

One is astonished that no official denunciation of such a gross trap came from Rome, from the Pope himself, or an authority directly responsible. On the contrary! Far from having to worry about a vigorous Roman warning, which would have sufficed to enlighten all Catholics in good faith, Joliot-Curie had the audacity to send a letter to the Pope! Had Msgr. Montini discreetly informed Moscow's agent that if he wrote to Pius XII *through his intermediary*, he would have nothing to fear in the response? It is quite plausible. For Stalin's stooge surely would not have had the audacity to write to the Pope unless he had expected some sort of favourable response on the Pope's part.

The letter to Msgr. Montini, graciously promoted by Moscow to "Secretary of State", was sent on January 26. Along with this letter was a letter to the Pope, where the communist – no doubt skilfully advised by a competent churchman – judiciously recalled all the declarations of Pius XII – and even Benedict XV! – on disarmament. Joliot-Curie concluded by observing the «complete agreement» of these texts with the program of the "Supporters of Peace", and daring to ask the Pope's collaboration: «This is why we permit ourselves to appeal to Your Holiness to support by every means you judge opportune these propositions for the reduction of armed forces, steps on the road to general disarmament, and which in reality correspond to the aspirations and needs of all peoples for whom the World Congress wished to speak. We beseech you, Most Holy Father, to accept our most respectful deference. Signed: F. Joliot-Curie.»⁶⁰⁰

What would the Vatican do? Would it lower itself, and shamefully compromise itself by answering – without any necessity! – this turncoat, who for so long had sold himself to the bolshevik cause? Was it not unworthy of Rome to give any kind of reply to this stooge? On the contrary, could it not have seized this opportunity to finally unmask the flagrant hypocrisy of this enterprise of Moscow – which was so dangerous and deadly for the free world? Could not the Vatican have published this paper as documentation, and finally condemn with firmness the gang of progressive intellectuals – including priests and religious – who had revealed their treason by signing this famous “Stockholm Appeal”? It would have been sufficient to recall the passage from *Divini Redemptoris* denouncing the Kremlin’s pacifist campaigns:

«In the beginning Communism showed itself for what it was in all its perversity; but very soon it realized that it was thus alienating the people. It has therefore changed its tactics, and strives to entice the multitudes by trickery of various forms, hiding its real designs behind ideas that are good and attractive.

«Thus, aware of the universal desire for peace, *the leaders of Communism pretend to be the most zealous promoters and propagandists in the movement for world peace.* Yet at the same time they stir up a class-warfare which causes rivers of blood to flow, and, realizing that their system offers no internal guarantee of peace, they have recourse to unlimited armaments»⁶⁰¹... striving at the same time in every way to make the West stay disarmed.

It was also the opportunity to cite the decree of July 1, 1949, against all collaboration with communism.⁶⁰² At the very least, Rome in some way had to settle in the negative, in all clarity, the debate which had been dividing Catholic opinion for months: should the document be signed or not?

Well, not exactly. On February 16 Msgr. Montini had obtained permission from the Pope to answer the Kremlin’s agent, and found a way of addressing him a perfectly irenic letter which practically justified the progressives who had signed. Msgr. Montini contented himself with pleading the cause of his patron at Rome: Moscow, he explained, had been quite unjust in accusing Pius XII of warmongering. It was «an absurd calumny», because the Pope for his part had always worked for world peace also:

«From the Vatican, February 16, 1951.

«Sir,

«I have indeed received the letter you sent me last January 26, and, *as you asked me, I hastened* to place in the Holy Father’s hands the message attached to it, and which he read *attentively*.

«You observe in this document that His Holiness, following his predecessors, has on many occasions proclaimed the necessity of working for the establishment of peace among Nations, by substituting the force of law for the force of arms, and proceeding seriously and honestly to a gradual and adequate limitation of armaments.

«You mention equally the recent encyclical of July 19, 1950, citing the very words of His Holiness on the instruments of death invented by modern technology.

«We can only observe with pleasure how you recognize in this way the fact that the Sovereign Pontiff has always pronounced in favour of peace, a true and just peace.»

«This is a point which has been denied or ignored quite often and by many in the last few years: the Holy Father's words and acts have even been distorted so badly that some powerful organizations, which nevertheless claimed to work for peace, have gone so far as to give credence among the masses to the absurd calumny that the Pope desired and favoured war.

«It is evident, however, that the Vicar of the "Prince of Peace", visible Head of the Church – whose mission is to make justice and charity reign on the earth – can have no more ardent desire than the coming of peace among men.

«Thus there is no room to doubt that the Holy See continues – as it has done up to the present – to work in the service of peace – true peace – by virtue of the very principles which direct its action and which have their source in the doctrine taught by Our Lord Jesus Christ. And one can only wish that these efforts encounter everywhere – in Governments as well as in people's and individual consciences – sincere comprehension and adherence.»

«I ask you to accept, Sir, the assurance of *my most devoted sentiments.*

«Signed: J.-B. Montini.

*Monsieur Joliot-Curie,
2, rue de l'Élysée,
PARIS.»*

A clever response, apparently. But in a spirit completely different from that of *Divini Redemptoris!* In other words: we recognize that you at Moscow work sincerely for peace. In return recognize that we too, at Rome, work more than anyone else for this same peace. And since we are in accord, understand us just as we understand and collaborate with you!

Although properly speaking it was not a letter of the Pope or even a reply made explicitly in his name – if we reread the text, the nuance is important: Pius XII had surely allowed Msgr. Montini to respond, but in his own name – nevertheless the Cominform seized this new propaganda argument. Indeed on March 7, 1951, *L'Osservatore Romano* was obliged to make the following correction:

«From various quarters there has been talk of a letter which, in the name of H.H. Pius XII, was supposed to have been sent to the "World Peace Council". To add some clarifications and shed some light on these rumours, we believe it opportune to publish the following documents (in other words, the letter to Msgr. Montini, the letter to Pius XII and Msgr. Montini's response).»[603](#)

Thus by this stupefying exchange of correspondence, now a matter of public record, the whole world knew that the Vatican agreed to dialogue with Moscow, and respond to any advances Moscow might make. At the same time, the whole worldwide progressive clan learned that in the Curia, Msgr. Montini was the most “open” man, and the Kremlin’s privileged man to dialogue with. Joliot-Curie could be satisfied and so could Stalin, who soon granted him the «peace prize.» The response obtained surely surpassed all their hopes!

We have seen how two months later, the Pope finally found a more judicious response to this fallacious communist campaign in favour of peace: on May 13, he decided that the closing of the Holy Year would take place at Fatima on October 13, at the end of a congress which would deal precisely with the question of peace, but in the light of the message of Fatima! It would also be in Salazar’s Portugal, in an openly anti-communist atmosphere!

Nevertheless, this late measure did not repair the evil done by Msgr. Montini’s initiative: the Vatican had not dared to disavow and condemn the progressive religious and priests who were scandalously engaged in the service of Stalin’s pacifist campaign. Treason was within the Church and Rome temporized, allowing the ravenous wolves disguised in sheep’s clothing to devour the flock.

ROME AGAINST CHRISTENDOM

On June 2, 1951, to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the encyclical *Rerum Ecclesiae*, which Pius XI had devoted to the missions, Pius XII published the encyclical *Evangelii praecones* on the same subject, and – unfortunately! – exactly along the same lines, while events were so cruelly belying the political analysis imprudently proposed by Pius XI twenty-five years earlier. In 1951, while the Korean War was in full blast, and the communist insurrection tragically threatened the flourishing Christian communities established hardly a century ago, the Pope quoted a long passage from *Rerum Ecclesiae* which became a weighty argument in favour of the anti-colonialist campaign passionately waged by the small faction of Christian progressives. In this domain also they were working shoulder to shoulder with the communists... to the sole profit of Bolshevik expansion, for the loss of souls and misfortune of peoples:

Repeating the words of his predecessor, who was coldly, blindly opposed to colonization out of fidelity to democratic utopianism and the supposed “right of peoples to dispose of themselves”, Pius XII stated:

«Suppose that a war or other political events in a mission territory replace one regime with another, and that the departure of such a nation’s missionaries be demanded or decreed; suppose – although, granted, it would be more difficult for this to come about – that the natives, having reached a certain degree of culture and having attained a certain political maturity, wish to obtain their autonomy by driving from their territory the functionaries, troops and missionaries of the nation commanding them, and can do so only by means of force. What ruin, we ask, would not threaten the Church in these regions, if the needs of the

new Christians had not been entirely provided for by setting up a network of native priests over the whole territory?»⁶⁰⁴

Let us dare to say it: what naivety and what blindness to believe that once Catholic France, Portugal or Belgium were driven from their overseas provinces by world communist subversion, Bolshevism or Islam, that once these forces became masters of the new countries criminally delivered over to them, they would grant the Church complete freedom... provided she were sufficiently uncoupled from the West... and sufficiently betrayed these Catholic and civilizing nations which allowed her to accomplish her missionary work! This lack of foresight on Rome's part in such a tragic situation is grounds for consternation. It was to prove disastrous.

MSGR. MONTINI ADVOCATES THE «APERTURA A SINISTRA»

On December 10, 1945, De Gasperi, the most conspicuous leader among the Italian Christian Democrats, became president of the Council. He was to govern Italy as an absolute master until July of 1953. His policy had been simple: he had liquidated all opposition from the right to share power with the socialists and communists. Granted, in governing he ordinarily went against these compromising allies to get the Catholic votes and American Marshall Plan money. But in the name of democracy, he was responsible for the communists and socialists continuing to play their role in Italy. He feared more than anything else the rebirth of a right wing regrouping Mussolini's former supporters, and out of liberalism he refused to conduct an openly Catholic policy.

Pius XII was quickly disappointed, irritated by this policy of compromise and opening to the left which he considered treason. In 1948, he had encouraged Father Lombardi and Professor Luigi Gedda, president of Italian Catholic Action, to found "Civic Committees" to lead the struggle against communism and for the interests of the Church with more pugnacity than the Christian Democrats, who were too soft and compromising. In 1951, he even ordered Luigi Gedda to seek an understanding with the nascent parties of the right and Italian neo-fascists. In short, he preached opening to the right while Gasperi wanted at any cost opening to the left, the first principle of the ideal Christian Democrat from Lammenais to Marc Sangnier and Jacques Maritain.

In this grave dissension during the fifties between Pius XII and the Christian Democrats in power in Italy, we know that Msgr. Montini more or less secretly took the side of his old friends, against the Pope. Father Robert Graham was forced to recognise this, although in a deliberately apologetic article:⁶⁰⁵ «The ideas of Pope Pius XII and Alcide De Gasperi did not always coincide. There were moments of tension between them.»⁶⁰⁶ But Msgr. Montini took no account of these divergences: «The Montini family was more than ever connected to Christian Democracy, and Giovanni Battista Montini above all. His spiritual children of the old FUCI were now the young and dynamic leaders of the movement, as prime ministers (Andreotti, Moro), as ministers (Scelba, Gonella and others). De Gasperi himself had spent his prewar years as an employee of the Vatican Library under Montini's protection. This

friendship and association had never been denied by either one – why should it have been?»⁶⁰⁷

Msgr. Montini went even further. He supported the left wing of the Christian Democrat party, grouped around a team of “Democrat mystics”, the Dossettis, La Pira, Fanfani. As our Father, the Abbé de Nantes writes: «In Italy he took advanced positions, for example in supporting his friend La Pira who protested against the closing of a factory; but the protest was so unreasonable that soon Montini abandoned his misled friend. Even more seriously, he supported the crypto-communist Mario Rossi against Luigi Gedda, whom Pius XII had invested with a precise and completely opposite mission of fighting communism.⁶⁰⁸ Here the insubordination is patent...»⁶⁰⁹

«TRUE AND FALSE REFORM IN THE CHURCH»

There was patent insubordination also in the doctrinal debate of Rome against the progressive French theologians and worker priests. In 1952, Father Congar underwent «the rigours of the Holy Office» for his book, *True and False Reform in the Church*. «Msgr. Montini showed himself “upset and disturbed by the affair”, desiring “that they go back on the error committed”. He ordered the book and gave a warm thanks for it... He also took the side of Father Congar in his difficulties.»⁶¹⁰

MSGR. MONTINI, «MAN OF THE LEFT»

At this period, it was common knowledge at Rome – and the press lost no time echoing these rumours – that Pius XII’s two most intimate collaborators, Tardini and Montini, were of opposing tendencies. In a remarkably well documented article in the July 5, 1952 issue of *Paris Match*,⁶¹¹ their photographs appeared on the first page with the caption: «They share the confidence of Pius XII. These two prelates are, under the Pope’s direction, the leaders of the Church’s government. Msgr. Montini, personal secretary of Pius XII, is in charge of Ordinary Affairs. He is favourable to the French bishops and *passes as a man of the left*. He is not always in agreement with the Pope. He sees him every evening and every other morning. On other mornings it is Msgr. Tardini. He is in charge of Extraordinary Affairs, *is of the right and a monarchist*. Neither one holds an important rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy: they are not even bishops.»⁶¹²

This reporting – the first of its kind, and done thanks to the special authorization of the Holy Father, who had received the journalists himself – was of course carefully read at the Vatican. No doubt Pius XII read it. What did he think of it? In any case, at the consistory of January 1953, to the stupefaction of Roman circles, the two prelates who shared the functions usually assumed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, did not even appear on the list of those who were to be promoted to Cardinal...

MSGR. MONTINI DENIED THE CARDINALATE?

On January 12, 1953, Pius XII created twenty-four new Cardinals. In his allocution to the consistory, he made this strange declaration: «There is another thing which we cannot pass over in silence: our intention had been to admit to your Sacred College the two very distinguished prelates in charge of the two sections of the Secretariat of the State, and their names had been the first two written on the list we had prepared. But these two prelates, in an outstanding example of virtue, requested us so urgently to allow them to decline this high office that we felt obliged to give way before their prayers and repeated requests. In doing this, we nevertheless wanted to reward in some way their virtue, and as you know we have elevated them to posts of honour which corresponds more adequately to the domain of their laborious activity.»⁶¹³

That is quite an astonishing declaration! As our Father, the Abbé de Nantes wrote in 1975, «This glorious humility, which was like a slap in the face to all past, present and future Cardinals, had to have had great reasons, but since it concerns a person still living and so highly placed, it is better to say nothing.»⁶¹⁴

The years have passed and today it is possible and useful to speak. First of all it must be recalled that already in 1946, during the first consistory, there was astonishment at Rome that the Pope's two closest collaborators did not appear on the list of new Cardinals. In 1953, this exclusion was even more surprising, given their eminent functions and their age. At that time Msgr. Tardini was sixty-four years old and Msgr. Montini was fifty-five years old. But the new Cardinals, Stepinac, Gracias, Wendel, Wyszynski, Quiroga, and Léger, were even younger. Archbishop Siri of Genoa was only forty-six. This explains the Pope's public declaration during his allocution to the consistory.

As Jean d'Hospital remarks, not without malice but not without plausibility either, the proclamation *urbi et orbi* of the outstanding humility of our two prelates did not explain everything: «Did Pius XII decline the purple when Pius XI had offered it to him? Come on! Under the flowers, there was a thorn. The papal version was a cover-up.»⁶¹⁵

Father Graham himself implies as much, in his ardent plea in favour of Msgr. Montini: «It is legitimate to suppose (he writes), that the Pope himself had suggested this course to them. That they accepted without visible discontent, then or later on, a sacrifice which humanly speaking had to go against nature gives us an idea of their conception of devotion and service of the Pope.»⁶¹⁶

In effect, we have no proof that Msgr. Montini had decided *of his own volition* to refuse the Cardinalate. An attentive reading of Tardini's work on Pius XII even gives us a clear idea of what happened. Without of course contradicting Pius XII's public declaration, Tardini implies that he was the first to refuse the Cardinal's hat. And if Tardini refused, Msgr. Montini, who was nine years younger and occupied a lower post in the Secretariat of State than Tardini, would clearly have been morally obliged to refuse as well.

We have good reasons to believe that if Msgr. Tardini refused the purple so firmly, it was not only out of humility. Granted, he had no ambition for himself, and he could just as well continue his office in the service of the Church without this new dignity. But no doubt he

sensed that Pius XII had hesitated, had scruples about naming Montini a Cardinal. He understood that he would render the Church and the Pope a service by stubbornly refusing the cardinalate, which would oblige Montini to do the same... And that would allow the Pope to suggest with all the more insistence that they both take this course.

We have no disclosure of Msgr. Montini on this point. On the other hand, Msgr. Tardini speaks about it at length in his book about Pius XII, thereby highlighting the fact that the initiative to refuse the cardinalate began with Tardini:

«Appointments represented *another torment* for Pius XII. He knew that they were that much more delicate the higher the dignity and, unfortunately also, the more coveted...

«At those times Pius XII was very much uneasy, solicited in different directions by diverse propositions and recommendations, and *torn between his natural condescendence and the imperatives of a demanding conscience*. This is why he did not like changes and often preferred to put off appointments...

«That being said, it will be understood that the preparation of a consistory was torture for Pius XII, and the word is not too strong. He put several months into establishing the list of those chosen. Of the Consistory announced in November 1952 (and which took place in January 1953), *he had spoken to me* for the first time in the month of May (1952)...

«I would like to point out here a characteristic trait in Pius XII's conduct. It can be attributed equally to the fear of placing others in a disagreeable situation, as well as the desire to make them happy: for the whole twenty year duration of his pontificate, Pius XII never forced anybody to accept an appointment. At the most he allowed that the person concerned be told that *he would please the Pope by accepting*.»

In a footnote, with great finesse, the Cardinal – Msgr. Tardini did accept the cardinalate in 1958, when his refusal would have been of no use to the Church, quite the contrary – implies that in spite of Pius XII's insistence, in the end he was satisfied with Tardini's refusal:

«Not only did he offer us the dignity of Cardinal, but he insisted for several months that we accept. His idea was to leave us with the same jobs as before: "Nothing will be changed", he said, "only you will have the red hat in addition." *And he laughed heartily when he heard the response that we would be very happy to remain as before but... without the red hat*. The Pope added that he found a title to give us, once we were vested with the purple. "For example", he said, "Msgr. Montini, Prefect for Ordinary Affairs, and Msgr. Tardini, Prefect for Extraordinary Affairs." At that time he did not think of giving us the title of "Pro-Secretary of State", which was conferred upon us later on, when the Holy Father was already aware of our desire. I will always remember with what kindness the Pope, in November 1952, while still at Castelgandolfo, told *me* one morning: "But at least, I hope, you will accept the title of Pro-Secretary of State?" I answered yes immediately and thanked him. Later, when the news had become public, while *I* was thanking His Holiness again, he said to *me* with good grace: "Dear Monsignor, you thank me, but you didn't let me do what I wanted." I said:

“Most Holy Father, I thank you for what you have done, but even more for what you have not done.” *And the Pope smiled.*»⁶¹⁷

Thus Monsignors Tardini and Montini became Pro-Secretaries of State on November 29, 1952, and during the consistory of January 12, 1953, they were congratulated publicly for their fine services... but without being promoted to the cardinalate. Pius XII, who at this moment sought to promote the young Cardinal Siri and Cardinal Ottaviani, in whom he had complete confidence, had to be happy with this skilful solution: he had discreetly removed Msgr. Montini out of the line of his succession without disavowing him publicly, or even discrediting him in the eyes of the public. Msgr. Tardini’s remarks come to mind:

«Once the decision was made, the next step was its execution. This too was a delicate moment, *especially if this decision was by its nature displeasing to someone*. In this case Pius XII strived – as he himself used to say – to “*sweeten the pill*”. For this purpose, in a document already prepared, he would modify some part of an overly harsh phrase, insert a few kinder words, add a word of praise.

«The result was a pill so well covered with sugar that sometimes the patient, on reading this document or at a papal audience, tasted and savoured the sweetness without even realizing that he had absorbed the bitterness of the *pill*.»⁶¹⁸

It was an elegant solution and the easiest one also, but at times it still involved regrettable consequences. In this case, Msgr. Montini continued to be at the Vatican in the Pope’s antechamber, the skilful advocate and effective protector of everything which worked in the service of subversion in the Church. He increasingly made himself known as such.

«*MSGR. MONTINI, POPE OF TOMORROW?*»

The Abbé de Nantes summarizes in one sentence the astonishing contrast between these two men who continued to assist Pius XII at this period:

«The opposition is obvious (he writes) between Tardini, a Conservative, with a deep and firm grasp of theology but without any support in international opinion, and Montini, inconstant and superficial, but enjoying the support of the Italian political left, the all-powerful American Judeo-Masonry... and Moscow.»⁶¹⁹

This support of the mainstream press was stupefying. Are examples needed? They are furnished by a series of very well documented articles published in *France-Soir*, during the first weeks of January 1953.⁶²⁰ On January 13, three days after the consistory... where Msgr. Montini was not named a Cardinal, the author entitles his article: “*The shadow of the Pope is Msgr. Montini...*” In fact he claims to introduce to us at the same time Pius XII’s two most intimate collaborators, but he begins with Msgr. Montini, to whom he devotes almost four columns, while he contents himself with one column for Msgr. Tardini!

Msgr. Montini's life is recalled in detail, with the greatest admiration. Then we are taken to the heart of the article with this subtitle: "*Msgr. Montini, Pope of tomorrow?*" The author explains:

«Voluntarily, Msgr. Montini declines – except for very rare exceptions – to express a personal opinion, to settle a question, he wants to be a shadow: the shadow of the Pope. And in this, he follows point by point the example of the man who was his real mentor in the art of governing the Church, Cardinal Pacelli himself... Even more than Cardinal Pacelli in relation to Pius XI, Msgr. Montini follows this law in his relations with Pius XII... The latter asks of his collaborators first of all that they inform him. He wants to know the reactions of the world, the fluctuations of the mysterious factor which is Catholic public opinion, whose demands he wishes to satisfy.

«The cooperation is so close that – just as it happened with Cardinal Pacelli – *many people wonder, seeing the discreet silhouette of Msgr. Montini, if he will not be the Pope of tomorrow.*

«Msgr. Tardini is at the opposite pole of his colleague and friend (?). Diplomat though he is, he does not mince words, and does not water down his expressions when he receives a person of the world in his vast office.»

Here is another example of this astonishing support from the press, and the left-wing press: *Le Monde* made a point of revealing that Msgr. Montini was favourable to the French bishops who supported continuing the experiment of the worker priests:

«At this period (Father Graham reports) the editor of *Le Monde*, Hubert Beuve-Méry, met Montini and wrote that he had had a lengthy discussion with the prelate on the question of worker priests. Montini, he said, had willingly brought new information on the subject which was clearly different from what had already come from the Vatican. Montini, said the director-editor of *Le Monde*, did not give his own personal opinions, but he showed that he was open.»⁶²¹

Étienne Fouilloux notes for his part, «Above all he encouraged and facilitated with all his authority the Franco-Roman "summits" of 1952-1953 (summits which resulted momentarily in getting Pius XII to give way. After having received Cardinals Liénart, Feltin and Gerlier on November 5, 1953, the Pope agreed to attenuate the rigour of decisions already taken and granted a longer delay, which allowed the whole progressive press to be unchained for six months)⁶²²: again, in 1953 Montini appeared more open to requests for religious liberty emanating from the USA than his colleagues in the Holy Office.»⁶²³

APPENDIX II - A SAD AFFAIR: THE FAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DANCE OF THE SUN

On November 18, 1951, page one of *L'Osservatore Romano* had an article entitled: «*Il prodigio di Fatima*». Under the reproduction of two most unusual photographs of the sun,

the quasi-official organ of the Holy See, after briefly recalling the prodigy of October 13, 1917, added this commentary:

«The two photographs which we reproduced, and whose origin is rigorously authentic, show, both by the black spot on the sun produced by its extremely rapid rotation, and by the position of the sun itself almost at the limit of the horizon, a position absolutely impossible at the hour the photographs were taken, that is, exactly at 12:30 p.m. The phenomenon is all the more prodigious as the totality of spectators were thinking of a very different miracle, similar to those which have already been verified in celebrated Marian sanctuaries. Thirty-four years later, while the entire Catholic family exulted, in union with the Vicar of Jesus Christ, for the dogmatic definition of the Most Holy Virgin's Assumption into Heaven, another surprising fact took place at the Vatican. This is how Cardinal Tedeschini, papal legate, described it during his homily at the pontifical Mass in the sanctuary of Fatima, on October 13 of this year ...» At this point the account we have already quoted followed.⁶²⁴

The journal of the Holy See concluded: «It is not ours to formulate deductions from these singularly analogous events. Mary often reveals Herself in the gravest days of the Church's history, even by personal manifestations to the successors of Peter. From these manifestations all souls cannot but draw comfort and support for the salutary enterprises of the Christian life and apostolate, and implore with increased fervour those graces of mercy which the Mother of God has promised to a repentant world, desiring to renew itself following the divine laws.»⁶²⁵

On November 21, *Le Monde* echoed this important article: «*L'Osservatore Romano* confirms Cardinal Tedeschini's declarations on the prodigy of Fatima.» It went on to mention the account of the visions of Pius XII and the publication of the "photographs of the miracle of 1917". In a most regrettable fashion, the visions of Pius XII were thus closely associated with the publication of these photographs.

A DEADLY ERROR

On March 11, 1952, *Le Monde* ran the headline: «Photographs "proving" solar prodigy of Fatima said to be false». It went on to explain: «The Vatican has apparently discovered that the two photographs published in *L'Osservatore Romano* of November 18 on the solar prodigy of Fatima are fake. It is believed that they were given to one of the directors of the journal by a high Portuguese official who had furnished a written guarantee of their authenticity. This same high official is said to have declared that his snapshots were taken by his brother during the last apparition of Fatima in 1917. It is not yet known how the Vatican established that the shots were fakes, but a declaration will be published shortly on the subject in *L'Osservatore Romano*.»

After this announcement, *L'Osservatore Romano* was of course forced to publish a clarification. It appeared in the March 14 edition. Here it is, *in extenso*:

«Some time ago, under the guise of rumours said to come from Portuguese Catholic circles, somebody affirmed that the photographs of the prodigy of Fatima, published in the November 18, 1951, edition of our journal, represented not this fact but a celestial phenomenon presenting analogies with it and which, in reality, took place only after 1917.

«These rumours, according to statements appearing this morning in journals of the extreme left, were also welcomed by journalists that are usually serious. The latter have gone so far as to say that denial on the subject of the authenticity of the photographs was sent to *L'Osservatore Romano*, and our journal promised a correction.

«This statement does not correspond to the truth in any way; and if it is comprehensible that certain sectors of the press try to exploit the episode in a slanderous way, we can discover neither where, nor how, nor when the above-mentioned usually serious journals could have received such information. As far as we are concerned, we must in fact declare:

1. That the photographs of Fatima were given to us with all the usual guarantees of authenticity, on the occasion of the last great Marian manifestations, by persons who are responsible and worthy of faith.
2. That their authenticity was later confirmed in writing, at our request, before publication.

«If in spite of all these guarantees the photographs, as it is said, were not authentic, something about which we could have no doubt, it is evident that we were surprised in our good faith, and be that as it may, it continues to be evident that the prodigy of 1917, which took place in the presence of tens of thousands of witnesses, many of whom are still living, remains outside discussion.»⁶²⁶

On March 15, *Le Monde* made a reference to this statement of clarification: «*L'Osservatore Romano* admits the possibility that the photographs of the prodigy of Fatima were not authentic.»

What had happened? In December 1957, in the Portuguese Jesuit review *Broteria*,⁶²⁷ Father Agostinho Veloso, S.J., provides the following explanation of the origin of this lamentable error:

«The head of protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Portugal, Dr. Joao Mendonça, possessed in his parents' house four negatives which his brother Alfredo, already dead at that moment, had taken. He believed that they were of Fatima and, as such, that the respective positives had been published in a book of Dr. Formigao, writing under the pseudonym "Vicente de Montelo.»

«When Cardinal Tedeschini came to Portugal, again in the best of faith, Dr. Mendonça offered him some blown-up versions of these photos, believing they had been taken at noon on October 13, 1917. Later on *L'Osservatore Romano* published them, equally in good faith.

«However, the author of this footnote (Father Veloso) had the opportunity to do research on this case and he verified that the photographs had been taken neither at Fatima, nor at noon on October 13, 1917, but at Torres Novas at five o'clock in the afternoon, on June 13, 1925. Returning from Fatima, and believing he was seeing, in some astronomical phenomenon at the time, a repetition of the miracle of Fatima (which thousands of people had been present for, on October 13, 1917), Alfredo Mendonça photographed it. Later, he died. And his family, discovering the negatives later on, made an error concerning the date and place, and hence the error spread.»⁶²⁸

This completely benign explanation, which accepted without discussion the justification provided by the person originally responsible for the affair, is perhaps not the most probable one. For the unbelievable carelessness of Dr. Joao Mendonça, guaranteeing by writing the authenticity of these photographs without any serious proof and without any research or preliminary verification, appears extremely suspect to us. The manner in which the anticlerical and Masonic press – and in the first place, *Le Monde* – was informed of the trickery only a few months after the photos were published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, is no less suspect. If Dr. Mendonça was able to find out that the photographs he had just offered Cardinal Tedeschini as authentic snapshots of the miracle of October 13, 1917, had in reality been taken at five in the afternoon on June 13, 1925, at Torres Novas – what precision! – how could he have not known that beforehand? And how did the enemies of the Church happen to be the first ones to be informed?

When we realize that the upper Portuguese bourgeoisie remained in great part liberal, sceptical, anticlerical and secretly affiliated with Freemasonry, another hypothesis, less benevolent but not less plausible, inexorably comes to mind: that of a trap, a deliberate deceit of which Cardinal Tedeschini was the victim, and then *L'Osservatore Romano* as well.

Be that as it may, the publication of the fake photographs of the miracle of 1917 by the organ of the Holy See did great harm to the cause of Fatima. Clearly, the whole anticlerical press gloated over the affair; what a windfall for the rationalists, always on the lookout for arguments against Fatima!⁶²⁹

Besides, Pope Pius XII, always so sensitive to the movements of public opinion, was no doubt very much affected by this blunder on the part of the Holy See's daily paper, especially since it was this same article of November 18, 1951 that had informed the world of his own visions of the dance of the sun in October-November 1950. This unfortunate coincidence is perhaps a factor in the more reserved attitude he later adopted concerning Fatima, as we shall see.

Let us, however, dare to express a final remark. Was it really opportune to publish *urbi et orbi* – first of all at Fatima during the Solemn Mass of October 13, 1951 and then for the whole Church in *L'Osservatore Romano* – completely personal visions which the Holy Father had been favoured with the year before? Would it not have been better if the Pope had quite simply drawn all the consequences for himself? As for edifying the faithful, would not a magisterial discourse of the Sovereign Pontiff on the incomparable miracle of October

13, 1917, as a divine guarantee of the apparitions and message of Fatima, have been much more effective and favourable for increasing in souls devotion to Our Lady of Fatima? The regrettable effects and scant supernatural fruit of publishing the Holy Father's visions lead us to think so.⁶³⁰

CHAPTER VIII

«LIKE THE KING OF FRANCE, THEY DID NOT WANT TO HEED MY REQUEST...» (1953 - 1956)

While the miraculous events of Syracuse still held the attention of much of the press and aroused a holy emotion in the mass of the faithful, on September 8, 1953, Pope Pius XII published the encyclical *Fulgens corona*, announcing the proclamation of a “Marian Year”, to celebrate in 1954 the hundredth anniversary of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

On December 8, the Pope proclaimed the solemn opening of the Marian Year in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. In the special prayer he had composed for this occasion, Pius XII invoked the Immaculate Heart of Mary, «*the assured refuge in the tempests which assail us on every side*»⁶³¹. In the radio message he pronounced the same day, he commented on the praise which the Church addresses to the Virgin Mary, «*pulchra et luna, electa ut sol, terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata* – fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array»:

«Mary is beautiful in Herself, like the moon, She radiates light around Her like the sun; *but against the “enemy”, She is strong, She is terrible as an army in battle array, “acies ordinata”*».

«On this day of rejoicing and exultation, God knows how much we would like to be able to forget the bitterness of the times we are going through! But the dangers weighing over the human race are such that we must never cease – one might say – to shout our cry of alarm. *The “enemy” is here, who is bearing down on the doors of the Church, and menacing souls. And here is another – and completely relevant aspect – of Mary: Her strength in battle...*»

The Pope concludes with an urgent prayer:

«O Mary, strong as an army, give victory to our troops. We are so weak and our enemy waxes furious with such arrogance. *But with Your standard, we feel sure of overcoming him; he knows the strength of Your foot, he fears the majesty of Your glance. Save us, O Mary, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array!*»⁶³²

Yes, more and more holy souls – the only clear-sighted souls in this kind of drama – were beginning to realize: a miraculous protection, a very special intervention of the Queen of Angels could still save the Church and Christendom against the redoubled attacks of the powers of darkness. For while the Bolshevik enemy was at the door, more menacing than ever – after the Korean War, came the loss of Indochina by France, then the loss of Morocco and Tunisia, and later on Algeria and black Africa –, meanwhile the traitors, the false brethren, the modernist and progressivist Judases had infiltrated and installed themselves from within, in the very heart of the Holy City; disguising themselves, they had sneaked into the leading posts and right up to the highest offices of the hierarchy, even at Rome.

Did Pius XII realize it? Undoubtedly he did, to a certain extent.⁶³³ But unfortunately, although he saw the evil – we will have occasion to return to this point – no doubt he did not discern all *the deepest roots of it*, and he did not manage to resolve to apply the *heroic decisions* and *supernatural remedies* which alone, at this point, could still have saved everything. To gain the victory in this superhuman, supernatural battle – an apocalyptic battle! – extraordinary assistance had to be obtained from Heaven. Needed was precisely *this miraculous assistance*, this powerful, irresistible intervention which God had promised at Fatima, at the dawn of the century. He had promised it on one condition: that the pastors of the Church agree to enter into His designs, that they render a solemn cult to the Immaculate Heart of His Mother, and promote devotion to this Most Holy Heart everywhere. That was all God expected: that the Pastors accomplish humbly, with love, with “a faith able to move mountains”, and “a hope against all hope”, Our Lady’s “little requests”, which were so simple and easy, but also secrets of grace and mercy, secrets of salvation: «*God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart... If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace.*»

At Syracuse, while showing Her Heart pierced with thorns, Our Lady – or rather Her Image, but it is all one thing – had shed abundant tears. «*Would men understand the mysterious language of these tears?*» Pius XII had exclaimed tragically, commenting on the prodigy. But what about Pius XII himself? Alas! It appears that he did not understand it. For this earth-shaking miracle changed nothing; it did not reverse the sad decline of his waning pontificate.

The more we study up close, with a magnifying glass, the final years of this great reign – which the parallel promises of Paray-le-Monial and Fatima invite us to compare with that of the «king of France», Louis XIV – the more we are forced to make a bitter observation. After 1951, and still more after *Sacro vergente anno* – for up to that point it was possible to believe that the Pope was merely delaying the exact accomplishment of Heaven’s requests – yes, after the summer of 1952, the chasm between Rome and Fatima grew deeper every day, to the great comfort of Moscow.

What had happened? How can we explain such a deadly change? If perhaps we examine an impressive series of facts, we will get an idea.

1953

THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE SECRET OF FATIMA: THE OFFICIAL EVALUATION OF FATHER DHANIS

Ten months after the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pius XII, Father Dhanis took up his pen against Fatima once more. This time it was to defend himself. Indeed in February of 1953, a Portuguese Jesuit friend of Father da Fonseca, Father Veloso, had published in *Broteria* a severe, blistering critique of Dhanis’ last article.⁶³⁴ The opponent of Fatima wanted to have the last word. He responded. However, this time his paper did not appear in Louvain’s *Nouvelle Revue théologique*, as in the preceding year. Nor

did it appear in *Broteria*, the Portuguese Jesuit review where he had been attacked. The article appeared at Rome itself, in the quasi-official *Civilta cattolica*. When we realize, as we have said, that the director of the great Jesuit review saw the Pope every fifteen days,⁶³⁵ we can make an educated guess that it was Pius XII himself, along with Father Janssens, Superior General of the Society, who imposed – or rather granted – to Dhanis the honour and privilege of this response in the columns of *Civilta cattolica*, in order to put an end to the controversy setting several members of the Jesuits in scandalous opposition to each other.

The article appeared in May 1953.⁶³⁶ In spite of appearances, in granting this article – for it was in fact a concession – Pius XII had once more given way to the anti-Fatima camp. For in the end, instead of closing the debate in the unofficial journal of the Holy See by a correction from Father da Fonseca – who was also a Jesuit, but a serious expert and ardent defender of the message of Fatima – this concern was left in the hands of the hypocrite Dhanis. While giving the appearance of making great concessions, and describing in mealy-mouthed terms a highly doubtful devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, at bottom Dhanis secretly maintained all his most perfidious attacks and unjustified criticisms against the great Secret. And did Pius XII let him do so? Did he hope to make everybody happy by this compromise? Undoubtedly, but it proved disastrous for the cause of Fatima.

Let us go through this article again. It is particularly instructive to read it while putting ourselves back in the context of that time. In the first line, Dhanis perfidiously recalls *Civilta cattolica's* previous interventions concerning Fatima. These two articles appeared in 1931 and 1943, both from the pen of Father da Fonseca. Since that date, was there anything more on Fatima in the great Jesuit review? Either in 1946, during the crowning of Our Lady, or in 1951, for the closing of the Holy Year jubilee and the international congress? Nothing! And now, after this ten year silence – a silence heavy with significance – it was to the adversary, and no longer the apologist, that *Civilta cattolica* opened its columns. What a victory!

After giving a very brief rundown of the facts, Dhanis brings up the successive acts by which the hierarchy clearly gave its approval to the message of Fatima. But this is to move on immediately to a second part, entitled: «The significance of the acts of the authority of the Church.» What is the meaning of the approbation granted by the Church to an apparition or private revelation? That is the question. Answer: practically none. For in this area, our author claims, no certainty is possible.

Not even when the Pope orders the Universal Church to celebrate on February 11, through a liturgical feast, «the apparition of the Blessed Virgin, Mary Immaculate?» Not even when the Church mentions this apparition in the martyrology, in the oration of the day and at several points in the Divine Office?⁶³⁷ The scholarly exposition of Father Dhanis does not even broach the question! He rehashes the principles formulated in the eighteenth century by Cardinal Lambertini, he invokes a passage of the encyclical *Pascendi* (falsifying its obvious meaning), and reaches the desired conclusion: to depreciate as much as possible all Divine interventions in the Church's history; they are all scornfully, indistinctly designated under the vague, imprecise heading of “private revelations”. In short, the

adversary of Fatima reveals himself to be an even poorer theologian than critic when he analyzed the historical documents concerning Fatima.⁶³⁸

In any case, Dhanis insists, – for this is the point he wants to come to – the ecclesiastical hierarchy cannot conform to “private revelations”. At most, an extraordinary intervention of Heaven can suggest an initial idea or give the first impulse to a declaration in favour of a decision already recognized as legitimate, fitting, and necessary for other reasons, and higher motives.

Dhanis goes on to observe – rejoicing as though it were the most normal thing, and a safeguard of the sovereign autonomy of the hierarchical authority – that the consecration of 1942 did not correspond to the exact request of the Secret. He rejoices that the consecration of 1952, the consecration of the peoples of Russia, «*was announced in an Apostolic Letter which made no mention at all of Fatima.*»

Alas! Here Dhanis is in accord with the feeble point made by Father da Fonseca – which he quotes with pleasure. Unfortunately, many bits of evidence prove⁶³⁹ to us that this was the thinking of Pius XII himself. In the final part of the article, Dhanis proposes to make «an evaluation of the discussion». We examined its content in our first volume.⁶⁴⁰ At that time we had observed:

«In this final response, in vain shall we look for the slightest clear and honest retraction. On the contrary, he (Dhanis) always claims imperturbably that his “preceding clarifications (sic) remain substantially (?) intact.” He insinuates that the recent consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Pope in no way weakens his suspicions against the Secret: “*The Apostolic Letter makes no mention of Fatima.*⁶⁴¹ *Thus the Holy Father showed that on this occasion the Secret of Fatima was not the principal motive for him, but rather an accessory occasion for performing acts which were already to be recommended for intrinsic reasons, and which were requested by the bishops and by many of the faithful. The fact of the consecrations does not prove that in the eyes of the Holy Father the Secret of Fatima, in all its parts, reproduced the words of the Most Holy Virgin...*”

«Dhanis still thinks that the Secret received “*precisions added in all good faith in a degree difficult to determine*”. The text divulged is only a distant and deformed “*echo*”. In other words, its content remains completely uncertain!»⁶⁴²

We have isolated all the venom contained in this article. Yet, it was enclosed in such soothing formulas, such sugar-coated circumlocutions, that all in all it could make a good impression on everybody – especially the Pope. Father Dhanis seemed prudent, moderate, in favour of the “golden mean”, *objective and reasonable*. He proclaimed his devotedness, that he was interested solely in the truth, and the greater service of Our Lady of Fatima. What is more, *on the essentials* Dhanis seemed to be in perfect agreement with his adversaries of yesterday, his colleagues da Fonseca and Veloso. True, they had treated him harshly, but he seemed to feel no animosity towards them. Finally, he was obeying the Pope. He accepted, of course, everything the Holy Father saw fit to accomplish in the sense

of Fatima. But he was happy over the Pope's great perceptiveness and extreme circumspection in this domain!

It is conceivable that Pius XII, who was so directly concerned in this article, an article no doubt written according to his directives, was aware of its contents. Yet, it was not followed by any denial or rectification. Neither Father Veloso nor Father da Fonseca had the opportunity to make any response to their Roman colleague. In short, Father Dhanis had the last word in a controversy which he dominated.

AN ELOQUENT SILENCE

Besides, for over a year already, Pius XII seemed to be proving Dhanis correct by his silence. Indeed the radio message addressed to the pilgrims at Fatima on October 13, 1951 was Pius XII's last solemn act in favour of Fatima. After that, it cannot be denied that relations between Rome and Fatima grew notably colder. To make this realization it suffices to go through the pontifical documents of the final seven years of his reign. In 1952, we do not find any allusion to Fatima, not even, as we have said, in the Apostolic Letter *Sacro vergente anno*, through which the Holy Father consecrated Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In 1953, we find just one mention, a very mild one at that, on April 11. In a "radio message to the agricultural workers of Columbia", the Pope declares: «May you experience the protection of your great patroness, Our Lady of Fatima, whose most sweet name we invoke at this moment with all our heart.»⁶⁴³ On September 8, in the encyclical *Fulgens corona* announcing the upcoming "Marian Year", he speaks at some length about the apparitions of Lourdes,⁶⁴⁴ but says not a word about Fatima.

1954

THE MARIAN YEAR WILL NOT BE THE YEAR OF FATIMA

In 1954, public mentions of Fatima in pontifical discourses are almost equally rare: On October 11, in his encyclical *Ad Coeli Reginam*, the Pope recalls his radio message of 1946 «for the crowning of the miraculous statue of Fatima»;⁶⁴⁵ on December 8, in his radio message to the Marian Congress of Columbia, he makes a reference without any commentary to «the inauguration of the national monument to Our Lady of Fatima».⁶⁴⁶ That was it.

THE FEAST OF THE QUEENSHIP OF MARY AND RENEWAL OF THE CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

As the Marian Year approached its end – it was to close on December 8, 1954 – Pius XII published on October 11 a beautiful encyclical on the Queenship of Mary, whose feast he instituted, declaring:

«By our apostolic authority we decree and institute the Feast of the Queenship of Mary, which will be celebrated in the entire world on May 31.»

He added something else, again perhaps to do something more in the sense of Fatima's requests, but without saying so:

«We order equally that on this day, the consecration *of the human race* to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary *be renewed*. Here indeed lies the great hope of seeing an era of happiness arise, where Christian peace and the triumph of religion shall reign.

«Let everybody therefore approach, with greater trust than before, the throne of mercy and grace of our Queen and Mother, to request help in adversity, light in darkness, and strength in times of pain and tears...»⁶⁴⁷

It was a pious and holy decision, of course, but it did not correspond to what the Blessed Virgin had requested. Moreover the order remained so vague that it almost passed unnoticed, and it remained a dead letter.

«*WHEN THE DARKNESS GROWS THICKER*»

More than ever, however, the hour was a sombre one for the Pope. The summer and autumn at Castelgandolfo had been tragic. Pius XII had learned of news so shocking that it altered his health: his closest collaborator, the Pro-Secretary of State for Ordinary Affairs, Msgr. Montini, had been betraying his trust, undertaking relations with Moscow without informing the Pope.⁶⁴⁸ The ailing Pope very nearly resigned. One evening, believing death was near, he had left his close associates bidding them adieu.⁶⁴⁹

On October 12, in a radio message to the Mariological Congress at Montevideo, on the occasion of the consecration of Uruguay to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Pius XII freely expressed his disquiet:

«The world is passing through a sombre hour (he declared), and the clouds are slow in clearing up. On the contrary, from time to time there resound in various places shouts by which the enemies of the Church celebrate their victories, whereas the good seem to be strongly disoriented, perhaps for lack of the necessary unity. Precisely for this reason our hope is more and more firm, and our prayer more and more fervent to the Queen of Heaven, as if we expected no deliverance except from the Hand of Her who has always been the *Help of Christians*.»⁶⁵⁰

General Franco, during a pilgrimage to Fatima.



General Franco , pronouncing the Act of Consecration of Spain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

On the same day, the clergy and faithful of Spain had gathered behind the head of state, Generalissimo Franco, for the official, national consecration of Spain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In this hour of immense joy and triumph, the Pope expressed his sombre intuitions once more, and explained to them why the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was more necessary than ever:

«We believe that more than ever today, all humanity must run towards this harbour of salvation which we have pointed out to it as the purpose of this Marian Year: the most pure Heart of the Blessed Virgin, precisely because clouds darken the horizon, because at certain moments it seems that darkness increasingly covers the roads, because the audacity of the ministers of hell goes on increasing. Humanity must take refuge in this fortress, it must entrust itself to this most gentle Heart, which to save us *requests only prayer and penance*, and asks only on our part that we *correspond a little* to Its requests.»⁶⁵¹

Yes and no, Most Holy Father! Of course it was true that the Immaculate Heart of Mary asked only that the Church «correspond a little» with Its requests, for It to graciously grant deliverance. But no, Our Lady did not ask only for «prayer and penance», as Father Dhanis falsely claimed! The seer of Fatima had repeated many times, untiringly, and again in 1952 to Father Schweigl, what Our Lord's most precise, immutable demands were, in honour of His beloved Mother.

SYRACUSE: A MIRACLE FOR NOTHING?

On October 17, speaking to the Marian Congress of Sicily, the Pope mentioned the Blessed Virgin's miraculous intervention at Syracuse the preceding year.⁶⁵² Among other things, he said:

«If devotion to Mary is so profoundly rooted and so ardent in the people of Sicily, who could be astonished if She chose, according to what your most worthy prelates related to us, one of your illustrious cities recently to dispense signal graces?... It was not without a vivid emotion that we heard of the unanimous declaration of the bishops of Sicily on the reality of this event... Will men understand the mysterious language of these tears? Oh, the tears of Mary! On Golgotha they were tears of compassion, etc.»⁶⁵³

Was this not the providential opportunity, finally, to approve, bless and encourage the holy practice of the reparatory devotion of the five first Saturdays of the month – requested by Heaven since 1925 to console the Immaculate Heart of Mary, pierced by the sins of men? Certainly! And nothing was easier, more natural than to recall the authentic, integral message of Fatima in the context of the miracle of Syracuse – as Cardinal Ruffini or Archbishop Baranzini of Syracuse had done spontaneously.

Yet, Pius XII did nothing of the sort. No doubt it did not even occur to him. On the contrary, he wanted to reassure the fretful, ecumenical or liberal spirits in his entourage, who did not appreciate his statements – Father Janssens, Father Bea – who, for the Church's misfortune, was his confessor! – Msgr. Montini and Msgr. Dell'Acqua, who were all of the same opinion, the same spirit as Dhanis. So, Pius XII felt obliged to add these restrictive words:

«Certainly, the Apostolic See has up to the present in no way manifested its judgment on the tears said to have been shed by one of these images in a humble household of working people.»⁶⁵⁴

Was this a simple formula of routine prudence? Perhaps. But modernists of the stripe of Father Dhanis immediately seized upon it to draw an argument against the credibility of the events of Syracuse... and also against the parts of the Fatima message for which neither the Pope nor the Bishop of Leiria had taken the trouble to pronounce on authoritatively.

AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE DOGMA OF MARY MEDIATRIX

Similarly on October 24, in his radio message to the international congress, after stating a few rules to assure «real and lasting progress» in Mariology, the Pope saw fit to add:

«Thus will this discipline be able to make progress, utilizing *this just middle road* which will place it on guard against *all false and immoderate exaggeration of the truth*, and separate it from those who are troubled from the vain fear of granting the Most Blessed Virgin more than is just...»⁶⁵⁵

Instead of denouncing excesses with precision, as so many errors against the Faith and true devotion to the Most Holy Virgin, did not this general warning against «*all false and immoderate exaggeration of the truth*» dangerously lend itself to confusion? For a Protestant, for a Modernist, the whole Catholic dogma on Mary is «a false and immoderate exaggeration of the truth». For a Catholic ecumenist of the fifties, such as Father Bea, S.J., rector of the Biblical Institute and the Pope's confessor, or for Msgr. Montini – we do not put forward these two names by chance – all proposing of a new Marian dogma, *especially the universal mediation of the Most Holy Virgin*, was to be denounced as «an immoderate exaggeration of the truth».

In the immediate entourage of Pius XII, in fact one can very well discern a plot against the definition of the dogma of Mary Mediatrix. Although during the first ten years of his pontificate Pius XII often employed in his discourses or encyclicals this beautiful Marian title – which the apparitions of Rue du Bac and Fatima so clearly imply – little by little he grew more reticent on this point and the term Mediatrix became rarer in his writings, and finally disappeared entirely.

Father Laurentin highlighted this point in 1962:

«Pius XII (he writes) had a constant concern to maintain a just equilibrium between excess and depreciation. The discretion of his theological vocabulary is notable. Pius XII never employed the expression Co-Redemptrix (which he had used before his election to the pontificate), and almost never Mediatrix (here Laurentin is mistaken and misleading: we have been able to find fifteen uses of this title by Pius XII up to 1950, and our list is not exhaustive!), for fear of obscuring, as he sometimes said to his intimates (which ones, we would like to know?), the *unus Mediator* of 1 Tim. 2:5. Was it for this reason (adds Laurentin) *that he established the Feast of the Queenship of Mary on May 31, thus leading to suppression of the feast of Mary's Mediation granted to very many dioceses?*»⁶⁵⁶

Indeed! Out of 365 days in the year, where so many ferias were free, why was the new feast of the Queenship of Mary chosen *precisely for May 31*, if not to make the feast of “Mary, Mediatrix of all graces”, celebrated up till then on this same day, fall into disuse?⁶⁵⁷

Here on the very occasion of the Marian year was an infinitely regrettable decision to which Pius XII consented. Once again he had retreated on this point; he had given way to the camp of the innovators, who were so fiercely, and hypocritically, anti-Mary.⁶⁵⁸

A DOUBLE PROJECT WHICH GOD DID NOT ACCEPT

We seem to have a new proof, however, of the Holy Father’s troubled conscience regarding the requests of Fatima. One and a half months after his encyclical *Ad Coeli Reginam*, Pius XII publicly promised again to do something more in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, if God permitted it by granting him sufficient health. After referring to the battle against communism led by the Church, the Pope added:

«Let men do everything possible, with courage and vigilance, to resist these scourges: this is befitting to Christians. May nothing apt for driving away such a grave contagion be neglected, may nothing be omitted. And since human forces are incapable of attaining this result, let men have recourse in prayer and supplication once more and always to Her whom our fathers were wont to implore as their helper in all perils, this Queen of angels and men whose prayer has so much power with God, and who has never ceased to cover the Church of Her Divine Son with Her motherly protection...

«For our part, here are our own desires: as we began this year particularly dedicated to the Blessed Virgin at Saint Mary Major’s Basilica, so likewise, *God willing*, we would like to end it with a prayer before this holy image which is rightly called *Salus populi romani*. And before the immense crowd that will surely gather there, we would like to *consecrate once more to our most loving Mother, the Queen of Heaven, the entire human race*, wounded by sin and divided by too great a love for earthly realities, and filled with anguish by present and future events. And we have no doubt that what we will do here, *God willing, our brothers and children in Christ, with great joy and in union with us will also repeat in their own churches.*»⁶⁵⁹

This renewal of the act of consecration of October 31 and December 8, 1942, was planned for December 8 – but now for the first time, all the bishops were invited to join in with the Sovereign Pontiff, each in his own cathedral. Note well that it was still not what Our Lady requested, since it was a consecration of the human race and not Russia! We note also with bitterness that, although inwardly the Pope apparently wanted to obey the requests of Fatima, he nevertheless did not dare to do so, contenting himself with doing something else.

«*God willing*», Pius XII had repeated in two places, announcing the ceremony of December 8. He had also promised Msgr. Montini, appointed Archbishop of Milan on November 1, that he would confer the episcopal consecration himself on the following December 12.

However, neither one of these projects could come to pass. In the final days of November, the Pope became gravely ill. For December 8 and 12, he had to content himself with reading some very brief radio messages from his sick-bed.⁶⁶⁰ There was no more talk about renewal of the consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Sovereign Pontiff, in union with all the bishops of the world. By this tragic mishap, did not God want to make the “Pope of Fatima” understand that what he expected from him was the exact fulfilment of the requests of His Most Holy Mother, and not something else? Thus the Marian Year ended sadly on this discordant note, which unfortunately was not the last of the pontificate.

1955

PIUS XII SAYS NO TO THE LITURGICAL FEAST OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Since 1927, pilgrim priests had the faculty of celebrating the votive Mass of Our Lady of the Rosary at the Cova da Iria.⁶⁶¹ On October 22, 1949, Rome had also granted permission to celebrate the Mass of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. However, there still was no proper feast in honour of Our Lady of Fatima.

In 1955, the Portuguese bishops unanimously believed that the moment had come to request this of the Sovereign Pontiff. Two minor decisions, made the previous year by the Holy See seemed to be grounds for hoping for a favourable response.

THE BRIEF “RECENS CONSTITUTAS”. For on June 28, 1954, at the request of the local bishop, Rome had agreed to give Our Lady of Fatima as principal patroness of the diocese of Warangala, newly erected in India. The apostolic brief granting this favour was written in glowing terms, and above all it concluded with these important words:

«... We establish, choose and declare the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Most Holy Rosary of Fatima as the primary Heavenly Patroness with God for the diocese of Warangala. We grant among other things the honours and privileges due according to custom to the principal Patrons of dioceses, *and we add to that the faculty of celebrating each year, on May 13, the feast of this Heavenly Patroness, with the office of the common of feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and with the Mass of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary...*

«Given at Rome, at Saint Peter’s, under the Fisherman’s ring, on June 28, 1954, the sixteenth year of our pontificate.»⁶⁶²

The Holy Father had graciously granted this feast to a bishop in India – would he not also grant it, with all the more reason, to all the Portuguese bishops, unanimously making this request for the “faithful nation” where She had deigned to appear? Did not this concession in favour of a diocese in India prove that there was no objection in principle to Rome’s granting it to the “Land of Holy Mary”? Especially since the end of the Marian Year had been marked by another Roman decision in favour of Fatima...

THE BRIEF “LUCE SUPERNA”. On November 12, 1954, at the request of the Bishop of Leiria, the Pope granted the sanctuary of Fatima the title and privileges of a basilica. A notable fact is that in the Apostolic brief announcing this favour we find the most explicit affirmations of the reality of the apparitions of Fatima; these formulas were now in an official pontifical text published in the Acts of the Apostolic See.⁶⁶³ Here are the principal excerpts:

«To the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Heavenly light illuminating this benighted century, the venerable sanctuary of Fatima in Portugal has been consecrated, *where the Mother of God once manifested Herself under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary (ubi eadem Deipara... olim se dedit conspiciendam)*.

After a brief description of the riches and ornaments of the edifice (the text mentions the mosaic representing the Immaculate Heart of Mary), the Roman document continues:

«Among other things, in this same sanctuary..., solemnly consecrated last year, were buried the bodies of *Jacinta and Francisco Marto, who were judged worthy of the wonderful vision of the Mother of God (qui Deiparae prodigiali visu dignati sunt)*.»

After briefly mentioning the pilgrimages and recalling the solemnities of May 13, 1946 and October 13, 1951, the Holy Father continued:

«So that this sanctuary be enhanced with even greater honours at the end of this Marian Year, our venerable Brother José Alves Correia da Silva, Bishop of Leiria, has asked us to grant this church, which is frequented by innumerable crowds, the title and rights of a minor basilica. Gladly hearing these desires *by reason of our particular devotion to the Blessed Virgin of Fatima...*», we grant the privileges requested.

«Given at Castelgandolfo, under the Fisherman’s ring, on November 12, 1954, the sixteenth year of our pontificate.»⁶⁶⁴

THE REQUEST OF THE PORTUGUESE BISHOPS

Encouraged by these signs of benevolence, the Portuguese bishops believed that the hour had come to address their request to the Holy See. On July 13, 1955, they asked the Sovereign Pontiff to grant for all Portugal the institution of a feast, in honour of “the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin of the Most Holy Rosary”. This new feast would be celebrated on May 13, with a proper office which the Portuguese bishops submitted on the same occasion for the approval of the Congregation of Rites.⁶⁶⁵

A favourable response, of course, would have been extremely important for development of the cult of Our Lady of Fatima. Unfortunately, as Msgr. Luciano Guerra reports, «the response was negative, “*because it was not opportune*”, according to the terms frequently used by the Holy See for its refusal.»⁶⁶⁶

This time it was a formal, categorical refusal given to the entire Portuguese episcopate. Undoubtedly it was the first time such a thing had happened since the beginning of the pontificate of Pius XII, who had once had such great esteem and real friendship for Cardinal Cerejeira. The refusal was especially disappointing and painful because Rome could not justify it for any reason of principle. The precedent constituted by the brief we already mentioned, *Recens constitutas*, was the guarantee that such an obstacle did not exist. Why this refusal, then? Would not the granting of this feast, a good thing in itself, have been *supremely opportune* for all of Portugal, including its overseas provinces, where it would have aroused a holy enthusiasm and revival of devotion to Our Lady of Fatima and the message of Her Immaculate Heart?

The obstacle was at Rome, and only at Rome. It was the clan of supporters of Dhanis, or rather the anti-Fatima clan, of which Dhanis had merely been the spokesman. Msgr. Montini had been removed, but his right hand man remained – Msgr. Dell’Acqua, the new substitute Secretary of State. Father Bea, the Pope’s confessor remained – he was already secretly enamoured of ecumenism and ready to make all concessions, especially in the area of Marian devotion. Also remaining were Father Janssens, Superior General of the Jesuits and Dhanis himself, who had become the quasi-official expert of the Society – if not the Vatican itself – for everything concerning Fatima.⁶⁶⁷

In short, the Portuguese prelates were under an unfortunate illusion about the real dispositions of the Holy See. The two briefs of 1954, important as they were for Fatima, were not destined to be made known to the general public. For practical purposes they went unnoticed.

It would have been quite different for the establishment of a liturgical feast celebrating the apparition of May 13, 1917. But Rome refused to make this truly useful, supremely effective decision to make Our Lady of Fatima and Her message of salvation more known and loved. Was the Pope alone in deciding on this disconcerting refusal? Or was he pushed into it by certain members of the Holy Office? Here we must draw attention to a coincidence, for which we cannot yet propose a definite interpretation.

MAY 1955: CARDINAL OTTAVIANI AT LISBON, FATIMA AND COIMBRA

Two months before the Portuguese bishops addressed their request to the Holy Father, Cardinal Ottaviani, then the Pro-Secretary of the Holy Office, had come to the Cova da Iria to preside over the national pilgrimage of May 13. In his homily to the pilgrims, he had referred to the apparitions, but without citing any of Our Lady’s essential messages with precision.⁶⁶⁸

After Lisbon, on May 17 the Cardinal came to Coimbra, «where his program was filled with official acts: a visit to the seminary, a visit to the university, and to the convent of Saint Teresa, “where he spoke a few moments with Sister Lucy, the seer of Fatima”. On his return to Lisbon, he presided over a gala dinner, followed by a reception.»⁶⁶⁹

What was the content of this conversation between the Pro-Secretary of the Holy Office and Our Lady's messenger? Apparently Sister Lucy requested the Cardinal to pass on to the Holy Father her desire that he «rapidly advance Jacinta and Francisco's cause for beatification. We also know that the Pro-Secretary of the Holy Office questioned her on the third Secret, and more precisely on the date fixed for its disclosure, 1960. In 1967, the Cardinal recalled that he had asked Lucy: «Why this date?» She had answered: «Because it will appear clearer.»⁶⁷⁰ Was this audience with the seer the principal motive of the Pro-Prefect's visit to Portugal? What other themes were brought up? We do not know.

What we do know is that the Cardinal, by virtue of his functions, was very little inclined to attribute importance to "private revelations". As Pro-Secretary of the Holy Office, he had to examine many cases of alleged apparitions, and warn against excessive credibility in this area.

Significant in this regard is the article he published on March 25, 1951, in *L'Osservatore Romano*:

«Revelation closed with the death of the last Apostle (the Cardinal recalled) and it is entrusted to the Church, which is its interpreter and guardian. Nothing else can be revealed to us which is necessary for our salvation. We have nothing more to wait for; we have everything. The most well-established visions can give us new motives for fervour, but not new elements of life and doctrine... We have Holy Scripture, we have Tradition, we have the Supreme Pastor and a hundred other pastors alongside our house; why should we give those who fight against us and despise us a spectacle of foolishness or senseless exaltation? "Be not so eager to agitate yourselves", Dante already wrote in his time. "Do not be like a reed in the wind." Already he gave the same reasons which we give ourselves: "You have the New and the Old Testament, and the Pastor of the Church to guide you." And he concluded, just as we conclude ourselves: "Let that be enough to save you" (Paradise, V, 73-77).»⁶⁷¹

The Cardinal's warning is useful and salutary – and more relevant than ever! – at a time when false mystics and false visionaries are springing up, dangerously misleading the multitudes. The reasons put forward, however, those of Dante in the fourteenth century, are perhaps not the best. They call for a good many corrections. To turn the faithful away from so many false "apparitions", the Cardinal contented himself with the easiest response – but what an ineffectual one, as later events proved! He tended to put down all "private revelations", whether true or false.

Would it not have been better, for the good of their souls, to encourage the faithful to study and apply the very rich messages of reliable apparitions, officially guaranteed by the Church? Is it not despising the gifts of God to ignore the incomparable, inexhaustible treasure of light and grace dispensed to the Church by the apparitions of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial? Or the apparitions of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal at Rue du Bac? Or the apparitions of the Immaculate Conception at Lourdes, or the Immaculate Heart of Mary at Fatima? If the Sacred Heart of Jesus and His Most Holy Mother have deigned to

intervene in our history in such an undeniable manner, addressing precise requests and wonderful promises to men, it was surely through a design of mercy of God's infinite Wisdom, for the salvation of a greater number of souls. Granted, these apparitions were not necessary *a priori*, and we would have no grounds for complaint if we had been deprived of them, since it is true that «we have everything»! But to the extent that Heaven, through an excess of love, wishes to grant even more to the Church, is it not unbelievably superficial, and stupefying blindness, to stubbornly refuse this extraordinary help? This aid is miraculous and not only useful, but according to the very designs of God indispensable, in a world where the charity of the many has grown cold, and in a century when hell and its henchmen are unchained with unheard-of audacity and power, against all that is of God, of Christ, and His Church.

Let us close this digression, although these remarks are important: they explain how certain valiant defenders of the Faith and Tradition at times adopted *vis-à-vis* Fatima – although for very different motives and in a very different spirit – the same attitude in practice as the extreme reserve and suspicion of their semi-modernist adversaries. What an infinitely regrettable convergence!

THE FATIMA SEER REDUCED TO SILENCE

It was also around this period that Sister Lucy was watched much more closely, and almost completely reduced to silence. According to John Haffert, who does not give the exact date of this measure, the Pope decided that only persons who had already met her could speak with her again, without the express permission of the Holy See.⁶⁷² And in its note of July 2, 1959 - the integral text of which we will quote later on – the chancery of Coimbra states in the most categorical manner:

«The chancery of Coimbra is authorized to declare that Sister Lucy said everything she wanted to say and had to say about Fatima, and which can be found in books published on Fatima, and has said nothing more; consequently, she has authorized no one to publish, *at least since February 1955*, anything new which might be attributed to her on the subject of Fatima.»⁶⁷³

To what precise event does this date of February 1955 correspond? We do not know.

In any case, in the history of Fatima, 1955 will continue to go down as a gloomy year, the year the Pope refused the Portuguese bishops institution of the liturgical cult of Our Lady of Fatima.

1956 PIUS XII AND THE “PRIVATE REVELATIONS” OF PARAY-LE-MONIAL AND FATIMA

If we closely study the discourses and decisions of Pius XII at this period, we get the tragic impression that relations imperceptibly grew colder, the differences grew deeper between the Vicar of Christ – for whom Fatima apparently no longer counted – and the Immaculate Virgin, who was ever faithful to Her promises as well as Her express requests revealed at Fatima thirty years earlier, and repeated so many times over since then.

Thus in the year 1956, the very name of Fatima is totally absent from the official Acts of Pius XII, as it had already been in 1955. However, Fatima historians like to point out a new intervention of the Pope in favour of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This text is worth our attention.

THE ENCYCLICAL “HAURIETIS AQUAS” AND THE SOURCES OF DEVOTION TO THE HOLY HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

On May 15, 1956, Pius XII published his masterly encyclical *Haurietis aquas*, on the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The encyclical is a magnificent doctrinal treasure, and after *Mystici Corporis*, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, *Mediator Dei* and *Humani Generis*, it was the last of the great theological encyclicals of the pontificate.⁶⁷⁴

At the end of his exposition, which was at the same time scriptural, theological and historical, the Pope encouraged the Faithful to join devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and he recalled one more time the consecration of the Church and the world he had performed in 1942:

«And so that this devotion to the august Heart of Jesus may bring greater advantages for the Christian family and for the entire human race, *the Faithful should make sure to closely associate with it devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*

«Indeed, God willed that in the work of the Redemption of men, the Most Holy Virgin was to be indissolubly joined to Christ, *in such a way that salvation would come to us from the charity and sufferings of Jesus Christ, intimately associated with the love and sorrows of His Mother; thus it is fitting that the Christian people, which has received the divine life of Christ through Mary, after rendering to the Sacred Heart of Jesus the homage due It, offer to the most loving Heart of the Heavenly Mother like testimonies of its piety, its love, and the fervour of a heart disposed to gratitude and reparation.*

«To this most wise and most sweet design corresponds *the act of consecration* through which we ourselves dedicated Holy Church and the entire world to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin.»⁶⁷⁵

In this magnificent passage the whole doctrine of Mary Co-Redemptrix is admirably explained, although the word is not found there; there is also the pressing invitation to “reparation” towards this Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, which cooperates so closely in the work of our redemption.

However, on reaching the end of this beautiful encyclical, the reader familiar with the messages of Paray-le-Monial and Fatima cannot help but express one regret: what a shame that after bringing up Paray-le-Monial the Pope did not wish to recall – as Cardinal Cerejeira liked to do so often – that Fatima was in our twentieth century, for the Immaculate Heart of Mary, what Paray-le-Monial had been for the cult of the Sacred Heart!⁶⁷⁶

Unfortunately, the Pope did not make the slightest allusion in this vein. On the contrary, we often discern in the text of the encyclical a polemical point against those who attribute too much importance to the revelations of Saint Margaret Mary, a reticence which applies a fortiori to the revelations of Fatima.

Answering the objections of Protestants and progressives, Pius XII demonstrates – with great clarity! – that the cult of the Sacred Heart is not something that appeared suddenly and later on in the Church, and only in the aftermath of “private revelations”, but that it is «the act of religion *par excellence*», profoundly rooted in Revelation passed on by Scripture, the Fathers and the Church’s mystical Tradition.

But in doing so, he insists so much on this point that he reaches the point of depreciating the revelations of Paray-le-Monial, reducing their role in the historical development of devotion to the Sacred Heart to almost nothing. In reality their role was so important! After recalling that Saint John Eudes was «the author of the first liturgical office in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Whose feast was celebrated for the first time, with the approval of many bishops of France, on October 20, 1672»; after mentioning «the ardent zeal of Saint Margaret Mary and her spiritual director, Blessed Claude de la Colombière», the Pope adds:

«It is enough to recall the period when devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was being spread to understand clearly that its astonishing progress comes from its perfect conformity with the very nature of Christianity, which is a religion of love. *Thus it cannot be said that this devotion came from a private revelation made by God, or that it appeared suddenly in the Church. No, it came forth spontaneously from the living and fervent faith of men who were filled with supernatural gifts, who adored the Redeemer and His glorious wounds, the striking testimony of His infinite love. Thus the revelations of which Margaret Mary was the object add nothing new to Catholic doctrine...*»

Of course! But does not the insistence on this aspect, although recognizing the importance of the reality of the Sacred Heart apparitions – as the text of the encyclical does immediately afterwards – risk ignoring the most specific, the most beneficial, the most effective part of the apparitions? We refer to the precise requests and the wonderful promises attached to them – which of course are completely in line with Scripture and Tradition, but nevertheless are really new – which make more explicit, for our time, the infinite riches of Divine Revelation, which closed with the death of the last Apostle.

The Pope did not see fit to mention these requests and these promises of the Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary. He even wanted to make it clear that the feast of the Sacred Heart was not instituted to correspond to the requests of Paray-le-Monial, but for other reasons:

«We have a clear proof that this devotion draws its origin from the very principles of Christian Doctrine from the fact that approval of the liturgical solemnity by the Apostolic See preceded approval of Saint Margaret Mary's writings. *Indeed it was not precisely by reason of some private revelation but to correspond to the desires of the Faithful that the Congregation of Rites, by the decree of January 25, 1765, which was approved on February 6 of the same year by our predecessor Clement XIII, granted to the bishops of Poland and the Roman Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart, the faculty of celebrating the liturgical feast; by this act the Holy See wanted to give a new development to a devotion already alive and flourishing, so as to "revive by a symbol the memory of the divine love"* which led the Saviour to offer Himself as a victim of expiation for the sins of men.»⁶⁷⁷

Does not this astonishing insistence tend to suggest that the Roman Pontiffs do not have to base their decisions on any private revelation, however certain it is? This was already the thesis developed by Father Dhanis in 1953, in his article in *Civiltà cattolica*. Can we not read between the lines a sort of justification of the Pope for not having accomplished Our Lady of Fatima's requests and Her demands to promote devotion to Her Immaculate Heart in the world? Is it not a defence, a plea *pro domo* which, moreover, supposedly had to be completed, so that the whole truth might be told about the real history of devotion to the Sacred Heart...?

For in the end, Saint John Eudes himself recognized that he had drawn the inspiration for his devotion to this Divine Heart through reading the revelations of Saint Gertrude, Saint Mechtilde and Saint Bridget,⁶⁷⁸ not counting the numerous divine communications which Marie des Vallées passed on to him, or with which he was directly favoured himself.⁶⁷⁹

Later on, the sublime revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to Margaret Mary, propagated by certain Jesuit saints – too few! – such as Blessed Claude de la Colombière, Father Croiset, and Father de Gallifet, aroused in the people and the court of princes this great movement of piety and these requests, which are mentioned by Pius XII here.⁶⁸⁰ The Popes of the eighteenth century – with a slowness and a reluctance which does not do them honour – were finally forced to correspond to these requests. Timidly, and very late in the day – in 1765! – they responded, while Europe had already been corroded since the beginning of the century by an anti-Christ humanism, which had taken the place of a frigid Jansenism. Europe had been morally, spiritually and mystically disarmed – delivered over to the agents of the Masonic Counter-Church, who were ready to light the fires of revolution.

Would it not have been better, nay, was it not absolutely necessary, that without waiting for almost a century, until the very eve of the catastrophe, the Popes – and the Jesuits, to whom this mission had been expressly entrusted – had deigned to consider attentively the revelations of the Sacred Heart to Margaret Mary and dare to pay attention: permitting, encouraging and promoting this wonderful devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the infinite treasure of grace and mercy which Pius XII, at the end of his encyclical, proposes to the Faithful as the ultimate salvation of the modern world? There is no need even to answer.

Was the same delay, with such grave and dramatic consequences, going to repeat itself in the twentieth century for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, requested by Heaven in our day? There was this difference: in the eighteenth century, the Sacred Heart had not addressed itself directly to the Pope to propagate its cult. It had entrusted this noble mission to the King of France, directing him to intervene with the Holy Father. On the other hand, in the twentieth century, at Fatima – as already in 1899, for the consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart⁶⁸¹ – the great requests of the second part of the Secret are directly addressed to the Sovereign Pontiff: the consecration of Russia and approval of the reparatory devotion on the five first Saturdays of the month.

To him also, in the beginning of 1957, suddenly fell another responsibility: putting to use, for the good of the Church, the final prophetic words pronounced at the Cova da Iria on July 13, 1917.

APPENDIX I - THE BATTLE FOR «THE PRESERVATION OF THE DOGMAS OF THE FAITH» (1953-1956)

The Marian Year of 1954 had been for Pius XII one of the hardest and most trying of his pontificate. From January 25 to March 25, he was overwhelmed with illness once more and was unable to receive audiences. He was increasingly disturbed over the ferment agitating the Church in France. In conscience he felt obliged to react firmly, but these repressive measures, which turned a significant part of public opinion against Rome, were extremely painful for him:

«In August 1953, the news broke of the closing of the seminary of the Mission de France, where a certain number of worker priests had been formed. This was done to facilitate its reorganization, which was judged necessary. In November, the movement *Jeunesse de l'Église*, animated by a Dominican, Father Maurice Montuclard, had been sanctioned (at the Pope's request), by the Assembly of French Cardinals and Archbishops, and in the end was forced to be dissolved. In January 1954, the three Dominican provincials of France, who were suspected of favouring the resistance of the worker priests, had been removed by Rome, and four of their most influential religious – Chenu, Congar, Féret and Boisselot – were dispersed among the provinces.»⁶⁸²

For the worker priests, «a final and fateful delay was fixed: on March 1, 1954, all of them had to leave their work.»⁶⁸³

It was only on Easter Sunday, April 18, that Pius XII, finally recovering, was able to pronounce his usual radio message.⁶⁸⁴

PIUS X: «THE SAINT THAT PROVIDENCE PRESENTS FOR OUR TIME»

The greatest joy of this Marian Year, and perhaps the last joyful hour of the waning pontificate, was the canonization of Pius X on the evening of Saturday, May 29, in Saint Peter's Square, in the presence of 450 bishops who had come to Rome for the event. If, as we will show, the essence of the great Secret, its third part, deals with *«the preservation of the dogmas of the Faith»*, we are at the very heart of the prophetic message of Fatima here. This canonization of the Pope who condemned modernism and the progressivist utopia of the Sillon was not an ordinary canonization: it was the solemn approval, the quasi-infallible canonization by the Sovereign Pontiff of the hard battle waged by his predecessor, at the dawn of this century, for the defence of the dogmas of the Faith against errors which are unceasingly revived, and always produce the same deleterious effects. Here are the most significant passages of the memorable discourse that Pius XII pronounced during the canonization ceremony:

«This hour of striking triumph which God, Who exalts the humble, has prepared and as it were hastened, to seal the wonderful ascent of His faithful servant Pius X to the supreme glory of the altars, fills Our soul with a joy in which, Venerable Brethren and dear children, you greatly participate by your presence. This is why we give fervent thanks to the divine goodness for having allowed us to live through this extraordinary event...»

«It is a happy and memorable date, not only for us, who number it among the glory days of our pontificate, for which Providence had reserved so much pain and solicitude, but also for the entire Church which, spiritually grouped around us, exults in unison with lively religious emotion.»

«The dear name of Pius X on this radiant evening traverses the entire earth from one pole to the other, acclaimed by the most diverse voices; everywhere it arouses thoughts of heavenly goodness, powerful impulses of faith, purity, and Eucharistic piety, and resounds like an eternal witness of the fruitful presence of Christ in His Church. Through a generous return, by exalting His servant, God attests the eminent sanctity through which, even more than by his supreme office, Pius X during his life was the illustrious champion of the Church, and by that fact he is today the Saint that Providence presents for our time.»

«Now we desire that you contemplate precisely in this light the gigantic and gentle figure of the Holy Pontiff, so that once darkness descends on this memorable day and the voices of the immense Hosannas return to silence, the solemn rite of his canonization remains a blessing for your souls and a pledge of salvation for the world...»

After showing how Pius X, through his reform of canon law, *«was the providential saint of our times»*, Pius XII continues:

«Pius X also reveals himself to be the convinced champion of the Church and the providential saint of our times in the second enterprise which distinguishes his work and resembled, by its sometimes dramatic episodes, the struggle undertaken by a giant for the defence of a priceless treasure: the internal unity of the Church in its inner foundation: the Faith...»

«It must be recognized that the lucidity and firmness with which Pius X conducted the victorious struggle against the errors of *Modernism* attest to the heroic degree to which the virtue of faith burned in his saintly heart. Uniquely solicitous to preserve intact the heritage of God for the flock entrusted to him, the great Pontiff knew no weakness in the face of anyone, whatever his dignity or his authority, no hesitations before seductive but false doctrines inside and outside the Church, nor any fear of incurring offences against his own person and seeing the purity of his intentions unjustly misjudged. He had a clear awareness of struggling for the most holy cause of God and of souls...

«It is fitting that as the Church decrees the highest glory for him at this hour, it sing its gratitude to Pius X, and at the same time invoke his intercession *to see itself spared from new struggles of the same nature*. But the issue at hand at that time, that is, the preservation of the intimate union of faith and science, is such a great work of the Pontiff and is also so important that it goes well beyond the frontiers of the Catholic world.»

The separation, that is, the systematic opposition between science and faith operated by modernism is in effect so deadly that «death is hardly any worse». It has brought about the «spiritual catastrophe of the modern world» by dissolving faith and frightfully mutilating science.

«To such an evil, the Saint opposed the only possible and real means of salvation: *Catholic truth*, biblical truth, the truth of faith accepted as “a reasonable homage” rendered to God and His revelation. Coordinating faith and science in this way, the former as the supernatural extension and at times the confirmation of the second, and the latter as the means of access to the former, he gave Christians unity and peace of mind, conditions absolutely necessary for life.

«If today many turn once to this truth, impelled towards it somehow by the impression of the emptiness and anguish of their abandonment, and if they have the happiness of being able to find this truth firmly possessed by the Church, *they must be grateful to the farsighted action of Pius X*. Indeed to him goes the merit of having preserved the truth from error, both among those who enjoy its full light, that is, the believers, and among those who are sincerely seeking it. For others, his firmness towards error may continue to be a scandal; in reality it is a service of extreme charity given by a Saint, acting as Head of the Church, to all humanity...»

Finally, by working to make the Eucharist the Divine nourishment of the Church's life, Pius X was again «*the providential example for the modern world...*» As the «apostle of the interior life», he is «*the saint and guide of men of today.*»⁶⁸⁵

By insisting so forcefully on the relevance of Saint Pius X's doctrine and example – and again on May 31, in his vigorous exhortation to the bishops, whom he urged to firmly exercise their teaching authority by more carefully controlling the teaching given in the seminaries, colleges and universities⁶⁸⁶ – Pius XII knew that he was firing a barrage at the innovators.

Canon Papin reports that «Pius XII, on this evening of May 29, tasted all the celestial joys, “transported to the third Heaven”.»⁶⁸⁷ He was a thousand times right to rejoice this way, for he had just performed one of the most useful acts for the Church in his entire pontificate! Even now, some thirty-five years later, is it not this canonization of Pius X which illumines our path and gives us peace and comfort in the terrible crisis we are passing through? Are not Fatima and Saint Pius X the two great signs of Heaven for our century? As we continue to walk, illumined by the gentle light of these two beacons shining in the night, we can be sure we will not go astray. But on the other hand, those who deliberately, obstinately ignore them because they despise them, strongly risk... despising God by despising the gifts of His Providence for our benighted epoch where errors and lies, spread everywhere by the prince of this world, threaten to invade the Church and deceive, if it were possible, even the elect.

Unfortunately, in 1954 the division of spirits was already so profound in the very bosom of the Church and in the ranks of its Pastors that many theologians and prelates considered as null and void this canonization of a Pope they did not like, if they did not already secretly hate him for having condemned and unmasked their chimerical hopes for a reconciliation between the Church and the World.

SAINT PIUS X DESPISED

Are examples needed? In the summer of 1954, Msgr. Pierre Veuillot, who was then working in the Secretariat of State, published a book entitled *Notre Sacerdoce*. It was a collection of pontifical texts on the duties and ideal of the priest. The work begins with a hundred pages of texts of Saint Pius X, whom the author presents in his introduction, mentioning of course his recent canonization. The preface is by Msgr. Montini, Pro-Secretary of State. In these over-polished, over-crafted eight pages, in vain will we look for the slightest reference to Saint Pius X. Three months after his canonization – the text is dated August 23, 1954 – the holy Pope was buried by the Pro-Secretary of State, who was already preaching – although with skilful precautions and prudent reserves – “the Reform” demanded several years before by Father Congar in a book which Msgr. Montini had greatly appreciated, as we had said, and which he had without doubt preserved from the Index. Msgr. Montini wrote:

«Will the people return? They will not return. It is for the priest to budge, not the people; it is useless for the priest to ring the Church bells; nobody is listening; *it is necessary that he hear the sirens which come from the factories, these temples of technology where the modern world lives and breathes*; it is for him to become a missionary again, if he wants Christianity to remain and become again a living leaven of civilization. And the priest begins his movements. We must understand well: the apostle is both pastor and fisherman; that is, he adapts himself to all the exigencies of the goal to be attained, which is to win souls back and lead them to Christ. A certain *apostolic relativism* is part of the pastoral art. Hence a *new reformism* invades the soul of the priest: *the principle is good*; but how difficult, how perilous the application! To whom belongs *the work of reform*? And what must it be? Some, in their imprudence, took no account of these elementary and broad limits, which only the

authority of the Church can watch over and set out, and which the Church cannot but defend when it concerns the divine deposit of faith and the law of Christ.

«And it is on *this many-sided and anxious search for the true conception of the priesthood* that the spirituality of our times has most exercised itself...»⁶⁸⁸

One has to analyze this text, where the Pro-Secretary of State, with consummate skill, reveals his immense sympathy for the innovators... at the very moment Pius XII took sanctions against them!

APPENDIX II - THE MIRACLE OF FATIMA CONTINUES (1953-1956)

«*If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.*»

It is important to stress that Our Lady of Fatima continued – and with great generosity! – to keep this wonderful promise of salvation for souls and peace for the nations in these final, more gloomy years of Pius XII's pontificate. In Portugal, in Austria, in Spain – wherever the people strived to correspond lovingly and eagerly to the great requests of Her Immaculate Heart, She granted Her graces of conversion and peace which, as the all-powerful Mediatrix, She is able to pour out over all souls and the entire world.

THE PORTUGUESE MIRACLE

The “Land of Holy Mary” was the first to benefit from these fruits of extraordinary graces. Cardinal Cerejeira observed as much on November 29, 1956, in a conference on “The situation of the Church in Portugal”:

«I note first of all *the fact* – for which we can never give enough thanks – *of the peace, freedom, and renewal of the Church in Portugal...* Those who half a century ago applied the axe of persecution to the old tree in whose shadow all those who believed, hoped and loved took refuge, will never understand how the old, stripped-down trunk grew green once more, was covered with branches, flowers and fruits, and shelters its own children anew. I will add that we ourselves do not understand very well. *One cannot speak about this wonderful renewal without bringing up at the beginning the miracle of Fatima in 1917.* Indeed the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima was for Portugal like the rainbow which, according to the biblical account, appeared in the sky after the flood: a new era of peace was going to begin.»⁶⁸⁹

This miraculous restoration in Portugal, whose providential instruments were Cardinal Cerejeira at the head of the Church and Salazar as head of State, was supported, encouraged and blessed by Pius XII throughout his pontificate. He said publicly of Salazar: «I bless him

with all my heart, and my most ardent wish is that he can carry to completion his work of national restoration, both material and spiritual.»⁶⁹⁰

It should be made clear that the Fatima seer shared the same sentiments about the leader of the New State. «*It is well known how cordial relations were between Lucy and Salazar*», observes Father Messias Dias Coelho. Indeed, Salazar visited Lucy several times at the Carmel of Coimbra, and there was an exchange of correspondence between them.⁶⁹¹

To the extent that Portugal was unanimous behind its providential leaders, and faithful to its Heavenly Patroness, it continued to benefit from Her miraculous protection. This was noticeable again in the summer of 1954, when suddenly Goa, in the Indian sub-continent, was gravely threatened:

«Some so-called volunteers, armed with the most modern weapons, encircled the Portuguese possessions and even occupied by force two cities enclosed in Hindu territory: Dadrar and Nagar-Aveli. Openly encouraged by Nehru and his government, the “volunteers” continued arming themselves and the press announced that, even in the face of armed opposition, Goa and its dependencies would be “liberated” on August 15, the national holiday celebrating the Indian Union.

«In Portugal (both continental Portugal and the overseas territories) there was a veritable “spiritual mobilization”. In all churches and sanctuaries, vigils of prayer and novenas for peace were organized. At Goa and Lisbon the relics of Saint Francis Xavier were exposed; his protection was publicly and solemnly invoked along with that of Saint John of Britto, a Portuguese missionary to India.

«A thousand pilgrims left from Lisbon on foot on August 10, to arrive at Fatima after walking day and night. The whole country prayed with these “volunteers for peace”. They arrived at Fatima on the 14th. *Now in the most unexpected manner, on the 14th, Nehru gave his police and army the order to prevent the volunteers from crossing the Portuguese border.*»⁶⁹²

Eight years later, betrayed by Rome,⁶⁹³ betrayed by the entire West, and already weakened from within by opposition from progressive Catholics, Portugal finally lost its Indian possessions. It is easy for us to learn our lesson from this event: although God grants His miraculous assistance at the prayer of a whole nation unanimous behind its hierarchical leaders, when fervour is extinguished and trust disappears, and many Pastors, even at the highest levels, betray the cause of Christendom, then God abandons men to their own weakness.

AN AUSTRIAN MIRACLE?

It is a known fact that after the Second World War, part of Austrian territory was occupied by the Soviets. Less well known is the quasi-miraculous manner in which this Catholic State was suddenly delivered from Moscow's tutelage.

For the USSR, Austria evidently represented a precious toehold in the heart of Europe, due to its petroleum wells and its strategic situation. Yet in 1955, Moscow unexpectedly agreed to the complete retreat of its occupation forces, finally restoring full independence to Austria, which recovered its boundaries of 1938.

What had happened? Between 700,000 and 1,000,000 persons, comprising 10 to 12% of the population, had signed a promise to say the Rosary every day, and respond to Our Lady of Fatima's requests.⁶⁹⁴

For Teresa Neumann, the stigmatist of Konnersreuth, there was no doubt about it: «It was definitely the prayers and numerous Rosaries of the Austrian people which acquired their liberty from all Russian domination», she declared in 1962, shortly before her death.

SPAIN UNDER THE SIGN OF FATIMA

But it was Spain especially that experienced under the pontificate of Pius XII, Our Lady of Fatima's protection, a wonderful Catholic renaissance in perfect harmony between Church and State. After Her triumph at Madrid in May, 1948,⁶⁹⁵ the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima had continued making Her way through the dioceses of Spain, arousing the same enthusiasm everywhere and producing the same fruits of conversion and renewed fervour.⁶⁹⁶

On June 1, 1952, for the closing of the 35th International Eucharistic Congress of Barcelona, during the Solemn Mass celebrated by papal legate Cardinal Tedeschini, General Franco read a magnificent proclamation by which he consecrated Spain to the Most Holy Sacrament.⁶⁹⁷

On August 27, 1953, a concordat was signed between the Holy See and Spain. It was exemplary on all points, through its full and complete recognition of the rights and privileges of the Catholic Church, which was proclaimed «*the sole religion of the Spanish nation*».⁶⁹⁸ This concordat, undoubtedly the most perfect one the Vatican had ever concluded, officially consecrated a whole series of restoration measures taken by General Franco in the years following the victories of the anti-Bolshevik Crusade:

«He had re-established the Church in its privileged position of old, proclaimed Catholicism the religion of the State, recalled the Society of Jesus, which had been expelled from Spain by the Republic, made the study of religion obligatory in schools and universities, abrogated the divorce law and had given legal recognition to religious marriages. The State had begun paying salaries of the clergy again. The Catholic Church had not been treated with such respect and honours in Spain for a long time.

«In this matter (he declared to the Cortes⁶⁹⁹ in 1953) there are no hoaxes or deceits. If we are Catholics, we are so with the obligations deriving from this fact. *For Catholic nations, questions of faith belong to the first rank of the State's obligations. The salvation or perdition of souls, the rebirth or decadence of the faith, the expansion or the reduction of the true faith are vitally important problems in the face of which we cannot be indifferent.*»⁷⁰⁰

As well, on October 12, 1954, during the Marian Congress of Saragossa, he pronounced in the name of the entire nation, at the feet of Our Lady of Pilar, an admirable consecration of Spain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Father Alonso had the excellent idea of publishing the text in its entirety,⁷⁰¹ and thus it escaped the universal conspiracy of silence. We can hardly do better than to quote this text in our turn. Indeed, does not this formula of consecration express Spain's response to the requests of Heaven, passed on by Sister Lucy eleven years earlier?

«August Mother of God and compassionate Mother of men, on this soil of Saragossa bedewed by the blood of martyrs, and near the sacred Pillar, pledge of Your predilection and symbol of the unshakeable faith of Your people, we come to accomplish a work of love and gratitude.

«Divine Revelation teaches us, Our Lady, that Your Son, Our Lord, because He loved us, delivered Himself up to death to save us; and since the heart is the symbol and mark of love, we adore the Divine Heart of Jesus, to which our nation was solemnly and officially consecrated.

«O Blessed Lady, the Roman Pontiff, Vicar of Christ on earth, our Father and supreme Teacher, obeying the inspirations and requests of Heaven, has consecrated the entire world to Your Heart. The bishops of Spain, following as always the Bishop of Rome, have equally consecrated their dioceses, and since the official life of a Catholic nation must reflect the religious life of its citizens and worship God according to the Church's teachings, the Spanish State hastens today before Your altar to officially consecrate the entire country to Your Most Pure Heart, putting it under the protection of Your motherly love.

«There is no better occasion to do so than the celebration of this Marian Year, which reminds us of the glorious action of Your people, unequalled champion of the dogma of Your Immaculate Conception.

«It is a duty of gratitude which moves us, Our Lady! Your smiles have cast light on the glorious paths of our history and Your blessings have protected us. You came to this very spot to encourage our Father in the Faith, Saint James; later You gave our ancestors a heroic example to fight the infidels over the course of centuries, right up to the attainment of religious and political unity for our country; Your intercession obtained victory each time we had to face unjust invasions, and lastly, the deadly peril of the godless; a proof of Your Divine Son's predilection and Your trust was the choice of Spain to bring faith and civilization to twenty countries of America, and through Your miraculous apparitions, You also helped our missionaries and soldiers so that the natives would get along with them as brothers. Who can count the innumerable benefits we owe to Your protection?

«Thus, O our Mother and Mistress, filled with gratitude and love, but with humility due to our weakness, conscious of the rights You have over us as Mother of God and Co-Redemptrix with our Advocate, *reaffirming our Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Faith, and our adherence to the Vicar of Christ, renewing our resolutions for an integrally Christian life, as individuals and as a nation*, and recommending to You with special insistence the twenty

nations of the Hispanic world, all of which we bear in our thoughts and our innermost heart, in the name of twenty-nine million Spaniards joining in this act, we solemnly, officially and irrevocably *consecrate Spain to Your Immaculate Heart*. Regard it as Your property and possession; protect it and defend it; be the sure road which will lead us to God; be our Mediatrix and our Advocate; obtain for us from God the pardon of our sins, fidelity to the Christian law and perseverance in good. Bless our fields and our enterprises that our people may serve You with a generous heart, delivered from all its anxieties, since You are the Mother of us all; give us a brotherly spirit towards each other, and Christian love for all nations and men.

«Through the motherly reign of Your Heart, bring to us also the kingdom of Jesus Christ, a kingdom of justice and holiness, a kingdom of peace, love and grace. Amen.»

At the end of his beautiful radio message where he exalted Spain's centuries-old devotion to the Most Holy Virgin, Pope Pius XII also pronounced a formula of consecration of the nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, thus joining in the solemn act performed the same day at Saragossa.⁷⁰²

A GREAT MOVEMENT OF CONVERSIONS IN THE ANGLO-SAXON WORLD

Also at this period, in the reign of Pius XII, the message of Fatima enjoyed wonderful success in Anglo-Saxon countries. As Canon Barthas observed, «How can we not attribute to Our Lady of Fatima the thousands and thousands of conversions of communists or Protestants obtained by Her great apostle in the United States, Bishop Fulton Sheen? And also the conversions of so many influential communists, principally in Anglo-Saxon countries, especially when they themselves, like Douglas Hyde or Hamish Fraser, declare that they owe their return to the Catholic fold to the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima?»⁷⁰³ For example, in the USA for the year 1949 alone, there were no less than 120,000 conversions to Catholicism.⁷⁰⁴

It even appears that Our Lady of Fatima wanted to give a tangible sign of this wonderful power given to Her for the conversion of souls. It was December 8, 1952, at Paris, in the hall of the Parc des Expositions. Father André Richard had organized a great meeting for information on Fatima and the Blue Army which he had begun setting up in France. Msgr. Rupp pronounced a remarkable allocution there. Hamish Fraser was also scheduled to speak. Fraser, a fiery Scotsman who had served as a communist commissar during the Spanish Civil War, had recently converted to Catholicism. He had become an ardent apostle of the message of Fatima.

At the moment his talk was to begin, «a dove came down from the metal beams of the hall, turned towards the platform and landed on his head, as he was getting up. It remained there a good twelve minutes, in spite of the flashing of photographers.»⁷⁰⁵ «It is impossible to find words to describe the emotion that came over me», he declared later on. Then he added: «Now I am convinced that it was Our Lady's way of saying that prayer can convert

communists.» This was indeed the essential theme of the declaration he was about to make, and Our Lady, through this moving sign, seemed to want to confirm it:

«I know that prayer can convert communists (he declared),... I know that prayer can convert Russia. Whether Russia is converted or not, whether there is a third world war or not, whether the Church of Jesus Christ returns to the catacombs or not depends on the answer to one question: “Are we ready to do what has been asked of us by the Mother of God Herself?” If we say yes to this question, Russia will be converted and there will be peace, and we can look with confidence to the future. *If today the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ is being crucified, it is not the communists who are principally responsible.* For Stalin’s soldiers, who are in the process of planting the nails in the flesh of the Mystical Body of Christ, are the agents not of the Kremlin but of our apathy, our lethargy, our lack of loyalty and courage. When we Catholics begin fully accepting our responsibilities, communism will become as ineffectual as the Arian heresy... *In my humble opinion, Fatima is the most significant event of this century, perhaps the most significant one since the Reformation...*»⁷⁰⁶

APPENDIX III - FATIMA, MOSCOW AND THE VATICAN (1953-1956)

On October 7, 1953, on the Feast of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, the consecration of the basilica took place at the Cova da Iria. On this occasion, Cardinal Cerejeira once again pronounced a remarkable discourse.

«Fatima (he proclaimed), has become the altar of the world... Its message is becoming clearer and clearer, but not everything has been divulged yet. And already, doubt no longer seems possible: *Fatima* is rising as the miraculous anti-Russia. Russia has incarnated the role of the anti-Rome, or if you will, *the Rome of Antichrist*. It directs in the world the assault of militant atheism against the Christian Church. It wants to destroy the Kingdom of God on earth. It professes a blasphemous Gospel: the redemption of man by his own efforts, without Christ.»⁷⁰⁷

While the Patriarch of Lisbon continued denouncing world communism directed by Moscow as the implacable enemy of Christ and the Church, while he presented Fatima as the last hope of peace for the world, through the conversion of this poor Russia enslaved by a handful of diabolical men, in progressive circles and even at Rome, the death of Stalin on March 5, 1953, had reawakened the delusions of Ostpolitik.

I. THE USSR AT THE HOUR OF “PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE”

The Kremlin, for its part, was preparing to launch once more its eternal policy of detente and the hand outstretched to Christians... Again there were rumours seeking to persuade the West that religious liberty would be respected in the USSR... This propaganda campaign

resulted in Nikita Khrushchev's famous signed declaration to the Central Committee on November 11, 1954, where we read:

«Certain citizens, while fulfilling their civic duties, remain under the influence of all sorts of religions. *The Party's attitude towards them is attentive and full of respect...* Harassment only harms the goals of the Communist Party and ends up consolidating and reinforcing prejudices...»⁷⁰⁸

This new manoeuvre by the Kremlin had been prepared during the first months of 1954. It was to last right up until October 1956. The USSR was striving uninterruptedly, and with surprising insistence, to persuade the Vatican and world opinion of its desire for detente and even its determination to finally reach a *modus vivendi* with the Holy See. Bogomolov, the Soviet ambassador with the Italian government, believed in effect that it was «impossible to favourably dispose the West to the USSR until its relations with the papacy were improved.»⁷⁰⁹

DECEMBER 1955: FATHER REDING AT MOSCOW

Maxime Mourin reports, «The attention of Soviet authorities had been drawn to the words of a theology professor at the Catholic Faculty of Graz, Father Reding, who was originally from Luxembourg. The works were devoted to atheism in Western and Eastern Europe, and published with the approval of the Prince-Bishop of Graz-Seckau. In conferences given at Graz in 1952 and devoted to Saint Thomas Aquinas and Marx, and later published with the local ordinary's permission, the author had wanted to show that a profound analogy existed between medieval philosophy and Marxism, an analogy already brought to light by Father Wetter of the Russicum.»⁷¹⁰ This strange concordism revealed at the very least a curious sympathy for Bolshevism! The Kremlin, always in search of contacts and propaganda, was going to seize this opportunity so graciously offered by a licensed professor of theology...

«In the beginning of 1955, the Soviet government asked its ambassador at Vienna to invite Father Reding to come to the USSR to meet personalities of the cultural and religious world.»⁷¹¹ More skilful than Father Orlemanski eleven years earlier, Father Reding went first to Rome, where he had an interview with Father Leiber, private secretary of Pius XII. Prudently, the Vatican refrained from giving an explicit, favourable response. Father Reding spoke to his bishop, who gave him permission to go to Moscow.⁷¹²

«He arrived in the USSR in December 1955, was officially received at Moscow by the director of the "Section of non-Orthodox religious communities", Polianski, and after a fifteen day stay he went to Lithuania, where there is one of the most important Catholic populations still existing in the USSR. He celebrated Christmas Mass at Vilna, before two thousand of the faithful, and then made contact with the Catholic community of Leningrad, numbering 12,000 members. At Moscow, he was able to speak with Metropolitan Nicholas, and participated in a four hour debate with representatives of the Academy of Sciences... Before his departure, Father Reding was received by Mikoyan, Vice-President of the

Council, in the absence of the head of the government.»⁷¹³

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY IN THE SERVICE OF OSTPOLITIK

In June of 1955, the Soviet government invited Chancellor Adenauer of West Germany to Moscow. He went there the following September 9-13.

Meanwhile, in Italy, the left wing of Christian Democracy came into power with the election of Gronchi to the presidency of the Republic on April 29, 1955. In the beginning of October there was an International Congress at Florence including the mayors of great cities of the world. The mayors of Moscow and several capitals of the eastern bloc countries participated. Carlo Falconi recalls having seen on that occasion La Pira, the mayor of Florence, a utopian and mystic democrat, obsequiously doing business with Soviet representatives:

«I was at Florence in the early days of October 1955, on the occasion of the Congress of Mayors. And I still recall, in the halls and on the terraces of the Uffizi, during the official reception, going back and forth... between the mayor of Moscow, and Bogomolov, Russia's ambassador to the Quirinal. In between two gestures, and two smiles, he attempted to recite fragments of phrases in a French unworthy of a man that had emigrated like himself; he seemed like a gnome, a "mole" busy occupying his hosts with witty words. In between two explanations in official style, he would recite verses of the Bible, quote now from the Fathers of the Church, now from Saint Thomas Aquinas, and invoke the Holy Virgin. He was so successful that he got them to assist at a Mass. Not being content with that, he got them to meet with Cardinal Dalla Costa. And we, of course, went along with the game, partly astonished, partly amused, but also a little taken in.»⁷¹⁴

In fact, all the benefits of these pseudo-pleasantries clearly went to Soviet propaganda.

TOWARDS A "MODUS VIVENDI" BETWEEN ROME AND MOSCOW?

In his radio message for Christmas 1955, Pius XII had pronounced in favour of renunciation of nuclear testing, for the renunciation of atomic weapons and the establishment of international control of armaments.⁷¹⁵ The Soviet press, ignoring the Pope's brief warning about communism, published the pontifical declarations the next day, presenting them as very close to the Soviet conception and accompanying them with very favourable commentaries, with this reservation: they attributed it to "grass-roots pressure from Catholics". This new attitude «encouraged certain rumours concerning the possibility of more direct relations between the Pope and the Kremlin.»⁷¹⁶ The rumours intensified when in February 1956, during the twentieth Communist Party Congress, Khrushchev, by his famous "secret report" – which was promptly published by *The New York Times* and *Le Monde!* – committed the USSR, with great fanfare, to the path of "peaceful coexistence" and "de-Stalinization".

«Since the Pope, in a discourse pronounced on March 4, 1956, had renewed his exhortations in favour of disarmament and peace, Radio Moscow made another favourable commentary on his words, and Vatican Radio, on March 8, noted with satisfaction Moscow's recognition of the Sovereign Pontiff's desire for peace.»⁷¹⁷

On April 17, news came of the dissolving of the Cominform, created in 1947 to take the place of the Comintern which, as we have seen, was opportunely suppressed in May 1943 – to reassure the Allies that the Kremlin did not seek domination.⁷¹⁸ In May, 1956, Moscow announced that Soviet armed forces would be reduced by 1,200,000 men within a year!

In spite of *L'Osservatore Romano's* repeated denials, «rumours from various sources continued to circulate that the men of de-Stalinization, now convinced that by an aggressive atheism they would alienate a great part of world opinion, without simulating any religious conversion were ready to seek ways of coaxing the Vatican into a diplomatic reconciliation. The communist press seemed to be disposed to facilitate these soundings. The Italian Communist Party's organ, *L'Unita*, published on its front page, in May 1956, a dispatch from Moscow quoting a declaration of Msgr. Mazelis, capitular vicar of Telsiai in Lithuania, saying: "If you want my personal opinion, I think that in the future there will be cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Vatican, under the form of a concordat or some other form."

«In October, an important journal of Hamburg, *Die Welt*, reproduced an article of the journal of Hungarian syndicates signed by Lukacz, in which the Hungarian Communist Party "thinker", while expressing his conviction that the bourgeois faith would end up decomposing on its own, declared: "It is properly untenable to continue presenting the Church as a valet of Wall Street. It would be unworthy of communism to content itself with old clichés concerning religion, without using solid and serious arguments." And he committed the communists to engaging in dialogue with qualified representatives of the Church, such as Fathers Brockmoeller and Wetter or Father Reding, and on the Protestant side, Karl Barth and Martin Niemoeller. The Austrian Catholic press agency "Kathpress" had itself – by mentioning the possibility of a visit to Rome in 1957 by Khrushchev and Bulganin to make contact with Italian leaders – pointed out certain facts, which according to it gave reason to believe that the Russians were seeking a real rapprochement with the Vatican.

«Trusted men of Christian Democracy and Italian Catholic Action, having successively gone to Moscow during the last few months, had informed the Holy See on their return to Rome of suggestions in this sense which they had gathered during their meetings with Soviet political figures. In addition, certain nunciatures had been contacted to find out *what reception would be given to an eventual request for an audience of Soviet leaders with the Apostolic See.*»⁷¹⁹

Thus the Kremlin's skilfully conducted campaign bore fruit once more. In the West, and even in the Church, optimism was in the air. The Bolshevik bear was in the process of being

tamed, growing wiser through contact with the “free world”, and no longer a threat – so the West believed, for its comfort.

Even sadder, it must be observed that Fatima experts were also won over by the contagion of this euphoria. Would not the end of the Cold War mark the beginning of Russia’s conversion? Were not Our Lady of Fatima’s promises in the process of being fulfilled?

II. A DANGEROUS ILLUSION: «THE CONVERSION OF RUSSIA HAS ALREADY BEGUN»

Canon Barthas, who at that time enjoyed a very large audience in Fatima circles, wrote in December 1955:

«Since His Holiness Pius XII fulfilled the prophecy of Mary – “The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me”⁷²⁰ – ... the spirit of domination and methods of intimidation are less accentuated in the Kremlin bosses, and they agree to negotiate with the leaders of other nations.» And our author lists – with disconcerting naivety! – the many indications of “peaceful coexistence” and even rapprochement between the East and West: «For some time in international conferences, have not the smiling propositions of the USSR taken the place of the abrasive and perpetual “Nyet”? And do not the diplomatic conversations of San Francisco (June 1955) give reason to hope for an improvement in the international atmosphere...?»

In July 1955, «the Geneva conference took place. Has it not given a precious example of fraternization between the two parts of the world? Has it not marked a new step forward in international understanding?... There is no doubt about it: Our Lady of Fatima has begun lifting the Iron Curtain... it is permissible to see in the Pope’s vision of the solar prodigy a new pledge in favour of Our Lady’s promises...»

Not even the tragic events of Hungary were enough to dispel this illusory optimism. A few months later, in the second edition of his work, Canon Barthas continued on his kick, imperturbably:

«Let us add a few auspicious symptoms which can be noted since the first edition of this work. It can be said that the “conversion” of Russia has already begun since the Cominform has been suppressed, French communist journals are no longer subsidized, at least as generously, and several of them have ceased to appear; the Holy Father is no longer insulted in the press of Russia and its satellites, and even the Moscow journals commented favourably on the pontifical message of 1955, going so far as to say that implementation of the plan proposed by Pius XII was “a duty in conscience for peoples and their leaders” (cf. *La Croix*, December 27, 1955, article by F. Roussel).

«We are also familiar with the clumsy attempt recently made by Soviet diplomacy to indirectly renew relations with the Vatican.⁷²¹

«Two Cardinals, several prelates and priests have been liberated in the satellite countries. Was not the monstrous crushing of Hungary, which tried to deliver itself from intolerable servitude, the last gasp of the “Beast”, which still does not want to die?»⁷²²

At the same period, in a book remarkable in other respects, Gilbert Renault – alias Colonel Rémy -was unafraid to sound the epic trumpet to proclaim the imminent collapse of communism. Two months after the Hungarian revolt was crushed by Soviet tanks, he wrote:

«I dare to state for my part that if Marxism continues to stink up and corrupt souls, it does so in the manner of a cadaver already in the process of decomposition. The consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart which Our Lady has asked of the Holy Father through Lucy’s mediation is an accomplished fact; it has been translated into what is, in my mind, an unexpected result, which nobody would have dared predict so shortly after Stalin’s death, and in the face of which all human reasons given for it remain insufficient: I mean the ignominious crumbling of this bloody fetish, yesterday exalted as the equal of a god, and whose fall has irreparably shattered the unity of the communist world. Let us make a further evaluation, in the year 1956, such as it might appear from the eyes of the people of the Kremlin...»⁷²³

We will abstain from following our author in his mistaken demonstration. It would be too sad! It is more important to learn our lessons from this tragic error, to avoid repeating it.⁷²⁴

Meanwhile, as we shall see, Sister Lucy was using completely different language: «*Russia*», she declared to Father Fuentes, «*will be Heaven’s instrument for the chastisement of the whole world, if we do not obtain beforehand the conversion of that poor nation.*»⁷²⁵

III. DECOLONIZATION, A NEW PHASE IN THE PLAN OF BOLSHEVIK EXPANSION

In reality Russia, far from being converted, continued its great design for world domination with an utterly diabolical consistency and skill. But beginning with the fifties, communist expansion had entered a second phase; now it was no longer confined to Europe but worldwide: this new phase was the conquest of the Third World through decolonization. In this context detente once more became the order of the day, as one of the masterstrokes of Moscow’s political game. Just as in the years 1941-1944, the Kremlin, which was preparing the Sovietization of all Eastern Europe, at all costs had to reassure the Allies on its postwar intentions, so also in the fifties, while the West prepared to abandon the Third World, it was more convenient than ever for Moscow to dispel suspicions and stir up in public opinion the most illusory hopes for peace and world reconciliation. Moscow did so by preaching detente, opening to the West, de-Stalinization and the elaboration of a new Marxist praxis, fully respectful of democracy, the rights of man and even religious liberty.

ROME BEFORE THE COLONIAL PROBLEM

In this machiavellian game, which sought to seduce the West and lull it to sleep while immense territories were going to escape its control, as well as its civilizing and missionary action, Rome's attitude would be decisive.

Pope Pius XII, instead of grasping the gravity of the peril and employing every means to wake up the West from its blind apathy, instead of denouncing the betrayals of the men in power – socialists, freemasons or Christian Democrats – instead of preaching the crusade necessary to protect an entire area of Christendom under siege, the Pope was silent and even publicly encouraged the abandonment. Herein lies the drama of the end of his pontificate.

In 1962, in his "History of the Algerian War", the very progressive and philo-communist Georges Hourdin was able to write: «From the beginning, the hierarchy clearly took a position in favour of the insurgents. It did so from the Vatican to the See of Alger, going through the Assembly of Archbishops and Cardinals... *The impulse came from Rome...* The great body of truth and virtue which is the Church of Rome declared itself favourable to independence for the once colonized peoples since the outbreak of the Algerian war, at the very moment of the meeting of the Bandoeng Conference...»⁷²⁶

THE CHRISTMAS RADIO MESSAGES OF 1954 AND 1955. It was true. Since December 24, 1954, in his radio message to the world on the occasion of Christmas, entirely devoted to the problem of peace and «coexistence», after denouncing «the nationalist policy» and «the nationalist State» as the authors of all evil, the Pope added:

«Europe... seems to be losing ground in many regions of the earth. In reality, such a reversal regards the proponents of the nationalist policy, who are forced to retreat before adversaries who have adopted their own methods. In particular, *among some peoples considered up to the present as colonists, the process of evolution towards political autonomy, which Europe ought to have guided with foresight and attention, has rapidly been transformed into an explosion of nationalist movements avid for power.* It must be admitted that these unexpected conflagrations, detrimental to Europe's prestige and interests, are at least in part the fruit of its bad example.

«Is it only a momentary disarray for Europe? In any case, what must remain and which undoubtedly will remain is the real Europe, that is, this collection of all the spiritual and civil values which the West has accumulated by drawing from the riches of each of the nations composing it, to spread them to the entire world. Europe, according to Divine Providence, can still be the generator and dispenser of these values, if it is able to recall to mind its own spiritual character and *renounce the divinization of power.*»⁷²⁷

When we recall that at this period the colonizing countries in question were principally France, Portugal and Belgium, we are stupefied by this analysis of the situation. It calls, in fact, for a good deal of comments...

What is certain is that the Vatican, here and now, considered decolonization as a normal political fact, something good in itself and unavoidable, without apparently caring about its

tragic consequences for millions of poor souls who cruelly suffered from it, both from the point of view of their true temporal good, and even more important, that of their eternal salvation. At Rome, it seemed, a new page had been turned. There were dreams of a lasting spiritual influence of Christian Europe at the very moment that it would be deprived of all concrete means of exercising it. That is tantamount to somebody cutting off his arms and legs to be able to run better!

These pontifical words, a few months after the drama of Dien-Bien-Phu, i.e. after the criminal abandonment of Indochina by Mendès France, when close to a million Vietnamese Catholics had to leave their country fleeing communist enslavement and persecution, just a few weeks after the bloody All Saints day in Algeria – yes, these words of the Pope on decolonization, considered in historical hindsight, leave us seized with astonishment: how could Pius XII, always so firmly convinced of the intrinsic malice of communism,⁷²⁸ not have grasped that decolonization would mark a new phase of its worldwide expansion?

On the contrary, in his radio message of Christmas 1955, developing the same themes again, the Pope insinuates that it is the colonial wars as such that play into the hands of communism. Hence it is necessary to make peace by promptly granting political independence to the peoples demanding it:

«In the Christmas message of last year, we already made an allusion to the centres of opposition noticeable in the relations between European peoples and those outside of Europe who aspire to *full political independence*. Could we let these conflicts follow their course, so to speak, which would easily lead to an increased gravity in these conflicts, sowing hatred among men and creating what could be called traditional enmities? Would not a third party perhaps take advantage of it, a third party which the other two groups basically do not want and cannot want? *At all events, let not a just and gradual political liberty be refused these peoples, and let no obstacles be placed in its way*. These peoples, however, will recognize for Europe the merit of their advancement; without Europe's influence, extended to all areas, they could be led by a blind nationalism to cast themselves into chaos or slavery.

«On the other hand, the peoples of the West, especially Europe, must not, on the various questions at hand, remain passive in *a sterile regret for the past* or address each other with mutual reproaches of colonialism. On the contrary, they must set themselves to work in a constructive manner to extend, to regions where this has never been done, the true values of Europe and the West, which have borne such good fruits on other continents. The more they tend to that alone, *the more they will be a help to the liberty of these young peoples*, and the more they themselves will remain preserved from the seductions of false nationalism. In reality this is their true enemy, which one day could excite them to fight each other, to the profit of a third party.»⁷²⁹

A few months later, on July 11, 1956, Msgr. Dell'Acqua, substitute Secretary of State, sent a letter to Archbishop Duval of Alger recalling the directives of this Christmas 1955 radio

message.⁷³⁰

PIUS XII AGAINST COMMUNISM

However, while he resolutely committed the Church on the road of decolonization – in this respect unwittingly corresponding to Moscow’s fondest dreams – we must not forget that Pope Pius XII remained deaf to all the Kremlin’s fallacious solicitations; with unbreakable firmness he continued publicly condemning communist persecutions in eastern bloc countries. Thus he composed the moving Apostolic Letter *Dum maerenti*, which he addressed on June 29, 1956, «to the prelates, priests and the faithful of the persecuted peoples in Europe».⁷³¹ He did the same on September 2, in a radio message to the 77th Katholikentag in Cologne. For Pius XII it was clear: since communism «had atheism and impiety as its foundation», it would always be the Church’s sworn enemy, with which no understanding, no profound accord, no real coexistence could ever be established.⁷³² After the bloody drama of Budapest in November 1956, he multiplied his declarations against communism.⁷³³

WOULD ROME BETRAY CHRISTENDOM?

After the events of Hungary, felt throughout the whole world as a terrible warning, was the Pope going to realize that the Bolshevik peril menaced not only Europe but even more the people of the Third World? Would he finally encourage and support maintaining a colonizing presence of Catholic nations in these countries without any national tradition or unity, who were defenceless against their own rebellious minorities as well as their outside adversaries? Would he understand that the defence of French Algeria, and tomorrow the Belgian Congo, Angola and Portuguese Mozambique against the insurgents was a veritable crusade, the only effective means of saving them permanently from anarchy, Islam and the Bolshevik gulag?

Alas! We must observe that nothing of the sort happened. On April 21, 1957, in his encyclical *Fidei donum*, on the situation of the Catholic missions, Pius XII continued to preach decolonization for Africa, and in the most categorical manner:

«The Church, which over the course of centuries has already seen so many nations being born and growing, cannot but be particularly attentive today to the accession of new peoples to the responsibilities of political liberty. Already several times We have invited the nations concerned to proceed along this path according to a spirit of peace and mutual understanding. “*Let not a just and gradual political liberty be refused these peoples (who aspire to it), and let no obstacles be placed in its way*”, We said to one side; and We advised the others to “recognize for Europe the merit of their advancement; without its influence, extended to all areas, they could be led by a blind nationalism to cast themselves into chaos or slavery.” In renewing this twofold exhortation here, We express our wishes that a work of constructive collaboration continue in Africa, free of prejudices and reciprocal susceptibilities, preserved from the seductions and narrowness of false nationalism and

capable of extending to these populations, rich in resources and the future, the true values of Christian civilization which have already borne such good fruit on other continents.»

In short, Pope Pius XII continued imperturbably committing the Church and Christendom along the path already opened by Pius XI. For the first time, however, he made an allusion to the real danger of communist penetration in Africa itself:

«We know unfortunately that atheistic materialism has spread its virus of division in many regions of Africa, fanning the flames of passions, pitting peoples and races against each other, taking advantage of real difficulties to seduce minds by facile mirages or to sow revolt in hearts.»

But what had to be done to ward off the peril? The Pope did not propose any solution, any remedy. He contented himself with «renewing for the good of African peoples the grave and solemn warnings on this point already addressed many times to the Catholics of the whole world».⁷³⁴ These good words, which scarcely bothered Islam and international communism, were a very fragile rampart indeed for the poor Christian communities of Africa!

This shows how far from the truth were the historians and bishops who optimistically imagined that they were witnessing the conversion of Russia promised by Our Lady of Fatima! Quite the contrary: since Her requests had not yet been obeyed, the terrible chastisement predicted by the second Secret of Our Lady continued to fall upon humanity with implacable rigour: *«If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace. If not, Russia will spread its errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church...»*

The reality even exceeded the prophecy – unless, as is probable, it is an element of the third Secret – inasmuch as it was the Church herself, more exactly it was the Vatican and the Pope who were mysteriously blinded, actively contributing to delivering over to the adversaries of Jesus Christ and His Church, to the enemies of the human race, lands of Christendom snatched with great struggling from Satan’s empire barely a century ago by the blood of martyrs and soldiers, by the sweat and tears of a phalanx of heroic missionaries.

From now on, now that the pastors of the flock remained deaf to the requests, threats, and promises of Heaven, was not Russia going to spread its errors – its secularizing and profane humanism and messianic utopia of a universal peace without Christ – to the very heart of the Church?

APPENDIX IV - A POINT OF HISTORY: THE “TREASON” OF MSGR. MONTINI

In 1954, while Pius XII was sorely tried by sickness and weakened by old age, at the Vatican somebody dared, without the Pope's knowledge, to respond to Moscow's advances.

Colonel Arnould, who had served during the war in the "Intelligence Service", functioned at this period as a secret agent directly in the service of Pius XII. The Pope entrusted to him tasks of gathering information which nuncios could not accomplish.⁷³⁵ Thus he was unofficially entrusted with missions concerning eastern bloc countries: aid to members of the clergy in prison, taking bibles into the USSR, etc. On this occasion he entered into talks with the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, who had a great admiration for Pius XII and was not afraid to offer him invaluable services in this area of aid to persecuted Christians.⁷³⁶

During an audience (undoubtedly around the beginning of summer 1954), the Archbishop of Uppsala suddenly declared to Colonel Arnould: «*Swedish leaders are well aware that the Vatican was conducting relations with the Soviets.*» The Colonel answered that that seemed surprising, but he did not know all the Vatican's secrets; nevertheless, he would ask Pope Pius XII about it the next time they met. The Colonel was received in audience about once a month by the Pope, in the latter's private apartments. On his return to Rome he therefore questioned the Holy Father, saying it would not be right to betray the confidence of the Archbishop of Uppsala, who was so understanding and helpful. The Pope was quite astonished, and asked the Colonel to certify on his behalf to Archbishop Brilioth that the Vatican was not conducting relations with the Soviets.

When Colonel Arnould returned to Sweden, the Archbishop of Uppsala reaffirmed to him that, according to his information, the Vatican was conducting relations with Moscow. The Colonel certified the contrary, on the Pope's behalf. The Colonel recalled, «there was a long silence. Then the Archbishop asked me to come back to see him when I had finished my mission in Sweden, before returning to Rome. I did so. Archbishop Brilioth then gave me a sealed envelope destined for Pope Pius XII, asking me to give it to him with my own hands, without passing through any of the Vatican's services. He simply told me: "This envelope contains the proof of the relations the Vatican is undertaking with the Soviets."»

At Rome, or rather, again at Castelgandolfo, no doubt – but unfortunately we cannot give the exact date – the Colonel gave the envelope to the Pope. The Pope opened it in his presence. He read it and his jaw dropped. Yet, he said nothing.

However, the last official text signed by the Pro-Secretary of State is dated September 23, 1954.⁷³⁷ On November 1, 1954, Msgr. Montini was relieved of his functions at Rome and appointed to the Archbishopric of Milan, which had become vacant on August 30, the date of Cardinal Schuster's death. *Promoveatur ut amoveatur*, as the Roman saying goes: "Promote him to get rid of him."

When Colonel Arnould returned to the Vatican, Msgr. Montini had already left the Secretariat of State. Surprised by this unexpected change, the Colonel questioned Father Leiber, Pius XII's private secretary on the reasons for it. Father Leiber answered, «*The reason is the letter you brought from Sweden.*» He added that this letter had provoked the

Pope's anger; that Msgr. Montini had been sent to Milan in disgrace and that the Pope had stated that never in his own lifetime would Msgr. Montini be made a Cardinal.

Such are the disturbing, tragic facts, which all historians have little by little been forced to admit. Father Robert Graham, S.J., who *a priori* would like to deny these facts, himself unwittingly provides some information which confirms their well-foundedness. He reports, «In the end, hostile voices went so far as to accuse Msgr. Montini of disloyalty to the Pope.»⁷³⁸ «Montini and Tardini in certain circles were depicted as being opposed to each other. Tardini, it was said, clearly saw the communist danger. Montini had illusions about it.»⁷³⁹ After reporting the accusations of treason brought against the Pro-Secretary of State, Father Graham finds only one response to put forward, and that one is hardly convincing: «These fairy tales present the character of J. B. Montini in a false light. Why are they still repeated, and even in the publications of presumably intelligent persons?»⁷⁴⁰

But Father Graham himself, recalling the antagonism between Msgr. Tardini and Msgr. Montini, writes on the subject of their work "in tandem", under Pius XII's direct orders: «Such a situation could have been the occasion of tension and conflict. It was certainly an occasion of confusion *when one section discovered that the other was already informed, or was already handling matters which it thought belonged to itself. Did the right hand always know what the left hand was doing?* In spite of these unpropitious conditions, their functioning on the whole (?) apparently (!) went without incident.»⁷⁴¹

Our Jesuit, in spite of all his oratorical precautions, already says far too much. He clearly reveals to us that Tardini was often irritated to see his colleague getting involved in affairs not under his jurisdiction, and treating them in his own way, according to his own views and secretly. Hence it is not surprising to learn that in 1954, Msgr. Montini was directly communicating with the Kremlin's representatives without the Pope's knowledge.

According to other reports, in this tragic autumn of 1954, Pius XII discovered that his Pro-Secretary of State «had hidden from him all dispatches related to the schism of the Chinese bishops»,⁷⁴² which was then becoming dangerously aggravated. For this reason on October 7, 1954, Pius XII addressed to the bishops, clergy and faithful of China an encyclical letter intended to encourage them in persecution, and especially to warn them against the development of a schismatic Chinese Church, under the Marxist government's orders and definitively separated from the Roman Church.⁷⁴³

In any case, that the removal of Msgr. Montini had the effect of a disgrace is now a fact so well established, that Jean Guitton himself is forced to recognize it. After stating at the beginning of his work *Paul VI secret the official thesis* – «*It has never been learned, and never will be known, why Pius XII, having made him Archbishop of Milan, did not create him a Cardinal, which had the consequence of taking him out of the running for Pope*»⁷⁴⁴ – he gives himself away by writing, some one hundred pages later, these lines which definitively decide the question. It has to do with the disaffection, the lack of confidence of the faithful from which Msgr. Montini, having become Pope, suffered after 1968. Guitton avowed then: «He went through a trial similar to *the one Pius XII had inflicted on him: that of "diffidentia"*».

*In the case of Pius XII, the distrust came from the top, since Pius XII seemed to have lost the trust he had placed in him. The encyclical *Humanae Vitae* was to inflict a new opposite trial on Paul VI, where the distrust came, not from the top, but from the bottom.»⁷⁴⁵*

However, once again Pius XII chose the gentle manner, which would provoke neither noise nor scandal. He opted for a compromise. To sanction the guilty party and to satisfy the just demands of Curia members aware of the odious betrayal, he decided to remove Msgr. Montini from the Secretariat of State. But to avoid the backlash that would be provoked by too open a disgrace, since the See of Milan had become vacant, Pius XII saw fit to appoint Msgr. Montini to it, promising at the same time – as he let his intimates know – never to make him a Cardinal, although Milan had traditionally been a bishopric held by Cardinals.

Thus a public scandal was avoided. Yet the solution adopted, once again, was not without grave disadvantages. Appointed to Milan, the new Archbishop had to be in a position to worthily exercise his office without the Milanese being able to suspect the disgrace of their new Pastor, called to succeed the prestigious and holy Cardinal Schuster. Also, Pius XII was forced to play along, to such a point that this disgrace almost took on the appearance of a promotion in the eyes of an uninformed public... Thus he promised to confer himself, as had been expected, the episcopal consecration on the man who for fifteen years had been one of his closest collaborators.

Pius XII was surely profoundly affected both by the bitterness caused him over this abuse of trust in which he had been victimized as well as by the false situation in which he was placed by the decision he had taken to conclude this sad affair!

The appointment was signed on November 1 and announced by *L'Osservatore Romano* on the 4th. We have described how a few weeks later, the Pope was so gravely ill that he believed his final days had arrived.

Msgr. Tardini recalled, «His sufferings were unspeakable. There was this hiccup, this uninterrupted, lacerating hiccup; a convulsive trembling continually agitated his throat, his chest, his entire person. He could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep.

«However, his intellect was as always clear and luminous. His serenity was imperturbable, his piety edifying. He always had over his heart, and often in his hands, the book of Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, and he seemed to console himself and console his visitors by repeating with great devotion the beautiful prayer: “Soul of Christ, sanctify me!”»⁷⁴⁶

On December 2, the Pope was worse. «That day we also talked about the eventuality of convoking a consistory in the Pope's own bedroom. Clement IX and Pius IX had created powerful precedents in this regard.⁷⁴⁷

At 12:45 p.m., while receiving Msgr. Tardini in audience, the Pope described to him how that very morning he had a vision: «He was on his sick-bed. His condition appeared very aggravated to me. Every five minutes, he suffered nausea and vomited some coffee coloured matter (this was detritus, not blood). In spirit he was always serene. He told me:

“I tell you for your sake; the others may think that these are the hallucinations of a sick man. Yesterday morning, I clearly heard a voice, very clearly! – and as he spoke, the Pope touched his right ear – which said: *Behold, a vision*. But nothing happened. This morning, while I was assisting at holy Mass, for an instant I saw the Lord. It was an instant, but I did see him.”

«At one-thirty, I went out, very preoccupied and very troubled.»⁷⁴⁸

Msgr. Tardini continues, «Two days later, on Saturday, December 4, I returned for an audience.» The Pope confided to him: «“I believed that the Lord was calling me. It is the opposite...” Again he took the little book of Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius and told me: “Here is my comfort!”»⁷⁴⁹

We have related how on December 8, the Pope was ill and unable to preside over the closing of the Marian Year and renew the consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as he had announced. On December 12, Msgr. Montini received episcopal consecration from the hands of Cardinal Tisserant. From his bed Pius XII pronounced a short radio message addressed both to the new bishop and the very many representatives of his Milanese flock present in Saint Peter’s basilica. On January 6, 1955, Pius XII again addressed a brief message to the diocese of Milan for the solemn entrance of the new Archbishop.⁷⁵⁰

Thus Msgr. Montini was removed from the Curia, distanced from the Pope over whom, up till then, he had exercised a greater influence than one might ordinarily think. He was also excluded from the upcoming conclave, for Pius XII had resolved not to admit him in the Sacred College. But in the See of Milan he was to become the most prominent bishop on the peninsula. Noisily, the progressive press would strive to report on all his actions and gestures, designating him as the man of the future, the man most capable of committing the Church to new paths.⁷⁵¹

SECTION V: Pius XII faces the Third Secret (1957-1958)

CHAPTER IX

THE THIRD SECRET OF OUR LADY: «... THEY DID NOT WANT TO READ IT!» (1944 - 1958)

In mid-March 1957, the double envelope, doubly sealed with wax, containing the final Secret of Our Lady of Fatima, was placed in the hands of Archbishop Cento, Apostolic Nuncio at Lisbon. On April 16, it arrived at Rome, at the Vatican, in the Pope's study.

This brief message, written down by Lucy on a modest sheet of paper in January 1944 – we have seen in what a dramatic context, and after a miraculous intervention by the Blessed Virgin⁷⁵² – this famous “third Secret” had finally reached the Holy Father's hands. This prophetic warning, we are certain, could still have shored up the course of the waning pontificate, and strengthened the Church in advance against the terrible crisis approaching. The first warning signs of the crisis had already appeared in the revolutionary ferment of the “Liberation”,⁷⁵³ precisely a few months after Our Lady of Fatima, appearing to Lucy again, ordered her to write down this final message and pass it on to her bishop.

Arriving at Rome in 1957, the Secret, with its divine and vivid light, could have enlightened the Pastors of the Church entrusted by Christ with keeping intact the deposit of the Faith. But would the Sovereign Pontiff deign to read it? Would he believe its veracity? Would he have the strength to take heed of it and divulge it at the hour willed by Heaven?

In any case, since the spring of 1957, the third Secret, which was certainly the gravest and most urgent one, was at the Holy Father's disposition. It can be said that the Church's and the world's salvation depended, above all, on the consideration the Sovereign Pontiff would give to these Divine words of the Queen of Prophets — the Immaculate Mediatrix, who alone was capable of finally crushing all heresies — in the hour of the final battle of the powers of darkness against the Church of Christ. As we chant in the liturgy: «Thou alone hast destroyed all heresies in the whole world!»

But before going into the history of this dramatic confrontation between the various Popes and this tragic prophecy of Our Lady of Fatima, we must shed a little light on two preliminary questions. Since 1960, they have been muddled at will, and deliberately obscured, and we will see why:

1. To whom was the third Secret directly addressed?
2. Had Our Lady really asked that it be revealed to the world in 1960?

The examination of these two questions calls for a profound inquiry, following the most scrupulous critical method, for the answer is of utmost importance for the entire subsequent history of Fatima — and the Church — from 1960 to our own time.

I. THE INTENDED RECIPIENTS OF THE THIRD SECRET AND THE DATE OF ITS PUBLICATION

In spite of all the imprecisions, untruths and lies spread on this point since February of 1960, four important truths can be solidly established, truths founded on very numerous and solid testimonies.

1. THE IMMEDIATE RECIPIENT OF THE SECRET: BISHOP DA SILVA OF LEIRIA

The first of these historical truths, and a highly significant one, is that Bishop da Silva could have read the Secret immediately, on June 17, 1944, or when he took possession of it, and he even could have revealed it as he saw fit. However, he absolutely did not want to.

Father Alonso states, «Undoubtedly, the Bishop of Leiria could have opened the letter immediately.»⁷⁵⁴ When in 1947 someone asked him if he knew the Secret, Bishop da Silva answered: «No. I did not want to read it. Fatima is entirely God's work, and I did not wish to interfere with it.»⁷⁵⁵ Let us observe that Bishop da Silva never justified his attitude by saying he did not have the right to open the Secret, which he surely would have done, had he been able to fall back on the slightest declaration of Sister Lucy in this sense. No, he avowed once more, a few months before his death: «Although I could have opened it when I wanted, I preferred not to do so.»⁷⁵⁶

Why? The bishop gave this reason to Canon Galamba, who in turn told Father Alonso:

«I asked him many times why he would not open it. He always answered, "It's not my duty to interfere in this matter. Heaven's secrets are not for me, nor do I need to burden myself with this responsibility.»⁷⁵⁷

What a disconcerting response! As though the Queen of Heaven's words were not a precious grace mercifully granted to the Church for the greater good of souls!

So Bishop da Silva stubbornly refused to read it. The fact is so well established that Cardinal Ottaviani, in his discourse of February 11, 1967, at the Antonianum, said so clearly: «Although Lucy said he could, he did not wish to read it.»⁷⁵⁸ Let us note, however, in Don José's defence, that although Sister Lucy had informed him, on Our Lady's behalf, that he could read the Secret, it was only a wish and not a formal order. The testimony of Canon Galamba, an advisor and long-time friend of his bishop, leaves no doubt on this question too:

«Lucy said only that *it could be made known immediately*, if the bishop so commanded. But she did not say that *it had to be opened immediately*. The dates for making it known were determined in a dialogue between the bishop and Lucy.»⁷⁵⁹

In any case, an initial fact is certain, and moreover nobody has even thought of questioning it: the immediate recipient of the Secret was Bishop da Silva. It was also planned in 1945 that, if he died, the precious document would go to Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon.⁷⁶⁰

This fact must be stressed, for it proves that the third Secret, contrary to everything said about it later on, was neither exclusively nor even explicitly addressed to the Holy Father. No, like the first two parts of the Secret, with which it forms a whole, it was entrusted to the Church, and first of all to the representatives of the Portuguese hierarchy, to whom it belonged to inform themselves about it and make it known.

But that being said – no doubt because this final Secret, as we will demonstrate, concerns the authorities of the Church even more directly than the first two parts – Sister Lucy wished the Sovereign Pontiff to read it as early as possible.

2. THE POPE COULD HAVE READ IT IN 1944

We have recalled how in May or June 1944, Sister Lucy expressed to the Bishop of Gurza her desire to speak with the Holy Father in person,⁷⁶¹ to talk to him about the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, but surely also about the third Secret, which she had just written down three months earlier.

Father Alonso records another important fact:

«Cardinal Ottaviani himself has told us that the Sacred Congregation was not interested in 1944 in having the document sent to Rome, preferring that the Bishop of Leiria should continue to keep it in his possession.»⁷⁶²

Finally, as we have said, during her pilgrimage to Fatima on May 21-22, 1946, serious consideration was given to Lucy going immediately on to Rome to see the Pope, and as Canon Formigao made clear, «*to tell him the third part of the Secret of Our Lady of Fatima*».⁷⁶³ After the regrettable abandonment of this project, the seer had to content herself with writing to him. She did so in July 1946, again expressing her desire to speak with him personally.⁷⁶⁴

Although our information is still very incomplete on this point, it seems very probable that Sister Lucy wanted Pius XII to learn the contents of the final Secret without delay.

Since that did not happen – and this is a third important truth for which we will furnish unquestionable proofs – between 1944 and 1946 it was agreed between Lucy and Bishop da Silva that the final Secret would be divulged in 1960.

3. «IT MUST BE READ TO THE WORLD IN 1960»

A series of unimpeachable witnesses allows us to establish this fact with absolute certitude. Let us quote first of all the decisive words of Canon Galamba, which alone would be sufficient for our demonstration:

«When the bishop refused to open the letter, Lucy made him promise that it would definitely be opened and read to the world either at her death or in 1960, whichever would come first.»⁷⁶⁵

AN IMPRESSIVE SERIES OF WITNESSES (1944-1953). Thus the date 1960 was indicated by Lucy to Bishop da Silva, perhaps in 1944. In any case, we have written testimonies to this effect in 1946. On February 3-4, **Father Jongen** interrogated Lucy:

«“You have already made known two parts of the Secret. When will the time arrive for the third part?” “I communicated the third part in a letter to the Bishop of Leiria”, she answered. “But it cannot be made known before 1960.”»⁷⁶⁶

On August 12, 1946, Sister Lucy received **John Haffert**, who in a recent work also gives us an interesting testimony on this subject:

«At the bishop’s house (in Leiria), I sat at the table on his right, with the four Canons. During that first dinner, Canon José Galamba de Oliveira turned to me when the bishop had left the room momentarily and asked: “*Why don’t you ask the bishop to open the Secret?*” Endeavouring not to show my ignorance concerning Fatima – which at that time was almost complete – I simply looked at him without expression. He continued: “*The bishop can open the Secret. He doesn’t have to wait until 1960.*”

«Just then the bishop returned and there was a long moment of awkward silence. The other Canons were obviously also interested in seeing whether or not I would broach the subject to the bishop – the subject on which apparently he had silenced them on more than one previous occasion and on which Canon Oliveira was now taking advantage of a newcomer to again broach the question. I finally broke the silence by saying to the bishop that I understood there was a Secret still to be opened and *was there some reason why the bishop did not wish to open it?* His Excellency looked up with what to me was an unexpected degree of firmness.»⁷⁶⁷

One month later, on September 7, 1946, **Cardinal Cerejeira** was in Brazil for the closing of the Marian Congress of Campinas. He declared on the subject of the Secret of Fatima:

«From the two parts of the Secret *already revealed* – the third part *has not been made known*, but it has been written and placed in a sealed envelope *and will be opened in 1960* –, we know enough to enable us to conclude that the salvation of the world, in this extraordinary moment of history, has been placed by God in the Immaculate Heart of Mary.»⁷⁶⁸

In February 1960, the Patriarch of Lisbon, reporting the directions which the Bishop of Leiria «had passed on to him» on this subject, declared, again in the same sense:

«Bishop da Silva enclosed (the envelope sealed by Lucy) in another envelope on which he indicated that *the letter had to be opened in 1960* by himself, Bishop José Correia da Silva, if he were still alive, or if not, by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.»⁷⁶⁹

There is another and even more important testimony: that of **Canon Barthas**, who during his conversations with Sister Lucy on October 17-18, 1946, had the opportunity to question her on the third Secret. Here is the account, which he published in 1952:

«“When will the third element of the Secret *be revealed to us?*” Already in 1946, to this question Lucy and the Bishop of Leiria answered me uniformly, without hesitation and without comment: *“In 1960.”*»

«And when I pushed my audacity so far as to ask *why it was necessary to wait until then*, the only response I received from either one was: *“Because the Blessed Virgin wishes it so.”*»

«The text of Our Lady’s words was written down by Sister Lucy and enclosed in a sealed envelope, and put in the safe of the Bishop of Leiria. *It will be opened at the date indicated* by Bishop José da Silva or by His Eminence the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.»⁷⁷⁰

In 1953, under the title, ***Fatima, altar do mundo***, there appeared in Portugal three bulky volumes, handsomely made, and containing a series of studies written by the best experts of the period. In this quasi-official publication, during his account of the apparitions, Canon Galamba wrote concerning the third Secret:

«The third part of the Secret, written down by Sister Lucy, was sealed by the hands of His Grace the Bishop of Leiria *and will be opened either after the seer’s death or at the latest in 1960 (... ou apos a morte da vidente ou o mais tardar em 1960).*»⁷⁷¹

TWO DISSENTING VOICES. After this impressive series of testimonies, all in perfect agreement, we must digress. In 1953, for the first time a Fatima expert, Father Sebastiao Martins dos Reis, publicly expressed a contrary opinion,⁷⁷² writing:

«It has been repeated and, what is more, declared and even written in books, reviews and journals *that the third part of the Secret would certainly be revealed in 1960.*»

«It is evident that if the Secret is written, no doubt it is for it to be read. But will it be in 1960?! Granted, we cannot guarantee that this will not be the case. *However, we have strong reasons to contest the certitude with which such an affirmation is so confidently expressed. This is why we dare to deny it.*»

Strange statements! What then were these «*strong reasons*»? Had the author seen Sister Lucy and received from her declarations saying the opposite of what we have reported? Had he benefited from private disclosures of Bishop da Silva or Cardinal Cerejeira? No! He had never had an audience with the seer and he seems to be unaware of the declarations from the Bishop of Leiria and the Patriarch of Lisbon. He puts forward no testimonies in support of his thesis and refutes none of those we have cited. He does not even mention

them! In other words, *it is his total absence of serious information which allows him to contest the promise of disclosure of the Secret in 1960.*⁷⁷³

On this point, the study of Father Martins dos Reis does not seem to have made much of an impression, at least with the public.

OTHER AUTHORITATIVE TESTIMONY. On May 14, 1953, Lucy received a visit from **the Armstrongs**, who were able to question her on the third Secret. In their account published in 1955,⁷⁷⁴ they confirmed all the facts given above and particularly that the third Secret «*had to be opened and divulged in 1960*».⁷⁷⁵

On May 17, 1955, as we have said, **Cardinal Ottaviani**, Pro-Prefect of the Holy Office, came to the Carmel of Saint Teresa at Coimbra. He interrogated Lucy on the third Secret; and in his conference of 1967 recalled:

«The message was not to be opened before 1960. I asked Sister Lucy, “Why this date?” She answered, “Because then it will seem clearer (*mais claro*).”»⁷⁷⁶

On October 13, 1956, **Cardinal Tisserant**, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, came as the papal legate to bless “Domus Pacis” at Fatima, international headquarters of the Blue Army. During his homily to the faithful, the Cardinal brought up right away – with utterly scientific precision and rigour – the prophecy of the great Secret concerning the conversion of Russia. He declared: «*A part of this message must remain hidden until 1960; but a part has been made public in 1942 by the ecclesiastical authorities...*» He goes on to cite the pastoral letter of Cardinal Schuster in 1942, deploring the fact that it furnished only «a very brief and pale expression of what is found in Lucy’s notebooks...»⁷⁷⁷

Cardinal Piazza, Secretary of the Consistorial Congregation, made a similar declaration.

In November 1956, **Father Schweigl**, undoubtedly well informed, titled a chapter of his little work: «*Towards the Year 1960...*», and he writes: «... The third part of the message must remain secret until 1960.»⁷⁷⁸

Later on we will quote the testimony of **Bishop Venancio**, who had been Bishop da Silva’s auxiliary since December 8, 1954. He succeeded Bishop da Silva to the See of Leiria on September 13, 1958.

Father Alonso adds:

«**Other bishops** also spoke – and with authority – about the year 1960 as the date indicated for opening the famous letter. Thus, when **the then titular Bishop of Tiava**, and Auxiliary Bishop of Lisbon, asked Lucy when the Secret was to be opened, he always received the same answer: *In 1960.*»⁷⁷⁹

A TRIPLE CONCLUSION. This means that the most authoritative testimonies previous to 1960 are all perfectly clear and in agreement: they all predict the disclosure of the third

Secret for 1960. Let us insist on this historical point, a point of capital importance, which later will be so brazenly denied.

The critical examination of the testimonies proves:

1. That before 1960, neither Lucy, nor Bishop da Silva, nor Cardinal Cerejeira nor anybody else had claimed that the third Secret *was reserved exclusively for the Pope*. It was common knowledge that it was entrusted to the Bishop of Leiria and immediately after his death it would be passed on to the Patriarch of Lisbon.

2. That before 1960 – for this same reason that the Secret was not reserved for the Pope – *nobody thought of making the distinction between “opening the envelope” and “revealing the Secret”*. The envelope would be opened for the Secret to be read and revealed. Father Alonso stresses the point with good reason: «When Don José, the first Bishop of Leiria and Sister Lucy agreed that the letter *was to be opened* in 1960, they obviously meant that its contents *should be made public* for the good of the Church and the world.»⁷⁸⁰ Indeed it was obvious for them that the third part had to be published at that time, exactly as the first two parts had been in 1942. And in Portugal, it must be recalled, the first two parts had been published right away by Canon Galamba, in their exact and integral contents.⁷⁸¹

3. That before 1960, nobody thought of affirming – as was done later on – that by indicating a date, Sister Lucy had only wanted *to forbid publication of the Secret before that*, without getting any hopes up for later on, but contenting herself with saying it was merely *permitted* to read the Secret and reveal it from that moment.

This thesis was upheld by Father Martins dos Reis in 1966, claiming that everybody had been too hasty in promising disclosure of the Secret for 1960. This promise, according to him, was due only to a regrettable mistake:

«Where then did the confusion come from? Well, that is explained very well and very simply from the fact that Lucy always said that *the Secret could not be revealed before 1960!*» Her questioners misunderstood and, distorting her thinking, declared that *«the Secret necessarily had to be revealed in 1960.»*⁷⁸²

The thesis is developed skilfully but proves nothing, for again Father Martins dos Reis fails to cite the most explicit positive testimonies, those of Cardinal Cerejeira, Canon Galamba, the Armstrongs, and Canon Barthas,⁷⁸³ who were all independent of each other and expressed Sister Lucy's thinking with exactitude. For how can it be said that there was “confusion”, without either Bishop da Silva, from 1944 to 1957, or Sister Lucy from 1944 to 1960, having had the time to realize it and set their questioners straight?! Indeed nobody has ever furnished the slightest declaration on their part challenging the opinion – which was well-nigh universal in 1960 – that the Secret had to be divulged on that date. An even more noteworthy fact is that Sister Lucy has not denied it after 1960 either, when the slightest words coming from her in this sense would have been seized upon and broadcast to explain the Vatican's unexpected silence.

In other words, the hypothesis of Father Martins dos Reis, which is very convenient for justifying Rome's silence *a posteriori*, does not have the slightest foundation in testimonies previous to this date; *all of them, without exception, suppose that the final Secret will be revealed in 1960*. Some say it *explicitly*, declaring that *it will be «read to the world», «at the latest in 1960.»* The others say it *implicitly*, adding the detail that *it cannot be published before 1960*. These two different formulas are not opposed. But while the first one is addressed to the Pastors entrusted with its publication, the second one tends to calm the impatience of the faithful and journalists, eager to know everything or figure out everything right away. To their indiscreet questions, Sister Lucy or Bishop da Silva were content to respond: «The Secret cannot be revealed before 1960.» This means, quite simply: «*In 1960, but not before! For this is how it has been decided.*»

In this same context, when the curiosity became more pressing in 1959, Bishop Venancio, the new Bishop of Leiria, declared:

«I think that the letter will not be opened before 1960. Sister Lucy had asked that it should not be opened before her death, or not before 1960. We are now in 1959 and Sister Lucy is in good health.»⁷⁸⁴

It is certain that Bishop Venancio firmly hoped that the Secret would be made public in 1960, but only in 1960. Such is the obvious meaning of the *not before*, which in no way restricted the promise of «*revealing it to the world in 1960*».⁷⁸⁵

4. «BECAUSE THE BLESSED VIRGIN WISHES IT SO»

All testimonies reporting to us Sister Lucy's repeated declarations lead us to a most important conclusion: Heaven desired and willed that Our Lady's final Secret be believed and divulged. In 1944 at the earliest and in 1960 at the latest, for then it would become perfectly clear.

But let us note carefully that this was not a prophecy. It was a new request of Our Lady, which Bishop da Silva and Cardinal Cerejeira had publicly bound themselves to fulfil. Sister Lucy had never pretended to prophesy by announcing publication of the Secret in 1960, as an event which would happen no matter what. And, in this sense, Father Martins dos Reis was correct. This revelation, being confided to the authorities of the Church, continued to depend on their cooperation and many other unforeseeable elements – and above all, on an intervention from Rome, which took place in 1957.⁷⁸⁶

II. THE THIRD SECRET: FROM LEIRIA TO ROME

«It is a well known fact (Father Alonso writes) that, at the beginning of the year 1957, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the Holy Office, as it was called then) asked the chancery of Leiria to send photocopies of all Lucy's writings to Rome. The rather important photocopies kept in the archives of Leiria date from this period.»⁷⁸⁷

It was on this occasion, then, that the final Secret left Portugal for Rome. We even know with certainty the moment when this transfer took place. Father Alonso states:

«We ourselves can state with certainty that the document was still in the chancery of Leiria until the end of February 1957, and that by the latter half of March it had already been handed over to the Nuncio in Lisbon.»⁷⁸⁸

The interesting thing for us would be to learn the reasons which suddenly moved the Holy Office to request, in 1957, a document no longer offered to it, although it had refused to accept it in 1944. While waiting to learn the whole truth from an official source, we must be content with hypotheses. However, thanks to the disclosures of Bishop Venancio, at the time Auxiliary Bishop of Leiria and intimately involved with these events, we now have many reliable facts which we will take care not to neglect. I myself received them from the mouth of Bishop Venancio on February 13, 1984, at Fatima. The former Bishop of Fatima repeated to me on this subject, almost word for word, what he had already said previously to Father Caillon, who gave a very detailed account of it in his conferences.⁷⁸⁹

In the beginning of 1957, or according to Geraldes Freire, at the end of 1956, the nuncio at Lisbon, Msgr. Cento, sent an order from the Holy Office to Bishop da Silva, to prepare for Rome a copy of all Sister Lucy's writings. The diocese arranged it with a firm in Lisbon, and Bishop Venancio was entrusted with the operation. When the work on the photocopying was completed, Bishop da Silva also asked the nuncio if he had to send the third Secret too. The nuncio inquired of Rome, and the answer was: «Naturally! the Secret too! Especially the Secret!»

Then Bishop Venancio went to his aging bishop, who was now eighty-five years old.

«He was very weak, riddled with rheumatism and almost blind. His auxiliary told him: "Listen, Your Grace, you have the Secret here; you can read it; Lucy told you that you can open it. Open it! We will make a photocopy. This is the last opportunity we have." He answered no: "No, that doesn't interest me. It's a secret, I don't want to read it." The next morning the auxiliary proposed the same thing. He refused again.»⁷⁹⁰

Bishop da Silva ordered his auxiliary (Bishop Venancio) to bring everything – the photocopies of Lucy's writings and the original of the Secret – to the Nunciature at Lisbon.

Bishop Venancio related that once he was by himself, he took the great envelope of the Secret and tried to look through it and see the contents. In the bishop's large envelope he discerned a smaller envelope, that of Lucy, and inside this envelope an ordinary sheet of paper with margins on each side of three quarters of a centimetre. He took the trouble to note the size of everything. Thus the final Secret of Fatima was written on a small sheet of paper.

Around the middle of March 1957, Bishop Venancio went to the Nunciature in Lisbon. The Nuncio, Msgr. Cento, was informed and he looked very pleased. Bishop Venancio, on the contrary, could not hide his immense regret. «You look sad!» the Nuncio told him. Then he

added: «Oh! It will be much safer at Rome than with you!» What a slap in the face for the Bishop of Leiria and for Cardinal Cerejeira, chosen by Sister Lucy as future custodian of the precious document!

We know that the envelope arrived at Rome on April 16, 1957.⁷⁹¹

Now the question arises: who decided on this transfer of the third Secret from Leiria to Rome?

AN ENIGMA: WHY DID THE VATICAN ASK FOR THE THIRD SECRET?

First of all it is certain that the initiative for this transfer came neither from Sister Lucy, nor Bishop da Silva, but from the Vatican. According to Cardinal Ottaviani, the Holy Office requested it from the Bishop of Leiria through the Nuncio's mediation. But on what occasion? And for what purpose?

“A SIMPLE ACCIDENT”? During his conference given at the “Study Week on the Message of Fatima” in April 1983, Msgr. Luciano Guerra, Rector of the Sanctuary of Fatima, proposed this benign explanation: While stressing that this was only his own hypothesis, he declared:

«It was only a simple accident that provoked the transfer of such an important document from the archives of the Bishop of Leiria into the Holy Father's hands.» In effect, on the occasion of the request for a liturgical feast in honour of Our Lady of Fatima by the Portuguese bishops, «in 1955, the Holy See requested that all of Lucy's writings be sent to it. When he came to the third part of the Secret, the bishop charged with this task, being unable to photocopy the document because it was closed and sealed, asked Rome what he should do. He was told to send it as it was.»⁷⁹²

However, is it certain that the request for Sister Lucy's writings was addressed to the Bishop of Leiria in 1955? This is unlikely, because the documents were not brought to the Nuncio until mid-March 1957. And hadn't the Pope said no in 1955 to the request for a liturgical feast?⁷⁹³ Besides, on February 11, 1967, Cardinal Ottaviani made no allusion to this motive. He proposed a completely different explanation.

DID ROME WANT THE SECRET FOR SAFE-KEEPING? The Bishop of Leiria, declared Cardinal Ottaviani, gave the Secret «to the Apostolic Nuncio, then Msgr. Cento (now Cardinal Cento), who is present here. The latter transmitted it faithfully to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which had asked for it, and here is the important part: *in order to prevent something of so delicate a nature, not destined for public consumption (sic), from falling, for any reason whatsoever, even accidentally, into alien hands.*»⁷⁹⁴

Perhaps the Cardinal had allowed himself to be convinced of the necessity of this transfer to safeguard the precious Secret. But in reality, it seems to us, this was much more a convenient pretext than a serious reason. The Secret had been kept perfectly well at Leiria

Before a little wooden safe placed on a table and bearing the inscription, «*Secretum Sancti Officii*» (Secret of the Holy Office), the journalist questioned the Mother: «Mother, what is in this little safe?» She answered: «*The third Secret of Fatima is in there...*»



In Pius XII's apartments: the safe in which the third Secret of Fatima was placed in 1957. *Paris-Match* reproduced this photograph in a special issue published shortly after the election of John XXIII (cf. our exposition, p. 484-486).

The photograph of this safe – which we have reproduced here – was published in *Paris-Match* a year and a half later, on two occasions, at the time of Pius XII's death.⁷⁹⁹ Unfortunately, in these two articles Mother Pasqualina's disclosure was not mentioned, and the report was also presented as having been done *after the Pope's death*, during the interregnum. But how could a journalist have had access to the Vatican's pontifical apartments and speak there with Mother Pasqualina while Pius XII was dead at Castelgandolfo, and when right after his death the seals had been placed according to custom on the Roman apartments? This incredible supposition casts doubts over the authenticity of the testimony.

To set the record straight, I asked Robert Serrou to be good enough to clarify for me what had really happened. His answer is perfectly clear and dispels all difficulty. In effect the reporting took place *before Pius XII's death*; and so by a simple journalistic artifice it was presented in the magazine as having been done during the interregnum:

«In response to your letter of January 5, 1985, I can confirm for you that I did indeed do a story in Pius XII's apartment *on May 14, 1957*, in the late morning, that is a little over a year before the Pope's death. I found the precise date by rummaging through my notes for you, which as you can imagine was no simple affair. It is correct that Mother Pasqualina did tell me, while showing me a little safe bearing a label with the words "Secret of the Holy Office": *"In there is the third Secret of Fatima."*

«I believe I can tell you that there is no doubt about the veracity of this Sister's information.»⁸⁰⁰

The precise date of May 14, 1957, is of the highest interest: the envelope with the Secret had arrived at Rome on April 16, barely a month earlier. This allows us to suppose that Pius XII immediately placed it in this safe where it remained, at least up to the moment of his death.

Now that this fact has been established – which proves that Pius XII attributed great importance to this third Secret – the question becomes even more acute: did he open the envelope and read its contents?

DID PIUS XII READ THE THIRD SECRET?

As disconcerting as it might seem, except for the presence of the precious manuscript in his own office – which of itself does not constitute sufficient proof – we have no proof, no evidence allowing us to state that Pius XII really did read the final Secret of Fatima.

It is astonishing and stupefying, but on the contrary, several facts seem to indicate that he didn't want to read it, in this respect following Bishop da Silva's example.

On February 11, 1967, in his allocution «on the Secret of Fatima», Cardinal Ottaviani – *very curiously* – makes no allusion to Pope Pius XII:

«The Bishop of Leiria... sent it to the Apostolic Nuncio, then Msgr. Cento (now Cardinal Cento), who is present here. The latter *transmitted it faithfully to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, which had asked for it... So the Secret arrived at the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and it was passed on to John XXIII, *still sealed*.»⁸⁰¹

This declaration calls for three remarks:

1. By stating that the Secret was passed on to the Holy Office by Msgr. Cento, the Cardinal used a very imprecise but not false formula since the Pope – who was himself, we must not forget, Prefect of the Holy Office – had placed it in a safe with the inscription, "Secret of the Holy Office".
2. If Pius XII had read the Secret, then, in February of 1967, Cardinal Ottaviani had no reason to hide it from the public, quite the contrary.
3. By indicating that the Secret was passed on to John XXIII «*still sealed*», he seems to state that Pius XII did not read it.

We have another testimony: that of Msgr. Loris Capovilla, who was the private secretary and confidant of John XXIII. Questioned in 1977 by Father Alonso, Msgr. Capovilla also expressed the opinion that Pius XII had not read the third Secret.⁸⁰²

Father Freire observes that there was no evidence allowing us to believe that Pius XII read the Secret.⁸⁰³ Father Alonso opts equally for the negative: «Was the servant of God, Pius XII, able to read the Secret? We believe he did not, since he surely either did not believe it was important – and in this case it is still another reason to confirm that in 1957 there was still not the slightest apprehension at Rome about the “Secret” – or, if he believed it was important, he preferred to wait until the year 1960, but by then the Lord had already called him to eternal glory.»

«What is absolutely false is a rumour that was already current in 1957, that Pope Pius XII did read the letter and that he wept because of the terrible things said in it about Germany. As Father Leiber, a close friend of the Pope, assured us, “That report is completely unfounded. There is not a word of truth in it.”»⁸⁰⁴

In 1982, in his last article devoted to Fatima, shortly before his death, Father Alonso is even more categorical: «*Pius XII certainly did not read the document.*»⁸⁰⁵

Upon examination, we feel compelled to agree with this conclusion of the Fatima expert. Indeed if Pius XII had read the third Secret, undoubtedly he would have made some allusion to it before one or another of his confidants, and we would have known. Perhaps we even would have found some echo of it in his official acts. Now we do not have the slightest evidence of that. At the very least, it would have been noticed in 1959 that the two envelopes sealed with wax by Sister Lucy and Bishop da Silva had been opened. And in 1960, Rome surely would have informed the public that Pope Pius XII had been the first to read the Secret and had decided to say nothing, without even promising that it would be revealed in 1960. On the contrary, the testimony of Cardinal Ottaviani and Msgr. Capovilla agrees in saying that the envelope was passed on, «*still sealed*», to John XXIII.

«*THEY DID NOT WANT TO READ IT*»

To these weighty arguments we can add another and no less convincing argument, although of a completely different order. It is furnished to us by Sister Lucy’s authentic declaration to Father Fuentes on December 26, 1957, thus over eight months after the Secret’s arrival at the Vatican. Sister Lucy confided to the Postulator for Jacinta and Francisco’s cause for beatification:

«Father, the Most Holy Virgin is very sad because no one has paid any attention to Her Message, neither the good nor the bad. The good continue on their way but without giving any importance to Her Message... I am still not able to give any other details because it is still a secret. According to the will of the Most Holy Virgin, *only the Holy Father and the Bishop of Fatima are permitted to know the Secret, but they have chosen not to know it so*

that they would not be influenced. This is the third part of the Message of Our Lady which will remain secret until 1960.»⁸⁰⁶

In December 1957, no doubt after a Divine Communication, the seer states that Pius XII did not want to read Our Lady's final Secret any more than the Bishop of Leiria. It was a disconcerting, mysterious refusal – and how deplorable! We can hardly imagine the motives for it. However, an attentive examination of the attitude of Rome, and especially Pope Pius XII himself during the final years of his pontificate, will undoubtedly clear up this enigma.

IV. THE TRIUMPH OF THE ANTI-FATIMA PARTY

In a word, here is our bitter observation: during the final years of Pius XII one no longer finds in any Roman document or pontifical discourse a single phrase, a single word which might displease the enemies of Fatima or not square perfectly with Father Dhanis' thesis: acceptance of Fatima I and the pilgrimage, silence on Fatima II and the great Secret.⁸⁰⁷

THE VATICAN AND FATIMA (1956-1958)

In 1956, Canon Barthas offered the Holy Father his final work: *Fatima and the Destiny of the World*. Msgr. Dell'Acqua, Substitute Secretary of State, answered in the name of the Holy Father without ever mentioning Our Lady of Fatima:

«His Holiness knows and appreciates *your Marian zeal*, and has already had the opportunity to tell you so on the occasion of your preceding works. He wishes that this work, as you yourself desire, have the effect of increasing the Christian people's trust towards the *Virgin Mary*.»⁸⁰⁸

What a difference in tone with the letter of approval received by the same author in 1942, for *Fatima, merveille inouie!*⁸⁰⁹

In any case, we have evidence of the anti-Fatima party's victory at Rome: when Father Schweigl published his little work, *Fatima e la conversione della Russia* in November 1956,⁸¹⁰ he concluded his preface by expressing «his warm thanks to professors *Edouard Dhanis* and Luigi G. da Fonseca for their help in researching the documents.» That Father Dhanis is named here, and named first, shows that within the Society he enjoyed unquestioned authority, a sort of right to be consulted on everything concerning Fatima.

It must be noted that precisely at the end of this year, 1956, the Vatican decided to request that the manuscript of the third Secret be transferred to Rome.

Equally significant is the bland character of references to Fatima in pontifical discourses. On March 14, 1957, speaking to the Portuguese College of Rome, the Pope concluded:

«May the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Virgin of Fatima, to whose protection the College is specially entrusted, deign to pour out upon you... the abundance of Their graces.»⁸¹¹

On March 30, 1957, Pius XII signed an Apostolic Letter designating Our Lady of Fatima patroness of the diocese of Zacapa in Guatemala. But what a contrast between this letter, *Quod de Beatissima Virgine*, and the brief *Recens constitutas* of 1954!⁸¹² This time Rome no longer graciously concedes «the faculty of celebrating each year on May 13 the feast of this Heavenly Patroness». In the meantime, this same feast had been refused to the Portuguese bishops. In 1957, the Holy See contented itself with granting the request of a bishop, Msgr. Luna, who apparently asked Rome only for the favour of a simple «*annual commemoration*». So there was no longer any question of a feast in honour of Our Lady of Fatima!⁸¹³

On April 3, 1957, the “Casa Beato Nuno” was blessed at Fatima. This was a vast retreat house where spiritual exercises were regularly given to Carmelite tertiaries. Solicited on this occasion by the Carmelite Superior General, the Pope answered him:

«We have learned, through the excellent letter you sent us, that members of the Carmelite Third Order from all nations will meet in the month of August next year near the sanctuary of Fatima, *where the Blessed Virgin is venerated in such a particular manner...*» Then, in the conclusion: «... To you, beloved son... and to those who will soon be meeting *near the sanctuary of Fatima*, we grant our Apostolic Benediction with all our heart.»⁸¹⁴

The brevity and coldness of these allusions to Fatima, in circumstances which however are so propitious for a longer development – for example, a reminder of the apparition of Our Lady of Mount Carmel holding the scapular in Her hand on October 13, 1917 – manifests at the very least an extreme reserve.

In this context, on April 16, 1957, the envelope of the third Secret was placed in the Holy Father’s hands. One month later, on May 19, the third Congress of the Apostleship of Prayer was held at Braga. Cardinal Cerejeira presided, in the presence of the whole Portuguese episcopate. Acceding to the Cardinal’s request, Pius XII agreed to pronounce a radio message. Yet, reading it is somewhat disappointing.⁸¹⁵ It is a quite feeble echo of the very enthusiastic radio messages of October 31, 1942,⁸¹⁶ May 13, 1946,⁸¹⁷ or June 2, 1951.⁸¹⁸

Father Videira mentions also for this year 1957, the audience of June 4 granted to some Portuguese pilgrims, but he does not quote any of the Pope’s words.⁸¹⁹ For the sake of completeness, let us point out finally one last and utterly insignificant mention of Fatima on October 7, 1957. Speaking to a group of sick persons, Pius XII concluded his discourse with these words: «May Mary, the Virgin of Lourdes and Fatima, under whose patronage you have made your first steps, protect you and lead you...!»⁸²⁰

During the year 1958, the very name of Fatima is totally absent from papal discourses. However, during the final months of his pontificate, Pius XII spoke very often of the apparitions of Lourdes, whose hundredth anniversary was being celebrated, but he used

none of these numerous occasions to evoke the magnificent continuity between the manifestation of the Immaculate Conception in 1858 and the revelation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at Fatima in 1917.⁸²¹

There was an even more astonishing silence: the first “Congress of States of Perfection” of Portugal was held at Lisbon from April 8-14, 1958. Cardinal Cerejeira presided and many bishops were present, along with 1,500 representatives of a hundred religious orders and congregations. In the long letter addressed to members of this Portuguese Congress, the Pope, who recalled the harsh anti-Christian persecutions suffered in the eighteenth century, and also 1834 and 1910, then brought up the wonderful Portuguese Catholic renaissance without even pronouncing the name of Fatima!

«However, to restore the courage embattled by trials, there were *numerous signs* by which *the presence of the gentle and good hand of Her whom you call with gratitude, “the glory of our land, who has saved it a thousand times”*, made itself felt. Thus a renewal of the search for Christian virtue was witnessed. And Portugal, after eight centuries of existence, was publicly reconciled with the Church under whose patronage and tutelage it was once born...»⁸²²

The omission of the apparitions of Fatima, in this kind of context, could not have been simple inadvertence. It was surely deliberate. Even if, as might be imagined, it was originally the work of a secretary charged with preparing this pontifical document, it was deplorable!

Similarly, on May 13, 1958, 500,000 pilgrims had gathered at the Cova da Iria for the blessing of the colossal statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary sculpted by Father McGlynn and destined for the facade of the basilica. Yet the Vatican kept silence.

In September, 1958, a great international Marian Congress was held at Lourdes.⁸²³ Several remarkable communications were pronounced, notably on the theology of Marian apparitions. But it is painful to read, under the pen of Father Leiber, this remark showing to what extent Pius XII had finally given way to his entourage, who had led him to adopt a greater reserve in the domain of Marian theology:

«On the question of “Mary Mediatrix” and “Mary Co-Redemptrix” (the Pope’s private secretary reports), Pius XII, a few weeks before his death, in the days immediately following the Mariological Congress of Lourdes, declared that these two questions were still not sufficiently clear or sufficiently mature; during his entire pontificate, he consciously and deliberately avoided taking a position on this subject (we have however noted that, until 1950, the title of Mediatrix was often found in his discourses), and even left them to the free discussion of theologians. He never considered changing this attitude.»⁸²⁴

Thus on “Mary Mediatrix” Pius XII had ended up giving way. Gradually he had let himself be convinced, as he already had been regarding Fatima, on the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary – judging it impossible to accomplish by ordering all the bishops

of the world to join him for a solemn act of reparation and consecration – and finally he gave way for the third Secret also, judging it more prudent to have it transferred to Rome...

*A MANOEUVRE OF THE ANTI-FATIMA PARTY:
THE TRANSFER OF THE THIRD SECRET FROM LEIRIA TO ROME*

In effect, we are in a position to propose a hypothesis regarding this enigma: why did the Holy Office, in 1956-1957, suddenly demand the manuscript of the third Secret when it was no longer offered to it, and had refused the manuscript in 1944?

Many indicators have proven to us that Fatima, and especially its Secret – the first two parts and even more so the third one! – had tenacious adversaries at Rome. These adversaries were in the Curia, the Holy Office, and even in the Pope's entourage, which had rallied to the theses of Father Dhanis. They were well aware that Bishop da Silva had permission to read the Secret, but that he stubbornly refused to open it. They knew that after him, it would fall to the Patriarch of Lisbon to open it and divulge it to the world in 1960, or upon the death of Sister Lucy prior to 1960. Perhaps they feared that the seer would grant the future Bishop of Leiria, Msgr. Venancio, permission to read it. In short, one could be certain that if the Secret remained in Portugal, it would certainly be revealed to the world in 1960. This date was approaching, and there was every reason to fear publication of a text which would surely go in the sense of the first two parts, and would be very dangerous for the affairs of the progresso-modernist clan. Something had to be done.

As Father Martins dos Reis had recalled in 1953, in a book with which Father Dhanis was surely familiar,⁸²⁵ was not the hierarchy, and it alone, judge of whether it was opportune to reveal this Secret or not? And would it not be better for Rome to relieve the Portuguese bishops of this responsibility to decide for itself?

To provide an excuse, they requested a photocopy of all writings of Sister Lucy. Yet, it was clear that only one thing really mattered: transferring the original text of the Secret from Leiria to Rome, to snatch it from the hands of its future recipient, Cardinal Cerejeira.

Whose idea was this manoeuvre? Perhaps the future will tell. In any case, it corresponded exactly to the thought of Father Dhanis and his friends and protectors, who secretly were anti-Fatima. Did they succeed in convincing or fooling Cardinal Ottaviani a few months after his return from Fatima, Coimbra and Lisbon? Undoubtedly. Pope Pius XII himself? Probably. The fact is that the order was given, and it came from the Holy Office.

When a few months later the Secret arrived at Rome, on April 16, 1957, it was immediately passed on to Pius XII, who kept the double envelope sealed with wax in his own office, in the safe reserved for "Secrets of the Holy Office". Yet, he did not read it and no longer spoke of it. Does this mean he attributed no importance to it? Actually, we would see this as a proof of the contrary. But he was surely afraid of reading it. He knew what difficulties, what tenacious opposition he had had to face even at the Vatican to reveal and accomplish the first two parts of this same Secret – and only partially at that! We have also seen Father

Schweigl reflecting these difficulties. The Pope knew what interior torments, what scruples these requests of Our Lady, incompletely obeyed, had caused his delicate conscience. After all, it was only a private revelation, and a Pope, he thought, is not obliged to take them into account. Also, the best way not to be influenced, as Sister Lucy said shortly afterwards, attributing precisely this sentiment to Pope Pius XII, was not to read the Secret at all. Since the year 1960 had been indicated as the date for its publication – Sister Lucy had confirmed this to Cardinal Ottaviani, who undoubtedly reported it to the Pope: “In 1960, it will be clearer” – Pius XII, indecisive and hesitant, took refuge in the thought that he would read it only then... or his successor would.

Having resolved on this decision, which although it was not formally contrary to Fatima, was certainly not the mark of holy enthusiasm and total filial trust towards Our Lady, who had appeared in the Cova da Iria, the Pope found himself, if we can say so, in a precarious situation. He kept this mysterious text, still sealed, in his office, with mixed feelings; hope was undoubtedly clouded by distrust and disquiet. He also preferred to speak as little as possible about Fatima, or in the vaguest terms, which would turn away the attention of the faithful from this centre of attraction and this date 1960, which was more and more avidly awaited. Thus during the final year of his pontificate, the name of Fatima totally disappeared from his discourses.

What a sad drama! On December 4, the former Bishop of Leiria, Msgr. da Silva, died – without having read the Secret. Less than a year later, on October 9, 1958, Pope Pius XII followed him into the grave – without having read the Secret. He who in 1951 had joyfully proclaimed himself “the Pope of Fatima” had refused to read the final words of the Queen of Prophets, words which most precisely concerned our time – and words which, according to all indications, were of capital importance for the very life of the Church.

Indeed, of the three representatives of the Church who could and should have revealed to the world Our Lady’s most precious, most urgent message, none of them read it. Both Bishop da Silva, for fear of his responsibilities, and then Pope Pius XII, «so as not to be influenced», declined to do so. As for Cardinal Cerejeira, who should have received the message in December 1957 and divulged it himself in 1960, as he had publicly announced, he was skilfully, odiously prevented by the Roman initiative. Yes, those who had requested and obtained transfer of the third Secret from Leiria to Rome had played their cards right! Their manoeuvre had succeeded perfectly. Once the Secret was snatched away from the Portuguese, its publication in 1960 was no longer assured...

At Coimbra. in the silence of her cloister, Sister Lucy was not unaware of these sad events. In December 1957, she had the opportunity to speak with complete freedom to a man of God. She did not hesitate to generously share with him her lights from on high concerning the tragic situation of the Church and the world, in these final years of Pius XII’s pontificate.

CHAPTER X

«THE BLESSED VIRGIN IS VERY SAD BECAUSE NOBODY PAYS ATTENTION TO HER MESSAGE...»

For a few years already, visits to the Cannel of Coimbra were becoming rarer. The visit of Father Lombardi, the celebrated Jesuit founder of the “Better World Movement”, was the last one widely reported in the press.⁸²⁶ Fortunately, however, another much more important testimony reveals to us Sister Lucy’s thoughts and feelings at the end of 1957.

Father Augustine Fuentes was a Mexican priest. He was preparing to become postulator of the causes for beatification of Francisco and Jacinta,⁸²⁷ and simultaneously postulator for the causes of the Mexican martyrs under the Masonic persecution of Elias Calles (1924-1928).⁸²⁸ In effect, he had the privilege of speaking at length with the Fatima seer on December 26, 1957. He had already met Sister Lucy on August 10, 1955.⁸²⁹

After his return to Mexico, on May 22, 1958, he gave a conference to the mother-house of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Guadalupe. During this conference he reported Sister Lucy’s words. The account of this conference was published, Father Alonso stresses, «with every guarantee of authenticity and with due episcopal approval, including that of the Bishop of Leiria.»⁸³⁰ Father Fuentes made it clear that this was a message received «from the very lips of the principal seer». Here are the excerpts of the original Spanish text quoted by Father Alonso:⁸³¹

SISTER LUCY’S CONVERSATION WITH FATHER FUENTES (DECEMBER 26, 1957)

«I wish only to tell you about the last conversation which I had with Sister Lucy on the 26th of December last year. I met her in her convent. She was very sad, very pale and emaciated. She said to me:

«NO ONE HAS PAID ANY ATTENTION»

«Father, the Most Holy Virgin is very sad because no one has paid any attention to Her message, neither the good nor the bad. The good continue on their way but without giving any importance to Her Message. The bad, not seeing the punishment of God actually falling upon them, continue their life of sin without even caring about the message. But believe me, Father, God will chastise the world and this will be in a terrible manner. The punishment from Heaven is imminent.»

THE SECRET NOT REVEALED

«Father, how much time is there before 1960 arrives? It will be very sad for everyone, not one person will rejoice at all if beforehand the world does not pray and do penance. I am not able to give any other details because it is still a secret. According to the will of the Most Holy Virgin, only the Holy Father and the Bishop of Fatima are permitted to know the secret, but they have chosen to not know it so that they would not be influenced.

«This is the third part of the Message of Our Lady which will remain secret until 1960.»

RUSSIA, THE SCOURGE OF GOD

«Tell them Father, that many times, the Most Holy Virgin told my cousins Francisco and Jacinta, as well as myself, that many nations will disappear from the face of the earth. She said that Russia will be the instrument of chastisement chosen by Heaven to punish the whole world if we do not beforehand obtain the conversion of that poor nation...»

«THE DECISIVE BATTLE» BETWEEN MARY AND SATAN: THE FALLING AWAY OF CONSECRATED SOULS AND PRIESTS

«Sister Lucy also told me: Father, the devil is in the mood for engaging in a decisive battle against the Blessed Virgin. And the devil knows what it is that most offends God and which in a short space of time will gain for him the greatest number of souls. Thus the devil does everything to overcome souls consecrated to God, because in this way the devil will succeed in leaving the souls of the faithful abandoned by their leaders, thereby the more easily will he seize them.»⁸³²

«That which afflicts the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Heart of Jesus is the fall of religious and priestly souls. The devil knows that religious and priests who fall away from their beautiful vocation drag numerous souls to hell... The devil wishes to take possession of consecrated souls. He tries to corrupt them in order to lull to sleep the souls of laypeople and thereby lead them to final impenitence. He employs all tricks, even going so far as to suggest the delay of entrance into religious life. Resulting from this is the sterility of the interior life, and among the laypeople, coldness (lack of enthusiasm) regarding the subject of renouncing pleasures and the total dedication of themselves to God.»

THAT WHICH SANCTIFIED JACINTA AND FRANCISCO

«Tell them also Father, that my cousins Francisco and Jacinta sacrificed themselves because in all the apparitions of the Most Holy Virgin, they always saw Her very sad. She never smiled at us. This sadness, this anguish which we noted in Her penetrated our souls. This sadness is caused by the offences against God and the punishments which menace sinners. And so, we children did not know what to think except to invent various means of praying and making sacrifices. (...)

«The other thing which sanctified these children was to see the vision of hell.»

THE MISSION OF SISTER LUCY

«Father, that is why my mission is not to indicate to the world the material punishments which are certain to come if the world does not pray and do penance beforehand. No! My mission is to indicate to everyone the imminent danger we are in of losing our souls for all eternity if we remain obstinate in sin.»

THE URGENCY OF CONVERSION

«*Sister Lucy also said to me:* Father, we should not wait for an appeal to the world to come from Rome on the part of the Holy Father, to do penance. Nor should we wait for the call to penance to come from our bishops in our diocese, nor from the religious congregations. No! Our Lord has already very often used these means and the world has not paid attention. That is why now, it is necessary for each one of us to begin to reform himself spiritually. Each person must not only save his own soul but also all the souls that God has placed on our path...»⁸³³

«The devil does all in his power to distract us and to take away from us the love for prayer; we shall be saved together or we shall be damned together.»

LAST TIMES OF THE WORLD

«Father, the Most Holy Virgin did not tell me that we are in the last times of the world but She made me understand this for three reasons.»

THE FINAL BATTLE. «The first reason is because She told me that the devil is in the mood for engaging in a decisive battle against the Virgin. And a decisive battle is the final battle where one side will be victorious and the other side will suffer defeat. Hence from now on we must choose sides. Either we are for God or we are for the devil. There is no other possibility.»

THE LAST REMEDIES. «The second reason is because She said to my cousins as well as to myself that God is giving two last remedies to the world. These are the Holy Rosary and Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. These are the last two remedies which signify that there will be no others.»

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT. «The third reason is because, in the plans of Divine Providence, God always, before He is about to chastise the world, exhausts all other remedies. Now, when He sees that the world pays no attention whatsoever, then, as we say in our imperfect manner of speaking, He offers us with a certain trepidation the last means of salvation, His Most Holy Mother. It is with a certain trepidation because if you despise

and repulse this ultimate means we will not have any more forgiveness from Heaven because we will have committed a sin which the Gospel calls the sin against the Holy Spirit. This sin consists of openly rejecting, with full knowledge and consent, the salvation which He offers. Let us remember that Jesus Christ is a very good Son and that He does not permit that we offend and despise His Most Holy Mother. We have recorded through many centuries of Church history the obvious testimony which demonstrates, by the terrible chastisements which have befallen those who have attacked the honour of His Most Holy Mother, how Our Lord Jesus Christ has always defended the honour of His Mother.»

PRAYER AND SACRIFICE, AND THE HOLY ROSARY

«*Sister Lucy told me:* the two means to save the world are prayer and sacrifice.

«Regarding the Holy Rosary, Sister Lucy said: Look, Father, the Most Holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or, above all, spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world, or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary. With the Holy Rosary, we will save ourselves. We will sanctify ourselves. We will console Our Lord and obtain the salvation of many souls.»

DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

«Finally, devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Most Holy Mother, consists in considering Her as the seat of mercy, of goodness and of pardon, and as the certain door by which we are to enter Heaven.»

We will describe what a tempest this text was soon to stir up in the Church. The text was indeed extremely grave. While vigorously recalling the essence of the first and second Secret, Sister Lucy had spoken to Father Fuentes about new themes. We may assume that they are more or less directly related to the subject of the final Secret: this decisive battle between Our Lady and Satan, this satanic project of attacking first of all consecrated souls and priests, this necessity for the faithful to be converted to a holier life, without waiting for a call to penance «on the part of the Holy Father for the whole world, on the part of the bishops for their dioceses, or from the religious congregations». In other words, in December of 1957, even before the death of Pius XII, Our Lady's messenger already foresaw the grave crisis the Church would have to face.

A PROPHEMIC FORESIGHT

While among the Pastors optimism was in the air – thus we read in the “Doctrinal Report” of the bishops of France: «*Let us be careful not to mistake a few clouds in an otherwise luminous sky for a dark horizon charged with storms*»⁸³⁴ – Sister Lucy already foresaw the storm, she announced it and gave an exhortation to stand firm, This prophetic foresight was combined with a rather gloomy judgment on the pontificate about to close. In the same spirit, she wrote in June 1958:

«We must pray a great deal and beg God not to chastise us and save us in time and for eternity.»

On the following September 29, she wrote:

«We are in the process of praying, asking God for peace, not only the peace of the nation, but also peace for disoriented minds and peace for consciences. May God give light to the blind... and humility to the proud, so that they see the good road and depart from the evil one.»⁸³⁵

In the light of these declarations of Sister Lucy, which summarize so vigorously the broad lines of Our Lady’s message, we can outline a quick evaluation of the pontificate of Pius XII before entering, with John XXIII, a new phase of the Church’s history.

THE REIGN OF PIUS XII IN THE LIGHT OF FATIMA

THE HOUR OF THE DECISIVE BATTLE

«The devil is carrying on a decisive battle with the Virgin Mary.» This is the essential theme of this grave conversation, which is also that of the great Secret. In the Secret a triple battle is successively evoked: there is the battle for souls, whom God wants to save by the gentle and powerful mediation of His Most Holy Mother, tearing them away from the grip of Satan, who works furiously for their perdition. There is the battle for Christendom, menaced more than ever by the power of the Revolution with many faces: anti-Christ Masonry and atheistic Bolshevism, as well as a democracy supposedly Christian, but in reality liberal and plutocratic, Protestant and Masonic, and always fundamentally secularist and secretly anti-Catholic – the triple manifestation of a «Revolution satanic in its essence», as Joseph de Maistre called it. Finally there is the battle for the Church, which in its defence of the treasure of the Faith is confronted with the most perfidious heresies ever to cross its path: progressivism and modernism, the double current «of the great movement of apostasy organized in all countries for the establishment of a universal Church having neither dogmas, nor hierarchy, nor a rule for the spirit, nor a bridle for the passions», as Saint Pius X said, denouncing the utopia of the Sillon.⁸³⁶

THE FINAL RECOURSE

In this apocalyptic battle, in this “decisive struggle” of the “last times of the world”, so clearly perceived by Saint Pius X in his first encyclical, God in His mercy has left neither the Church, nor Christendom, nor souls without a weapon, disarmed before the unchained Adversary. For over a century, since 1830 precisely, on the eve of the Revolution’s apparent triumph, He has sent us His Mother many times. And at the dawn of this century, in 1917, at the very moment when the Bolshevik Revolution was going to make schismatic Russia – the “Holy Russia” of old, unfortunately cut off from Rome but enslaved to the perverse ideologies of the West – the fortified camp from which the Revolution would go forth to conquer the world, at the other extremity of Europe the Queen of Heaven came to Portugal, this land faithful to Catholicism and Rome. She came to deliver it from the Masonic, anti-national Revolution which had taken hold of it, and to offer all humanity the promise of miraculous aid, the assurance of extraordinary help, capable of transforming this final offensive of the forces of evil into a triumph of the Catholic Faith. There was only one condition: that the Pastors of the Church, attentive to all Her requests, deign to accomplish them without delay, to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This holy devotion is so dear to the Heart of God that He willed to make it, in our century, the ultimate resource before the gravest perils, the supreme remedy to heal all the evils of humanity, ravaged for over a century by revolution and rebellion against the reign of Christ.

«THEY DID NOT WANT TO HEED MY REQUEST»

We have seen how Pope Pius XI, designated by name in Our Lady’s great prophecy, remained deaf to this appeal until the end. The solemn warning of August 1931 concerned him first and foremost:

«Make it known to My ministers (Our Lord told His messenger), being given that they follow the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My request, that they shall follow him into misfortune.⁸³⁷ It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.»⁸³⁸

The pontificate of Pius XII opened amid the anguish of the imminent war, but also in lively hope. Would not the Holy Father, so profoundly devoted to Our Lady, so clearly predestined to become “the Pope of Fatima” – if only by the moving coincidence of his episcopal consecration on May 13, 1917, with Our Lady’s first apparition at the Cova da Iria – correspond filially to Heaven’s requests, and thus obtain the miracles of grace and mercy which would finally procure peace for the world through the conversion of Russia? Pius XII was justly frightened at the thought of the horrors of the war to come. Peace had been his first concern, his first torment:

«A river of peace over the world! Such is the desire we have cherished for so long in our soul, for which we have prayed with the greatest fervour, and to which we have devoted ourselves since the day it pleased the divine Goodness to entrust to our humble person the

high and awesome office of common Father of peoples, an office proper to the Vicar of Him to Whom the nations were promised as an inheritance.»⁸³⁹

And in this thought, he had placed on his pontifical coat of arms the dove of peace holding an olive branch in its beak. This peace, this true peace which the world can never procure for humanity – «*illam, quam mundus dare non potest, pacem*» – was offered insistently by Our Lady of Fatima: «*If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace.*» All the world's hope was in this promise. «*Opus justitiae pax, Peace is the work of justice*», proclaimed Pius XII's coat of arms. But who could ever make enough justice reign in the world for peace to follow, if Heaven did not intervene in the course of history with power and mercy? In short, the astonishing, wonderful miracle of the doves, who spontaneously gave homage to the white Image of Our Lady of Fatima, recalled this crying truth: «*Only She can help you*»,⁸⁴⁰ and in Her hands lies the world's final hope for peace.

What still needed to be done was to inform the new Pope, with precision, of the Queen of Heaven's requests and promises, as well as the terrible threats of chastisements if men stubbornly continued turning a deaf ear to Her.

We recall that a first initiative was attempted in this sense by Father Gonçalves in the spring of 1940. The good and holy Jesuit hoped to see the consecration of Russia done in the month of May... but nothing happened. In December, the seer herself wrote to the Holy Father. Pius XII showed himself well disposed towards Fatima and its messenger, but he still doubted, he hesitated. He temporized, so much so that nothing had been done when in the summer of 1941 the war entered its second phase: Nazi Germany and Bolshevik Russia, formerly friends, became enemies, and this reversal of alliances laid the trap, for the West, of an alliance with Moscow which would be fatal.

The months went by. The Pope's friendship and esteem for President Roosevelt led the Pope to weaken his denunciations of the Bolshevik peril; and when the first two parts of the Secret of Fatima were published at Rome in the spring of 1942, the text was censored, diluted so as to suppress Our Lady's words concerning Russia, its errors, its responsibilities in the war, and the peril it continued to constitute for the entire human race.

In autumn of 1942, after new initiatives from the Portuguese bishops, and not without receiving new inspirations from Heaven, Pius XII decided to do something. This was the consecration of October 31, which effectively marked, according to Our Lord's promise, the great turning point of the war. But this was still only a half-measure, only the beginning of a response to Heaven's desires. To be sure, it would bring incomparable fruits of graces for the Church, but it would not obtain from God the promised, the necessary and urgent miracle of the conversion of Russia. Russia therefore successfully continued – thanks to the blind, criminal complicity of Western leaders – its policy of deception with diabolical cunning, a policy which delivered into its hands, at the end of this disastrous war, all the nations of central Europe it had coveted for so long.

Nazi Germany was crushed and the hostilities barely terminated when a stupefied West discovered that it had waged war for the sole profit of the Bolsheviks; and thus the Cold

War began. This Cold War was fortunate in that the Vatican recovered its foresight. The Pope, fully conscious of the Red peril – the Soviet danger and the danger of progressive subversion within the Church itself –, seemed determined to vigorously take all measures necessary to effectively shore up the Church. While the cult of Our Lady of Fatima and devotion to Her Immaculate Heart developed marvellously under his paternal blessing, the Pope was preparing to call an Ecumenical Council which, under the two signs of Saint Pius X and Fatima, could procure decisive help for the Church in its triple battle for preservation of the deposit of Faith, for a more vigorous defence of Christendom, for the Church's expansion and the salvation of a greater number of souls.

Alas! This Holy Year 1950, which undeniably was the apogee of Pius XII's pontificate, was going to mark the beginning of an alarming decline. In spite of the divine sign he had been able to contemplate in the sky at the Vatican on four occasions, before and after the infallible definition of the dogma of the Most Holy Virgin's Assumption, Pius XII was shaken by the unexpected opposition he encountered. He did not have the strength to face this opposition squarely and mercilessly unmask it. He hesitated, he temporized, and ended up giving in to his most perfidious adversaries: the members of his entourage who, while flattering and adulating him, wanted to twist his pontificate around according to their own views. He gave up his project of a Council, he toned down his enthusiasm for Fatima, and left Father Dhanis and his friends complete freedom to manoeuvre. Thus it can be said that the Church's future was decided in a few months following the proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption and the choice graces it merited the Sovereign Pontiff. Instead of being an encouragement to launch him onto new battles, instead of being a new point of departure in the fulfilment of Heaven's requests, it was a point of stopping. Hence this immense potential of supernatural energies remained inactive, for lack of new, firm, precise directives.

Indeed in 1957, seven years after this year of grace 1950, Our Lady of Fatima's messenger insisted on telling Father Fuentes that for the essentials, the great requests of Our Lady of Fatima had not yet been accomplished, that «no one has paid any attention to Her message». Her triple Secret revealed in 1917 as a generous, miraculous offer of salvation for humanity had not yet been heeded, forty years later.

THE FIRST SECRET IGNORED

To increase love for the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Church, God wanted this devotion to be preached in season and out of season, as an inexhaustible means of saving a multitude of souls, and especially those in the greatest danger of being eternally lost.

Was this appeal heard? Of course, as we have seen, Pope Pius XII, throughout his pontificate, did a great deal for the Blessed Virgin and for Fatima, even after 1950. After the closing of the Holy Year at the Cova da Iria on October 13, 1951, he opened on December 8, 1953, a Marian Year during which ceremonies and manifestations in honour of the Most Holy Virgin were going to multiply all over Christendom. To take only one particularly

eloquent figure, in this year 1954 there were no less than forty-three Marian Congresses!⁸⁴¹ For the principal ones, Pius XII sent a letter or a radio message to the congress members, always exalting the tradition of Marian devotion proper to the nation he was addressing.⁸⁴² In 1958, the pontificate was going to close with a new Marian Year, which Pius XII had decided on to commemorate more solemnly the hundredth anniversary of the Immaculate Virgin's apparitions at Lourdes.

To realize what a powerful contribution Pius XII made to developing devotion to the Most Holy Virgin in the Church, it suffices to look over the collection of "Papal Teachings" published by the monks of Solesmes. In the volume devoted to Our Lady, out of more than 500 pages of the Sovereign Pontiffs from Benedict XV to John XXIII, over half are composed of texts from Pius XII,⁸⁴³ to which we must add the numerous passages from his discourses where he recommends to the faithful the devotion of the most holy Rosary.⁸⁴⁴

Yet he refused public, official recognition of the Fatima apparitions, which would have implied concession of a liturgical feast commemorating the apparition of May 13, 1917.

He restricted, and finally paralyzed, if we can believe his closest collaborators,⁸⁴⁵ the great movement of devotion and theological research in favour of an infallible definition of the dogma of Mary Mediatrix.

Finally, in spite of the tears of Our Lady of Syracuse, silently requesting reparation and consolation for all the offences against Her, Pope Pius XII never made the slightest allusion to the holy practice of the reparatory devotion of the five first Saturdays of the month, so insistently requested by Heaven since 1925.

In fact Lucy's sad observation, echoing Our Lady's disclosures, contains a crying truth: «Father, the Blessed Virgin is very sad, because no one has paid any attention to Her message, neither the good nor the bad. The good continue on their way, without giving any importance to Her message...»

THE SECOND SECRET DISTORTED

To be sure, we must not forget that the Apostolic Letter *Sacro vergente anno* of July 7, 1952, will remain an important date in the history of Fatima. It continues to attest that the requests passed on by Sister Lucy were in themselves completely reasonable, easy for the Sovereign Pontiff to do. What Pope Pius XII had already done half-way, and without daring to name Fatima, could be done tomorrow, with precision and solemnity. This incomplete realization of the consecration of Russia is already a pledge of its full accomplishment in the future.

Still, Pius XII had not performed the solemn act of reparation and consecration such as Heaven required, and what is perhaps even more deplorable, he and his entourage allowed the opposite to be said and insinuated: that is, everything was done; nothing else was necessary but to open one's eyes to see that the wonderful promises of 1917 were already

being fulfilled.

THE THIRD SECRET BURIED

Finally, how can we not deplore the fact that the “Pope of Fatima” left this earth without deigning to read Our Lady’s final Secret? When in 1851, Cardinal de Bonald, Archbishop of Lyons, asked Venerable Pius IX if he desired to know the secrets passed on by Our Lady of La Salette to Mélanie and Maximin, the holy Pope immediately answered that he would receive «the secrets of the children gladly and with pleasure». Thus even before the episcopal order of Bishop Bruillard of Grenoble recognizing the authenticity of the apparitions, the Sovereign Pontiff was able to read the secret of La Salette in its initial version, certainly the most authentic version. He communicated it also to Cardinal Lambruschini, prefect of the Congregation of Rites,⁸⁴⁶ and he declared later on that reading it had allowed him to avoid grave pitfalls in governing the Church.⁸⁴⁷

We know that in 1944 and again in 1946, Sister Lucy tried to make known to Pope Pius XII Our Lady’s final Secret. But, alas! Far from showing for the Secret of Mary the same filial eagerness, the same holy curiosity as Pius IX, he preferred to wait. The years went by – right up until this fateful April 16, 1957, when, receiving the envelope containing the third Secret, Pius XII decided not to open it.

What a shame! What a treasure of lights and graces buried in vain! The grave warning addressed by Our Lord to Pope Pius XI now applied to his successor: «Make it known to My ministers that, given they follow the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My request, they will follow him into misfortune ...»

«THEY WILL FOLLOW HIM INTO MISFORTUNE...»

Misfortunes had in fact, followed immediately after the disobedience of the Pastors of the Church to Heaven’s requests. 1929-1930: first refusal of Pope Pius XI. 1931: the first revolutionary troubles in Spain, before throwing it, in 1936, into the atrocious torments of civil war. March 1937: second refusal of Pope Pius XI, soon followed by the disturbing nocturnal aurora of January 25, 1938, the sign announcing the great chastisement of guilty humanity by «another worse war».

It cannot be said that Pius XII opposed Heaven’s requests by similar refusals. But he hesitated, he waited, and finally contented himself with half measures. The misfortunes continued to fall upon the Church and Christendom. Recall that during his long reign, from 1939 to 1958, communism was able to increase its empire immensely in Europe and soon in Africa and Asia,⁸⁴⁸ and even within the Church itself, especially after the “Liberation” of 1944, when progressivism and modernism set down powerful roots, secretly preparing «the greatest religious revolution in the Church’s history, bringing the greatest human disaster in the history of the world». At the death of Pius XII, «only very few minds knew that the secret sect of the modernists waited only for the loosening of pontifical authority

to throw off the mask and impose itself, with the cooperation of the progressive party, itself supported by Freemasonry and communism».⁸⁴⁹ Less than ten years later, it was a *fait accompli*.

The lightning speed of this upheaval was not without an explanation. Sharing Sister Lucy's severe diagnosis, our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, made this sad observation: «When Pius XII died, venerated by the crowds, unanimously admired... the world was in peril and the Church was like a city on the eve of a revolution, already infiltrated by enemy troops.»⁸⁵⁰

However, in this autumn of 1958, while Pius XII lay dying at Castelgandolfo a new hope was rising on the Church's horizon: the year 1960 was approaching, when the final Secret of Our Lady would finally be revealed. All holy souls were awaiting this hour, certain that it would be a new hour of grace for the Church, a new offer of pardon for souls and a pressing appeal for conversion. At the dawn of the new pontificate, just as twenty years earlier at the beginning of Pius XII's reign, Fatima and its Secret was once again the world's great hope.

PART TWO: THE THIRD SECRET HIDDEN (1958-1960)

CHAPTER I
THE CHURCH'S GREAT HOPE
(1958 - 1959)

On October 28, 1958, Cardinal Roncalli, Archbishop of Venice and former Nuncio to Paris, was elected to the See of Peter and took the name John XXIII. On November 17, he chose Msgr. Tardini as his Secretary of State.

What would the new Pope's attitude towards Fatima be? Two declarations from the opening months of his pontificate seemed to allow great hopes...

THE POPE URGES THE FAITHFUL TO HEED THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN'S WARNINGS

On February 18, 1959, in a radio message for the closing of the Marian Year – decreed by Pius XII on the occasion of the centennial of the Lourdes apparitions – John XXIII explicitly evoked the important role of certain “private revelations” in the Church's life:

«Like our Predecessor, we ardently desire that Christendom be renewed in a unanimous *élan* of Marian piety, for, when it is understood according to the Church's doctrine, it cannot but lead souls more surely and more quickly to Jesus Christ, our one and divine Saviour. *Following those Pontiffs who for a century recommended that Catholics pay attention to the message of Lourdes, we urge you to listen, with simplicity of heart and an upright mind, to hear the salutary warnings of the Mother of God – warnings still relevant today.*

«Moreover, let nobody be surprised to hear the Roman Pontiffs insist on this great spiritual lesson passed on by the child of Massabielle. If they have been constituted guardians and interpreters of Divine Revelation, contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, *they also have a duty to recommend to the attention of the faithful – when after mature examination they judge it opportune for the general good – the supernatural lights which it pleases God to freely dispense to certain privileged souls, not to propose new doctrines but to guide our conduct: “Non ad novam doctrinam fidei depromendam, sed ad humanorum actuum directiones.”* (Saint Thomas, IIa-IIae, q. CLXXIV, a. 6, ad tertium.) Such is indeed the case with the apparitions of Lourdes...»⁸⁵¹

Commenting on this beautiful text, Dom Roy underlines its importance:

«For the first time concerning Lourdes (and perhaps for the first time in the Church's history), a pontifical document states that the Popes *must*, in certain cases, “for the general good”, “*recommend to the attention of the faithful... the lights which it pleases God to dispense to certain privileged souls*” ... The Pope gives a precious indication for the theology of private revelations, applying to them the teaching of Saint Thomas regarding the gift of prophecy.»⁸⁵²

Hearing these liberating words, the devoted servants of Our Lady of Fatima must have quivered with hope. Two months later, on April 28, 1959, in a radio message where he asked for prayers on the occasion of the month of Mary, the Pope declared again:

«In our time, – as Christians have often had, and still have the opportunity to experience, – the august Mother of God makes Her presence felt in human events in a special way. The more charity grows colder, the more urgently this Mother exhorts Her children to piety, to virtue, to penance for sin; and when from every side the menace of fearsome scourges increases, we feel that in Her clemency She intercedes for us, that She implores for us mercy, warding off the chastisements merited by our faults. Thus we have a powerful patroness with the Divine Majesty, we have a Mother who with a heart full of pity has compassion on Her children’s sufferings. Hence, one would be placing his own salvation in jeopardy if, when he is assailed by the tempests of our world, he refused to accept Her helping hand.»⁸⁵³

What truth in these words, which coincide with Sister Lucy’s statements to Father Fuentes!⁸⁵⁴ No doubt it was also in the opening months of the pontificate that Msgr. Cento, Apostolic Nuncio to Portugal from 1953 to 1958 and recently named a Cardinal, had spoken favourably to the Pope about Fatima and Sister Lucy.⁸⁵⁵

The Pope was personally familiar with Fatima, having gone there at Bishop da Silva’s invitation on May 13, 1956, to preside over the ceremonies of the national pilgrimage. Were there not grounds for hoping he would pay attention to its message and strive to implement it? *«In the night which was growing darker»*, to repeat another of John XXIII’s expressions,⁸⁵⁶ the Immaculate Virgin appeared then more than ever as the last recourse, and Her final message, the Secret of secrets, as the great hope of a divine message, a motherly warning specially intended to help the Church pass safely through formidable perils.

IN THE USA: FATIMA ON TELEVISION

At this period in the United States, the Blue Army launched a great promotional campaign in favour of Fatima, centred on the expected revelation of the third Secret. As John Haffert recalls:

«First, we “played up” the 1960 Secret. We had a television program in New York every Saturday night at 9:00 p.m. in which we discussed the Message of Fatima. We called the program “Zero, 1960” and later, “Crisis”.

«We were not implying that there would be some kind of catastrophe at that time. We implied, rather, that the Message of Fatima was not something that happened in 1917 and was finished, but which *began* in 1917 and would not be consummated until Russia was converted. Even after that, it would continue to be fulfilled in the “triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary” and “an era of peace for mankind”.

«We had some of the most celebrated figures of our time on the program, including President Kennedy, Senator Humphrey, and many others! The program was picked up by over 100 stations throughout the country and for over a year had a “star” rating in *The New York Times*.

«And the Pilgrim Virgin statue was travelling from diocese to diocese, with the message delivered to tens of thousands on a “person to person” basis.»⁸⁵⁷

This American-style promotional campaign was inspired by a correct instinct: publication of the great Secret in 1960 could be an incomparable grace for the Church; what was necessary was to draw the greatest possible fruit from it by preparing the faithful to receive it. One could be certain it would also be a powerful apologetical argument to move hesitant souls to conversion.

In Europe also, the wait for 1960 aroused a revival of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, although in a completely different manner. This was true first of all in Portugal, where preparations were underway for the solemn blessing of the national monument in honour of Christ the King.

*MAY 17, 1959: PORTUGAL RENEWS ITS CONSECRATION TO THE MOST HOLY HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY*⁸⁵⁸

We have already described how on April 20, 1940, the Portuguese bishops, in retreat at the sanctuary of Fatima, meeting at the foot of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, addressed two petitions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: they asked for Portugal the grace of a concordat «which recognizes for the Church her liberty and her rights», and the favour «of being spared the horrors of the war» which was then causing bloodshed all over Europe. To obtain these graces, they made a vow to build «a monument in honour of the royalty of the Divine Heart of Jesus, in the capital of the Portuguese nation». They presented this vow and this petition to the Sacred Heart of Jesus «through the mediation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary»,⁸⁵⁹ to whom they had already officially consecrated Portugal on May 13, 1931.⁸⁶⁰

Their prayer being answered on both counts, the bishops set about executing their design. On June 28, 1956, in a radio message to Portuguese people of the entire world, Cardinal Cerejeira – who had the initiative for this project – explained its significance: this great construction, which would rise above the summit of the hill of Almada, on the left bank of the Tagus River,⁸⁶¹ would be «the monument of national homage and gratitude to Christ the King» who, «through the Intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, had spared Portugal the slaughter of the war. *For it cannot be doubted (the Patriarch stated) that Providence preserved Portugal from the war thanks to the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady of Fatima.*» So the national monument was to commemorate «the miracle of Portuguese peace», it would be «the monument of Portuguese peace». «This monument will rise up in the capital of the Portuguese world, and the image of Christ the King will extend the arms to embrace it all and bless it, as He miraculously showed Himself at Fatima in the

celebrated apparitions of October 13, 1917.» The monument to Christ the King would be raised up «as the complement of the sanctuary of the Cova da Iria».⁸⁶²

On January 16, 1959, in a collective pastoral letter, the Portuguese bishops announced that on the occasion of the blessing of the monument, the following May 17, they would renew the consecration of the nation to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary. And to enable the unanimous Christian people to prepare for «this supreme act of adoration and reparation», they invited individuals, families, associations, parishes and dioceses to renew their own consecration. Thus all Portugal would make reparation for the blasphemies of impious atheism by proclaiming the sovereignty of God.⁸⁶³ A great «crusade of prayers» was organized across the entire country.⁸⁶⁴

The solemnities began with the national pilgrimage of May 13 to the Cova da Iria. Here is the description of Canon Barthas:

«We must say a word about the reparatory triduum celebrated at the Basilica of Fatima and the fervour of the 800,000 pilgrims who came to the national sanctuary to pray for the Holy Father's intentions, and for the nations shackled by communism...

«On the evening of May 13, a procession left on foot for Lisbon, with the Virgin of the Capelinha, who had to be present at the feast of the Almada. Along the way the doves came to join the procession, at their favourite place.»⁸⁶⁵

The statue was received at Lisbon during the night, at the church of Our Lady of Fatima, where a huge crowd was waiting. For three days the faithful of the capital pressed inside to come and venerate the holy Image, while in the city spectacular ceremonies followed, one after the other.⁸⁶⁶ On the evening of May 16, during a fervent evening procession, Our Lady of Fatima went through the avenues of the capital.⁸⁶⁷

On the morning of May 17, Pentecost Sunday, a Pontifical Mass was celebrated at the palace of Jeronimos, while the statue of Our Lady was carried in procession to the foot of the monument of Christ the King.

In the late afternoon, before all the bishops of Portugal and its overseas colonies, in the presence of all the members of the government and a crowd of between 800,000 to 1,000,000 people, the ceremony began with the solemn blessing of the monument, followed by a vibrant allocution by Cardinal Cerejeira. The Cardinal Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro addressed the faithful in his turn, and then the loudspeakers broadcast a very brief radio message of His Holiness John XXIII.

Then Cardinal Cerejeira, before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, pronounced the solemn act of consecration of Portugal to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.⁸⁶⁸ After that, Admiral Americo Tomaz, the head of state, associated himself with this act in the name of the government and the entire people.⁸⁶⁹ After the singing of the *Te Deum*, the ceremony ended with benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

At the moment when the choir sang the final verse of the *Tantum Ergo*, in honour of the Holy Spirit – *Procedenti ab utroque compar sit laudatio* – a dove suddenly left the pavilion of Our Lady, and after flying around over the authorities, came and placed itself on the podium which was supporting them, right before the kneeler of President Tomaz. As Barthas recalls,

«... All eyes turned towards the dove, which never ceased looking at the altar and the monstrance, as if to show everybody present where the true direction of their thoughts should lie.

«When the ceremony was over, the Cardinals present as well as the bishops approached the bird, which was completely unafraid. In his turn, the head of state went towards it; then it flew away to rejoin the Virgin. The dove left Her only at the moment of embarcation over the Tagus river, for the return.

«All the journals of Lisbon published this account, with the photograph of the dove.»⁸⁷⁰

By this discreet but very moving sign, the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary were surely showing Their satisfaction at this solemn, public consecration renewed by the religious and political authorities, who were together recognizing Their divine royalty.

Perhaps there was even another and more striking sign of the Divine pleasure: many witnesses worthy of faith stated that during the singing of the *Te Deum*, they had contemplated extraordinary solar phenomena similar to those of October 13, 1917. We will return to this point in an appendix to this chapter.

APRIL 24 - SEPTEMBER 13, 1959: ITALY UNDER THE SIGN OF FATIMA

In December 1958, the Italian bishops had decided to consecrate their country to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. To prepare the faithful for it, they decided to resume for a few months the “Pilgrimage of Mary”, which ten years earlier had stirred up such a great wave of fervour all across the Peninsula.⁸⁷¹ Desiring that this Marian Tour be placed entirely under the sign of Fatima, they asked Bishop Venancio, the new Bishop of Fatima, for the statue of the “World Tour”.

Arriving at Naples on April 24, 1959, the white Image went all across Italy, leaving behind innumerable and fervent crowds everywhere. All the regions of the Peninsula, all the important cities welcomed Her with unexpected enthusiasm and fervour. One has to read the chronicle of this journey published the following year to retrace its principal episodes.⁸⁷²

Beginning on May 17, at Pisa, the miracle of the doves was constantly renewed. At Genoa, at Turin, at Padua, at Milan, at Brescia, at Syracuse... everywhere the white doves were found at Our Lady’s feet. «In all, there were 128 days that they faithfully followed Our Lady in 91 cities, from May 17 to September 21.»⁸⁷³

The most spectacular solemnity took place at Catama on September 13, where almost all the Italian bishops, in the presence of several members of the government, consecrated Italy to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Nor were the doves missing: one could count as many as twenty at a time. Then the statue returned to Fatima after a stop at Rome and Trieste.

According to Father Simonin, a French Dominican of the convent at Fatima, wonderful atmospheric phenomena also took place during this "Pilgrimage of Mary" in Italy. He writes:

«We know from a good source that the solar prodigy (of October 13, 1917) was repeated three times during Our Lady of Fatima's triumphant journey across the principal cities of Italy in 1959, and during the same year once again on May 17 at Portugal, at the end of the ceremony blessing the monument of Christ the King on the hill of Almada, near Lisbon...», etc.⁸⁷⁴

To the extent that these proved to be real supernatural prodigies, we would see here the mark of a very special insistence from Heaven on the eve of the decisive year. At the approach of 1960, God wanted perhaps, in Portugal and even in Italy, to draw the attention of the Holy Father and his entourage once more to the extraordinary importance and incomparable supernatural fruitfulness of the Fatima revelations...

FATIMA, HOPE OF THE CHURCH AT AN «APOCALYPTIC HOUR»

On April 24, 1959, on the occasion of the opening of Our Lady of Fatima's itinerant mission across Italy, Cardinal Cerejeira had spoken a brief message of striking farsightedness to the bishops of the Peninsula, declaring:

«It is an apocalyptic hour for the world. These are frightening winds from hell which are blowing, and the elect themselves are allowing themselves to be carried away.

«Our Lady of Fatima came to the Cova da Iria to remind men of the way of salvation: prayer and penance. It is the echo of what Jesus told His Apostles in the Garden of Olives: "Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation."

«To bring Her message everywhere, Our Lady of Fatima became a pilgrim. Now behold Her on the road to Italy. It is the Woman "full of grace" who is passing through. With Her is always found Her Divine Son, in Whom alone is salvation. And He brings with Him the Holy Spirit. This pilgrimage is like a Pentecost; it will be a shower of blessings.»⁸⁷⁵

These words were so clear on the gravity of the hour, but at the same time full of hope. They were fulfilled to the letter in Italy. The passage of Our Lady of Fatima really was accompanied by a wonderful shower of graces over the good people, who ran to Her feet everywhere. We can say that if there was hope of a "new Pentecost" for the Church, it was here, in devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and in the accomplishment of all Her

requests... But the Pastors of the Church still had to have enough faith and docility to Heaven's designs to be the instruments of this effusion of graces, which God wanted to pour out over the world through the mediation of His Immaculate Mother.

Now during this year 1959 – while the year fixed for the publication of the third Secret was approaching – Rome on several occasions had shown a disturbing coolness and mistrust for Fatima. It was in painful contrast with the enthusiastic hope of the faithful.

APPENDIX I - ACT OF CONSECRATION OF PORTUGAL TO THE MOST HOLY HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY⁸⁷⁶

I. PORTUGAL RENEWS ITS CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

«O Jesus Christ, immortal King to Whom was given all power in Heaven and on earth, Redeemer and Saviour of men, Our Lord and Our God, behold we are present before Your invisible but Real Presence in the consecrated Host, at the monument built to Your Divine Royalty by the gratitude and piety of Portuguese people dispersed throughout the world; *before You Portugal is on its knees to ratify and solemnly renew its consecration to Your adorable Heart.*»

THANKSGIVING

FOR THE CONCORDAT AND FOR THE CATHOLIC RENAISSANCE. «Portugal believes that You have accepted the national consecration which the Pastors chosen by You, accompanied by their flocks (who are the entire Portuguese people), made to You on October 28, 1928. With a humble but joyful heart we give You thanks for the liberty granted Holy Church, Your Spouse and Our Mother, for the work of restoration and development of the Christian life and its institutions, and finally because Your most Holy Name – in which alone there is salvation – is recognized and taught publicly.»

FOR THE GIFT OF PEACE. «This Monument will proclaim perpetually, by a solemn vow, *the miracle of peace which You mercifully granted to the Portuguese nation, thanks to the intercession of Our Lady of Fatima, Patroness of Portugal.*»

«**WE WILL NOT HAVE CHRIST REIGN OVER US!**»

THE ANTI-CHRIST HATRED OF “DIABOLICAL MEN”. «But Christian Portugal senses today that the Powers of Darkness, stronger than ever, have been unchained to destroy Your Kingdom in the world. *Russia (why not cite its name, since Your Mother, who came down from Heaven, did so at Fatima?), Russia continues to spread its deicidal errors everywhere.* In like manner of old, many standing before Pilate, inspired by the Spirit of evil, cried out that

they did not want You to reign over us. They preferred Barabbas to You, Lord, Barabbas the author of sedition, Barabbas the murderer.»

THE PRACTICAL APOSTASY OF SO MANY CHRISTIANS. «See, Lord – or rather, O Lord of Mercy, do not look! – at how many, even those who bear the name of Christians, Your Name, how many deny You in their life, despising Your most holy Law. They do not call themselves atheists, but they act as if they were in their private, family, economic and social life. A youth without purity, families without love, without children, without fidelity; riches without justice or charity; poverty without resignation and without hope...»

«CHRIST CONQUERS, CHRIST REIGNS, CHRIST COMMANDS!»

«In this sublime act of consecration, through the voice of those who legitimately represent it, Portugal comes to tell You:

ACT OF FAITH. «That it recognizes You as the “King of all things”, to Whom everything is submitted, as the Divine Teacher of truth, supreme legislator of good, inexhaustible fountain of charity and love, triumphant Prince of Peace, glorious conqueror of sin and death. It recognizes You as the Saviour of men, full of mercy, the Firstborn of the new humanity regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, the Way, the Truth and the Life of every man who comes into this world.»

ACT OF SUBMISSION. «*It promises to submit always to Your Kingship, a kingship of love in which all those who become subjects become free. Your kingdom is a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace.*

«*Conscious of its providential mission as soldier of the Cross and missionary, Portugal wants to continue to be so in the mother country and beyond the sea. You Yourself have chosen it in history; it wants to be faithful to its vocation: and especially to this choice You have made of it to be the herald of devotion to Your adorable Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Your most holy Mother.*»

ACT OF CONSECRATION. «Portugal delivers itself over to You in a fervent act of faith and love for the realization of the unfathomable designs of wisdom and mercy enclosed in Your Heart. And through this Divine Heart, may You call all men to realize that God is love, and His law is liberty and peace.»

IN THE FACE OF A HOSTILE WORLD, ALL OUR CONFIDENCE IS IN YOU AND IN YOUR MOST HOLY MOTHER

«*We have against us the entire world which stands in opposition to Your Kingdom, the deceitful kingdom of Satan. The three concupiscences spoken of by the Apostle who rested his head upon Your breast, that is, sensuality, pride and covetousness are the sources of every evil which oppresses men; they corrupt hearts and minds which no longer*

distinguish between good and evil. Lord, they no longer pay attention to these words You spoke to Satan with authority on the mount of the Temptation: “Man does not live by bread alone”, “God only shall you worship”.»

WE ARE WEAK; YOU ARE OUR STRENGTH. «And we are afraid, Lord, for we are weak; we too are sinners. Tell us as You told the Apostles: “Be not afraid, it is I!” Our trust, Lord, is in You Who have overcome the world. Our weakness finds its support in Your mercy and in Your omnipotence. Yes, Lord, if You are our strength, we are not afraid to affirm already, like the Apostle Saint Paul, that we can do everything in You.»

THROUGH THE MEDIATION OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY. «With trust we place this act of consecration in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Patroness of Portugal, whose vassals we are, that She may present it to You. Through Her, we ask You, Lord, to accept this consecration so that Your Kingdom may arrive among us, and that all the Portuguese people may be gathered into it.»

II. PORTUGAL RENEWS ITS CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

THE MONUMENT TO CHRIST THE KING, COMPLEMENT OF THE FATIMA SANCTUARY

«Holy Mary, Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God and our Mother, Queen of Heaven and earth, most high Patroness of Portugal, this Monument will be tomorrow – we hope – *the national sanctuary of adoration and reparation to the Divine Heart of Jesus*, which has so loved men, and receives from them outrages, sacrileges and indifferences at every moment.

«*This Monument stands as a complement to Your sanctuary at the Cova da Iria. At Fatima, You manifested to three candid and innocent children Your Immaculate Heart as a gift for the whole world, with wonderful promises.*»

THE ROAD LEADING FROM THE HEART OF MARY TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

«But Your Heart is like a transparent Eucharist; he who contemplates It sees Jesus, his Saviour. You appeared at Fatima, O Mother of God, to lead men to the Heart of Your Son, in Whom resides the whole fullness of Divinity. And by a symbolic journey, You wanted Your statue from the Capelinha of the apparitions to come triumphantly all the way here, as if to signify that through You men come to Jesus, that You have been chosen, created, preserved, that You are full of grace to give Him to us, for to Him alone is due all adoration, all praise and all glory. *This road which goes from Fatima to the sanctuary of Almada is, finally, the symbol of the road leading from the Heart of Mary to the Heart of Jesus.*»

THE CONSECRATION OF 1931

«Portugal comes to consecrate itself to the Heart of Your Divine Son. It does not forget, however, that it has been Your Kingdom from its beginning, that it is the “Land of Holy Mary”; it has officially proclaimed You its Queen and its Patroness; You Yourself, in calamitous days that already seem far off in the past, wanted to come among us to establish Your throne and Your altar; and on May 13, 1931, the representatives of Your Son solemnly consecrated us to Your Immaculate Heart so that, according to their words, “taking the Portuguese nation from our feeble hands into Your own, You might defend it and watch over it as Your own property and possession, and make Jesus reign, conquer and command there.” And You have defended it, and guarded it miraculously, O powerful Virgin, in the midst of an almost universal hurricane of fire and blood.»

PORTUGAL RENEWS ITS CONSECRATION

«Oh! Portugal knows Her in whom it trusts.

«Once again it solemnly consecrates itself to Her, ratifying and renewing the consecration made at an hour of grace and predilection, marked by God on the timetable of His Providence, in the year 1931.

«It delivers itself over to the Immaculate Heart by a supreme act of faith and love, knowing well that, by giving up everything, it saves everything. Did Jacinta say (and who taught it to her if not You, O Our Lady of Fatima?) that *God had entrusted peace to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? In Your Heart, O Mother of Mercy, all will find pardon, peace, purity, strength, love; and all will find there Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer.*»

«*THY KINGDOM COME!*»

«But Portugal cannot consecrate itself to Your Immaculate Heart without delivering itself and really consecrating itself to the Heart of Your Divine Son. For Jesus is the life that You live. You have received everything through Him and for Him. If You gently draw to Yourself sinful men, opening Your Merciful Heart to them, it is to lead them to Jesus, to Christ the King.

«Through You, O Heavenly Patroness, may His Kingdom come among us: a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. Amen!»



Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon.

APPENDIX II - WAS THE "DANCE OF THE SUN" REPEATED IN 1959?

Even before examining the testimony concerning the prodigies apparently renewed in 1959, we must insist on the absolutely unique character of the cosmic miracle of October 13, 1917, at the Cova da Iria. What seems to us most remarkable in this event, Dom Jean-Nesmy justly notes, «is precisely that it be so utterly unheard of. For who ever heard of a similar phenomenon for as long as the world has been the world? Who ever predicted such a "dance"? It is extraordinary and thus perfectly unexpected. In this manner, nothing could be more demonstrative than such a prodigy: out of proportion with the parish priests' or the Jesuits' ability to deceive, however enormous their enemies imagined it to be; but at the same time *unimaginable*, and consequently not suspected of having been invented by the imagination of thousands of spectators. For even if they were awaiting something, they certainly did not have that in mind! Not to mention those who, being far from the Cova da Iria, underwent no collective influence, and whose testimonies nevertheless agree.»⁸⁷⁷

After 1917, and especially after the visions of Pius XII were made public in 1950, one can no longer say as much, and greater prudence and rigour is needed before proclaiming that the “dance of the sun” was repeated again.

That being said, here *in extenso* is one of the many testimonies preserved at the National Secretariat of the monument of Christ the King. It is a letter written on October 9, 1959, five months after the event, by a Servite of Our Lady of Fatima, «a person worthy of consideration in every respect», as the author of the work makes clear.⁸⁷⁸

«Alcanena, October 9, 1959

«Your Reverence,

«Being present at the ceremonies which took place last May 17, on the occasion of the blessing and inauguration of the national monument of Christ the King, I heard the voice of a man exclaim in a moderate tone of voice: “Look at the sun!”

«They had begun the *Te Deum*, which I wanted to follow fervently, but having looked at the sun, simply for the pleasure of seeing it joyfully illumine the afternoon of such a hazy, humid day, I was immediately impressed, seeing repeated before my eyes the same phenomenon I had the happiness of witnessing at Fatima on October 13, 1917, although with less splendour now.

«I could not hold in an emotional exclamation, and I said to my cousins, the Vassala Santos girls, who were near me, that the “miracle of the sun” of Fatima was starting over again this very moment!

«I wanted to follow the *Te Deum*, but I was not capable of doing so, following it only every few lines because I didn’t know it by heart.

«I stared at the sun without hurting my eyes, and it looked like a great host slightly standing out, with luminous edges, and forming a gyrating circle the colour of the sun. The sun seemed to have gone slightly outside its orbit, but given the hour of the afternoon, it did not have the appearance, as in 1917, of coming too near the earth – indeed as everybody knows, it was noon solar time, and the effect was most terrifying!

«A few minutes later, I saw that the sun was covered by a little blood-red coloured cloud, which later disappeared; I observed again the same movement of the sun and the same absence of a glare on the disc, which became more and more impressive when seen through binoculars.

«It seems to me that this phenomenon lasted until the end of the *Te Deum*; the sun was covered at the end by an enormous bright-yellow coloured cloud; this colour spread around us, on the multitude and in the atmosphere.

«During these moments I sometimes closed my eyes, I looked at my book, I also looked in other directions to make sure it was not an illusion on my part. Around me, other persons remarked on the same phenomena, the same marvels,⁸⁷⁹ and we felt that God was manifesting Himself in a way similar to October 13, 1917, in the presence of the statue of the Cova da Iria, as if to show us the link between events taking place since the apparitions right up to this day when we were thanking Our Lady for the protection so miraculously granted Portugal, thanking the Holy Trinity with the hymn of thanksgiving for the infinite mercy They had shown, sending Heaven's Messenger into the world and working so many prodigies!

«I was rather surprised by the silence of the press on this subject, especially since they published photographs in which innumerable persons could be seen looking up, always towards the same point. I verified this in *Stella*, published at Fatima, in *Seculo Ilustrado*, and in other reviews, without any observation, however brief.

«This seems to me to be ingratitude to Christ the King. Finally, I rejoiced when I saw in *Novidades* and *A Voz* the transcription of the journal *O Monumento*, asking everyone who had seen the movements of the sun to go make their declarations. I did not go to the secretariat in Lisbon until last Wednesday. I had the pleasure of speaking on the subject with an employee who told me that I had to write my testimony. This is now done, and I ask you to please excuse all the imperfections.

«With my respectful salutations. May Your Reverence be assured of the best regards of a Servite of Our Lady of Fatima.

Maria Candida Lucas Reis e Silva.»

So the Secretariat of the Monument conducted an inquiry. Here is how the commemorative album accounts for it:

«Because of the rumours provoked among the public by this unexpected event, an event seen by a great number of persons both at the location of the Monument as well as at Lisbon and other distant places, the Secretariat invited spectators to send to it their depositions in writing, or to do so orally at its headquarters.

«Having collected a good number of authentic testimonies from persons both cultured and worthy of faith,⁸⁸⁰ the Secretariat asked a renowned and knowledgeable university professor to handle this case with specialists in astronomy and meteorology. The illustrious professor, who had himself been an eyewitness of the turning of the sun on May 17, 1959, performed his task with solicitude and dedication. He gave us an account of it in several letters. In the last one, he expressed himself in these terms:

«“With my respectful salutations, I send you with this a letter of... whose opinion you had solicited.

«As Your Reverence sees, once again science, or better, men of science, find no explanation for the phenomena observed: the hiding of the sun by discs animated by rotating movements, etc. They confine themselves to saying that science is behind in the knowledge of the atmospheric phenomena which might be behind these interferences observed on the sun. And nothing more...!

«We reach the point of asking the question: is it possible for science to progress anymore in this domain of physics? Nobody can give a satisfactory answer, and before the powerlessness of scientific reasoning the believer can suspect a supernatural manifestation, without however taking it for absolutely certain.

«I do not believe that the question will go any further than that, however much research is done and however many men of science we consult. They do not deny what we saw, but they do not even present any hypothesis by way of explanation!

«May Your Reverence pardon me for leaving the question such as it was, without having advanced one millimetre beyond this confirmation: the littleness of man before the greatness of God's work. Be assured always of the very great consideration and very great esteem of your...

Lisbon, May 15, 1962".»

Let us add also this important fact: «Neither the prelates, nor the clergy, nor the civil authorities, nor invited guests, installed in two pavilions, as well as some thousands of persons situated closest to the altar were able to observe the phenomenon, because the very great bulk of the statue's pedestal completely prevented them.»

This explains the fact that several witnesses of the ceremony of May 17, whom I was able to question in February 1984 at Fatima, told me that they saw nothing; thus Bishop Venancio, then the Bishop of Fatima, Father Kondor, presently vice-postulator of the causes of beatification for Jacinta and Francisco, and Father Cristino, presently chaplain of the sanctuary. But all three knew that many persons had testified to having seen it.

It is therefore desirable that the whole collection of accounts of the prodigy, preserved at the Secretariat of the Monument, be one day published. Only a critical examination of this abundant documentation would allow us to form a precise idea on its exact nature.⁸⁸¹ Meanwhile, following the authors of the historical album of the Monument, published under Cardinal Cerejeira's auspices, we are already entitled to think that extraordinary phenomena really took place on this May 17, 1959, precisely during the *Te Deum* of thanksgiving for renewal of the official consecration of Portugal to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.⁸⁸² It was a new mark of God's predilection for the "Land of Holy Mary". It was above all a new, benevolent manifestation of the Queen of Heaven and all-powerful Mediatrix, recalling the ever pressing relevance of her Fatima message, on the eve of the decisive year when her great Secret finally had to be revealed to the world..

CHAPTER II

ROME AGAINST FATIMA? (1959)

I. AN UNEXPECTED OFFENSIVE AGAINST FATIMA: FATHER FUENTES PUBLICLY DISAVOWED

On June 22, 1959, the account of Sister Lucy's conversation with Father Fuentes appeared in Portugal in the royalist daily paper, *A Voz*. Who would have foreseen that this text, already published in the United States in *Fatima Findings*, Father Ryan's review, and approved by several bishops – including the Bishop of Fatima – was about to unleash a violent campaign which would harm the cause of Fatima so gravely?

JULY 2, 1959: THE NOTE FROM THE CHANCERY OF COIMBRA

On July 2, 1959, the chancery of Coimbra published an aggressive note, which was at the very least disconcerting. Here, first of all, is the integral text:

«Father Augustin Fuentes, postulator of the cause of beatification for the seers of Fatima, Francisco and Jacinta, visited Sister Lucy at the Carmel of Coimbra and spoke to her exclusively about things concerning the process in question. But after returning to Mexico, his country – if we can believe an article in *A Voz* of last June 22, and a translation by M. C. de Bragança published on July 1 by the same journal – this priest allowed himself to make sensational declarations, of an apocalyptic, eschatological and prophetic character, which he declares that he heard from Sister Lucy's very lips.

«Given the gravity of such statements, the chancery of Coimbra believed it its duty to order a rigorous investigation into the authenticity of such news which persons too avid for the extraordinary have spread in Mexico, in the United States, in Spain, and finally in Portugal.

«For the peace of mind of those who have read the documentation published in *A Voz* and have taken alarm at the thought of fearful cataclysms which, according to such documentation, are to come upon the world in 1960, and still more, in order to put an end to the biased campaign of "prophecies," whose authors, perhaps without realizing it, are provoking a storm of ridicule, not only where they themselves are concerned, but also with regard to things reported as having been said by Sister Lucy, the Diocese of Coimbra has decided to publish these words of Sister Lucy, given in answer to questions put by one who has the right to do so.

«"Father Fuentes spoke to me in his capacity as Postulator for the causes of beatification of the servants of God, Jacinta and Francisco Marto. We spoke solely of things connected with this subject; therefore, whatever else he refers to is neither exact nor true. I am sorry about it, for I do not understand what good can be done for souls when it is not based on God,

Who is the Truth. I know nothing, and could therefore say nothing, about such punishments, which are falsely attributed to me.”

«The chancery of Coimbra is in a position to declare that since up to the present Sister Lucy has said everything she believed it her duty to say about Fatima, she has said nothing new and consequently has authorized nobody, at least since February 1955, to publish anything new that might be attributed to her on the subject of Fatima.

Coimbra, July 2, 1959.
The Chancery of Coimbra.»⁸⁸³

Here is an astonishingly violent text! Father Fuentes is accused of having himself made up statements which he attributed to Sister Lucy. In other words, he is publicly accused of telling a brazen lie. How can this sudden furor be explained?

In Mexico, Archbishop Manuel Pio Lopez of Vera Cruz went to the defence of Father Fuentes, stressing «that he had preached nothing that would contradict the message of Fatima, nor had he attributed frightening prophecies to Sister Lucy». Similarly, Cardinal José Garibi y Rivera, Archbishop of Guadalajara, remarked that Father Fuentes «had predicted nothing terrible in his preaching».⁸⁸⁴ In spite of these authoritative corrections, Father Fuentes was soon relieved of his functions as postulator, and on March 19, 1961, Father Luis Kondor, a Hungarian emigrant of the Society of the Divine Word, was appointed to replace him.

What had happened? Who had taken the initiative for this untimely reaction? Was it the auxiliary Bishop of Coimbra, Don Manuel de Jesus Pereira, who at the time was responsible for the chancery? In such an important matter, it is probable that the order came from higher up, undoubtedly from Rome itself.

For in the end, if there was a lie in this sad affair one may wonder *who lied*, and the official version is not the most plausible one. The evolution of Father Alonso on this thorny question seems highly instructive to us.

FATHER ALONSO REHABILITATES FATHER FUENTES

Entrusted by Bishop Venancio with the critical edition of the documents concerning Fatima, Father Alonso began by adopting the official version on this point, expressing it in *Historia da literatura sobre Fatima*.⁸⁸⁵ He expressed the official version again in September 1971, during the annual meeting of the French Society of Marian Studies at Pontmain. At that time he declared:

«Sister Lucy is not responsible for the ramblings of some of her visitors who spread news which absolutely did not come from her. It must be clearly noted that certain “revelations” made by the press concerning Sister Lucy cannot be attributed to her, for example, those spread by Father Fuentes and Father Lombardi.»⁸⁸⁶

That being said, it is all the more remarkable that five years later, Father Alonso defended a completely different position. Indeed in 1976, in *The Secret of Fatima: Fact and Legend*, without openly accusing the chancery of Coimbra, the official expert clearly strives to rehabilitate Father Fuentes.

«Who was right in this lamentable affair? Father Fuentes, the Coimbra diocesan spokesman, or Lucy? We would like to offer an explanation, giving our own modest opinion:

«1. What Father Fuentes says in the genuine text of his conference to the Mexican religious community⁸⁸⁷ in December, 1957, corresponds no doubt *in its essentials* to what he heard during his visit to Sister Lucy, for although the text is mingled with the preacher's own oratorical embellishments, and although it is adjusted to conform to a literary pattern, *these texts say nothing that Sister Lucy had not said in her numerous published writings*. Perhaps the principal defect lay in the presentation of these texts as coming from Lucy's own mouth, and formally and expressly given as "a message from her" addressed to the world. Sister Lucy did not have this intention.

«2. *The genuine text*, the only one that can be justly attributed to Father Fuentes, *does not, in my opinion, contain anything that could give rise to the condemnatory notice issued from Coimbra*. On the contrary, it contains a teaching most suited to edify the piety of Christians.

«3. The diocese of Coimbra, and through it Sister Lucy, have made no distinction between the genuine text which alone can be justly attributed to Father Fuentes, and the vast "documentation" to which we have already referred. *An error of judgment was thus committed, for everything was included in one single all-embracing condemnation.*»⁸⁸⁸

This text is clear, and of the highest importance. For if Father Alonso changed his mind, it was because in the meantime, to do his work, he had the opportunity to see Sister Lucy very often. This leaves room for a serious doubt on the authenticity of the seer's declaration published by the chancery! Everything is explained if a Roman authority demanded a formal and immediate denial from the Bishop of Coimbra. A sad affair, where undoubtedly neither Lucy nor Father Fuentes lied! And if anybody lied at Coimbra, it was undoubtedly to obey an order from higher up. This order is all the more plausible as the new pontificate's orientation was worlds apart from the message published by Father Fuentes. Besides, the allusions to the third Secret and the two passages concerning the Pope and the bishops could indeed displease the Roman authorities. At the Vatican, optimism was in the air, and John XXIII, who had announced on January 25, 1959, the upcoming convocation of an Ecumenical Council, hardly appreciated the "prophets of doom".

Moreover, Msgr. Loris Capovilla, private secretary and intimate advisor of John XXIII, furnishes us with an interesting declaration concerning the months preceding the violent reaction of the Coimbra chancery:

«In the opening months of 1959, an ecclesiastical personality (I do not recall his name) tried to interest Pope John XXIII in the project of a radio message which Sister Lucy could

address to humanity... The Pope imposed no decision, leaving it to the judgment of the competent organs. It appears that personally he preferred silence.»⁸⁸⁹

Whatever the case might be concerning the opportuneness of such an intervention, one can guess the hostile reactions this project must have stirred up in Roman circles, where Father Dhanis' influence was still preponderant. Not only did Sister Lucy not pronounce the radio message in question, but when Father Fuentes' account revealed the seer's declaration to the press, it provoked the vehement barrage and denial that we have just seen.

In this already stormy context, Pope John XXIII was going to read the third Secret.

II. THE READING OF THE THIRD SECRET BY POPE JOHN XXIII (AUGUST 1959)

As the year 1960 approached, since Bishop Venancio was keeping the most absolute silence on this subject, the specialists themselves were unaware what had become of the envelope containing the third Secret. Rome, for its part, kept silence. Indeed, for years there was no reliable evidence available concerning Pope John XXIII's decisions regarding the Secret of Fatima. Only in 1967, through Cardinal Ottaviani's public conference, and above all after 1977 through Msgr. Loris Capovilla's declarations, was it finally learned what had happened at the Vatican during the years 1959-1960.

Indeed in May 1977, after publication of his work *O Segredo de Fatima*, Father Gerald Freire decided to write to John XXIII's former secretary, to ask him for additional information on the third Secret. On June 20, Msgr. Capovilla answered in a letter containing seven points, which we will quote in full in an appendix to this chapter.⁸⁹⁰ On July 24 of the same year, he answered a series of questions from Father Alonso in a letter which we shall also quote.⁸⁹¹ Using the data supplied by these diverse documents, today we can give a sure, precise answer to many questions which had gone unanswered until 1977.

JOHN XXIII RECEIVES AND READS THE FINAL SECRET

On August 17, 1959, Father Paul Philippe, O.P., a future Cardinal who at the time was a superintendent of the Holy Office, came to Castelgandolfo to place the envelope sealed with wax in the Sovereign Pontiff's hands. Let us remark that this transmission of the Secret to the Holy Father was thus vested with an official character and surrounded with a certain solemnity, which attests to the prestige Fatima still had at this period.

However, a question comes up: Father Philippe's mission presupposes that the Secret, in this summer of 1959, was kept at the Holy Office. Moreover, Msgr. Capovilla confirms it in two instances. How long ago, and on whose initiative, had the envelope left the office of Pius XII? We do not know.

Msgr. Capovilla also reveals to us that John XXIII, contrary to Pius IX receiving the secrets of La Salette, did not open right away the envelope handed to him. He was content to declare: «*I am waiting to read it with my confessor.*» His confessor at that time was Msgr. Alfredo Cavagna, former national chaplain of the young women of Italy. Msgr. Capovilla adds the detail that the reading of the Secret «was done a few days later. But because of the difficulty caused by expressions proper to the language, help was sought from a Portuguese translator from the Secretariat of State, Msgr. Paulo José Tavares», who later became Bishop of Macao and is now deceased.

«JOHN XXIII MADE NO PRONOUNCEMENT»

As for John XXIII's reaction after reading the Secret, and the importance he attributed to it, this is difficult to say. Again according to Msgr. Capovilla, «*Pope John XXIII made no pronouncement on the contents of the Secret. He said that he preferred to leave to others (to his successor?) the appraisal (of the text).*»⁸⁹² According to Father Alonso, John XXIII declared more precisely: «*This does not concern the years of my pontificate.*»⁸⁹³

PROBLEMATIC CONSULTATIONS

Another important question: to whom did John XXIII reveal the contents of the Secret? During his public declaration of February 11, 1967, Cardinal Ottaviani declares that he had read the text himself: «*I, who have had the grace and the gift to read the text of the Secret – though I too, am bound by the secret – I can say...*»⁸⁹⁴ The Cardinal read it, then, but at a date unknown to us.⁸⁹⁵ His testimony, which contains – as we will see – numerous and grave inaccuracies, seems to contradict that of Msgr. Capovilla:

«The Secret (the Cardinal states) arrived in Rome and was taken to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Still sealed, it was later, in 1960, taken to Pope John XXIII. The Pope broke the seal, and opened the envelope. *Although it was in Portuguese, he told me afterwards that he understood the text in its entirety.*»

The Cardinal seems to assume that John XXIII read the text for the first time then. Yet, we know that he had first requested the help of Msgr. Tavares to understand the meaning of certain Portuguese expressions!

Father Laurentin undoubtedly expresses the correct hypothesis when he writes:

«John XXIII made these super-secret consultations at Castelgandolfo during the summer of 1959. Then, without mentioning these preliminary actions, he “opened” the Secret officially, in the presence only of Cardinal Ottaviani, Prefect of the Holy Office... The official opening (of the Secret) before Cardinal Ottaviani was only the official conclusion of this private inquiry conducted outside the Holy Office.»⁸⁹⁶

On the other hand, according to Msgr. Capovilla, John XXIII revealed the contents of the Secret to several figures in his entourage:

«*The contents of the letter (he writes) were brought to the knowledge of all the leaders of the Holy Office and the Secretariat of State, and to some other people... for example, Cardinal Agaganian. Without any doubt, the Pope spoke about it with his most intimate collaborators.*»[897](#)

Msgr. Capovilla added:

«Some people with whom *he spoke about Fatima* are already dead. Others are still alive: Cardinals Ottaviani, Parente, Philippe, Samore, Bishop Raimundo Verardo, then from the commission of the Holy Office, and Msgr. Capovilla.»[898](#)

Does this mean that John XXIII *had all these people read the exact and integral text of the Secret written down by Sister Lucy*? We have solid reasons to doubt it; we will come back to these reasons. The Pope undoubtedly contented himself with speaking to them about the Secret; to some of them in 1959; to the majority in 1960 or later, and in a rather vague manner.

IN A DEEP DARK, DARK WELL

The last question we must elucidate is: what later became of Sister Lucy's manuscript?

According to Cardinal Ottaviani, John XXIII «himself placed it in another envelope, sealed it, and sent it to be placed in one of those archives that are like a well where the paper sinks deeply into the dark, black depths, and where no one can distinguish anything at all. So really, it is difficult to say where the Secret of Fatima is now.»[899](#)

These words of the Cardinal, clearly intended to discourage all curiosity on this subject, do not shine brightly with the truth. Here Msgr. Capovilla is much more exact. He writes:

«After reading the text, the Pope wrote a personal note which was transcribed by his secretary (Msgr. Capovilla himself), and which was placed in the envelope containing the Secret.»[900](#)

John XXIII «took the document to the Vatican, and kept it on the writing table of his bedroom until his death, on June 3, 1963.»[901](#)

«From 1959 to 1963 (Msgr. Capovilla states), it stayed on the Pope's work table, sealed. I don't know where it was placed after that.»[902](#)

Let us add finally that, if John XXIII consulted some people of his entourage on this subject, during this summer of 1959, in any case, no news of it came out. The experts themselves did not know if the third Secret was still at Leiria, if it had been sent to Cardinal Cerejeira,

or if it was now at the Vatican.

III. A SECOND DISAVOWAL OF FATIMA: THE RADIO MESSAGE OF POPE JOHN XXIII (SEPTEMBER 13, 1959)

While at Castelgandolfo the Holy Father was reading the final Secret of Our Lady, the Virgin of Fatima was completing her triumphal mission across Italy. On September 13, anniversary of the fifth apparition, the closing of the national Eucharistic Congress was celebrated. But the most important event of the day, the event for which the bishops had decided on this “Pilgrimage of Mary”, was of course the solemn consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We have already spoken of the incomparable success of these four months of Our Lady of Fatima’s itinerant mission all across the Peninsula.

On this day, 300,000 of the faithful had gathered at Catania, in this Sicily already favoured six years earlier by the miracle of Syracuse. The official consecration was pronounced in the name of all the bishops by Cardinal Mimmi, papal legate. The President of the Italian Republic sent a brief message on this occasion – which was rather insipid and insignificant.

But the great disappointment came from the radio message pronounced by John XXIII. For four months, the tour of Our Lady of Fatima had been conceived as a preparation for the solemn act of the country’s consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This preparation had been done, in the most explicit manner, under the sign of Fatima. The majority of the bishops, as they welcomed the venerated Image, had recalled the essential points of the message.⁹⁰³

In this sort of context, the radio message of the Sovereign Pontiff would be extremely important. It was even more important since the Pope – as we know today – had just read the final Secret of Our Lady of Fatima, a few weeks earlier.

Everybody expected the Holy Father to devote his entire discourse to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and to the solemn consecration about to take place. Everybody thought he would speak about Our Lady of Fatima and the marvels of grace performed along Her path for the last four months. Many even hoped that he would allude to the upcoming revelation of Her final Secret.

What a disappointment it was, what scandal even, for the more perceptive ones, to find out that the Pope had resolutely omitted all references to Fatima. Nor did the adversaries fail to remark as much. Father Balic, O.F.M., a renowned mariologist, but who had more or less rallied to Dhanis’ theses on Fatima,⁹⁰⁴ gave heavy stress to this point a few months later:

«Significant in this regard is the attitude of the Holy Father John XXIII, who on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress in 1959, during which the consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary had been prepared and performed, (in his discourse) exalted Jesus in the Eucharist *and said not a word about Fatima and the Secret.*»⁹⁰⁵

In 1963, Father Laurentin is clearly pleased to recall this omission, which was only too obvious:

«The pastoral sense of John XXIII has indeed felt this problem (the problem which, according to our author, is posed by all consecrations to the Blessed Virgin Mary. For can somebody consecrate himself to something other than God Himself? Collective consecrations would pose an even more difficult problem, «to the extent that these consecrations include atheistic peoples.» This is obviously in reference to the consecration of Russia requested by Our Lady of Fatima!).⁹⁰⁶ On the occasion of the “Pilgrimage of Marvels”, whose object was to prepare for the solemn consecration of the Italian nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the journey of an itinerant statue of Our Lady of Fatima, he sent a message where he insisted on the importance “of taking more seriously the practice of the virtues and the realism of the Christian life”, and *he hardly mentioned the consecration in question.*»⁹⁰⁷

In fact, the long pontifical radio message was completely devoted to the Eucharist.⁹⁰⁸ Only a few insignificant words alluded to the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, decided on by the bishops and fervently prepared for over four months by an entire unanimous nation!

«This sentiment of humility and generosity in the service of God and His Church has led you to the profession of faith and love on this day, a profession which will in the future be more fervent than in the past, after *your act of consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*»⁹⁰⁹

«We are confident that all Italians, in virtue of this homage to the Holy Virgin, will venerate in Her, with renewed fervour, the Mother of the Mystical Body, whose symbol and vital centre is the Eucharist, that they will imitate in Her the most perfect model of union with Jesus, our Head; that they will unite themselves with Her in the offering of the Divine Victim; and that by Her Maternal intercession they will implore the gifts of unity and peace for the Church, and especially a richer and more faithful blossoming of priestly vocations. In this way, *the consecration will become a motive for a more and more serious commitment to the practice of the Christian virtues, a more effective defence against the evils threatening them, and a source of prosperity, even in this world, according to the promises of Christ.*»⁹¹⁰

OUR LADY OF FATIMA IN THE ETERNAL CITY (SEPTEMBER 14-17, 1959)

This surprising reserve on the part of the Holy Father, regarding both the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the message of Fatima, was certainly deliberate. Besides, a new proof of this deliberate coolness towards Fatima was given a few days later. In conformity with the program of the “Marian Tour”, the statue of the Madonna of Fatima arrived at Rome on September 14. It was to remain there until the 17th. During these three days, great solemnities took place at the Flaminio stadium, at the church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and at the basilica of Saint John Lateran. The mayor of Rome welcomed Our Lady of Fatima. The crowds gathered in. Yet, Pope John XXIII did not move. He pronounced

not a single word of welcome to Our Lady, who visited his diocese at the end of a triumphal journey.

L'Osservatore Romano contented itself, on September 16, and again on October 2 in its French edition, with publishing the text of the homily pronounced at Fatima by Cardinal Roncalli... on May 13, 1956! The organ of the Holy See called it a «*Special discourse, which it seems particularly opportune these days to recall or make known to many.*»⁹¹¹

Yet this homily contained nothing very remarkable, except no doubt this little sentence which the Vatican again judged *particularly opportune* early in 1960, faced with the increasingly restive wait for the revelation of the great Secret:

«This is not the moment (Cardinal Roncalli had declared) to penetrate and to study – which is indeed permitted, in a humble and pious spirit – the three great Secrets of Fatima confided to the seers. It is fitting to respect their profound mystery.»⁹¹²

In September 1959, John XXIII already knew these three Secrets; but undoubtedly he had already resolved not to reveal them to the faithful.

On September 17, Our Lady of Fatima left Rome for Trieste, the final stage of Her mission, where the cornerstone was to be blessed for a sanctuary dedicated to “Mary, Mother and Queen”, built as a perpetual remembrance of Italy’s consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On September 19, John XXIII pronounced a radio message on this occasion, but again without making any mention of the requests of Fatima, and making only a quick reference to the act of consecration of Italy.⁹¹³

A DERISORY COMPENSATION

Had anybody remarked to Pope John XXIII that the contents of his radio messages of September 13 and 17, and especially the coolness and apparent indifference he had manifested for Our Lady of Fatima during Her visit to Rome, had scandalized the faithful and risked lowering the Pope’s standing in the eyes of Portuguese church authorities? In any case, as often happened later, the Pope made a gesture to try to compensate for the bad impression left by his previous decisions:

«On September 22, 1959, the nunciature of Lisbon informed the rector of the sanctuary of the Vatican’s desire to send the sanctuary the doves arriving that day from Italy with the Pilgrim Virgin statue.»⁹¹⁴

The compensation was derisory...

FATIMA, SIGN OF CONTRADICTION

In fact, as the months passed, the clearer it became that the orientations of the new pontificate were in a spirit contrary to that of the Fatima message... In these circumstances, would the third Secret be revealed in 1960, as planned? Disquiet on this point was not without foundation.

More than ever, Fatima was going to appear as a sign of contradiction, revealing what was in men's hearts. An article appearing on October 3 in *Civiltà cattolica* – the knowledgeable Jesuit review in Rome, which enjoyed an immense audience because it was considered an unofficial organ of the Vatican – left no doubt about the all-powerful Society's positions regarding Fatima: the Jesuits had been won over to Father Dhanis' position. They did all they could to impose his views and create obstacles to the publication of the third Secret:

«At the approach of the year 1960, we hear of talk by certain people, with greater insistence, about the supposed "third part" of the Secret revealed to the three seers of Fatima and which, put in writing by Sister Lucy and sent to the ecclesiastical authorities, was supposed to be opened *and perhaps also revealed to the public itself* next year. As we remind everybody of the prudence necessary when speaking or writing (*often with arbitrary reasoning* [?]) on such a subject, *an extremely opportune note* arrives from the chancery of Coimbra...»⁹¹⁵

The article goes on to quote at length the declaration of July 2, 1959, whose «extreme opportuneness» for the adversaries of Fatima leads us to suspect that they undoubtedly were not strangers to its publication. They immediately invoked this text, at several points and with insistence, to justify the non-publication of the Secret.

However, in this year 1959, notwithstanding the underhanded, hypocritical opposition of the progressive, anti-Fatima minority, publication of the third Secret still seemed certain. As F. Stein wrote at the time, in *Mensagem de Fatima*:

«The testimonies which have announced the revelation of the Secret for 1960 are of such weight and so numerous that in our opinion, even if the ecclesiastical authorities of Fatima (in 1959 the experts themselves were still unaware that Rome had taken the Secret from the Bishop of Leiria over two years ago) had not yet resolved to publish the Secret in 1960, they would now see themselves forced to do so by the circumstances.»⁹¹⁶

This was the voice of wisdom and good sense, as well as an informed sense of the supernatural. For in this grave matter, did not the honour of Our Lady, and the greatest good for souls, alone have to guide the competent authorities' decision, to the exclusion of every other consideration? Trusting in the Church, the Faithful were right to hope that the Blessed Virgin's maternal warning would not be hidden under a bushel...

APPENDIX - JOHN XXIII AND THE THIRD SECRET ACCORDING TO MSGR. CAPOVILLA

We have already indicated in what circumstances Msgr. Loris Capovilla, former secretary and advisor of John XXIII, was led on two occasions during the summer of 1977 to give important information on the third Secret of Fatima.⁹¹⁷ Concerning this, we have given all the essential facts during our account of the events of summer 1959. By way of documentation, however, we now give these two texts in full.

They call for one preliminary remark: the precision and objective tone of these two letters must not fool us. They are to be read with great critical prudence, for not everything should be taken at face value, far from it! Msgr. Capovilla does his utmost to lessen the responsibility of John XXIII – and his own! – for the non-publication of the Secret in 1960. We will show in our next chapter that some of these statements are gravely incomplete, inexact, or even, it must be said, unquestionably false.

*LETTER TO FATHER FREIRE (JUNE 20, 1977)*⁹¹⁸

«Reverend Father and Brother,

«I am in a position to respond as follows to your letter of last May 15:

«1. On August 17, 1959, Pope John received from the hands of Father Paul Philippe (then Commissioner of the Holy Office) the letter relating to what is called the “Secret of Fatima”, and which was kept at the Holy Office. He said at that time: “I am waiting to read it with my confessor.” (Msgr. Alfredo Cavagna).

«2. In fact, the reading took place a few days later. But because of the difficulty due to expressions proper to the language, they requested the help of the Portuguese translator of the Secretariat of State, Msgr. Paulo José Tavares (who later became Bishop of Macao).

«3. The contents of the letter were brought to the knowledge of all the leaders of the Holy Office and the Secretariat of State, and also a few other persons.

«Without any doubt, the Pope spoke about it with his most intimate collaborators.

«4. After the reading of the text, the Pope wrote down a personal note, which was transcribed by his secretary, Msgr. Capovilla, and which was placed in the envelope containing “the Secret”.

«5. Pope John XXIII made no pronouncement on the contents of the Secret. He said that he preferred to leave to others (to his successor?) the appraisal (of this text).

«6. The document was kept in the writing table of John XXIII’s apartment, until his death.

«7. Paul VI, after his election, asked for information regarding this document; I no longer recall if it was in July 1963 or a few months after. We may believe he read the Secret.

«This is all I know on this point. I hope I have been precise. Pray for me. Your most devoted servant,

Loris Capovilla.»

*REPLIES TO FATHER ALONSO (JULY 24, 1977)*⁹¹⁹

«1. John XXIII frequently conversed with me about Fatima, and devotion to Mary which is spreading from there all over the world.

«His personal attitude concerning supernatural manifestations was characterized by a serene equilibrium: he was inclined neither to suggestion, as though he had discovered the complete solution to the evils affecting humanity, nor to destructive criticism. He let himself be guided by the prayer of Jesus: Mt. 11:25; Lk. 10:21 and again by 1 Cor. 1:27-29.

«2. In the opening months of 1959, an ecclesiastical personality (I do not recall his name) tried to interest him in the project of a radio message which Sister Lucy could address to humanity. This is according to what I gathered about it. He made no decision, leaving the judgment to the competent ecclesiastical agency. It appears that personally he preferred silence.

«3. For his actions he always asked for advice, either from his collaborators from the Secretariat of State and the Holy Office or from his confessor, Msgr. Alfredo Cavagna, a knowledgeable, cultured, prudent, and pious priest, and very devoted to Our Lady.

«4. Concerning the reading of the sealed envelope containing Sister Lucy's manuscript, here is my deposition: he received it from the hands of Father Paul Philippe, O.P., who was then the commissioner of the Holy Office, on August 17, 1959, *at Castelgandolfo*. He told me: "I am waiting to read it with my confessor." Because the text was difficult, due to expressions proper to the language, they requested the help of Msgr. Paulo Tavares, Portuguese translator of the Secretariat of State, who later became Bishop of Macao.

«5. Knowledge of the contents was given to the heads of the Secretariat of State and the Holy Office, and to a few other persons, for example, Cardinal Agagian. After reading it, the Pope wrote a personal note, which was transcribed by his private secretary, Msgr. Loris Capovilla, and attached to the envelope containing the "Secret". All I know of it is that the Pope made no pronouncement on the subject. He said that he preferred to leave the decision to others (to his successor?). He brought the document to the Vatican and kept it in the bureau of his bedroom until his death (June 3, 1963). Paul VI asked for information about the envelope shortly after his election. We may believe that he read it.

«6. John XXIII's thinking is explicit in numerous (sic) allocutions (I am presenting a few texts).⁹²⁰ During general audiences, he spoke many times, not about the Secret, but about devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and of Fatima.

«7. Some people with whom he spoke of Fatima are already dead. Others are still alive: Cardinals Ottaviani, Parente, Philippe, Samore, Bishop Raimundo Verardo, then from the commission of the Holy Office, and Msgr. Capovilla.

«8. The calling of the Council took place before John XXIII read the Secret. One cannot demonstrate historically a relation between “the Secret” and the announcement of the Council.

«9. However, Cardinal Fernando Cento, Apostolic Nuncio to Portugal from 1953 to 1958, spoke favourably to the Pope on the subject of Fatima and Sister Lucy.

«10. John XXIII stated many times that the union (of the Orthodox Church) would be the result of long work. He was convinced that the present generation would not see its crowning. Hence, I would not say that these are optimistic forecasts.

«11. I do not recall the address of the envelope (with the letter of the third Secret). If Cardinal Ottaviani stated that it was addressed to the Pope, this must be true: but at the time it was Pius XII who sent it to the Holy Office without having read it. Naturally, I may be mistaken. In fact the envelope was kept at the Holy Office before the election of John XXIII.

«12. It was never said that the document had been removed or was lost from sight. From 1959 to 1963 it remained closed, on the Pope’s work table. I don’t know where it was placed afterwards.

«13. Nobody ever said that the document had to be made public (sic!). Nor can I explain why, in 1960, the conviction spread that it had to be published-

«14. I did not hear that anybody advised its disclosure (sic!). I have the impression, all the same, that at the Vatican the opinion prevailed that it was proper to respect the reserve adopted by Pius XII.

Loreto, July 24, 1977.»

CHAPTER III

«THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT»: THE SECRET OF MARY DESPISED (1960)

A UNANIMOUS AND FERVENT WAIT

It cannot be denied that at the dawn of 1960 – apart from the handful of Jesuits and other progressive intellectuals who were obstinately, hypocritically anti-Fatima, and feared this eventuality more than anything – everybody confidently awaited the upcoming publication of Our Lady’s final Secret.

In November 1959, Father Richard, who at the time directed the French section of the Blue Army of Fatima, announced without the slightest hesitation: «1960 will be the year when the final Secret of Fatima must be revealed.» He reprinted a long article – a very remarkable one at that – by one of the best Portuguese experts, Father Messias Dias Coelho, completely devoted to the importance and probable contents of the third Secret. Father Richard wrote:

«It seemed interesting to us to summarize an article by Reverend Messias Dias Coelho, a professor at the seminary of Fundao in Portugal. This article appeared in *Mensagem*, with an imprimatur. *The author has the intention of clarifying the Secret of 1960, to prepare us for its revelation, whatever it might be.*»

Father Dias Coelho, who had just published his great work on Fatima,⁹²¹ had no doubts whatsoever about the upcoming publication of the Secret, as the introduction to his article attests:

«If it was only a question of much ado about nothing, this would already be sufficient reason for dealing with the matter, at least with the purpose of quashing these rumours. But in reality testimony on the existence of a third part of the Secret of Fatima (the first and second part having been published already in 1942) is so weighty, coming from persons like Don José, Bishop of Leiria, his successor, Don Venancio, Cardinal Cerejeira, and Cardinal Tisserant, that it leaves no doubt. Also, we can use, as an unquestionable fact, this assertion of Dr. Galamba de Oliveira (in 1953) in *Fatima, Altar do Mundo*: “The third part of the Secret was sealed in the hands of His Grace the Bishop of Leiria, and will be opened either after the seer’s death or at the latest in 1960.”»⁹²²

In the beginning of January, 1960, *A Voz*, the royalist journal of Lisbon, also announced the publication of the Secret. On January 5, these lines appeared in the Madrid Journal A.B.C., under the pen of its Roman correspondent:

«For the moment nothing is known, but already the world press – especially the Italian press – reflecting the curiosity and anxiety of millions of Catholics, is asking when the famous document will be opened and made public; many are already assuming that it will coincide with the commemoration of the first apparition of Our Lady, that is, on May 13.»⁹²³

Before long Radio Fatima communicated the following, without the slightest commentary:

«Yesterday, Mr. Guiseppe Gyreco, director of the review *Grazia* of Milan, accompanied by a photographer-reporter, was at Fatima to procure information on the upcoming revelation of the Secret...»⁹²⁴

The news had spread all over Christendom, and the pastors most informed about the grave dangers of the hour hoped that publication of this final Secret of the Queen of Heaven would be the occasion of extraordinary assistance granted by God to the Church and the world. Here is what our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, who at the time was pastor of three humble parishes in Champagne, wrote to his friends on the occasion of the new year:

«I wanted to write to you my wishes for the year of grace 1960, year one of the expansion of world communism according to the declarations of its leader, *also the year of the revelation of the last Secret of Fatima*. I have put off writing this letter, too heavy with fears and at the same time charged with a great hope...

«As we rise above the strange passions in which the papers and party men seek to lead us... the coming year can easily be foreseen. The great movements of thought which hold power will continue their accelerated expansion, which is literally terrifying, *unless*, prepared in the secret of the Church of God, which prays and immolates itself without letting up, *some supernatural event comes to reduce to naught the vain thoughts of the wicked*. Pessimism, optimism, no! It is Christian wisdom, which dares to measure with precision the forces of Satan, but with faith opposes to them the power of the Invisible Spirit who animates our Holy Mother the Church.»

At the dawn of 1960 – as still today, thirty years later – the forces of Satan still have these same two faces which our Father denounced back then: that of communism and that of its accomplice, a progressivism supposedly Christian:

«What terrifies us first? Obviously communism, which persecutes the Church. Its Red stain grows larger on the map of the world, and fortified by its success, it casts its tentacles upon a new continent which the West seems to abandon to it, Africa... It has been said over and over that its military force alone could not explain such an expansion; it is its power of seduction, which is truly diabolical, that allows it to take hold of immense regions of the world without firing a shot. On the one hand, the “under-developed” peoples allow themselves to be taken in by this subversive dialectic which the West itself invented, and on the other hand progressivism and its multiple currents of ideas even here consider communism not as an enemy of our civilization, and our religion, but as a brother movement... An event near at hand marks this complicity: Khrushchev’s visits to France. This welcome, which is senseless and odious, leaves the clergy and elite of the country almost indifferent...

«If all Christians, all civilized men saw this evil with the same eyes and a true resolution, it is certain that a blow stopping this decomposition of the world and its great Christian empires would quickly be struck, and without great cost...»

The drama was the treason spreading within the Church itself:

«In this general orientation of the Catholic elite, there is on the one hand this mental perversion of progressivism, which leads people to see in these insurrections, where Christians, Moslems, pagans and communists are mingled, a sort of new biblical, evangelical march of Humanity towards the Promised Land and the City of God, and on the other hand a certain candour joined with the most reprehensible blindness, through which they imagine that they merit the privilege of complete liberty for the Church in these new worlds!

«In this spirit of dizziness which is seducing the Catholic elite and masses, there lies such a power of delusion that *I no longer expect the saving miracle except from the Church herself, waking up her children. Will it be the third Secret of Fatima which must be revealed next May 13? Will it be the Council? Apparitions or some extraordinary event? All this is possible, and Heaven is close enough to earth to make the necessary help appear before our dazzled eyes. But to the extent that events precipitate themselves, will not the miracle be that, by the dozens, and then by the thousands, from the most perceptive to the entire people, everybody purifies himself in prayer and the study of every ferment of heresy, discord or cowardice, and then run to the defence of the City of God, assailed on every side...*»⁹²⁵

This miracle of the conversion of hearts was even more a conversion of minds. They needed to be purified from the venom of error, which was beginning to poison an ever increasing number of poor souls led astray by bad shepherds. Nothing would have been more effective for this purpose than the prophetic words of Our Lady Herself, warning the Church of the gravest danger threatening it at the dawn of this new decade.

I. A BEWILDERING DECISION: THE SECRET OF FATIMA WILL NOT BE REVEALED

In this atmosphere of expectation, of simple curiosity among some, but supernatural confidence and holy hope among others, «suddenly came the announcement from the Portuguese news agency A.N.I.⁹²⁶ at Rome which sowed the greatest disillusionment in the history of Fatima and one of the greatest injuries to Fatima's reputation...»⁹²⁷

FEBRUARY 8, 1960: THE COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NEWS AGENCY A.N.I.

«According to Vatican sources (February 8, 1960), the Secret of Fatima will never be disclosed.

«It has just been stated, in very reliable Vatican circles, to the representatives of United Press International, that it is most likely that the letter will never be opened, in which Sister Lucy wrote down the words which Our Lady confided as a secret to the three little shepherds in the Cova da Iria.

«As indicated by Sister Lucy, the letter can only be opened during the year 1960.

«Faced with the pressure that has been placed on the Vatican, some wanting the letter to be opened and made known to the world, others, on the supposition that it may contain alarming prophecies, desiring that its publication be withheld, the same Vatican circles declare that the Vatican has decided not to make public Sister Lucy's letter, and to continue keeping it rigorously sealed.

«The decision of the Vatican is based on various reasons: 1. Sister Lucy is still living. 2. The Vatican already knows the contents of the letter. 3. Although the Church recognizes the Fatima apparitions, she does not pledge herself to guarantee the veracity of the words which the three little shepherds claim to have heard from Our Lady.

«In these circumstances, it is most probable that the Secret of Fatima will remain, forever, under absolute seal.»⁹²⁸

This simple text from the news agency was a real bombshell! In the Church's history, it perhaps weighs a great deal more heavily than the five bulky volumes of *Discorsi, messaggi, colloqui* of His Holiness John XXIII, where of course it does not appear!

Still, it is Pope John XXIII who unquestionably assumes the primary responsibility for the announcement. He had read the Secret five months earlier. He had decided not to divulge it. This press communiqué revealed his unexpected decision. In spite of some hypothetical circumlocutions purely for form's sake, it was clear that this decision was irrevocable. This text, which moreover was very badly composed, left not the slightest doubt on that point: «*The Vatican has decided not to make public Sister Lucy's letter, and to continue keeping it rigorously sealed...*»

A TEXT UNWORTHY OF THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER

This decision was in itself stupefying. It was going to cause a great deal of surprise, indignation, or even scandal among the faithful. John XXIII had chosen – or at least agreed – to make it known to the world in a roundabout, doubly anonymous manner. It was the doing of the “Vatican”, of “Vatican authorities”, without any precision. Nor had anybody assumed responsibility for the disclosure. It was not attributed to any Cardinal, to any department leader, to any Roman prelate: «*It has just been stated... to the representatives of United Press International...*» This was tantamount to saying: “The Vatican has decided; the Vatican has declared to the press...” Nothing more would be disclosed. Why this double camouflage? Why all the mystery? For a very simple and compelling reason: if a Cardinal or some prelate had pronounced this declaration, immediately he would have been asked the embarrassing question: Where did the decision originate and what were the motives for it? He would have had to answer... and everybody could have judged the plausibility of the reasons put forward in an official text emanating from a responsible authority. The most complete anonymity was intended to elude this insurmountable difficulty. The faithful had

to be content with a vulgar, cold press communiqué without any traceable origin or definite guarantee of authenticity.

Yet, in spite of this bizarre, deceitful procedure, unworthy of the successor of Peter, it was clear for every informed reader that this communiqué emanated from the highest spheres of the Vatican, that the text had undoubtedly been at least checked by the Holy Father himself, and that the decision not to divulge the Secret came directly from him. Cardinal Cerejeira highlighted the point on February 24, 1960:

«According to the dispatch which has been published – and I am convinced of the veracity of what it states (meaning: its contents really do express the Pope’s thinking) – this document (the third Secret) must be at the Vatican, and His Holiness must be aware of its contents.»⁹²⁹

Besides, not only was the press communiqué never denied, but it turned out to be the only text emanating from the Vatican to justify not publishing the third Secret. Neither John XXIII nor Paul VI deigned to give the Church a single sentence of explanation on the subject. They never made the slightest explicit reference to the Secret of Fatima. The world had to wait until 1967 for Cardinal Ottaviani to approach the question again, and we shall see in what astonishing manner he did so!

These facts demonstrate the importance of this dispatch from a press agency in the history of the third Secret. It also shows how scandalous was the evasiveness of the Sovereign Pontiff, covering himself under the most shameless anonymity to reveal to the faithful his decision as supreme Pastor on such a grave subject, so close to the hearts of his finest children and so closely touching on the honour of the Mother of God. He had made the decision, but refused to publicly assume responsibility for it, and the rude blow it would have caused to his popularity. Was this not already implicitly recognizing the arbitrary, unacceptable character of this desire to bury forever, in indifference and scorn, the final Secret of the Queen of Prophets, a Secret intended beyond any question to be revealed to the world?

A MASS OF INCOHERENT STATEMENTS, INEXACTITUDES, AND LIES

Apart from the categorical and peremptory statement according to which Our Lady’s final message would «*never* be disclosed», that it would remain «*forever*» under the most absolute seal (what unbelievable audacity in this unjustifiable decision!) everything in this Vatican communiqué – we are forced to state – seems vague, incoherent, and even false.

1. The communiqué states, «it is most likely *that the letter will never be opened*, in which Sister Lucy wrote down the words which Our Lady confided as a secret to the three little shepherds in the Cova da Iria.» In vain was this declaration attributed to «very *reliable* Vatican circles»; it is false or at least ambiguous since we know that John XXIII had already *opened the envelope* in August 1959.

2. «As indicated by Sister Lucy, the letter can only be opened during the year 1960.» What does that mean? Sister Lucy had never said such a thing. The truth is that she had made Bishop da Silva promise that the Secret be divulged immediately after her own death, or at the latest in 1960.

3. The communiqué goes on to state that the contrary «pressures» exercised over the Vatican had led to its negative decision. But this too is simply a false pretext: for in the end, on the one side there were the Blessed Virgin's specific requests passed on by Her worthy messenger; there were the promises made public by Bishop da Silva and Cardinal Cerejeira to divulge it in 1960; and finally there was the great hope of the whole Church. On the other side, there was the tiny minority of adversaries of Fatima, who went «on the supposition that it may contain alarming prophecies».

Placed in these circumstances due to such contrary "pressures", did the Holy Father appoint a commission of Cardinals to examine the question? No! Did he announce that he had very attentively read the text of the Secret and taken it into consideration as he governed the Church, while waiting for a more opportune hour to make it public? No again! We know only that, faced with these contrary pressures, the Vatican resolutely adopted, across the board... the position of the enemies of Fatima! It even took the trouble to mention their infamous, but purely gratuitous «supposition», according to which the Secret might contain «alarming prophecies». One wonders why the Pope had to take into account this «supposition», since he himself had read the text, as we are informed a few lines down!

Behind this lamentable incoherence perfidy lay hidden: if the Pope, after reading the Secret, had given in to the demands of Fatima's adversaries, was it not because he shared their disdainful opinion about the Secret's contents? Was not the Secret nothing more than «alarming prophecies»? In any case Rome gave free rein to this hypothesis, which destroyed the reputation of the seer at the same time as it ruined the credibility of the message she had passed on.

THE THREE "REASONS" FOR NOT PUBLISHING THE SECRET

The text of the communiqué continues, «The decision of the Vatican authorities is based on various reasons...» Writing in *Mensagem de Fatima*, Father Stein immediately condemned these reasons as «absolutely unfounded and ridiculous». ⁹³⁰ Alas! The judgment is severe, but perfectly exact, as we will show.

1. «Sister Lucy is still living.» It is true that there had been a question about the death of the seer in the declarations related to disclosure of the third Secret. But nothing in these declarations allowed the conclusion that the Secret could not be revealed in 1960 if Sister Lucy was still alive at that time. Here is what had been agreed on at the beginning: «When His Grace the bishop refused to open it, Lucy made him promise that it would definitely be opened and read to the world at her death or in 1960, whichever happened first.» «The third part of the Secret... will be opened either after the death of the seer, or at the latest in

1960.»⁹³¹ Hence this clause mentioning the seer's death could only speed up the revelation of the Secret. It is inconceivable how the Vatican could possibly invoke it to delay this date.

Father Alonso justly remarks, «The fact that Sister Lucy is still living does not seem to us a valid reason for not revealing the Secret. First of all Sister Lucy is still sufficiently protected, outwardly by the cloister and inwardly by an extraordinary fortitude, from all the assaults of public opinion, no matter what their source. Besides, this would not have been the first or the most important occasion on which she had to endure serious harassment on account of her writings.»⁹³² The fact that Lucy was still living had not prevented publication of the first two parts of the Secret and nobody saw why it should be any different for the third part.

Besides, the proof that this reason was only a vain pretext is found in the communiqué itself, since it is stated at the same time that the Secret «will never be disclosed». Even after Lucy's death? Even after her death, it will «remain, forever, under absolute seal». Here is an initial, completely artificial reason, which hides other reasons which undoubtedly cannot be admitted.

2. «The Vatican already knows the contents of the letter.» This is precious information, but in itself it cannot justify the decision not to divulge the contents. On the contrary, could not, should not the knowledge of the Secret have led the Sovereign Pontiff to make it known to the entire Church, in conformity with Heaven's will?

A third motive is alleged, which in the final analysis is the only real one, all the others being only vain, incoherent and clumsy pretexts. Here then is the key phrase, the poisoned arrow of this Vatican communiqué:

3. «Although the Church recognizes the Fatima apparitions, she does not pledge herself to guarantee the veracity of the words which the three little shepherds claim to have heard from Our Lady.» Here is a motive unbelievable in its tenor! Not only does the Vatican make its own the untenable position of Father Dhanis,⁹³³ but it dares to go even further: it is on the entirety of the message – «the words which the three little shepherds claim to have heard from Our Lady» – that the communiqué casts the most infamous suspicion.

At the same time that it was forced to state that «the Church recognizes the Fatima apparitions» – although it is utterly unclear in what such a recognition can consist! – the Vatican publicly discredited all the revelations of Fatima without exception. True, it was in a miserable press communiqué whose juridical authority was nil, and whose content was worthless. But the whole world knew that this paper, which was never denied, emanated from the Holy See.

One can guess the anguish and immense sadness felt in Portugal in the wake of this communiqué – especially since in this question which concerned them in the highest degree, neither Sister Lucy nor Cardinal Cerejeira had been consulted.

II. THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES DESPISED

«I AFFIRM CATEGORICALLY THAT I WAS NOT CONSULTED»

On February 24, 1960, the news came out in the Portuguese Catholic daily *Novidades* that Cardinal Cerejeira had not even been consulted. The Patriarch of Lisbon had himself declared to a journalist of *Diario de Noticias*:

«In what concerns the last part of the Secret of Fatima – His Eminence said – *I know little or nothing. Whatever I know I learned through the dispatch from Vatican City printed in the papers.* I see that it is a question preoccupying the whole world, letters on this subject reach me from the most distant countries...»

Question: «But didn't the Secret have to be revealed in 1960?»

«What I know is that Lucy, with whom I have never discussed it, wrote the Secret in a letter given to the Bishop of Leiria, at that time Don José Correia da Silva. The latter sealed it in another envelope, on which he indicated that *the letter had to be opened in 1960 by himself, Bishop José Correia da Silva, if he was still alive, or if not, by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.* This is what was told to me by the Bishop of Leiria, who remained the custodian of the letter...»

Question: «What became of the letter after the Bishop of Leiria's death?»

«*I sincerely do not know.* I have heard nothing said on this subject. According to the dispatch which was published – and I am convinced of the veracity of what it states – this document must be at the Vatican, and His Holiness must be aware of the contents.»

Question: «But didn't Lucy herself make it clear – and we think that it was the will of Our Lady of Fatima – that the Secret had to be revealed in 1960?»

«It is common knowledge that Lucy has had new supernatural manifestations... Consequently, I can say nothing concerning the opportuneness of divulging the Secret. *I know nothing, and I affirm categorically that I was not consulted on this subject. What I did know of its non-disclosure in 1960, I learned through the papers.*»⁹³⁴

According to Msgr. Capovilla, John XXIII asked for advice from a dozen or so prelates on the subject of the third Secret. If this is true, it is even more stupefying that the person who had the right to be consulted before anyone else was deliberately shut out. Was it not written on the envelope of the Secret itself that it had to be opened by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon?!

ADVISORS OR ACCOMPLICES?

This shows us to what extent the consultations of John XXIII, to the degree they really took place, were already calculated. There was no consulting. There was no asking for advice.

Favourable opinions were gathered for a decision already made. In short, it was a question of looking for accomplices.

The first accomplice in this lamentable, scandalous affair where Rome lied so brazenly was undoubtedly Msgr. Capovilla, the private secretary and very skilful, influential advisor of Pope John XXIII. He avows it himself: «John XXIII frequently conversed with me about Fatima and the devotion to Mary spreading from there all over the world.» He also includes himself among the figures the Pope spoke to about the third Secret. He himself transcribed the note written by John XXIII after reading the text. Curiously, he knew the names of the prelates John XXIII consulted. He knew where Sister Lucy's manuscript was placed later on.

At the very moment when he appears informed on everything – which leads the reader to think that he was no stranger to the decision taken – he dares to justify it by a patent untruth:

«Nobody ever said that the document had to be made public (sic!). Nor can I explain why the conviction spread why it had to be published.»

This is astonishing, all the same: at the Vatican. – and there alone! – they were ignorant of what all Christendom knew for fifteen years! It is incredible. The Romans sometimes have an astonishingly short memory... even to the point of forgetting the definition of a lie, and its seriousness!

This leaves a lingering doubt on the seriousness of other statements in Msgr. Capovilla's plea for his master. Thus he has every interest in diminishing the responsibility of John XXIII – and his own – by saying that the Pope humbly requested advice from very many figures, whose thinking all went in the sense of non-publication:

«I never heard that anybody advised its disclosure. I have the impression, all the same, that at the Vatican the opinion prevailed that it was proper to respect the reserve adopted by Pius XII.»⁹³⁵

The secretary of John XXIII is decidedly fond of ambiguous expressions: «*The opinion prevailed...*», he tells us. Was everybody not in agreement, as he otherwise would have us believe? Were certain prelates consulted in favour, then, of quite simply obeying Our Lady's requests and divulging Her Secret? This is probably so, and perhaps one day we will learn their names.

However, precautions were taken to make the consultations selective. Thus Cardinal Koenig, Archbishop of Vienna, who was surely one of the most suspect and disastrous bishops of the conciliar and postconciliar period,⁹³⁶ was able to boast to Cardinal Cerejeira: «*The Pope told me the Secret of Fatima.*»

The Patriarch of Lisbon had not had this favour. He later confided to Father Caillon:

«I do not know the Secret. One time Pope John XXIII spoke to me about it vaguely, in a distant fashion, and I understood that it concerned very grave matters.»⁹³⁷

This response of Cardinal Cerejeira appears very enlightening to us. According to Msgr. Capovilla, Msgr. Samore was also aware of the Secret. Yet, the latter denies it. Everything is explained if John XXIII contented himself with speaking to him about it vaguely.

THE BISHOP OF LEIRIA: «I CAN SAY NOTHING»

Similarly, we know that Bishop Venancio was received in audience by John XXIII,⁹³⁸ in the months following the opening of the Secret, undoubtedly in December 1959. The Pope surely spoke to him about the third Secret. Yet, Bishop Venancio always stated that he had never read it. He reaffirmed it to me at Fatima, on February 13, 1984. In any case, his attitude in 1960 leaves it clearly perceptible that the Roman decision was contrary to his wishes.

On May 12, 1960, on the occasion of the pilgrimage, Father Richard was able to question him on the subject. Father Richard published an account of the interview in *L'Homme nouveau* of June 5:

«Bishop Venancio asks only one thing; *that nobody talk to him about the "Secret". On that point he is like a tombstone.* Also, it is now generally admitted that the famous envelope was placed in the hands of the Holy Father, who himself must have passed it on to the Holy Office; that its contents are presently being examined, and that it is not at all inconceivable that His Holiness John XXIII, at the desired time, and in his own way, which is very simple and not earth-shaking even for great things, might tell us what we ought to know. Perhaps it is indicative that in response to an homage from the Bishop of Leiria, he just sent a telegram which is *a pressing exhortation to the accomplishment of the "message of Fatima".*»⁹³⁹

The pressing exhortation to accomplishment of the Fatima message was, in reality, rather short. The Pope contented himself with saying, as in the usual type of telegram, that he sent his blessing to the pilgrims «as a pledge of perseverance in their resolutions to practice the message of Fatima».⁹⁴⁰

Bishop Venancio declared to a journalist of the Italian review *Oggi*:

«You want information on the Secret: my answer is no. I can say nothing, nor can I indicate where the letter is, nor tell you if it has already been opened, nor when its contents will be communicated... At present, it would not be opportune to speak about it too much.»⁹⁴¹

We will see later on that on May 17, 1960, after observing that Rome had done nothing on the occasion of the anniversary of the first apparition, Bishop Venancio had taken – without informing the Pope – an unusual and courageous decision to try to move Heaven, and undoubtedly also to make the Vatican break its silence... For officially, Rome still had not

dared to say a single authoritative and responsible word on the third Secret. What in reality was powerlessness to justify an arbitrary act seemed to be, in the public's eyes, the mark of a supreme disdain regarding Fatima.

BITTER DISILLUSIONMENT

«Simple folk (notes Father Alonso) waited up until May 13 when it was believed that the revelation would be made. Later, people felt a profound disenchantment and disappointment which did great harm to devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, both inside and outside Portugal.»⁹⁴²

III. THE LIES OF FATHER CAPRILE (JUNE 1960)

Would Rome continue to keep silence? On June 18, 1960, Father Giovanni Caprile, S.J., published a long article⁹⁴³ in *Civiltà cattolica* entitled: «*Fatima is a "Secret" not revealed*». Although this article lacked any official authority, it was later put forward as the Vatican's defence. This text has the same long-winded style as the communiqué of February 8. We will quote the essential passages here, interspersed with our comments.

1. «A MORBID ANXIETY»

«Among certain people, the approach of May 13 provoked a sort of *anxiety* which we would not hesitate to call *morbid*, in the expectation of that day, the day of publication of the "Secret" of Fatima. The press did not fail to become interested in the matter, thus contributing one way or another to increasing *the curiosity and expectation*. It will not perhaps be in vain, returning to a subject already dealt with a few months ago (cf. *Civ. cattol.* 1959, IV, 90-91), to recall the wise prudence and delicate reserve of the Church, which does not encourage *new alarmism* of this nature, and which alone has the right to pronounce authoritative words on this subject.»

This argument is at the very least bewildering: nobody has ever explained to us how this atmosphere of «curiosity and expectation», this «new alarmism», this «morbid anxiety» (sic), could dissuade the Vatican from divulging Our Lady's words. On the contrary! It would have sufficed to reveal these words for all the unjustified fears to be dispelled, for all the unfounded «new alarmism» to be refuted by the very fact. It is the Vatican's silence which caused them. And this silence will keep them going and cause new reactions of this kind to appear.

2. A SECRET WHICH SAYS NOTHING

«First of all, we make our own the wise remark of the Catholic weekly of Turin, *Il Nostro Tempo*, which observed last May 26: “The use of the term *secret* is in general judged improper, at least in its most suggestive acceptation, in this sense that *the last part of the Fatima message could also contain merely an invitation to prayer and penance, in the spirit of the apparitions of the Cova da Iria.*” Hence we see on what a fragile basis rest the catastrophic forecasts, inconsiderately spread.»

The Vatican spokesman was really short on imagination: for if the third Secret of Fatima contained only an «invitation to prayer and penance», one can no longer understand at all why the Pope so stubbornly refused to divulge it. Nor can we understand why Our Lady had ordered the three shepherds to keep secret a message repeating word for word Her public message of October 13, 1917! That just doesn't hold water! Some other reason had to be found...

3. THE FAITHFUL WERE PROMISED NOTHING, AND BESIDES, IT DOESN'T CONCERN THEM!

«Recently, deploring these *alarmist rumours* and urging the faithful to place no credence in them, the diocesan weekly of Porto, *A Voz do Pastor*, concluded: “We know nothing concerning Sister Lucy's letter; we do not even know if the Pope has occupied himself with the matter. *Nobody ever promised that the Secret would be published; it might very well be a message or a recommendation to the hierarchy. In this case the matter would not concern us, and we would have no reason to get agitated.*” (N.C.W.C., News Service, April 25, 1960).»

Two arguments, two patent falsehoods:

1. «*Nobody ever promised that the Secret would be published*»? We have quoted the public declarations of responsible persons – Sister Lucy, Bishop da Silva, Cardinal Cerejeira – which unquestionably had the value of promises. A certain audacity was needed to dare assert the contrary! Let us remark in passing that this is literally the false version presented by Msgr. Capovilla.

2. As for saying that it might be a «*recommendation to the hierarchy*», the testimonies from 1944 to 1960 all deny this hypothesis.⁹⁴⁴ We have shown that nothing, absolutely nothing, allows us to state that the final Secret of Fatima was reserved exclusively to the Pope.

4. «CONTRADICTIONARY RUMOURS», «SENSATIONAL NEWS»

«Already in February the rector of the sanctuary of Fatima, Msgr. Antonio Borges, had declared: “As at the time of the apparitions, the people are at present eager for sensational news which is prejudicial to the true message. In reality, immediately after the last war, Sister Lucy gave Bishop da Silva, who is since deceased, a letter which – according to him – contained something which had to be read in 1960, if she was not dead before this date. Since the death of the bishop in 1957, Church authorities have observed a prudent reserve,

by reason of the contradictory rumours circulating, *refusing to make any declaration concerning this letter and its publication.*” (N.C.W.C., News Service, February 15, 1960).⁹⁴⁵

«In April, the press service of the sanctuary, praising those who strive heroically to fulfil the message of prayer and penance left by the Blessed Virgin, added: “Simple and generous souls do not let themselves be troubled by sensational news which agitates the world concerning the third part of the Secret of Fatima.” (N.C.W.C., News Service, April 11, 1960.)

«To those who were waiting for a declaration from the present Bishop of Leiria, Don Joao Pereira Venancio, who said last year that the letter would be opened in 1960, but that he didn’t know by whom, or where, nor if the contents would be made public or not, Msgr. Borges remarked that opening the envelope was one thing, and its “publication” was something else, a subject on which it really wasn’t possible to say anything (N.C.W.C., News Service, March 28, 1960).»⁹⁴⁶

It is remarkable that Father Caprile, instead of developing an argument step by step, is content to make a disorderly accumulation of all the disparate and contradictory explanations expressed here and there to excuse Rome’s silence as best as possible. He dwells here on the embarrassed, not always exact declarations of Msgr. Borges and Bishop Venancio. Yet, it must be stressed that the same arguments do not have the same meaning on the lips of the one and the others. When the sanctuary authorities strove to justify the unbelievable Roman decision whatever the cost, they were clearly doing so against their better judgment, because of the obedience due to the Pope. They were intimately persuaded – wrongly, it seems to us – that this was the only attitude possible for them. When these same reasons, lacking all validity, were repeated at Rome by a knowledgeable Jesuit in *Civilta cattolica*, known to be an unofficial organ of the Holy See, it was an imposture!

Father Caprile goes on to quote several declarations from bishops, which add no positive element to his confused plea.

5. THE TRUE GRIEVANCES AGAINST FATIMA

As he widens the scope of the debate, our Roman Jesuit finally arrives at the essential point: Fatima displeases those in high places notably because of the anti-communism which it stirs up and approves. Sister Lucy herself is responsible for this «too exclusive interpretation of the message».

«As for certain interpretations of the message of Fatima *in an almost exclusively anti-communist sense*, and as for the impatience of certain people in the face of the Church’s prudent reserve, we do well to take into consideration the following observations excerpted from a clear and weighty article by Father Balic, president of the international Pontifical Marian Academy;⁹⁴⁷

«This too exclusive interpretation, which is at the basis of certain initiatives, has caused a great number of people carried away with enthusiasm at the passage of the venerated statue to remain deaf to the Madonna's first request, which is an invitation to conversion of heart and the renewal of morals. The enthusiasm of the crowds, which can have many explanations, has at times carried away those who should have enlightened souls on the true significance of the message. We are alluding here to certain writers, definitely in good faith but not always prudent, *for whom everything said or written by Sister Lucy must be considered strictly as a heavenly revelation. Such exaggerations easily lead the faithful to deviations, inciting them to attribute more importance to a private revelation than to Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Church.*»»

As if certain revelations passed on by Sister Lucy could be interpreted contrary to Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Church! Father Balic is incapable of furnishing the slightest example, but once the perfidious insinuation was made, it was to produce its deleterious effects of mistrust and scorn for Fatima.

6. THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH IS THE SOLE JUDGE

«An example of these deviations is offered to us by certain priests and lay people who, requesting publication of the third part of the Fatima message, are unsparing about criticizing Church authorities in various ways. They forget that *it belongs to the Church* not only *to watch over and interpret* Revelation, which ended with the death of the Apostles, but also what is connected with it, precisely as are *private revelations*. Only the ecclesiastical authority, invested with this power, has the right, then, to judge whether or not it is opportune to stress a private and secret revelation"...»

We do not deny it. Yet, the case of Fatima is particularly clear. In 1960, it was evident that the Church had already recognized the divine authenticity of the apparitions, to the point where no informed Catholic would have dared to publicly question it at the time. After the two prelates responsible – His Grace the Bishop of Leiria and the Patriarch of Lisbon – promised to divulge the integral text of the Secret at the latest in 1960, and given that for over fifteen years no authoritative declaration had come to deny these promises, the faithful were perfectly right to request this promised disclosure from the supreme authority. Besides, the revelation of the first two Secrets in 1942, with the approval of Pope Pius XII, constituted a precedent. At least they had a right to an exact and honest explanation on the part of the Holy Father. This is why it was normal that the lies of the Vatican authorities on such a grave subject should be a cause of scandal for them.

7. A THREEFOLD, DISTURBING SECRET

«The teaching of the Fatima message, as a pressing moral exhortation, is already clear *in the two known parts*: it is the motherly invitation addressed by Mary to all humanity for it to return to Christ, *through prayer and sacrifice. So we should preoccupy ourselves more with what is known than with what is still secret.*»»

Let us remark that out of his deliberate desire to ignore the third Secret so as to keep only «what is known», the author in fact comes to empty the first two parts of the Secret of their real content. Father Balic sees in them only a «moral exhortation... to prayer and sacrifice». This leads us to believe that he never read the authentic Secret, which contains something entirely different: the vision of hell, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary proposed as the final salvation of souls and Christendom. The precise requests and promises of Our Lady, as well as the prophetic announcement of terrible chastisements, are all wiped out from the message by the president of the international Pontifical Marian Academy, and by the Jesuit of *Civiltà cattolica*, who quotes him approvingly.

Father Balic then recalled the example of John XXIII, who on the occasion of the consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on September 13, 1959, «*said not a word about Fatima and the Secret*».⁹⁴⁸

Father Caprile concludes by repeating the major theme of his article:

«These few notes are sufficient to make us understand what the Church's thinking is, and consequently what attitude we should take: *neither fright, nor alarmism, nor "sentimentalism", nor morbid curiosity.*»

This was saying nothing. For those who awaited, who requested disclosure of the Secret were not animated by any of these feelings – unduly blown up by the enemies of Fatima to serve the needs of their evil cause – but only by faith and trust in Our Lady.

To conclude his plea and round out his potpourri of quotations, the Roman Jesuit wrote:

«A French Catholic weekly has written excellently (an article appearing in *La France Catholique* of May 13, 1960, where Georges Daix, after quoting the chancery of Coimbra's declaration against Father Fuentes, believed it pertinent to conclude thus): "*It is more important to respond to the message of Fatima than to know its Secret.*" No true children of the Church will behave otherwise.»

The formula sounds good, but it is a gross sophism. For whoever is familiar with Fatima knows that the Secret constitutes precisely the essence of the message! As for dissociating the third part from the preceding two, experience has shown how illusory this is, and we shall return to this point. What has taken place since 1960 has cruelly refuted the hypocritical invitations – which were just talk – from Fathers Balic, Caprile and company to practice with greater fervour the first two parts of the Secret, while as yet in ignorance of the third. In reality, the discredit brought against the final Secret would inevitably rebound against the entirety of Our Lady's warnings. It is certain, on the contrary, that its disclosure would again have drawn attention and aroused trust among the faithful for the two parts already known, and even the public message of 1917.

In his recent work, John Haffert himself insists on the deplorable effects of the Vatican's decision:

«1960 came and went and the Pope – to whom the Secret had been confided – did not make it public. He did not even make known the fact that he had opened it. The silence from Rome lay heavily on all of us. People began to murmur that Fatima must have been a fake, that there was no Secret, that the 1960 Secret was “a hoax”... (in 1964), the effect of the long silence concerning the 1960 Secret still seemed to hang over us like a pall.»⁹⁴⁹

That was exactly right: to bury the third Secret meant, in reality, burying Fatima with it. Had the Bishop of Leiria sensed it? Had he foreseen the disastrous consequences of Rome’s silence?

IV. THE FINAL ATTEMPT OF BISHOP VENANCIO (MAY 17 - OCTOBER 13, 1960)

On the day after the pilgrimage of May 13, the Bishop of Leiria made a courageous decision: he would speak directly to all the bishops of the world without asking anything from the Pope, whom he was content to inform later on. When we consider how naturally self-effacing and timid Bishop Venancio was, and how he believed it his duty to obey punctually, blindly, no matter what orders he received, it is astonishing to see him take such an initiative, which is most unusual in the Church’s annals. On this occasion he demonstrated the ardent faith animating him, and how much he feared the grave supernatural consequences of Rome’s scornful, cavalier attitude to the Mother of God’s messages. Undoubtedly he had also been encouraged by Sister Lucy.

Since the Pope, during the audience he had granted him in December 1959 had undoubtedly asked for absolute silence on the third Secret, Bishop Venancio did not speak of it. Yet, nothing prevented him from recalling the striking truth and importance of the second Secret’s prophecy concerning Russia.

«LETTER TO THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF THE WHOLE WORLD» (MAY 17, 1960)⁹⁵⁰

«Fatima, May 17, 1960.

«Excellency,

«On this day of the first anniversary of Portugal’s official consecration to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, may one of your most humble brothers in the episcopate be permitted to speak to Your Excellency *to present you with a request.*

«As Bishop of Leiria, I am entrusted with the sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima, and in recommending myself on this title, and on this office which is so heavy for me, I dare to open my heart to you and to hope for your cooperation.»

A DOUBLE THREAT: WAR AND THE EXPANSION OF COMMUNISM

«The anxiety of the whole world before the fragility of peace, and even more so, the anguish which grips farsighted Christians before the menace of the expansion of communism, sufficiently explain the numerous appeals coming to me from everywhere urging me to intensify the movement of prayer and penance born at the Cova da Iria, especially in view of the conversion of Russia and peace.»

A SPECIAL EFFORT OF PRAYER AND PENANCE IN THE SPIRIT OF REPARATION

«Still under the powerful emotions of the spectacle of the immense penitent crowd that gathered at Fatima last May 13,⁹⁵¹ and more conscious than ever, for my part, of the responsibilities which His Eminence Cardinal Lercaro recalled that day⁹⁵² to all the pilgrims in his homily; *faced with such a clear message given by the Most Holy Virgin forty-three years ago*, I have resolved to ask the people of my diocese, and the other pilgrims who will come to Fatima next October 12 and 13, for *a special effort of prayer and penance*, in view of a more perfect return to God.

«I will ask all those who can really do so to end the pilgrimage on foot, to recite the Rosary during at least the last few kilometres, and to spend the entire night from the 12th to the 13th adoring the Most Holy Sacrament, *in reparation for so many sins, a cause of affliction for the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Heart of our Sorrowful and Immaculate Mother.*»

TO MAKE UP FOR THE EVIL WHICH IS TRIUMPHING AND THE INDIFFERENCE OF SO MANY CHRISTIANS

«But how could the intervention alone even of a million pilgrims, burdened with their own spiritual miseries, sufficiently compensate for *such a great evil which is triumphing in the world, and the indifference of a multitude of Christians themselves, who neglect to have recourse to the Saviour and His Holy Mother?*»

TO OBTAIN THE TRIUMPH OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

«Hence it occurred to me to solicit the help of my brothers in the episcopate. Perhaps it will seem to you opportune, Excellency, to pass on my humble request to your people, and to suggest to them similar exercises of prayer and penance, in union with all the pilgrims of Fatima. In this way, next October 12th and 13th would be *genuine world days of prayer and penance, to obtain the triumph of the cause of God.*

«At Fatima, Cardinal Lercaro recalled, Our Lady has crowned the centuries-old history of Her merciful interventions, *asking that there be consecrated to Her Immaculate Heart the world, evil as it is, and particularly Russia, whose errors are spreading everywhere, and whose persecutions cause anguish to the Church.*»

FOR PEACE THROUGH THE CONVERSION OF RUSSIA

«May we not hope that bishops, priests and the faithful everywhere, joining with one heart and with renewed fervour, in the consecrations already accomplished by the Sovereign Pontiff, will contribute to removing the obstacles which may have prevented these solemn acts from obtaining their full efficacy, *for the conversion of Russia, so dear to the Mother of God, and for obtaining a real peace?*»

A FINAL REQUEST

«I would be very grateful to Your Excellency, if you saw no difficulty, for you to entrust somebody with the task of sending me, for the common edification, a little account of what may have been done, in this sense, in your diocese.

«May Your Excellency deign to pardon the simplicity with which I have let my heart dictate this letter, and accept my sentiments of profound respect and complete union in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

John, Bishop of Leiria.»

This letter was a humble request addressed to all the pastors of the Church, and through them, to all the faithful. At the same time, it was a profession of faith in the unquestionable authenticity and importance of the Fatima message for the salvation of the whole world.

By making an urgent invitation to pray and do penance in the spirit of reparation for offences against the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and to obtain a true peace from Heaven through the conversion of Russia, the Bishop of Leiria also intended to obtain from the Pope a response to Our Lady's precise requests. By requesting a written account of whatever was done in each diocese, he undoubtedly wanted to gather a vast documentation to press the Pope to invite all the bishops of the world to join with him, to finally perform the consecration of Russia as the Blessed Virgin had requested.⁹⁵³

By requesting all the bishops for «genuine world days of prayer and penance to obtain the triumph of the cause of God», the Bishop of Fatima demonstrated how grave the hour was for the Church and for the world. For «*the triumph of the cause of God*» had to be obtained first at Rome itself, at the Vatican – where the infamous communiqué of February 8, 1960, had scandalously discredited the apparitions and message of Fatima. Clearly, Bishop Venancio was attempting a final initiative to lead the Sovereign Pontiff to correspond, at least on some point, to the Blessed Virgin's requests. On October 13, the anniversary of the last apparition, a final hope remained. For the Pope it could be the opportunity to repair the grave scandal caused by not revealing the Secret. Besides, seeing how the crowds of pilgrims at Fatima knew how to impose on themselves courageous acts of prayer and penance to respond to the Fatima message, would perhaps the Holy Father's heart finally be touched? Would he then, perhaps, reveal to the world the Secret of Our Lady?

BISHOP VENANCIO AT THE VATICAN

On July 10, Father Richard wrote in *L'Homme nouveau*:

«It is still too early to know the repercussions of this act of the Bishop of Leiria. Its significance and importance cannot escape anybody who wants to take the trouble to reflect.

«What we already know is that many responses have arrived from all countries, and even from beyond the Iron Curtain; that the Princes of the Church have given their full adherence, and that recently, for the second time in six months, Pope John XXIII has granted an audience to the Bishop of Leiria.»

Bishop Venancio, then, had requested a second audience from the Pope. Undoubtedly the purpose was to give him the text of his letter and ask the Pope to himself address the order to all the bishops to perform, on October 13, an act of consecration of the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. What was John XXIII's response? We do not know. But at the beginning of September, he gave grounds for hoping that he really would do something.

«AN ACT OF JOHN XXIII FOR OCTOBER 13?»

On September 7, there appeared in *Novidades*, the Portuguese Catholic daily, a communiqué from the Information Service of the Sanctuary (SIS), whose text was as follows:

«According to a communication received from Rome, His Holiness Pope John XXIII manifested the intention to renew, next October 13, the consecration of the world and especially Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in union with all the bishops of the world, as Our Lady of Fatima requested. He would do so using the formula of consecration composed by Pope Pius XII (SIS).»

This note was reprinted in the religious bulletin of Porto, *A Voz do Pastor* of September 10, and on the 12th. *Novidades* stressed that it was officially published by the sanctuary of Fatima.⁹⁵⁴

SEPTEMBER 28: JOHN XXIII'S LETTER TO CARDINAL MICARA

At the approach of the month of the Rosary, in a letter to the Cardinal Vicar for the city of Rome, the Pope recommended recitation of the Rosary, and at the same time insisted in his turn on the gravity of the hour, writing:

«We have no illusions. Just as at so many other times in history (since there is nothing new under the sun) (Eccl. 1:10), *the world is going through grave, very grave and dangerous*

hours. At stake is the historic vocation of peoples, the eternal destiny of each man created according to the image of God.

«We do not usually lift the veil from the miseries and threats of ruin grasping at the heart of him who has the sacred duty to watch over and defend the family, social and religious order.»

«But the statistics are there, alarming in their cold enunciation of facts presented to the public by informed and competent specialists: a general hatred for life; a frenzy for domination; a subtle but obstinate initiation to error, which determines, with anti-Christian theories and spirit, the structure of systems of social life of the masses, who are fed with counterfeits of the truth.

«You know, Eminence, how much all this must inspire fear for the spiritual, religious and social order in those who, like the Bishop of Rome and all those who share his pastoral preoccupations, live through it, suffer from it, and are vividly preoccupied with it before the Lord and before souls.»⁹⁵⁵

We will return to this text in which, it seems, we can discern a vague allusion to the third Secret of Fatima. But was John XXIII really disturbed, convinced of the dangers menacing the Church and the world? Only the future would tell...

A PERFIDIOUS ARTICLE IN LA CROIX

Thinking that the Pope was going to do something, on October 4, La Croix finally devoted an article to the Bishop of Leiria's initiative: *«October 12-13: Prayer for peace with Fatima»*. After quoting some excerpts from Bishop Venancio's letter, the editor (Francois Bernard?) took advantage of the opportunity to add some reflections based on his own beliefs, and we can guess in what sense. "Prayer and Penance", this is the whole message of Fatima. We must confine ourselves to this, he explained in substance, adding perfidiously:

«It would be misleading to want to expect something else from the visions Lucy and her little companions Francisco and Jacinta had. Excessive speculation around a "secret" which, it is said, could be revealed this year has unfortunately turned attention away from the essential.»

He goes on to quote at length the hazy article of Father Balic already mentioned,⁹⁵⁶ to conclude:

«The appeal that comes from Fatima does not ask us to turn towards Fatima and fix our eyes in expectation of some kind of apocalypse, but to turn to God. The Holy Father has just lifted his voice, on the eve of the opening of the month of the Rosary, to invite us, in this very grave and dangerous hour the world is passing through, to take refuge under the protection of Her who is the help of Christians and the Queen of the Universe.»

OCTOBER 13, 1960: FATIMA UNDER THE TEMPEST

The long awaited pilgrimage, to which hundreds of thousands of the faithful all over the world united themselves, «was, more than ever, a pilgrimage of penance and sacrifice...»

«It began on the evening of October 12, in the midst of a storm of winds from the southwest, accompanied by sometimes violent showers. The torchlight procession took place under the pouring rain. The bad weather was prolonged all through the night.»⁹⁵⁷

In conformity with the request of Bishop Venancio expressed in his letter of May 17, and setting the example, Cardinal Cerejeira and the bishops present spent the entire night in adoration. Thousands of pilgrims imitated them.

«On the morning of the 13th, at the moment of the general Communion Mass, celebrated at 6:30 by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon at the high altar of the basilica, the storm redoubled its violence and the wind seemed to want to carry everything away, while the rain battered the pilgrims who had not been able to find a place in the basilica or in the outside galleries. Nevertheless, 48,000 of the faithful, of whom many had spent the entire night in prayer exposed to the rain and wind, received communion inside the basilica and on the wet esplanade...

«At 9:30, a statue of Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort which now stands above the colonnade of the basilica, was blessed and inaugurated by His Excellency the Bishop of Leiria in the presence of 400 Belgian and Dutch pilgrims, having at their head the Superior General of the Montfort Fathers...

«Around 10:00, the esplanade began to be covered again with compact masses, reciting the Rosary, now battered by a northwest wind, which fortunately, little by little dispelled the clouds. Finally, the sun appeared in a sky which was calm once more, when the statue of Our Lady of Fatima left in procession from the Capelinha to take its place, at 11:00, at the outside altar of the basilica, at the top of the monumental staircase.

«At this moment, the number of pilgrims could be estimated at between 300,000 and 400,000. Many had come on foot, often barefoot, and the medical assistance post had to take care of close to 1,500 people whose feet were injured during the rough and long journey which had led them to the Cova da Iria.»

In other words, Bishop Venancio's request to finish the journey as far as possible on foot, and saying the Rosary in the spirit of penance had been generously followed!

«After the Gospel, Cardinal Lercaro commented on Lucy's words to the crowd on October 13, 1917: "*Look at the sky!*"» The words had been somewhat modified for the needs of the homily, for Lucy had shouted at the time: "*Look at the sun!*"

On this subject Father Richard, who was on pilgrimage to the Cova da Iria again, makes a judicious remark, writing:

«No doubt some pilgrims came expecting the privilege of being the first to hear some information on the famous Secret. Others came with the hope that some extraordinary sign would mark the pilgrimage of the year 1960... *If faith and the expectation could really create their object, the sun probably would have "turned" at Fatima, especially since the tenacious rain of an entire night recreated certain external conditions of the famous day of October 13, 1917.*»⁹⁵⁸

But on this sad day of October, 1960, nobody saw any signs in the sky. On the contrary, our author reports, «the wind continued to blow violently right up to the end of the ceremonies, noticeably disturbing the officiants of the Pontifical Mass and troubling the voice of the loudspeakers». The written accounts do not even mention, as six months earlier during the pilgrimage of May 13, the presence of white doves at the feet of Our Lady, which however had been so frequent during this year 1960.⁹⁵⁹

«After the Pontifical Mass came the Eucharistic benediction of almost 500 sick people, sheltered under one of the galleries of the colonnade.

«*Then all the prelates present renewed the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, using the formula composed by Pope Pius XII.* The two Cardinals and the bishops surrounding them gave their blessing to the crowd of pilgrims.

«Finally, the Bishop of Leiria read the text of the telegram sent by order of the Sovereign Pontiff, granting the apostolic blessing "to all the pilgrims of Fatima, to all those who are united to their prayers and sacrifices, in these days of filial devotion and expiation in honour of the Mother of God."»

What disappointment! A simple telegram! John XXIII had remained insensible to all the requests addressed to him: the final Secret of Our Lady would not be revealed! He had not even deigned to do what had surely been promised Bishop Venancio at Rome: a renewal of the consecration of the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the Pope and all the bishops in union with him. For these days of prayer and penance, to which hundreds of thousands of the faithful had been united all over the world, he had not even consented to pronounce a radio message to the pilgrims. No, nothing of the sort, but a simple telegram from the Secretariat of State.

Father Richard, in *L'Homme nouveau* of November 6, in vain showed off an overflowing enthusiasm, for his plea is hardly convincing:

«Fatima 1960 was not just the crowd filling the immense esplanade of the Cova da Iria, it was the entire Church spiritually gathered around a world capital of supplication. Yes, millions of the faithful, all over the world, communicated in the same ardent supplication. If many Catholics remained indifferent, or were not touched, at least, in all countries, there were delegates of prayer and penance, so much so that Fatima 1960 was like a first spiritual mobilization of the Christian people.»

Granted, Bishop Venancio had received a certain number of responses from bishops. Some were very beautiful. They were published in the French, English and Spanish editions of *Voz da Fatima*. But in comparison with all the bishops of the world, they were very few indeed. Father Richard mentions *three* for France, where in fact the event passed unnoticed, except in twenty or so sanctuaries!

However, the most tragic event of this day had been the obstinacy of Pope John XXIII in his resolution to take practically no heed of the warnings and requests of Our Lady of Fatima. Father Richard notes again, «*Certain people hoped for a more precise participation of the Sovereign Pontiff...*» Indeed that is the least that could be said! But the president of the French section of the Blue Army concluded all the same:

«Well, we have the feeling that the pilgrims of October 12 and 13 – those who bloodied their feet along the way, the little young girl we encountered coming from Nancy on bicycle, the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon and the bishops who gave the example of spending the whole night in adoration, the thousands of pilgrims who remained stoically under the rain from 10:00 in the evening until 7:30 in the morning, the millions of others all over the world who also kept watch all through the night – *we have this confidence that all together they merited a new respite for the impenitent world, and that they prepared a more total and universal act on which our hope rests.*»

Yes, we are certain that they merited abundant graces for the Church and for the world. We will see, moreover, what a strange coincidence marked these October days in Russia itself, for which the Fatima pilgrims had prayed so much. Yes, they surely contributed to obtaining a grace of peace for the world.

V. «THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT»: THE SECRET OF MARY DESPISED

The editor of *L'Homme nouveau*, however, once again showed signs of a false optimism. As if everything could be saved democratically, by prayer alone, by the penance of the flock alone, while the Supreme Pastor remained insensible to Our Lady's voice, and obstinately refused to carry out the least of Her requests!

True, in His infinite goodness God would not leave the ardent supplications of His children without a reward; but He was also going to chastise with justice – and in a terrible manner! – the obstinacy of their pastors in not entering into His designs of mercy for the world by the sweet and powerful mediation of His Most Holy Mother.

The seer of Fatima had foreseen and feared this imminent catastrophe in 1957: «*The Most Holy Virgin is very sad, because nobody pays attention to Her message*», she had said then. She went on to explain the gravity of this fault which has incalculable consequences. For in despising the prophecies of Fatima, it was the Blessed Virgin, it was God Himself Whom the Pastors of the Church were going to despise, and mock, before the world.

Sister Lucy had also declared to Father Fuentes:

«In the plans of Divine Providence, God always exhausts all other remedies before He is about to chastise the world. Now, when He sees that the world pays no attention whatsoever, then, as we say in our imperfect manner of speaking, He offers us with a certain trepidation the last means of salvation, His Most Holy Mother. It is with a certain trepidation because, *if we despise and repulse this final means, we will not have any more forgiveness from Heaven because we have committed a sin which the Gospel calls the sin against the Holy Spirit. This sin consists of openly rejecting, with full knowledge and consent, the salvation which He offers.*⁹⁶⁰ Let us remember that Jesus Christ is a very good Son and that He does not permit that we offend and despise His Most Holy Mother. We have recorded through many centuries of Church history the obvious testimony which demonstrates, by terrible chastisements which have befallen those who have attacked the honour of His Most Holy Mother, how Our Lord Jesus Christ has always defended the honour of His Mother.»⁹⁶¹

Had not Pope John XXIII himself declared, six months before reading the Secret of Fatima:

«In our time the august Mother of God makes Her presence felt in human events in a special way... and when from every side the menace of fearsome scourges increases, we feel that in Her clemency She intercedes for us, that She implores for us mercy, warding off the chastisements merited by our faults... *Hence, one would be placing his own salvation in jeopardy if, when he is assailed by the tempests of the world, he refused to accept Her helping hand.*»⁹⁶²

This helping hand had been outstretched in mercy – for the final Secret of Fatima was just that; a very special help, a supremely effective heavenly reinforcement which the Queen of Heaven offered the Vicar of Her Son, to obtain light and strength for him in the terrible battles he would have to undertake against the powers of Darkness. Alas! John XXIII had finally disdained this extraordinary help.

TOWARDS A NEW AND TERRIBLE CHASTISEMENT

From then on, was not this black year, which had seen the Secret of Mary odiously despised, going to open a new time of chastisement? Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, predicted it in January 1961, in his letter for the new year:

«The year 1960 was, as I predicted to you last January, catastrophic for France, for the West, and for the Church. Khrushchev had announced that it would be year one of communist expansion, and God permitted this general advance of Satan's armies. *The predictions of Fatima were not revealed; everything indicated that it is the first of the two branches of the alternative which prevails: the chastisement of humanity, and particularly of Christian peoples, for the depravity of their mind and the laxity of their morals.*»⁹⁶³

This chastisement was even more fearsome than all the scourges caused by the startling expansion of Bolshevism prophesied by the second Secret. We will not describe its nature and tragic episodes right away.

Let us quote however, without any more ado – following our Father, who had placed its central verse in the opening quotation of his letter of January 1961 – one of the most famous oracles of the Book of Isaiah. God does not change, and men, alas, often fall back into the same errors and follow the same tortuous paths that their fathers had followed. Indeed this oracle, an excerpt from the “Testament of Isaiah”, applies in a striking manner to the date 1960 – so much so that one might have thought it was addressed to the Fatima seer at the end of this tragic year. When applied to the great Secret of Mary, it enlightens us straightway – and in what a divine, limpid, and profound manner! – on the enigma of its non-disclosure, and on the mystery of its probable contents, which we will now attempt to penetrate:

«Now go and inscribe this on a tablet, write it in a book, that it may serve in the time to come as a witness forever:

«This is a rebellious people, they are lying sons, sons who will not listen to Yahweh’s orders. To the seers they say, “*See no visions*”; to the prophets, “*Do not prophesy the truth to us, tell us flattering things; have illusory visions*”; turn aside from the way, leave the path, take the Holy One out of our sight.”

«So the Holy One of Israel says: “*Since you reject this warning and prefer to trust in wile and guile and to rely on these, then your guilt will prove to be for you a breach on the point of collapse, the bulge at the top of the city wall which suddenly and all at once comes crashing down, irretrievably shattered, smashed like an earthenware pot – so that of the fragments not one shard remains big enough to carry a cinder from the hearth or scoop water from the cistern.*”

«For thus says the Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel: “Your salvation lay in conversion and tranquillity, your strength in complete trust; *and you would have none of it...*”» (Is. 30:8-15)

«*Volui et nolulistis*»: “I wanted to save you, and rebellious to My voice, you did not want to hear Me.” It is always the same complaint full of anguish and love that God addresses to His people – and more than ever at the end of 1960. For more than ever the prophetic oracle of August 1931 was about to be fulfilled: «*They did not want to heed My request... They follow the example of the king of France in delaying the execution of My request, and they will follow him into misfortune.*»⁹⁶⁴

These terrible words were pronounced by Our Lord after the first refusal of Pius XI. What would it be thirty years later, after so many refusals of His Vicar on earth and while the Chair of Truth had been soiled by so many hypocritical lies intended to keep the truth captive, whatever the cost? «*God is going to chastise the world, and it will be in a terrible manner*», Sister Lucy said in 1957.

To what chastisement was the seer alluding? The prophecy of the third Secret will allow us to understand.

PART THREE: THE THIRD SECRET UNVEILED

INTRODUCTION

AT THE HEART OF THE MYSTERY OF FATIMA: THE FINAL SECRET OF OUR LADY

Why speak and write so much about a Secret which has still not been divulged? For two very clear reasons.

IT IS THE "SECRET OF MARY"

First of all, to repeat the beautiful expression of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, because it concerns the "Secret of Mary", and the Queen of Prophets never speaks in vain. The two parts of the Secret already known to us attest to that! They are so rich, so true and profound in their conciseness that just the examination of their objective content suffices to show that they are not of man, but of God.

We have every reason to think that the third part of this unique Secret is at least as important, as decisive for the salvation of souls and the future of the Church and the world. It is a light from Heaven, it is a divine grace which it is criminal to neglect, to despise.

But there is another, equally compelling reason urging us to draw the attention of the faithful and their Pastors to this final Secret of Our Lady.

HENCEFORTH, THE WHOLE OF FATIMA DEPENDS ON IT

In a word, the message of Fatima is an indivisible whole, and the third Secret, since the hour when according to Our Lady's will it should have been revealed, has in some way become the key.

With his rare farsightedness as a theologian and mystic, Canon Formigao – who died a holy death on January 30, 1958 – had observed this in 1938. What he said then about the new themes proper to the second Secret is equally applicable today to the contents of the third Secret:

«Really (he wrote to Bishop da Silva), the admirable work of Fatima constitutes in its entirety a harmonious, unique and indivisible whole: either we admit that Divine Providence has established it and disposes it strongly and sweetly, with all the elements composing it, or on the contrary, it will be logical to go from excluding one thing to excluding another even to the boldness of denying, moreover against the evidence itself, the reality of the apparitions and the wonderful events (of 1917).»⁹⁶⁵

This alternative of all or nothing could not be expressed more clearly. It applied indeed to the revelation of Fatima, as to that of the Gospel, to the extent that here also – keeping all due proportion – it is a question of an authentic manifestation of God in our history. This is

why, far from being a superfluous appendix, an accidental addition, the third part of the Secret constitutes an essential element of the Fatima message, as solidly connected to the other two parts as the first two are inseparable from each other. For in the mystery of Fatima, from the miracle to the public message, from this initial message to the two Secrets gradually revealed from 1925 to 1942, and finally from these last two to the final Secret written down in January 1944, the connection is so solid that nothing can break any of the links of this golden chain.

FROM THE MIRACLE TO THE MESSAGE OF 1917. Must it be recalled? Fatima is first of all a miracle. It is an extraordinary, incomparable miracle, unique in the entire history of humanity. For never had anybody seen an atmospheric prodigy as undeniable, as striking, a sign so spectacular as this dance of the sun at noon on October 13, 1917, in conformity with the prophetic announcement of the three shepherds expressed publicly three months earlier. This extraordinary sign, which we can call apocalyptic – in the strict sense of the term, because it undoubtedly attests to the eschatological significance of the event of Fatima – stamped the divine seal on the cycle of the apparitions, and the entirety of the Fatima message.

FROM THE MESSAGE TO THE SECRET. Just as the miracle of the Queen of Heaven leads us to accept Her maternal warning of 1917, so also this warning is inseparable from the great Secret revealed little by little in the following decades, and finally made public in 1942. In other words, we have sufficiently demonstrated against Father Dhanis that between Fatima I and Fatima II, no opposition, no real dichotomy can be sustained. To claim to believe in Fatima I, all the while refusing Fatima II, is adopting the hypocritical attitude of a son who claims to respect and love his mother, while he stubbornly refuses to obey her most pressing requests. For anybody who agrees to be logical, whoever admits Fatima I must admit Fatima II; and conversely, to reject Fatima II leads unavoidably, sooner or later, to casting suspicions and destroying the truth of Fatima I, and finally results in the absurd negation of the miracle of 1917.⁹⁶⁶

FROM THE FIRST TWO SECRETS TO THE THIRD. If we go further in considering the mystery of Fatima, we will discover that the bond uniting the revealed Secret to the hidden Secret – in other words, the first two parts to the third part – is just as solid, just as firm as the preceding links of the chain. In other words, between the final Secret, which we can call Fatima III, and Fatima II, the bond is just as unbreakable as between Fatima I and Fatima II. The mystery of Fatima forms a whole. In the last analysis we are just as certain that the twenty or thirty lines of the third Secret really are the very words pronounced by the Queen of Prophets at the Cova da Iria on July 13, 1917, as we are certain that on October 13, in this same Cova da Iria, over 70,000 witnesses, marvelling and seized with astonishment, were present at the most extraordinary cosmic miracle in all history.

SINCE 1960, THERE ARE ONLY TWO SOLUTIONS

Precisely because of this perfect coherence of the mystery of Fatima, since 1960 there are only two solutions: filial, precise and eager obedience to all Our Lady's requests; and this act of faith, of trustful docility towards the Immaculate Mediatrix of course presupposes, above all, disclosure of Her final message of salvation. The other way is to obstinately keep hidden, at whatever cost, this final and redoubtable Secret. This deliberate hiding of the Secret, this disobedience to Heaven's great designs, then causes the Holy Father to keep his distance from Fatima, to the point of feigning ignorance of its prophecies and the Blessed Virgin's other precise requests. This second way, inevitably, leaves the most odious, the most criminal suspicion hanging over the entire message.

In short, because it is a unique Secret setting out a unique design of mercy for the world, now that it is completely in the hands of the supreme authority – the Vicar of Christ – it cannot be obeyed worthily and show itself fully, miraculously effective until it is finally recognized as integrally authentic and proclaimed as such by the Sovereign Pontiff.

This is why nothing is so important, nothing is so necessary, so urgent as to make this final Secret known to the world – a Secret buried at the Vatican like a captive truth by successive Popes for thirty years! The Blessed Virgin desired its publication in 1960 and Sister Lucy, Her messenger, continues to desire it and urgently request it from the competent authority – this we know. As the custodian of a truth feared more than ever, she is reduced to the strictest silence on this most salutary message, to the point where she is practically forbidden to make the slightest allusion to it. The Bishop of Leiria and the sanctuary chaplains also seem to have received orders to keep silence.

As for us, nobody forbids us, nobody prevents us from helping to make the Sovereign Pontiff draw our Heavenly Mother's words, finally, out of the "Deep, dark well" of oblivion and scorn into which John XXIII aimed to bury them forever. No, by the grace of God, for the honour of our holy Mother, and for the salvation of the Church, these prophetic words will not be forgotten!

Since we cannot know the literal content and precise information which, when divulged, will surely be the striking mark of its heavenly origin, at the price of a rigorous and patient investigation we can at least advance very far into the mystery, and already find there light and strength for our journey.

May Our Lady of Fatima, the Immaculate Mediatrix, Guardian of the Faith and victorious over all heresies, guide us and enlighten us in this discovery of Her final message of salvation!

Virgin most faithful, pray for us!

SECTION I: A decipherable Secret

CHAPTER I

THE CERTAIN FACTS

Since the Secret has not been divulged, it seems at first glance that we can know nothing about its contents. Many experts have repeated this statement as though it were self-evident. Any exposition on the third Secret would necessarily be arbitrary and could result only in completely gratuitous, purely subjective conjectures. Attempts have been made to present this position to us as the only prudent and sure one, but in reality it is very inexact.

If it is true that in 1917, when it was revealed, or in 1944, when it was written down, and still in 1960, when it should have been revealed to the world, Our Lady's final Secret remained practically impenetrable – this is no longer the case now. For over forty years, reliable historical data concerning it has multiplied. Today it forms an impressive collection of reliable information; starting with these facts the historian, using his own method, reasoning through inference, can reach solidly established conclusions.

Now it is not a question of imagining, completely fabricating a Secret according to our fantasy. Nor is it a question of attempting to reconstruct, with precision, the very text of the Secret, which would be unbelievable presumption! No, it is a question of proceeding methodically, correctly reasoning about reliable facts, with extreme critical prudence. An investigation conducted this way proves wonderfully fruitful: it permits us first of all to resolutely set aside all the impostures, all the deceits and hoaxes which have occupied the public for over twenty-five years. Then, with all the false secrets unmasked, all the false hypotheses refuted, it is still possible to advance very far into the positive discovery of the Secret's real contents.

I. A FIRST VITAL FACT: WE KNOW THE CONTEXT OF THE THIRD SECRET

There is a major truth, which often passes unnoticed, which must remain in our memory all through our inquiry: it is the fundamental unity of the great Secret, revealed entirely by Our Lady during the third apparition on July 13, 1917.⁹⁶⁷ Thus it is a grave error to imagine three heterogeneous secrets, foreign to each other. Sister Lucy says: «THE Secret». «What is THE Secret?... THE Secret is made up of three distinct parts...»⁹⁶⁸ She says elsewhere: «The first part of the Secret», or again: «The third part of the Secret».

Out of this coherent whole, we now know three parts out of four: we know the beginning (the first two parts of the Secret) and the end, which surely constitutes its conclusion: «In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, which will be converted, and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world.» In this context which we already know, following the “etc” marked by Sister Lucy herself, the third Secret comes to be inserted. It is like the final completion of a monument: when it has scarcely been begun, it is impossible to know what it will look like; but when three fourths of the edifice has already gone up towards the heavens, it is not so presumptuous to

imagine what is still missing. The same is true for our incomplete cathedrals or for the famous “*capelas imperfeitas*” of the monastery of Batalha, not far from Fatima. It is not difficult for the specialists trained eye to conceive their harmonious crowning.

In November 1959, Father Messias Dias Coelho, one of the best experts on Fatima, had highlighted this point judiciously, writing:

«This third part of the Secret certainly constitutes a precious part of the whole message of Fatima... If the message is a whole, the third part must be harmoniously inserted into it. It is already an indication, moreover corroborated by examination of the two preceding Secrets... The third part of the Secret must be in line with the whole (constituted by the messages of the Angel, those of Our Lady at the Cova da Iria, and then those of Pontevedra and Tuy), and no doubt it gives it concrete form in a conclusive manner.»⁹⁶⁹

This is the first fact, which must serve us as a criterion to advance in discovery of the mystery of the third Secret: its contents must square with its immediate context – the first two parts and conclusion of the Secret – and, more generally, it must be in harmonious accord with the entirety of the Fatima message whose coherence is, moreover, utterly remarkable.

II. A SECOND FACT: THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH IT WAS WRITTEN DOWN

If the circumstances in which it was revealed prove to us its fundamental unity, the dramatic circumstances in which it was written down alone reveal to us, as Father Alonso justly remarks, its tragic gravity.

It is also important not to forget, as we study the third Secret, the three months of interior struggles and veritable agony the seer had to face before receiving from on high, on January 2, 1944, through a new apparition of the Immaculate Virgin, the strength to finally overcome the obstacles in her soul opposing the writing of this final message.⁹⁷⁰

III. A VERY ILLUMINATING ENIGMA: SINCE 1960, THE POPES HAVE REFUSED TO REVEAL IT

The fact is obvious. But it is worth the trouble to recall, with all possible precision.

FIRST OF ALL JOHN XXIII, as we have seen. In spite of incontestable promises from the responsible authorities, in spite of the enthusiastic, anguished wait of the entire Catholic universe. Why did he prefer to its promised disclosure, the grave disadvantages of his silence? The immense disillusionment and scandal of the faithful? In any case, right up to his death on June 3, 1963, John XXIII never made a single explicit mention of Our Lady's Secret.

Although the famous expression of Cardinal Ottaviani was materially inexact, it expressed nicely the discredit cast upon the Secret of Fatima by the Pope's express will:

«John XXIII himself placed the Secret in another envelope, sealed it and placed it in one of those archives which are like a deep, dark, dark well, into which papers fall and nobody sees anything any more.»

The Cardinal's expression is odious, but the reality is even more so.

POPE PAUL VI adopted the same attitude at the outset. Elected on June 21, 1963, shortly afterwards he asked to be given the text – a proof of his lively concern on the subject. Since nobody knew what John XXIII had done with it, Msgr. Capovilla was asked, and he was able to indicate where it had been placed:

«Paul VI, after his election, asked for information regarding this document; I no longer recall if it was in July 1963 or a few months later. We may believe he read the Secret.»⁹⁷¹

It is indeed very probable that he read it immediately. But like John XXIII, he took no heed of it, and resolved not to speak of it at all.

In February 1967, a few months before the solemn jubilee of the 1917 apparitions, there was new hope that the Pope would finally consent to divulge this famous Secret. Rome's silence had not succeeded in causing it to be forgotten. Paul VI ordered Cardinal Ottaviani to make it known in his name that it would not yet be divulged in 1967, if indeed it ever would! Of course, we will quote *in extenso* the Cardinal's conference, which calls for important corrections.

Let us merely point out that from 1967 until his death on August 6, 1978, Paul VI never spoke publicly about the Secret of Fatima. We do not even have any testimony allowing us to suppose that he consulted such or such a prelate or member of his entourage on this subject. Hence on the part of Paul VI, from one end of his pontificate to the other, there was an ice cold silence on the third Secret of Fatima, although on many occasions the press continued to speak of it, and some continued to request its disclosure.

Indeed on July 7, 1977, Cardinal Ottaviani could declare:

«The true text of the "Secret" written by the seer Lucy and sent to Pope John XXIII (sic) has truly remained a "secret", because the Sovereign Pontiff has revealed nothing of this affair. We are even totally ignorant of where he placed the text sent to him.»⁹⁷²

JOHN PAUL I had a profound devotion to Our Lady of Fatima. Eloquent testimony of this fact is his pilgrimage of 1977, during which, contrary to Cardinal Roncalli in 1956, he had made a point of speaking at length with Sister Lucy. Unfortunately, we do not know if his pontificate, which was too brief and tragically cut short, permitted him to find out Our Lady's final Secret.

AS FOR JOHN PAUL II, we know from a reliable source that he read it. He did so before his trip to Fatima on May 13, 1982, the first anniversary of the attempt on his life. He even consulted a Portuguese priest of the Curia, for the priest to translate the text for the Pope «with all the nuances of the language».⁹⁷³ But during his pilgrimage, he gave no hint of what he had thought of it, and in any case he did not reveal it. In the many discourses he pronounced in Portugal, he ignored it purely and simply... except on May 12, where he made an allusion which to us seems like the veiled, but offhand expression of his deliberate refusal to reveal it to the Church: «*Do you want me to teach you a secret...? It is simple, and it is no longer a secret: pray, pray a great deal, saying the Rosary every day*».⁹⁷⁴ That was all!

Finally, we have learned through the interview he granted to journalist Vittorio Messori on August 15, 1984, that Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, had also read the Secret, as Cardinal Ottaviani once did. But Ratzinger made it known at the same time that the Pope still did not have the intention of revealing it.⁹⁷⁵

In short, for thirty years, from John XXIII to John Paul II, it is always the same implacable refusal. Rome stubbornly remains deaf to all requests, from wherever they come: from the Portuguese hierarchy, from leaders of the Blue Army, from the Catholic Counter-Reformation League directed by the Abbé de Nantes, from Father Alonso or Father Laurentin.

This kind of obstinacy must have its reasons. Now all the reasons put forward in 1960, as we have seen, were designed to form a thick smokescreen to hide a truth which was too vexing. Cardinal Ottaviani's reasons in 1967 were not any more serious, as we will see; and the same is true for those recently advanced by his successor, Cardinal Ratzinger.

The question remains: what then is the true motive for Rome's silence, the true reason which all the other explanations are intended to cover up? Father Alonso, with skilful precautions, explains it to us, writing:

*«We may now ask in a more pointed and critical way: are not the very contents of this third part the principal reason for it not being disclosed?»*⁹⁷⁶

It is so obvious that, on this point, all the experts are in agreement. But it is also vitally important: it is the content of this famous Secret and it alone which, for thirty years has kept the Popes not only from revealing it themselves, engaging their authority behind it, but even from permitting it to be published by the Bishop of Leiria or again by the Carmel of Coimbra, without any Roman guarantee.

No, for thirty years the Secret of Fatima – and it alone! – has in a sense been on the Index. Sister Lucy, and she alone, is reduced to silence. On November 15, 1966, Pope Paul VI abrogated articles 1399 and 2318 of the Code of Canon Law, forbidding the publication of books and pamphlets propagating, without authorization, new apparitions, revelations, visions, prophecies or miracles. This abrogation is maintained in the new code – so much so that, since 1966, anybody can publish and spread among the Christian people the most

fantastic revelations. Any imposture, any devilry can be published. Nothing is forbidden any more; everything is allowed to appear.

Yet three months later, Paul VI made it known to the world, through the mouth of Cardinal Ottaviani, that the Secret of Fatima would remain buried – no doubt for all time – in the most rigorous silence! For what reason, then? Certainly because of its contents alone: for what it announces; for what it denounces; which is astonishingly troubling for the Vatican authorities.

In the final analysis, however, this refusal to divulge the Secret becomes, as time passes, a positive bit of evidence which allows us, as we will see, to make great progress in discovering Our Lady's true message.

We know, finally, one last fact which is important...

IV. THE PROPHECY OF THE THIRD SECRET IS BEING FULFILLED BEFORE OUR EYES SINCE 1960

Unimaginable in 1917, in 1944, or even in 1960, this Secret – which the authorities obstinately, unjustly hide from us – as if by a wonderful divine revenge, is ending up becoming clear and revealing itself as it is fulfilled by events. For it is indeed being fulfilled before our eyes. In effect, a calendar, a timetable can be drawn. Where are we in the fulfilment of the prophecy? The response is clear and certain: the very text of the Secret already divulged indicates it to us.

On the one hand, we are not yet at the end of the events prophesied: «In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world.» We are not there yet: Russia has not been consecrated as it ought to be. Sister Lucy has said so many times, even after May 13, 1982 and March 25, 1984.⁹⁷⁷

On the other hand, are the events predicted in the third Secret still to come? This solution is reassuring but false, for we have a date: 1960. Although we are not formally told that it will mark the beginning of the Secret's fulfilment, we know that beginning with this precise moment, indicated by Our Lady Herself, the prophecy «*will seem clearer*».⁹⁷⁸ Now the only reason which can make a prophecy clearer after a determined date is, without any doubt, the beginning of its fulfilment. Sister Lucy herself, in 1957, indicated to Father Fuentes the importance of 1960, as being both the year of the Secret's disclosure, and, if nothing was done after that to correspond to Our Lady's requests, the decisive moment of its terrible fulfillment.⁹⁷⁹

The *terminus a quo* (starting point) and the *terminus ad quem* (ending point) of the prophecy have been determined. Therefore we can be sure that presently we are living through this period which the third Secret refers to, that we are witnessing the events it

announces. Besides, Sister Lucy declared a few years ago that «*the chastisement predicted by Our Lady had already begun*».

TO SUMMARIZE: The authentic contents of the third Secret must simultaneously correspond to each of these four precise, objective criteria:

1. It must be in harmony with the immediate context of the Secret, in which it is inserted. It must also be coherent with the Fatima message as a whole.
2. It must be concerned with grave events, terribly important for the Church. The circumstances in which it was written down, tormented as they were, attest to it.
3. The contents of the Secret must take into account its non-disclosure by Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II.
4. Finally, it must have to do with events being fulfilled before our eyes, and which were already noticeable in 1944 – the year when Bishop da Silva and Pope Pius XII could have read it –, becoming clearer starting with 1960, when they (the events) would have of necessity to be revealed to the world.

Already, we have four reliable bits of evidence which considerably illumine our path, and enable us to avoid most of the dead ends followed since 1960.

CHAPTER II

THE FALSE SECRETS

Since 1960, several texts have been proposed successively to the press as being the third Secret of Fatima. Since the Vatican has taken refuge in an absolute silence, they were not expressly denied. This tended to give credence to the hypothesis of their authenticity. With the passing of time and in the light of all the historical facts we have gathered, today we can shed light on these false secrets which continue to cause prejudice against the only true one.

I. THE FALSE SECRET OF *NEUES EUROPA* (1963)

The text of *Neues Europa*, the first of the “false secrets” to appear, is the one which enjoyed the widest and most lasting distribution. Certain groups continue to spread it at the present hour as the authentic third Secret of Fatima. Therefore we will quote at length the two articles of the German review which made it public in 1963.

«THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY IN THE LIGHT OF THE MOSCOW ACCORD AND THE REVELATIONS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD AT LA SALETTE AND FATIMA»⁹⁸⁰

«In *Neues Europa* of October 1, 1963, we already announced to our readers the publication of the following inquiry. Louis Emrich was able to obtain information of the highest interest on the third part of the message of Fatima. *We are able to give our readers the content of the third message of Fatima under the form – that is, an extract – in which it was presented to the diplomats of Washington, London and Moscow. – The Editor.*

«What *Neues Europa* had already forecast in 1956-1958, i.e. that during the years 1963-1965 the conclusion of accords of worldwide significance would be reached between the Anglo-Saxon countries on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other, has become reality with the agreement of August 6, 1963, at Moscow on the cessation of all further atomic testing in the air, on land and under water. To date over 90 governments have signed this agreement.

«What is not as well known, on the other hand, is the fact that the Moscow accord was not only a happy result of worldwide diplomacy, but also of Vatican diplomacy. In effect it was the first time in the recent history of humanity, that in the conclusion of a political agreement of worldwide significance, the participants took into account essential factors originating from religious data. Pope Paul VI permitted not only Kennedy but also Khrushchev to look at *certain parts of the third message of Fatima* which the Mother of God had revealed *on October 13, 1917* to the little Portuguese seer Lucy. This message is so pressing that it even deeply impressed the circles employed in the conclusion of the Moscow accord.

«I have done everything possible to procure for myself the original text of the third message of Fatima, but all my efforts remained futile. The Vatican has made all the arrangements for this document to remain a papal secret until a new order.

«However, today I am in a position to communicate to readers of *Neues Europa* in all countries *an extract* of the content of the third Secret, in the form made available in inside information, in diplomatic circles of Washington, London and Moscow...

«*This extract of the third message of Fatima* was also passed on to President Kennedy, to Prime Minister MacMillan, and to Khrushchev, so as to let them study it personally. This text played a great role during the signature of the Anglo-American-Russian accord at Moscow. The leaders of the two world political blocs were all shaken by its contents, *just as were Pope Pius XII, Pope John XXIII, and Pope Paul VI.* According to rumours emanating from diplomatic circles, the conclusion of the accord banning all further testing of atomic bombs was in great part the consequence of the profound impression left by *the extract of the third message of Fatima* on the competent diplomatic circles of Washington, London and Moscow. *Although this document is not the original text of the message of Fatima* such as it was revealed on *October 13, 1917* by the Mother of God to the little seer Lucy, essential points of the original are nevertheless found there. It says:

«*It was the thirteenth of October 1917.* On that day, the Holy Virgin appeared for the last time to the little visionaries, Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia, at the end of a series of six apparitions in all. *After the manifestation of the miracle of the sun at Fatima, the Mother of God revealed a special secret message to Lucy, in which She particularly stated:*

«“Don’t worry, dear child. I am the Mother of God speaking to you and begging you to *proclaim in My name the following message to the entire world.*

«“In doing this, you will meet great hostility. But be steadfast in the Faith and you will overcome this hostility. Listen, and note well what I say to you: Men must become better. They must implore the remission of the sins which they have committed, and will continue to commit. You ask Me for a miraculous sign so that all may understand the words in which, through you, I address mankind. *This miracle which you have just seen was the great miracle of the sun! Everyone has seen it – believers and unbelievers, country and city dwellers, scholars and journalists, laymen and priests. And now, announce this in My name:*

«“A great punishment shall come to all mankind, not today as yet, nor even tomorrow, but in the second half of the twentieth century. What I have already made known at La Salette through the children Melanie and Maximin, I repeat today before you. Mankind has not developed as God expected. Mankind has gone astray and has trampled underfoot the gifts which were given it.

«“There is no order in anything. Even in the highest positions, it is Satan who governs and decides how affairs are to be conducted. He will even know how to find his way to the highest positions in the Church. He will succeed in sowing confusion in the minds of the great scientists who invent arms, with which half of humanity can be destroyed in a few

minutes. He will subject the leaders of the people to his power and incite them to produce enormous quantities of arms. *If mankind does not refrain from wrongdoing and be converted, I shall be forced to let fall My Son's arm. If those at the top, in the world and in the Church, do not oppose these ways, it is I who shall do so, and I shall pray God My Father to visit His Justice on mankind.*

«God will punish men still more powerfully and harshly than He did by means of the Flood, and the great and powerful will perish just as much as the small and the weak.

«There will also come a time of the hardest trials for the Church. Cardinals will be against Cardinals and bishops against bishops. Satan will put himself in their midst. In Rome, also, there will be big changes. What is rotten will fall, and what will fall must not be maintained. The Church will be darkened and the world plunged into confusion.

«The greatest World War will happen in the second half of the twentieth century. Then fire and smoke will fall from the sky, and the waters of the oceans will be turned to steam, hurling their foam towards the sky; and all that is standing will be cast down. Millions and millions of men will lose their lives from one hour to the next, and those who remain living will envy those who are dead. There will be tribulation as far as the eye can see, and misery all over the earth and desolation in every country. The time is continually approaching, the abyss is growing wider, and there is no end in sight. The good will die with the wicked, the big with the small, the princes of the Church with their subjects. Satan's henchmen will then be the only sovereigns on earth.

«This will be a time which neither king nor emperor, Cardinal nor bishop expects, but it will come, nevertheless, in accordance with My Father's plan to punish and take vengeance. Later, however, when those who survive all this are still alive, God and His glory will once more be invoked, and He will once more be served as He was, not so long ago, when the world had not yet become corrupted. I call on all true imitators of My Son, Jesus Christ, all true Christians and apostles of the latter days! The time of times is coming and the end of everything, if mankind is not converted, and if this conversion does not come from above, from the leaders of the world and the leaders of the Church. But woe! Woe if this conversion does not come about, and if all remains as it is, nay, if all becomes even worse! *Go, My child, and proclaim this!* I shall always remain by your side to help you.”

«I add once more that this is not the text of the original message such as the Mother of God revealed it on October 13, 1917, to the little seer Lucy, now a Carmelite, but *an extract of the third message of Fatima* such as is circulating this moment in diplomatic circles. I am assured that the authentic text of the message is even harsher and more overwhelming than the extract related above. However, it is not inevitable in its conclusions, because it places the conversion of humanity before its perdition. How will humanity decide? This question, before just as after, remains open...

Louis Emrich.»

«THE PRINCIPAL OBJECT OF THE FATIMA MESSAGE REMAINS THE STATE SECRET OF
THE VATICAN»

On November 1, 1963, *Neues Europa* added this additional information regarding the Secret of Fatima:

«In the last edition of *Neues Europa*, we stated formally that *the text we published there of the third message of Fatima constituted only an extract of it which is known in diplomatic circles*. The most important part, the quintessence of the revelations of the Mother of God, was unavailable to us. In this case it concerns words of the Holy Virgin predicting events which will take place at Rome and which will happen to the Vatican and the papacy at the dawn of D-Day, when humanity will be delivered to the divine chastisement. The passage related to it, and which forms the basis and conclusion of the third prediction of Fatima, was integrally detached from it and remains a state secret of the Vatican, until a new order is given.

«We know, however, what is said in the passage in question. It is related to the future of the Holy See and all the institutions attached to it. All the Vatican circles which were solicited to reveal the authentic text of this passage have categorically refused to make any kind of pronouncement on this subject.

«This intransigent attitude of Vatican diplomacy is the result of formal instructions emanating from Pope Paul VI, who decided that neither the wording of the third message of Fatima nor its principal part would be made accessible, for the moment, to public knowledge. Such a papal prohibition can only increase in a very considerable proportion the interest attributed, up to the present, to the affair of Fatima.

«At what period will the Pope judge it opportune to lift this prohibition? Nobody knows.

«Theoretically this restriction can cease tomorrow, but it could equally well remain in force for a more or less long period of time. The political situation at the world level will decide, according to its favourable or unfavourable evolution. But here and now it is certain that the third message of Fatima will be communicated in full and without any omission to the entire world, when the needs and the seriousness of the hour demand it.

Dr. Angelo S., Rome.»⁹⁸¹

What are we to think of this text? When it first appeared, it was difficult to say. A Fatima expert as competent as Father Messias Dias Coelho saw fit to publish it in 1964, in his review *Mensagem de Fatima*.⁹⁸² In 1971, he was still hesitant, and refused to reject it as completely inauthentic, for two reasons:

«1. The affirmation recently made to me by an eminent Cardinal, whose name we will keep secret for the moment. According to him, the text in question contains some exaggerations (which we had already noted in 1964), but fundamentally it corresponds to the truth. 2. The fact that the central nucleus of the text in question, as moreover everybody recognizes,

is the prediction of a future climate of division within the Church, a prophecy which was unbelievable eight years ago (the publication of *Neues Europa* dates from 1963), but is a reality today!»⁹⁸³

For several years, the fact that no denial came from Rome while this version of the “third Secret” had been translated into many languages, and spread all over the world, seemed to indicate that the Vatican recognized it as having at least a certain authenticity. In fact, it seemed unthinkable and with good reason that Rome, totally heedless of the truth and of the good of souls, would allow millions of Catholics to be taken in by an imposture without reacting... Alas! As we study Cardinal Ottaviani’s conference, we shall see how little concern the Vatican had for the truth, when it was a question of preventing the faithful from knowing or even guessing the true contents of the Secret of Fatima.

In 1976, confining himself strictly to the critical point of view – is the text proposed by *Neues Europa* the text, or, as L. Emrich claimed, an extract of the third part of the Secret of Fatima, yes or no? – Father Alonso adopted a categorical attitude, writing:

«Nothing in this text is either true or authentic: the staggering claim that the text was communicated by the Pope to the heads of state; the historical errors it contains; the literary structure, so different from that employed in Lucy’s writings, or the very ideas expressed, so absolutely foreign to those of Sister Lucy.»

In conclusion, Father Alonso points out that this text is a lamentable take-off on the secret of La Salette.⁹⁸⁴ Upon examination, we have to recognize that Father Alonso is clearly right, for these reasons:

1. THE INCONCEIVABLE CHARACTER OF THE MESSAGE BEING PASSED ON BY THE VATICAN

Imagine Pope Paul VI passing on to Kennedy, MacMillan and Khrushchev a text presented as a revelation of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima, where it is a question of atomic war, to be sure, but also of a terrible crisis in the Church, «*which will be darkened*», while «*Satan will... find his way to the highest positions in the Church*»? And this, at the very moment when the Council was continuing its work in euphoric optimism!

This alleged communication “of extracts” of the Secret to the principal heads of state by the Vatican is unthinkable, given the contents of the extracts in question.

2. “EXTRACTS” THREE TO FOUR TIMES LONGER THAN THE ORIGINAL

The text attributed to Our Lady by *Neues Europa* is already four times as long as the second part of the authentic Secret. Now Louis Emrich states at several points that it is still only an «*extract*» of the true Secret, whose «*most important part*» is still missing!

This verbosity alone is enough to show us it is a fake. For we know that the authentic Secret is extremely concise: «Lucy tells us that she wrote it *on a sheet of paper*. Cardinal Ottaviani, who has read it, tells us the same thing: “She wrote it *on a sheet of paper...*”»⁹⁸⁵ We have also given the testimony of Bishop Venancio, who before bringing it to the Nuncio in Lisbon, looked through the envelope containing the manuscript of the Secret: he too speaks of «*a paper*», «*of a sheet of paper*».

It is certain that the true Secret is relatively brief. Undoubtedly it is about the length of the second part, perhaps a little shorter, perhaps a little longer, But in no case could “extracts” from it be as long as the version of Louis Emrich! This is a second mark of inauthenticity, which is already decisive.

3. A TEXT WHICH IS FOREIGN TO THE REAL SECRET

These supposed extracts from the third part of the Secret constitute in fact *a complete message*, which absolutely does not square with the context of the authentic Secret of July 13, 1917. It is impossible to insert it after the ETC, which has to mark the beginning, and before the conclusion, already known to us, which must follow. Besides, Louis Emrich forgot to include there the only phrase of this final Secret already revealed by Sister Lucy: «In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.»

4. A CURIOUS PLAGIARISM

As Father Alonso points out, it would be easy to show that the style of the supposed Secret is absolutely foreign to Our Lady of Fatima’s messages, and foreign also to Sister Lucy’s style. However, Louis Emrich, whose works show that he was very well versed in the study of all sorts of revelations and apparitions, true and false, had undoubtedly read *Fatima, merveille du XXe siècle* by Canon Barthas, of which one sentence is repeated word for word, and attributed to Our Lady: It was the great miracle of the sun. «Everyone has seen it, believers and unbelievers, country and city dwellers, scholars and journalists...»⁹⁸⁶

5. A TAKE-OFF ON THE SECRET OF LA SALETTE

In effect, it would be easy to point out the passages taken textually or inspired from the secret of La Salette. Except for the explicit allusion to atomic war, all the other themes are borrowed from it, more or less skilfully adapted to the circumstances of the twentieth century.

6. «PROCLAIM IN MY NAME»... THE SECRET OF SECRETS!

Louis Emrich seems to be unaware that on July 13, 1917, after having revealed the three Secrets to Lucy and Jacinta – Francisco did not hear the words of the Apparition – Our Lady

told them: «*Tell the Secret to no one. Francisco, yes, you may tell him.*»⁹⁸⁷ And for the third Secret, we know that this formal prohibition was not lifted until twenty-six years later, in 1943.

Taking no account of these reliable facts, Louis Emrich has Our Lady say, in the very process of revealing this final Secret: I beg you «*to proclaim in My name the following message to the entire world... And now, announce this in My name... Go, My child, and proclaim this! I shall always remain by your side to help you.*» We recognize here the influence of the message of La Salette, which concludes with Our Lady's pressing invitation: «Well, my children, you will make this known to all My people.»

7. AN ENORMOUS BLUNDER

In four places, Louis Emrich tells us that the “third Secret” which he quotes to us was revealed by Our Lady on October 13, 1917, after the miracle of the dance of the sun. The Blessed Virgin Herself is supposed to have developed this argument: «This miracle which you have just seen was the great miracle of the sun...!»

Now the fact is: 1. That Lucy herself did not see the miracle of the sun, all absorbed as she was, at the same moment, by the three silent visions she was contemplating in the sky. 2. That on October 13, 1917, the message was given by Our Lady during Her apparition at the usual place, above the holm oak, and thus before the miracle of the sun. 3. Finally, and above all, the third Secret was revealed on July 13, 1917, and not on October 13. Besides, on October 13, Our Lady's message was entirely public. It was immediately passed on by the little seers, in its entirety and on that very evening. No authentic document makes the slightest allusion to any new Secret revealed by Our Lady on this October 13.⁹⁸⁸

8. AN AUTHOR FERTILE IN FABRICATIONS

Other writings of Louis Emrich, the author of the *Neues Europa* articles, are crawling with monstrous errors and dissuade us from giving him the slightest credit. Here is a specimen. In a chapter entitled, «The third message of Fatima», he dares to write:

«The complete document of the third revelation of Fatima, in the year 1955 (sic), was personally transmitted to Pope Pius XII by Lucy (sic), being a professed religious for eighteen years (sic). (Three statements, three errors – quite a bit for just one sentence!)

«When the Pope broke the seal of the package which Sister Lucy, the seer of Fatima, passed on to him, he read the first and second message with complete tranquillity, but when he read the third message his hands began trembling, and a cold sweat came over his forehead. (This is a complete fabrication, since we have absolutely no evidence allowing us to state that Pius XII had read the third Secret! On the contrary, we have solid reasons to believe that he did not open the envelope received in 1957.) A great disquiet came over him. Anxiety was imprinted on his facial features. Nervously, he placed a seal on the

document of the third message of Fatima, with the order that it be presented to him again on the anniversary of the third revelation on October 13, 1960 (sic).

«He was unable to open it again and reread it, for on October 5, 1960, eight days before the ill-omened date of October 13, 1960, he closed his eyes forever. (Is it necessary to recall that Pius XII died on October 9, 1958?!)

«... Similarly, coming from other sources, details concerning the third message of Fatima are known, although they have been officially declared a state secret of the Vatican. What does the message say according to the details already known? It says that the years 1966-70 will bring a fundamental upheaval of the faith among men, and also of truth, the liberty of peoples, and the maintenance of world peace. The war of 1914-1918 will be followed by an even more important war in 1939-45, and a third war will come, whose peak will be reached in the years 1966-70, during which half of humanity will be destroyed.»⁹⁸⁹

A DOUBLE CONCLUSION

1. It is obvious that the text spread in 1963 by Louis Emrich is a fake and has nothing to do with the authentic third Secret of July 13, 1917.

2. However, it is not devoid of interest, because, as we shall see at the end of our inquiry, it really expressed, and in a rather striking manner, certain themes of the true Secret. Is it by a fortuitous coincidence? Is it the effect of some Roman indiscretion from which the author really benefited? Is it due to the fact that Louis Emrich was inspired by other authentic prophecies concerning the Church's future? We are unable to say. Nor is it important, because the *Neues Europa* text is so unreliable in itself that we cannot prudently draw any argument from it in the development of our demonstration.

II. FALSE NEWS AND FALSE SECRETS

THE THIRD SECRET DISAPPEARED FROM THE VATICAN?

In November, 1969, the agency *Italia* published sensational news, which various journals hastened to repeat:

«In the month of August 1969, while Pope Paul VI was resting at Castelgandolfo, several pieces of artwork in his Vatican apartments were repainted.

«On this occasion, one morning a papal chamberlain noticed that a burglary had been committed in the Pope's office: a paperweight made of precious metals, the work of Benvenuto Cellini, a crucifix and a ring had disappeared, the library had been broken into and some dossiers taken. Among these dossiers was one containing the third Secret of Fatima.»

The Vatican vigorously denied the news of the burglary. The Italian agency, to give credence to its information, then claimed that the Vatican had appealed to the services of SID, the Italian counter-intelligence agency!

In 1983, Daniel Réju – in an unscrupulous journalistic work where monumental errors and unfounded allegations often succeed each other to the tune of four or five a page⁹⁹⁰ – re-published this «hoax in bad taste», to repeat the just expression of Father Freire.⁹⁹¹

1976: A NEW IMPOSTURE

In November 1976, the Portuguese review *O Maximo* launched its first issue, claiming to reveal the third part of the Secret of Fatima, the text of which had allegedly been found – get this! – in a book belonging to a university professor in contact with the Vatican!

This new version, whose essential part is a prophecy of atomic war whose style and gross blunders are sufficient to unmask the imposture, is not worth taking up any more of our attention. Let us merely point out that Father Freire quotes the text⁹⁹² and that Father Messias Dias Coelho took the trouble to refute it in *Mensagem de Fatima*.⁹⁹³

Fortunately, this gross imposture does not seem to have crossed the borders of Portugal.

1978: AGAIN, THE SECRET OF NEUES EUROPA

On October 16, 1978, *L'Osservatore della Domenica* contained a curious article signed by a Vatican prelate, Msgr. Corrado Balducci, a clerk in the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Coming from a member of the Curia, and published in a journal of Vatican City, this article was going to set off more speculation on the subject of the third Secret. These are excerpts from it, quoted by *Documentation catholique* of January 7, 1979.⁹⁹⁴

«We do not want to get lost in the many texts and so-called prophetic messages, due often to sick people, who more easily find an echo in times of discouragement and scepticism. *There is, however, a text which causes us to reflect and whose authenticity seems acceptable: it is the one called "the third Secret of Fatima" (1917).* The rumours had been that it would be made public in 1960; then it was thought it would be for the Holy Year of 1975. If it had been a question of good news, consoling things, there would have been no reason not to divulge it. Unfortunately, it seems to contain painful and very tragic predictions. *Some indiscretions on this subject appeared in the press about 1963, at a moment when, it was said, this text had been brought to the knowledge of the president of the United States and the leader of the Soviet Union. It is also found in Renzo Baschera's book *Le Profezie*, from which it was reprinted by *Neues Europa*, which published it at Stuttgart on October 15, 1963.*

«*True or not, I quote a few sentences from it: "A great punishment shall come to all mankind... in the second half of the twentieth century... There is no order in anything. Even*

in the highest positions, it is Satan who governs... He will succeed in sowing confusion in the minds of the great scientists who invent arms, with which half of humanity can be destroyed in a few minutes (in 1917, atomic energy was still unknown). He will have in his power the mighty who govern peoples, and he will push them to produce these weapons in great quantities." "There will also come a time of the hardest trials for the Church." "The greatest World War will happen in the second half of the twentieth century... Millions and millions of men will envy those who are dead".»

Leaving it thus «to the reader what judgment to make on Fatima», the author concludes on a note of optimism after the death of John Paul I who, «by his smile gave hope and optimism to life.»

This article, which tended to give credence to the “false secret” of *Neues Europa*, in fact had no other authority than the Vatican clerk, who moreover had made sure his article appeared during the interregnum between the death of John Paul I and the election of John Paul II. In other words, it is absolutely worthless.

NOVEMBER 1980: AT FULDA, DID JOHN PAUL II REVEAL THE THIRD SECRET?

In the last eight years, many reviews have echoed the sensational declarations concerning the third Secret which Pope John Paul II is supposed to have made during his trip to Germany, in November of 1980.

The source of this information is an article in a little German review called *Stimme des Glaubens*:⁹⁹⁵

«When the Holy Father was on the square of the cathedral, at Fulda in West Germany,⁹⁹⁶ a group of pilgrims asked him several questions on the Secret of Fatima, Communion in the hand, the near future, etc. One of the participants, duly identified and worthy of belief in our editorial staff, wrote a written account of this dialogue, an excerpt of which is given here:

«Question: “What happened to the third Secret of Fatima? Wasn’t it supposed to be published in 1960?”

«The Holy Father: “Given the gravity of its contents, so as not to encourage the worldwide power of communism to take certain steps, my predecessors in the chair of Peter preferred, out of diplomacy, to delay its publication. On the other hand, all Christians must be content with this: if it is a question of a message where it is said that the oceans will entirely flood certain parts of the earth, that from moment to moment millions of men will perish... (these last expressions are borrowed from the false Secret of *Neues Europa*), it is really no longer the case that publication of such a secret message should be so strongly desired.”

«“Many people desire to know only out of curiosity and a taste for the sensational, but they forget that to know implies a responsibility for them. It is dangerous to want only to satisfy

one's curiosity, if one is not at the same time prepared to do something, or if one is convinced that we can do nothing to prevent the misfortune predicted."

«At this moment the Pope took out his Rosary and said: "Here is the remedy against the evil. Pray! Pray! – and ask nothing more. Entrust all the rest to the Mother of God."»

«Question: "What is going to happen in the Church?"»

«The Holy Father: "We have to be prepared to suffer, before long, great trials which will require of us the disposition to sacrifice even our life, and a total submission to Christ and for Christ. Through your prayers and mine, it is still possible to diminish this trial, but it is no longer possible to avert it, because only in this manner can the Church be effectively renewed. How many times has the renewal of the Church been brought about in blood! It will not be different this time. We have to be strong, to prepare ourselves, to entrust ourselves to Christ and to His Most Holy Mother, to be assiduous, very assiduous in praying the Rosary."»

After quoting this dialogue, Father Alonso, in his last article on the Secret of Fatima, expressed «*the most serious reservations*». He made his own the remark of Emmeran Ritter:⁹⁹⁷ «Anybody who knows the Holy Father's style cannot see this information as reliable.»

SEPTEMBER 1981: A DECLARATION OF THE BISHOP OF LEIRIA

As we wait for more exhaustive information which would allow us to settle the question, Father Alonso's opinion seems the surest one to us.⁹⁹⁸ This is all the more so because – during a visit to Austria on September 12-13, 1981 – Bishop do Amaral, the present Bishop of Leiria, insisted on making a correction regarding the third Secret, which undoubtedly was aimed at both the text of *Neues Europa*, and the rumours concerning Pope John Paul II's alleged declarations at Fulda. The Bishop of Fatima declared:

«Recently, the third part of the Secret of Fatima has been used to spread alarming and catastrophic news. As the Bishop of Leiria, I too examined texts of the Secret presented as authentic. I read them attentively, and although I was convinced this was pure speculation, *I contacted the seer Lucy, who confirmed to me that all this was an invention, and had nothing to do with the contents of the message.*

«Thus we need not be alarmed with all these "prophecies" of doom, which lack authenticity...

«Up to the present, the Secret has never been revealed, and consequently we know nothing about its contents.

«The message of Fatima has been studied for decades by specialists, on the basis of documents and contacts with Sister Lucy, in accordance with the competent ecclesiastical authority.

«As bishop of the diocese of Leiria, to which the sanctuary of Fatima belongs, I can state that the message is in full conformity with the Gospel and with the Magisterium of the Church, and is interpreted as a maternal warning of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of Christ and Mother of all men.»⁹⁹⁹

A WELL-KEPT SECRET

The conclusion of this quasi-exhaustive inquiry into the false texts of the third Secret seems clear to us: there has been no leak. The Secret has been well-kept – scrupulously by Sister Lucy, although very certainly with regret. But since her hierarchical superiors imposed on her, in the name of the Pope, to keep the strictest silence on this subject, once more she manifested her heroic obedience and her humility, guaranteeing by this very fact – if there was still any need of it – the authenticity of her mission.

As for the very few princes of the Church who have had the original text in their hands, and were able to read it in its complete version – we are sure of this fact for Cardinal Ottaviani and for Cardinal Ratzinger – they considered themselves bound under oath (either the ordinary oath of the Holy Office, or by a special commitment demanded by the Pope on this subject) not to say anything: «*I am bound by the Secret*», Cardinal Ottaviani stated on February 11, 1967.

Probably, the only eventual “indiscretions” could have come only from the three Popes whom we know read it: John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II. Now we have every reason to believe that they kept the Secret fiercely, fearfully, striving always to reveal nothing explicitly, to let nothing come through.

Is this to say, with Bishop do Amaral in September 1981, that «since the Secret has never been revealed up to now, consequently we can know nothing about its contents»? This conclusion is too hasty. For using a great number of reliable facts, we can still examine the diverse hypotheses which have been proposed, and eliminate the majority with certitude as absolutely inadequate. To make it clear in this way what the third Secret does not contain is again advancing with great strides towards the discovery of what it really contains.

CHAPTER III

THE FALSE HYPOTHESES

A SIMPLE MORAL EXHORTATION? NO, A TRUE PROPHECY!

The least serious hypothesis, still proposed to us from time to time, consists in claiming, as Father Caprile did in June 1960, that the third Secret «might only contain an exhortation to prayer and penance».¹⁰⁰⁰ But in this case, as we have said, why would the Holy Virgin have ordered the children to keep secret... right up until 1944 or 1960... a message already public since 1917?! Besides, this hypothesis of a “moralizing” Secret renders absolutely inexplicable the fact that, since 1960, the Popes have still not dared to reveal it. These are two decisive reasons for setting aside the arguments of those who insist on this inconsistent hypothesis.

In effect, we know that the final Secret, far from being a simple moral exhortation or even a grave warning, is like the second Secret, prophetic in nature. The testimony of Cardinals Ottaviani and Ratzinger coincides on this point with several statements of Sister Lucy, and with John XXIII’s reflection after reading the Secret: «This does not concern the years of my pontificate.» Besides, the first sentence of the Secret – «In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved» – is already in the future, and places us straightway in the prophetic genre.

A VERY OBSCURE PROPHECY?

If we were to believe Cardinal Ottaviani, the Secret would be in an obscure style, difficult to penetrate, a veritable sibylline text. This, of course, would justify its non-disclosure:

«The Message was not to be opened before 1960. I asked Lucy: “Why this date?” And she answered me: “Because then it will seem *mais claro*, clearer.” This made me think that the message was prophetic in tone, because it is precisely the prophecies, as we see in Holy Scripture, which are covered with a veil of mystery. They are not generally expressed in language which is manifest, clear, understandable to everybody; the exegetes today are still interpreting the prophecies of the Old Testament. And what are we to say, for example, of the prophecies contained in the Apocalypse? In 1960, Lucy told me, the message will seem clearer.»

Then the Cardinal added, in the same sense:

«It is clear, however, as we see in so many prophecies – because I imagine that the message of Fatima has a tone of prophecy, since Lucy said that in 1960 it would seem clearer – that there is here a sign which is as though veiled, it is not a language which is altogether manifest and clear...»¹⁰⁰¹

Clearly trying to mislead his audience, the Cardinal mixes the truth with erroneous insinuations at will. That the Secret is prophetic is precious information, corroborated, as we have seen, by all other authoritative witnesses. That it makes us think, or perhaps even refers us to such or such a prophecy of the Apocalypse is equally very possible, for we have other evidence of this.

But does this mean the prophecy is so impenetrable that it cannot be divulged, because it would be incomprehensible to the public as the Cardinal seems to suggest? Certainly not! Did not Sister Lucy herself say in 1955 that in 1960 the Secret would «seem clearer»? Thus it is comprehensible to everybody, at least after this date.

Besides, it is an abuse to attribute the same obscurity to all prophecies. Although some of the prophecies, especially those with an eschatological character, really are difficult to interpret, others, predicting near and precise events, are crystal clear in their limpidity: such as Jesus predicting His death and resurrection, or the ruin of Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰² The same goes for Saint John, predicting in the Apocalypse the fall of the Roman Empire, which persecuted the Church.

Moreover, we know the prophetic style of the Secret by the second part, and we have every reason to think that the third is in the same vein, the same style as the part immediately preceding it and the conclusion which follows. Now in all this there is nothing obscure, nothing ambiguous: nothing but facts, names, dates, all with perfect clarity. This is what constitutes the extraordinary, absolutely unique character of the prophecy of Fatima.

The only phrase already known, which surely is part of this final Secret – «In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved» – gives us the tone, which harmonizes perfectly with the context. In short, as Father Alonso emphasizes, we can be sure that:

«The Secret of Fatima has a logical content that is very clear and definite... In the known parts of the Secret and in what is being fulfilled of the part as yet unknown, the Secret of Fatima is not a mysterious, extravagant or nebulous text. Still less is it “sibylline”. It has nothing at all to do with the Delphic oracles with their double and enigmatic meanings. Fatima is as simple as the rural environment in which the happenings took place. It also finds support in the real events which have disturbed our times.»¹⁰⁰³

In effect, the prophecies of Fatima have been fulfilled in an obvious manner for everybody: the night illumined by an unknown light, the Second World War, then the expansion of Russian communism spreading its errors throughout the world, and causing wars and persecutions everywhere. We can be certain that the third part of the Secret predicts events at least as precise, as important, and as verifiable.

A PROPHECY OF GOOD THINGS OR BAD?

In 1959, Father Messias Dias Coelho believed that the Secret perhaps announced... «the striking triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary», writing:

«This triumph has already been predicted. It is certain. Why wouldn't the third part of the Secret shed light on it, give it new colours, give it concrete form by new details of a nature to further embellish the royal diadem of Our Lady of Fatima?»¹⁰⁰⁴

This completely optimistic hypothesis, coinciding with the euphoric prophecies of John XXIII announcing that Vatican Council II would be «*a new springtime for the Church*», «*a new Pentecost*», can no longer be sustained today. As Cardinal Cerejeira told Father Caillon, «*If it were happy, we would have been told. Since we are told nothing, it is because it is sad!*» This is a simple, common sense reflection, but it is very enlightening on the contents of the Secret. The Patriarch of Lisbon declared again: «I do not know the Secret. One time Pope John XXIII spoke to me about it vaguely, in a distant fashion, and I understood that it concerned very grave matters.»¹⁰⁰⁵ There is no doubt about it: the third Secret is not a prophecy of good things.

COULD IT BE THE PREDICTION OF THE END OF THE WORLD?

This has been said at times, and above all some have wanted to create this impression to lessen consideration for the Secret. It is clearly false, since the Secret ends with a conclusion full of hope for the future of the Church and Christendom: «In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world.»

When Sister Lucy declares to Father Fuentes that the Blessed Virgin «*made me understand that we are living in the last times of the world*», she is not talking about the «*end of the world*» properly speaking, which is identified with the return of Christ in glory for the last judgment. This indicates only that we are entering the last great period of the world's history, without being able to judge how long it will last.

When William Thomas Walsh asked her on July 15, 1946, «*Has Our Lady given you any revelations on the end of the world?*» Sister Lucy, avoiding the trap with supreme wisdom, responded in a decisive tone: «*I cannot answer that question.*»¹⁰⁰⁶ A reply worthy of Joan of Arc! For to say yes would have given the impression that the end of the world was imminent. To say no would have given the impression that it was still very far off. It would have been untruthful if, as it probably does, the third Secret really does allude to the "last times" spoken of by Holy Scripture. Sister Lucy answered well: Fatima has not come to contradict the Gospel by taking away our uncertainty on the end of the world, which is willed by God for our own good: «Be ready, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come... Be watchful, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.»¹⁰⁰⁷

A THIRD WORLD WAR? ATOMIC WAR?

This time we are not in an illusory hypothesis. For now prediction and foresight are identified. Here, the horrible prophecy coincides with the most lucid political analysis, which is also utterly frightening. Would not Our Lady have predicted this future war, which

threatens us so tragically? In 1917, She asked that the Rosary be recited every day to obtain peace, and She announced to the shepherds: «The war is going to end.» A few months later, the war indeed ended for Portugal. But on July 13, in the second part of the Secret, She had predicted a new world war if men obstinately refused to obey Her requests: «If people do not cease offending God, another worse war will begin in the reign of Pius XI...» Since Her requests were not accomplished, this terrible war took place.

Did not the third part of the Secret, quite simply, predict a third world war if the world still refused to be converted? As we have seen, this is what is stated in the version of the third Secret spread by *Neues Europa*: «A great punishment shall come to all mankind, not today as yet, nor even tomorrow, but in the second half of the twentieth century... The greatest World War will happen in the second half of the twentieth century.»

And this war will be even worse than the one before, for this time it will be an atomic war. Would not Our Lady have predicted this chastisement, the most atrocious punishment ever? The “Secret” of *Neues Europa* says so in striking terms: «Fire and smoke will fall from the sky, and the waters of the oceans will be turned to steam... Millions and millions of men will lose their lives from one moment to the next, and those who remain living will envy those who are dead...»

Is not this hypothesis conceivable? Does it not have the advantage of squaring perfectly with the context of the message, since it only prolongs for a more distant future the prophecy of the second Secret?

THE MATERIAL CHASTISEMENTS ARE ALREADY PREDICTED IN THE SECOND PART OF THE SECRET. This is precisely where Father Alonso rejects the argument with an utterly convincing force and clarity. Strong in the knowledge of numerous unpublished documents, and a profound study of all the texts, he says, resolutely, no: no, the final Secret does not contain the prediction of new material cataclysms, nor that of a new atomic world war, the description of which would chill us with fright. Why? For a very simple reason, but also a very solid and obvious reason once it is shown to us: precisely because the prediction of these chastisements is spelled out in the second part of the Secret. And it is not in the style of Our Lady’s message to give us wordy descriptions. In a few words, with astonishing conciseness everything is said, and we really cannot see what could be added.

The prediction of the third world war? As we have already seen, the ten lines of the second Secret give us a much more profound, much more exact view of our history. It is the same war, the same cycle of chastisements continuing inexorably since 1938. The mysterious red glow, giving a purple shade to the night sky of January 25, 1938, announced this great war, which has never ceased since then, and of which the German aggression was only the first phase. The war announced by the Secret of Fatima is the war which Soviet Russia unleashes against the world, spreading its errors everywhere, causing revolutions, enslaving nations, persecuting Christians relentlessly. It is the Bolshevik war, which tends to impose the

world hegemony of communism. Politically, it is still the second Secret being fulfilled. And its most fearsome prophecies perhaps concern our future.

Have we yet considered the force of these simple words: «*The good will be martyred*»? Do they not predict a systematic, constant, universal and implacable persecution? The prophecy has been fulfilled atrociously – and gloriously for the Church – since 1917, everywhere communism has been installed. But what will it be if the persecuting power, tomorrow, manages to dominate the entire world? The manoeuvres of appeasement and the measures of relative tolerance intended to reassure the West, so as to better lull it to sleep, seduce it, and enslave it, will then be useless. Indeed the most terrible persecutions are perhaps still in the future, as well as the insistent prediction according to which «*the Holy Father will have much to suffer*» – which, following Father Alonso, we think has yet to be fulfilled.

Have we weighed these terrible words: «*Various nations will be annihilated*»? Many commentators reassure us, interpreting these words in their weakest sense: it is only a question of nations erased from the map, because they have been absorbed politically by others. But was Sister Lucy bringing up simple annexations when she declared to Father Fuentes:

«Tell them, Father, that many times, the Most Holy Virgin told my cousins Francisco and Jacinta, as well as myself, that many nations will disappear from the face of the earth. She said that Russia will be the instrument of chastisement chosen by Heaven to punish the whole world if we do not obtain beforehand the conversion of that poor nation.»¹⁰⁰⁸

This is why we have to fear that the word “annihilated” might be taken in its literal, and most obvious sense: annihilated, destroyed from top to bottom. Incredible in 1917, this tragic eventuality is no longer inconceivable at all for us today, in the atomic age.

THE THIRD SECRET SPEAKS OF SOMETHING ELSE... So it is clear: all the material chastisements which still threaten us, even the most frightful ones, are already predicted by Our Lady in Her second Secret, and we also know the supernatural means of warding them off, before it is too late... But all these things, Father Alonso assures us, the third Secret does not speak of; it no longer mentions them. There is, he explains, a very simple and convincing reason:

«We should remember in interpreting Lucy’s writings that she never repeats herself in the same text, especially when she is dealing with related things. If therefore the first part of the Secret speaks of the vision of hell and the intercessory function of Our Lady to save sinners who would otherwise go there, and if the second part deals with the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, emphasizing particularly the disastrous effects failure to do so will bring to the world and the Church in their external, political and material aspects, then we can be certain that none of this will again be included in the third part.»¹⁰⁰⁹

In effect, since the Secret is composed of «three parts», coherent but distinct, whose dates indicated by Heaven for their disclosure were not the same, we can be sure that the third part of the Secret will not repeat the same thing as the second, at an interval of just a few lines! So, Father Alonso continues, it is no longer a question of material chastisements, which already are all evoked in the Secret which is known: famines, wars, persecutions. No, it must concern something else.

Let us add that these important words of Lucy: «In 1960, it will seem clearer», could not be understood if the final Secret predicted the third world war or atomic war. In 1945, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the horrors of nuclear war were only too imaginable!

Nor would the obstinate silence of John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II be any more understandable. Would not this terrible prophecy have been a weighty argument in their support for pacifist propaganda against atomic weapons?

A CHASTISEMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL ORDER

Then if the final Secret of Our Lady no longer is announcing temporal chastisements, it has to prophesy events of another order... undoubtedly a spiritual chastisement, far worse, more frightful than famine, wars and persecutions, much more to be feared than atomic war itself, for it concerns souls, their salvation or their eternal loss.

Now we understand the words of Sister Lucy to Father Fuentes in 1957, when she was completely absorbed by the thought of the Secret which was supposed to be divulged in 1960:

«Father, that is why my mission is not to indicate to the world *the material punishments* which are certain to come if the world does not pray and do penance beforehand. No! My mission is to indicate to everyone *the imminent danger we are in of losing our souls for all eternity if we remain obstinate in sin.*»

When she declared, during the same interview: «Believe me, Father, God will chastise the world and this will be in a terrible manner. The punishment from Heaven is imminent», she was thinking of this spiritual chastisement.

Moreover, perhaps she had even spoken about it beforehand to her bishop, Bishop da Silva. For when we consider the absolute discretion he ordinarily imposed on himself concerning the Secret, one of his statements, reported by Msgr. Colgan, cannot fail to grasp our attention:

«John Haffert, international delegate of the Blue Army, was an intimate friend of the first Bishop of Fatima, and one day the old bishop, *voluntarily steering the conversation to the subject of the Secret*, told him: “It is possible that it deals with world events (this was the most widespread interpretation), *but also that it deals with entirely spiritual subjects.*”»[1010](#)

In passing, let us point out that this intuition of the dramatic contents of the third Secret, and the spiritual nature of the chastisements announced, seems to us to explain perfectly Bishop da Silva's disconcerting attitude. Literally frightened, and afraid to learn more, he did not want to «interfere» in such a grave matter.

Yet, what a shame that he did not have the strength to assume his responsibilities as the first recipient of the Secret! For after him, for close to thirty years the successive Popes – and out of obedience, the bishops of Fatima, Bishop Venancio, and since 1972 Bishop do Amaral – have never consented to say a single word allowing the faithful to grasp, with certainty, what a grave question is dealt with in Our Lady of Fatima's final Secret.

FINALLY, THE TRUTH TRIUMPHS: THE BISHOP OF FATIMA INDICATES THE ESSENTIAL CONTENTS OF THE THIRD SECRET

On September 10, 1984, Bishop Alberto Cosme do Amaral, the present Bishop of Leiria-Fatima, finally coming out of his reserve, made a declaration of capital importance: it eliminates for good the principal false hypotheses concerning the contents of the third Secret. Here, in effect, is what appears in *Mensagem de Fatima* of February 1985 under the title: «The Secret of Fatima does not announce the end of the world»:

«*The Secret of Fatima speaks neither of atomic bombs, nor nuclear warheads, nor Pershing Missiles nor SS-20s*», declared Don Alberto Cosme do Amaral, Bishop of the diocese of Leiria-Fatima, during a session of questions and answers which took place in the *aula magna* of the technical University of Vienna, last September 10.

«*Its content, he insisted, concerns only our faith. To identify the Secret with catastrophic announcements or with a nuclear holocaust is to deform the meaning of the message.*»

«*The loss of faith of a continent is worse than the annihilation of a nation; and it is true that faith is continually diminishing in Europe.*»

«The prelate made these declarations accompanied by his secretary and interpreter, Father Luis Kondor, S.V.D. According to the latter, the Pope has serious reasons for not publishing the Secret.

«When Father Kondor was questioned to find out if Don Alberto had read the famous letter of Lucy, he answered no, but that he could base what he said *on the study he had made of the Fatima message.*»¹⁰¹¹

From now on, thanks to these firm and limpid words, all the uncertainties, all the hesitations are finally dispelled. All the false secrets, completely fabricated by unscrupulous hoaxers, all the groundless hypotheses are finally unmasked, denounced by a responsible authority which no longer seeks to hide the truth.

What is more, Bishop do Amaral no longer discourages us, as in September 1981, from seeking to discover the essential contents of the third Secret, on the pretext that nothing can be known about it since it has not yet been divulged. No: he himself speaks about it with assurance, «*basing what he said on the study he had made of the message*». This is to recognize that such a study is possible, and that it can result in the discovery of the truth.

So it is possible for us too to undertake this study – all the more since the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima's courageous declaration renders our task easier from now on. Indeed we can be sure that Bishop do Amaral did not break his ten-year silence on the third Secret without receiving all the guarantees that the conclusions of his study conformed to the truth on all points. We have seen that already, in 1981, he had consulted Sister Lucy to submit to her the texts of the false secrets spread by the press... It is morally certain that he would not have undertaken publicly to indicate, finally, the essential contents of the third Secret, without obtaining beforehand the seer's consent.

NOTE TO THE THIRD EDITION (MAY 1986)

As might have been foreseen – on a subject which continues to be so red hot! – the statements made at Vienna on September 10, 1984, by Bishop do Amaral in Father Kondor's company, have recently been questioned. After an article in a little Belgian review (*Mysterium Fidei*, no. 72, p. 34, December 85) reporting these words, and moreover in a gravely inexact manner – without any reference to the Vienna conference, situating these words in February 1985! – an editor of the German Catholic review *Der Fels* asked for explanations from Father Kondor and the Bishop of Leiria.

Since the subject has been rigorously forbidden in the Church since 1960 – we must not forget that Cardinal Ratzinger himself, having spoken about the Secret too freely in a declaration of November 1984, was obliged to retract in June 1985 (see below pages 818 to 849)! – the Bishop of Leiria was also obliged to discreetly backpedal (letter of January 21, 1986, quoted by *Der Fels* of March 1986, p. 92).

It remains, however, well established that Bishop do Amaral and Father Kondor really said what Father Messias Dias Coelho reported in his review (*Mensagem de Fatima* of February 1985, quoted above), following *Bote von Fatima* of December 13, 1984 (p. 131) and IDU (*Informationsdienst zur Ehren der Unbefleckten Gottesmutter Maria*) of September 20, 1984. None of these articles was the object of a denial. I am, besides, in a position to state that in the spring of 1985 – before Cardinal Ratzinger's "retraction"! – far from denying the information contained in *Mensagem de Fatima*, which was communicated to him, Father Kondor was preparing to publish the integral text of Bishop do Amaral's conference with his answers to the questions that followed! But this text, finally, was not published... We can easily guess why, and under what pressure.

We will furnish all the documents on this regrettable affair in our fourth volume, retracing the history of Fatima from 1960 to 1987. Meanwhile, one can check it in *La Contre-Réforme catholique au XXe siècle*, May 1986, no. 222 (Maison Saint-Joseph, 10260 Saint-Parres-lès-

Vaudes, France).

SECTION II: The real contents of the Third Secret

CHAPTER IV

THE LOSS OF FAITH

The final Secret of Our Lady predicts neither the end of the world nor atomic war: it concerns our faith, the Catholic Faith; and more precisely the loss of this faith, «*a perda da fé*», as the Bishop of Fatima makes clear. Henceforth this is not only a solidly grounded hypothesis for us, and besides that the only completely plausible one, it is a truth we can base ourselves on with certitude because it is rigorously demonstrable. How? By simply analyzing what has already been revealed to us of the Secret.

I. «IN PORTUGAL THE DOGMA OF THE FAITH WILL ALWAYS BE PRESERVED»

THE DECISIVE SENTENCE

Along with the many historical facts and positive criteria already pointed out, in effect we are aware of a little sentence which is, in all certainty, an element of the authentic third Secret. It is this sentence which gives us the key: «*Em Portugal se conservara sempre o dogma da fé, etc. In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved, etc.*»

This little sentence which, curiously, has gone unnoticed by the majority of Fatima historians,¹⁰¹² is obviously of vital importance. Since Lucy's Memoirs were published in their integral text, in effect we can make a decisive critical remark: in her third Memoir, written in July-August 1941, Sister Lucy had been content to mention the existence of a third part of the Secret, but as yet she had said nothing about it. A few months later, in her fourth Memoir, written between October-December 1941, she decided to say more. She recopied almost word for word the text of the third Memoir, but adding after the final words – «... and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world» – the new sentence: «*Em Portugal se conservara sempre o dogma da fé, etc.*»

Thus we now know the first sentence of the final Secret. This addition is definitely significant. For it is certain that Sister Lucy did not insert it here out of levity, but in the specific intention of showing us, in a veiled manner, the essential contents of the third Secret. Indeed, in 1943, when Bishop da Silva had asked her to write down the text, and she was encountering insurmountable obstacles in obeying this order, she declared that it was not absolutely necessary to do so, «*since in a certain manner she had said it*»,¹⁰¹³ Undoubtedly she was alluding to the ten words discreetly added in December 1941 to the text of the great Secret – but added so discreetly that almost nobody noticed them. However, they are very enlightening when we stop and think about them.

A REASSURING PROMISE...

«*In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.*» This is a reassuring promise concerning the Faith of Portugal, parallel to the other promise of the temporal order from

which the “Land of Holy Mary” had already benefited. These two promises shed a mutual light on each other.

On August 18, 1940, Sister Lucy wrote to Father Gonçalves:

«The proof that (God) gives us (of the authenticity of His requests) is the special protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary over Portugal due to its consecration to Her. Those people whom you write to me about have a good reason to be scared. All this would have happened to us, had our bishops not paid attention to the requests of Our Good Lord, and prayed with all their heart for His mercy and the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our Blessed Heavenly Mother.»¹⁰¹⁴

A few months later, in her letter of October 24, 1940, destined for Pope Pius XII, she wrote:

«Our Lord promises a special protection to our little nation due to the consecration made by the Portuguese Prelates to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as proof of the graces that would have been granted to other nations, had they also consecrated themselves to Her.»¹⁰¹⁵

It is clear that for the same reason, because of the filial devotion of its Pastors to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Portugal «will always preserve the dogma of the Faith».

However, it is important not to exaggerate the contents of this promise. The wording is impersonal: the true Faith will be preserved in Portugal – but it is not said by whom. Will it be by a unanimous nation or by a tiny remnant of the Faithful? In any case, it is not a striking triumph for the Church being announced. The obvious meaning of the phrase is different; this promise, which is narrowly limited in space, supposes a broader picture which is very sombre. Father Messias Dias Coelho noted it again recently: «This allusion, so positive about what will happen among us, suggests to us that it will be different around us...»¹⁰¹⁶

... IN A DRAMATIC CONTEXT

This unconditional prophecy concerning Portugal “most faithful” – to repeat the title once granted the kings of Portugal by the Popes – is situated in a context which we know, through other sources, is extremely grave and tragic. As we have said, the third Secret is surely a prophecy of chastisement. It comes immediately after the final words of the second Secret, which are so terrible: «The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.» And the events which it announces appear again as the fearsome consequences of refusing to accomplish Our Lady’s requests. Finally, we know that it is being fulfilled during the intermediate period which began in 1960, and will last until the end of the chastisements with the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Indeed all the experts are in accord on this point. In her fourth Memoir, when she discreetly revealed the first sentence of the third Secret, Sister Lucy did not situate it in its logical place. She added it all at the end of the Secret, while its real place is obviously between the second part and the general conclusion.¹⁰¹⁷

Thus the obvious meaning of the first words of the third Secret, when they are considered in their immediate context, leaves little room for doubt.

II. APOSTASY WILL INVADE THE CHURCH

We can do no better than to quote Father Alonso's judicious commentary here:

«*In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved*": The phrase most clearly implies *a critical state of Faith*, which other nations will suffer, that is to say, *a crisis of Faith*; whereas Portugal will preserve its Faith.»¹⁰¹⁸

Father Alonso writes again:

«In the period preceding the great triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, terrible things are to happen. These form the content of the third part of the Secret. What are they?

«If "in Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved" ... ***it can be clearly deduced from this that in other parts of the Church these dogmas are going to become obscure or even lost altogether.***»¹⁰¹⁹

«Thus it is quite possible that, in this intermediate period which is in question (after 1960 and before the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary), ***the text makes concrete references to the crisis of the Faith of the Church and to the negligence of the pastors themselves.***»¹⁰²⁰

«One conclusion does indeed seem to be beyond question: the content of the unpublished part of the Secret does not refer to new wars or political upheavals, but to happenings of a religious and intra-Church character, which of their nature are still more grave.»¹⁰²¹

THE RALLYING OF THE EXPERTS

It must be remarked that Father Alonso was not the first to express this hypothesis. It imposes itself as soon as we pay serious attention to the first words of the third Secret, purposely reveal-ed by Sister Lucy. In 1967, Father Martins dos Reis wrote in *Sintese Critica*:

«Everything which was said (on the contents of the third Secret) was nothing more than fantasies in bad taste, *except what has to do with a crisis in "the dogma of the Faith" in certain nations, and less so in Portugal...*»¹⁰²²

In 1968, Father Roger Rebut was more explicit:

«This statement of the Blessed Virgin suggests, by opposition to the word *always*, that *in other places* it will not be the same. These words recall Our Lady's words pronounced at La Salette and Pellevoisin regarding the Church.»¹⁰²³

Before long, the majority of Portuguese experts rallied to this hypothesis: Father Messias Dias Coelho, publicly, in his journal *Mensagem de Fatima*; more discreetly, Canon Galamba, Father Luis Kondor, vice-postulator of the causes of beatification for Jacinta and Francisco, and undoubtedly Bishop Venancio himself, who strongly desired publication of Father Alonso's works.

Can we be more precise on the probable contents of this prophecy concerning the crisis of the Faith? In 1970, Father Messias Dias Coelho wrote:

«From the mouths of some Fatima experts we were able to hear this opinion: very probably the third part of the Secret does not only speak about the crisis of the Faith, *but also about the countries in which it is more acutely felt.*»¹⁰²⁴

We know that this was also Father Schweigl's opinion. He confided it to a member of his entourage – from whom we have this information – after returning from his investigative trip to Portugal, when he had the privilege of being able to question Sister Lucy at length.

AN UNPRECEDENTED APOSTASY

Whether various nations are cited in the Secret or not, we now know that it concerns not only a crisis of the Faith strictly limited to some regions of the world: «The loss of Faith *of a continent* (declares the Bishop of Leiria) is worse than the annihilation of a nation; and it is true that Faith is continually diminishing *in Europe.*»¹⁰²⁵

As for Cardinal Ratzinger, it is clear that his declarations to Vittorio Messori, in August 1984, equally confirm Father Alonso's hypothesis. The Cardinal tells us that the third Secret of Fatima deals with «*dangers threatening the faith and life of Christians, and therefore the world*». It is even probable that it was reading this extraordinary document that made the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith decide to denounce the grave errors which have taken root, and today threaten the integrity of the Catholic Faith in four continents out of five.¹⁰²⁶

Such a crisis of faith, on the scale of several nations or entire continents, has a name in Holy Scripture: *apostasy*. The word itself might even be found in the text of the Secret.

Now everything is clear. This hypothesis, and it alone, corresponds perfectly to all the data concerning the mysterious Secret – we will have an opportunity to return to this point in the next chapter. And first of all, the fulfilment of this prophecy, expressed at the Cova da

Iria forty years earlier, is as striking as it is undeniable.

III. SINCE 1960 THE PROPHECY IS BEING FULFILLED BEFORE OUR EYES

Yes, henceforth we understand Lucy's words: «In 1960, it will be clearer.» Our Father already denounced the seriousness of this terrible crisis of the Faith in 1959, in a series of letters entitled, "The mystery of the Church and the Anti-christ",¹⁰²⁷

With the passing of time, the fact has become more and more obvious. While using prudent circumlocutions, Father Alonso explains it to his reader. His analysis deserves to be followed, step by step:

«Can this intermediate period (which corresponds to the spiritual chastisements announced by the third Secret) be determined, chronologically, as being the one we have been living through, *since the immediate pre-conciliar period and the post-conciliar period?* (Let us point out how he skilfully sidesteps the conciliar period, curiously isolated from the pre-conciliar period, which prepared it, and the post-conciliar period, which flowed from it!) *We may affirm in general that this is so*, for it is certain that the consecration of Russia has still not been made.

«On the other hand, the internal troubles in the post-conciliar Church bear witness to a lamentable state of affairs, clearly pointed out by Pope Paul. This has been characterized not only by conflicts and antagonisms within the Church, but also by a tremendous weakening of the seriousness of theology; this was followed by a hypercriticism which is in the process of undermining Catholic exegesis; and later on, an anything-goes theology, which makes a game out of proposing new interpretations and new dogmas every day; finally a terrible crisis of the Faith in which the Church is without joy, without firmness, without support and without inner strength to work, faced with a hostile world which pretends to reduce it to a secular establishment.»

How correct all these observations are! But such is their importance that our official expert saw fit to prudently attenuate his thought. He will not, all the same, declare openly what follows inevitably from his thesis. That is, it is precisely this terrible apostasy from the Faith – which was the work of a minority of bishops and theologians before the Council, was then imposed on the majority during the Council, and which has grown uninterruptedly worse since then – which is the subject of the final Secret of Fatima! Hence he adds some expressions of uncertainty about the truths he has just enunciated, truths which are too powerful:

«*No one can doubt that this is what happened...* But is it precisely to this condition that the words of the text allude, "In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved"? *There are assuredly good grounds for believing that they do.* It is not, however, easy to say if the third part of the Secret refers to the era we are living in today or to another epoch yet to come. To limit the "intermediate" period to the present time is extremely probable, but not certain.»¹⁰²⁸

In other words: the Church is suffering from a frightful crisis of the Faith since 1960; this is certain. On the other hand, it is definite that the final Secret of Fatima announces a grave crisis of the Faith; this is equally certain, Father Alonso tells us. Is there not a necessary correspondence between these two facts? Our expert thinks so, proves it, but does not dare to say so categorically... at least in 1976. For six years later, in an article on the Secret of Fatima where he takes up the same thesis almost line by line, it is remarkable that he failed to go through the motions of repeating these restrictions, which do not take into account one of the four definite facts concerning the contents of the third Secret.¹⁰²⁹ In effect, as we have shown, it is certain that the prophecy began being fulfilled in a clearer manner, beginning in 1960.¹⁰³⁰

For this reason it is useless, henceforth, to try to continue dissimulating about the truth. Besides, in September 1984, Bishop do Amaral left not the slightest doubt on this subject. He tells us without the slightest hesitation: the third Secret of Fatima prophesies the terrible crisis of faith from which the Church is presently suffering.

«BEHOLD, I HAVE FORETOLD IT TO YOU!» (Mt. 24:25)

Once this certainty is acquired, it is obvious that the fact is of the highest importance. The prophecy of Fatima then assumes a more extraordinary scope in our eyes. In 1917, the Immaculate Virgin had predicted, at the Cova da Iria, the two major facts which were going to dominate the history of the century: the worldwide expansion of Russian Bolshevism, and the unprecedented apostasy which would strike the Catholic Church.

Even if the final Secret of Fatima did nothing more than announce, without further details, this terrible crisis of Faith which would suddenly ravage the Church if Our Lady's requests were not obeyed, this prophecy would already be of capital importance. But, as we will see, the third Secret tells us more. It does not merely denounce the frightful misfortune of this collapse of Faith. It also indicates the causes; it sheds its own divine light on the dramatic confrontations which have happened within the very bosom of the Church for well nigh thirty years, and it points to the one, narrow road of true salvation.

CHAPTER V

THE DEFICIENCIES OF THE PASTORS AND THEIR CHASTISEMENT

Is the Pope mentioned in the unpublished part of the Secret? Once again, the most enlightening rule is the conformity of the third Secret to the context of the message. This rule allows us to conclude, with assurance, in the affirmative: Yes, the Holy Father is certainly mentioned in the final Secret of Our Lady, and we can even deduce in what sense.

I. THE ROLE OF THE POPE IN THE SECRET WHICH HAS BEEN REVEALED

The great Secret of Fatima is nothing other than the concise and clear expression of Divine Mercy's great design for our century, given by the Blessed Virgin Herself. We must reread the text attentively to discover (perhaps to our astonishment) to what extent the Sovereign Pontiff's role is absolutely decisive for the success of this great providential design. In the twenty-three lines of Sister Lucy's manuscript,¹⁰³¹ the Holy Father is mentioned five times. Moreover the very structure of the Secret, where the promises and announcement of chastisements are repeated twice in a row, clearly underlines the supreme responsibility of the Holy Father, on whom everything depends in the final analysis. Indeed the requests of Our Lady addressed to the Holy Father are at the centre of the text, like a key phrase:¹⁰³²

First Exposition of the Promises

«If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.»

First Exposition of the Chastisements

«The war is going to end, but if people do not cease offending God, another worse one will begin IN THE REIGN OF PIUS XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that it is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and THE HOLY FATHER.»

THE REQUESTS OF OUR LADY, CONDITIONS FOR SALVATION

«TO PREVENT THIS (all the chastisements just described, as well as those that follow and to obtain the fulfilment of the promises), I SHALL COME TO ASK (THE HOLY FATHER) FOR THE CONSECRATION OF RUSSIA TO MY IMMACULATE HEART, AND THE COMMUNION OF REPARATION ON THE FIRST SATURDAYS OF THE MONTH.»

Second Exposition of the Promises

«If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace.»

Second Exposition of the Chastisements

«If not, Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred. THE HOLY FATHER WILL HAVE MUCH TO SUFFER. Various nations will be annihilated.»

THE POPE, THE FIRST ONE TO WHOM OUR LADY'S REQUESTS ARE ADDRESSED

The two requests of Our Lady of Fatima to the Supreme Pontiff, which are sandwiched in between the twofold presentation of the promises and chastisements, clearly stand out as the primordial condition of salvation. This is the heart of the drama, and the key to the prophecy.

In the apparition of Tuy, the words of Our Lady are even more explicit in this sense:

«The moment has come when **God asks the Holy Father to make**, in union with all the bishops of the world, the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to save Russia by this means.»

In May of 1930, Sister Lucy wrote to her confessor, Father Gonçalves, the most precise request which the Blessed Virgin Mary charged her to pass on to the Pope:

«The Good Lord promises to put an end to the persecution in Russia **if the Holy Father deigns to make, and orders** the bishops of the whole Catholic world to make with him, a solemn and public act of reparation and consecration of Russia to the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, **if His Holiness also promises**, once this persecution ends, to approve and recommend the practice of the devotion of reparation indicated above.»¹⁰³³

«The Good Lord insists **that I request the Holy Father to approve the devotion of reparation** which God Himself and the Blessed Virgin deigned to request in 1925.»¹⁰³⁴

This shows to what extent the Message of Fatima is eminently ecclesial, not just in the sense that it concerns the whole Church, but especially because the incomparable promises attached to the fulfilment of the heavenly requests are attached first of all to the head of the Church, the Pope himself. It is similar to Paray-le-Monial, where the requests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were addressed not to the people, but to King Louis XIV.

To be sure, in our twentieth century God has completely entrusted the salvation of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. But the Blessed Virgin – like the Holy Spirit, Whose visible Figure and living Tabernacle She is – cannot act, and does not wish to act in the Church independently of the ministers instituted by Jesus Christ to teach, govern and sanctify the faithful in His name. The fulfilment of the promises of Fatima – incomparable,

unheard of promises – depends entirely on the good will of the Pope, who by his apostolic authority must accept and promote the admirable design of mercy proposed by Heaven, but which cannot be fulfilled without his cooperation.

It cannot be denied that in the Message of Fatima, the responsibility confided to the Holy Father is immense, dizzying: either wonderfully to the good, or terrible and disastrous. For it can be exercised for better or for worse: «*I will give you the keys to the kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in Heaven.*» (Mt. 16:19) The Pope need only open the gates to the torrent of graces and blessings overflowing from the Sacred Heart of Jesus onto all souls, on Christendom and all the Church – through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, according to the design of infinite mercy from the Father of all good things. Jesus is the well. The Immaculate Heart of Mary is the canal. But it belongs to the Church, and in the first place the successor of Peter, to open the gates.

What a crushing responsibility! But it clearly does not suppress in any way our own responsibility – the responsibility of each of the faithful, who, once they have learned Heaven’s requests, must strive to put them in practice in their own life.

Yet, Christ willed that His Church be hierarchical, and even the sum total of all the individual wishes of the members of Holy Church cannot replace this act of obedience by the Head. For it is this meritorious act, an act of burning faith and filial confidence, this act of courage by the supreme authority, ordering all the bishops also to conform to the commands of Heaven – it is this act of the Sovereign Pontiff that God requests and waits for, and He will not change His plan...

*THE CONCLUSION OF THE SECRET:
FROM THE POPE ALONE WILL DELIVERANCE FINALLY COME*

«In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph.

«THE HOLY FATHER WILL CONSECRATE RUSSIA TO ME, and she will be converted and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world.»

Just as He is faithful, God is inflexible in His commands. He does not change His designs to cater to the capriciousness of men. No, He will not change His plan. He absolutely wills the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as a preliminary condition for its miraculous conversion. Sister Lucy was astonished to hear this from Our Lord:

«I asked Him why He would not convert Russia without the Holy Father making this consecration: Our Lord answered, “Because I want My whole Church to recognize this consecration as a triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so as to extend its cult and place devotion to this Immaculate Heart alongside the devotion to My Divine Heart.”»[1035](#)

Even before the conversion of Russia and peace for Christendom, it is this consecration of Russia by the Pope and all the bishops of the Catholic world which will constitute the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Just as He willed that the Sacred Heart of His Son triumph in the heart of King Louis XIV, that it be honoured publicly in his palace, and through him in all the courts of Europe as well – in the same way God wills today that the Immaculate Heart of His Most Holy Mother be venerated by the pastors of His Church, as the Pope orders all the bishops to accomplish with him all the acts of devotion requested by Heaven. Let them consecrate Russia to Her Immaculate Heart, in an act of public and solemn faith in Her universal mediation, proclaiming before the whole world their complete trust in Her all-powerful intercession.

From the above, it can be said without exaggerating: the salvation of the world is in the hands of the Vicar of Christ, and completely depends on his exact and prompt obedience to the desires of the Queen of Heaven. The salvation of many souls or their loss; war or peace; the worldwide expansion of atheistic communism or the conversion of Russia; the exaltation of the Church or an apostasy devouring and consuming the living cells of its body – everything depends first of all on him, and in the final analysis on him alone.

THE POPES WILL UNDERGO THE CHASTISEMENT OF THEIR DISOBEDIENCE

The other three references to the Holy Father in the second Secret are found in the two paragraphs announcing the chastisements which will fall on the Church and humanity, if they rebel against God's plan.

First of all, Our Lady dates the beginning of the great chastisement by referring to the Pope: «*In the reign of Pius XI...*», She says. And we have seen that this expression, far from being erroneous or insignificant, was surely deliberate: it underlines the responsibility of the first Pope to receive the requests of Fatima, and the first to decide to pay no attention to them.¹⁰³⁶

Next, in two places in the Secret, Our Lady foretells the sufferings of the Holy Father. However, it is important to interpret this prophecy correctly. Here once again, a later revelation sheds light on the meaning of the Secret of 1917: the revelation of August 1931, which is so important, but curiously enough, passed over in silence by the majority of commentators on the Message of Fatima.

«Later on by means of an intimate communication, Our Lord complained to me, saying: “*They did not wish to heed My request!... Like the King of France, they will repent and do it, but it will be late. Russia will have already spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars, and persecutions of the Church. The Holy Father will have much to suffer.*”»¹⁰³⁷

There are other texts of Lucy, and we shall see them later on, insisting on this chastisement of the papacy, comparable to the chastisement that befell King Louis XIV and his successors for not obeying the requests of the Sacred Heart, passed on by St. Margaret Mary. However,

we have said enough on this subject to draw the obvious conclusion about the content of the third Secret.

II. THE THIRD SECRET ANNOUNCES THE DEFICIENCIES OF THE PASTORS

THE POPE FREE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE APOSTASY IN THE CHURCH?

The inference is simple: if the Holy Father is named five times in the part of the Secret which has been disclosed, as the first one responsible for the salvation or chastisement of Christendom, how is it conceivable for him to have no responsibility for an infinitely more serious catastrophe, a spiritual one, which therefore depends on his direct and immediate power?

It might be possible for a schism or heresy in one part of the world, tearing part of the flock away from the Church. But the fragment of the Secret which we know, as small as it is, does not permit us to suspect this kind of trial. It suggests instead a near universal apostasy. And in this case, how could such an apostasy happen except with the knowledge of the Pope, in direct dependence on his supreme responsibility as Guardian of the Faith? How can “the dogma of the Faith” come close to disappearing without a lapse on the part of him whose principal duty is precisely to preserve intact the deposit of Faith within the Church?

In short, if the second Secret indicates discreetly but firmly the overwhelming responsibility of the Popes in the temporal chastisements which fall on Christendom, is it not unthinkable that the third Secret predicts the crisis in the Church without indicating the cause? Since Her prophecies which contain threats are always conditional, Our Lady of Fatima never predicts a chastisement without mentioning the responsibility of those who draw it on themselves: it is sinners who go to hell; and the Pope, bishops and faithful, by turning a deaf ear to Her requests, bring on the scourge of communism and its aftermath. If then the apostasy makes its way into the Church, how can the Shepherds not be responsible? The good shepherd does not let the wolf penetrate into the sheepfold and ravage the flock. And as Sister Lucy said to one of her nephews in the priesthood: «*The sheep follow their Pastor when he knows how to lead them and guide them on the good path.*»¹⁰³⁸

PARALLEL CHASTISEMENTS

Moreover, one fact stands out before our eyes: the parallel and simultaneous development of the two series of chastisements: the temporal ones striking the nations and the Church, but from without, and the spiritual chastisements which wound the Church from within, by the loss of Faith.

Now we know that it is one and the same act of the Sovereign Pontiff, finally consecrating Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary – «*but it will be late*», *very late* – which will put an end to those dark years and decades of communist domination and apostasy within the

Church. This underlines the fact that the two chastisements have the same cause: the obstinacy of the shepherds in not paying attention to the requests of Our Lady, their refusal to enter once and for all into the ways of God: «*To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.*»

This is also what the internal logic of that part of the Secret which has been revealed leads us to believe: the Queen of Prophets, predicting that an unprecedented spiritual chastisement would fall on the Church, also explicitly announced the causes of this apostasy.

IN PORTUGAL... AND AT ROME?

The very first sentence of the third Secret undoubtedly supplies us with some additional evidence.

From beginning to end, the great Secret has a worldwide scope: it speaks of nations, the Pope, and the Universal Church. There is nothing particularist about it. The third part of this Secret deals with the «*preservation of the dogma of the Faith*». For a Roman Catholic, these words call to mind the Apostolic See and its organs – today, the “*Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*” – which has the precise duty, not only to preserve intact in its infallible magisterium the sacred deposit of Divine Revelation, but to defend it and zealously ensure that only the purest Catholic Truth is taught by all the pastors and professed by all the faithful of the Church. If we consider them carefully, the eleven known words of the third Secret are stupefying: «*In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved*» etc. In Portugal... and at Rome? The little phrase deliberately revealed by Sister Lucy does not tell us. If the third Secret mentions Rome and the Pope – which is extremely probable – it is in the continuation of the text, which predicts the apostasy.

THE THESIS OF FATHER ALONSO:

«GRAVE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE UPPER HIERARCHY»

The opinion of Father Alonso, expressed on many occasions and with increasing firmness right up until his death on December 12, 1981, must hold our attention here. In 1969, he thought that the third Secret of Fatima predicted the crisis of Faith within the Church. But in 1976, in *The Secret of Fatima: Fact and Legend*, he added another element of the highest importance to his exposé:

«It is therefore completely probable that the text (of the third Secret) ***makes concrete references to the crisis of faith within the Church and to the negligence of the pastors themselves.***»¹⁰³⁹ He speaks further of «internal struggles in the very bosom of the Church and of ***grave pastoral negligence by the upper hierarchy***»,¹⁰⁴⁰ of «***deficiencies of the upper hierarchy of the Church.***»¹⁰⁴¹

Surely Father Alonso did not put down such serious words in black and white without carefully considering the whole impact. On this point the evolution in his thinking is noteworthy: he can hardly be accused of being an *a priori* “integrist”. In 1967, he had gone along with the declaration of Cardinal Ottaviani concerning the third Secret:

«It is a Secret addressed to the Holy Father» (he wrote at that time) and it would be impertinent and useless to hypothesize about its content.» He added: «Moreover, everything leads us to believe that this final Secret does not contain any new themes but simply a pressing appeal along with a grave admonition to today’s world to practice penance and interior conversion through the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.»¹⁰⁴²

In 1976, he had totally changed his mind. Now we are sure that in the meantime he had seen Sister Lucy often; we know that, during his work on the critical edition of the documents on Fatima, he had opportunities to question her on several occasions. As the official expert appointed by Bishop Venancio, would he have adopted this new position on such a burning question without being certain of at least the tacit accord of the seer? He gives us reason to believe that he knows much more about the subject than he is able to say:

«... Does the unpublished text speak of concrete circumstances? It is very possible that it speaks not only of a real crisis of the faith in the Church during this in-between period, but, like the secret of La Salette for example, there are more concrete references to the internal struggles of Catholics or to the fall of priests and religious. ***Perhaps it even refers to the failures of the upper hierarchy of the Church.***

«For that matter, none of this is foreign to other communications Sister Lucy has had on this subject.»¹⁰⁴³

These lines have a precious value for us, for two reasons. For in addition to the solid induction of Father Alonso, which he established using numerous bits of evidence – «I have the texts,» he declared –, they indirectly reveal to us the thoughts of the seer herself, such as they appeared in all clarity to a theologian without any prejudice. Indeed if Father Alonso had been mistaken about the content of the final secret, we can be sure that Sister Lucy – who had no qualms about refuting fantastic theories on several occasions – would have found a way to let him know.

III. NOW EVERYTHING IS EXPLAINED

If the third Secret predicts not only a near universal apostasy, but also reveals the grave shortcomings of consecrated souls – priests and religious – but especially the highest members of the hierarchy and the Sovereign Pontiffs themselves, giving concrete but easily understood details –, this would suddenly explain an impressive collection of diverse and independent facts concerning the mysterious Secret. Without this key, these facts would

remain for us for so many incomprehensible enigmas.

THREE MONTHS OF INSURMOUNTABLE AGONY

In the first place, we see how the very contents of the Secret held back Sister Lucy's pen, preventing her for several months from writing down the text in spite of the express order of her bishop.¹⁰⁴⁴

«Moreover (Father Alonso writes), how are we to understand Lucy's great difficulty in writing the final part of the Secret when she has already written other things that were extremely difficult to put down? Had it been merely a matter of prophesying new and severe punishments, Sister Lucy would not have experienced difficulties so great that a special intervention from Heaven was needed to overcome them.»¹⁰⁴⁵

«But, if it were a matter of internal strife within the Church and of serious pastoral negligence on the part of high-ranking members of the hierarchy, we can understand how Lucy experienced a repugnance that was almost impossible to overcome by natural means.»¹⁰⁴⁶

As a matter of fact, Sister Lucy surely realized that by writing these twenty or so lines, she was inaugurating an event which would have a formidable impact in the history of the Church and the world. For in the school of the Most Blessed Virgin, Lucy was used to judging all things in the light of God: thus in her eyes war, cataclysms and famine, the spread of the communist Gulag to the whole planet, the annihilation of several nations – all these things are infinitely less serious than the apostasy within the Church herself and the apostasy of her Pastors.

To be sure, the Church has the promises of eternal life, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. The infallibility of the Pope will never be compromised. For it is certain that never will any Pope be able to teach error in the exercise of his infallible magisterium, whether ordinary or extraordinary. Nevertheless, the shortcomings of the Pastors in the areas where they are not infallible can still have the most disastrous consequences. Through their fault, the faithful can lose their Faith, resulting – along with the frightful injury done to God by this collective apostasy – in the eternal loss of millions of souls. This is where the third Secret is connected with the first one, concerning the vision of hell. And in this aspect, in its insistence on the responsibilities of Church leaders, the third Secret undoubtedly seemed to Lucy the most terrible one, and above all the most difficult to transmit. For Lucy was a humble religious, accustomed at all times to looking on her superiors as the authentic representatives of God. Now that she found herself suddenly ordered by Heaven to communicate such severe warnings to them, such sharp reproaches regarding their conduct, it was an extremely painful mission for her.

We have already seen how on June 12, 1941, Our Lord commanded her to pass on a similar message to the bishops of Spain. For more than a year, Sister Lucy hesitated, and could not bring herself to inform the Bishop of Tuy. As we recall, it was a severe admonition concerning the internal disorders of the Church in Spain, for which the bishops were

responsible. They were expected to apply the remedies and use firmness in doing so. If they failed to do this, they would draw down a chastisement on their country once again.¹⁰⁴⁷

We ought to reread this whole chapter of the history of Fatima, which undoubtedly places us in the atmosphere of the third Secret. For we know that the numerous revelations and divine communications received by Sister Lucy throughout her life were always in close connection with the great prophetic Secret of 1917, coming only at the providential hour to make more explicit a particular request of Our Lady. Thus it is clear that the message to the bishops of Spain was directly related – being an application to a particular instance – of the themes developed in the third Secret on the subject of the universal Church.

SOME REVEALING ADMISSIONS

We know that the third Secret explicitly concerns the Pope, from several indications in the writings and statements of Sister Lucy.

On March 2, 1945, she wrote to Father Aparicio, her former confessor, who was then a missionary in Brazil:

«Do they pray for the Holy Father over there? It is necessary to pray unceasingly for His Holiness. *Days of great affliction and torment still await him.*»¹⁰⁴⁸

Father A. M. Martins, who quotes this text, notes down judiciously: «*An unconscious reference to the crisis in the Church?*»¹⁰⁴⁹ Indeed we see in this a proof that the sufferings of the Holy Father mentioned by the Secret cannot be identified – as many commentators think – with the afflictions of Pius XII during the Second World War. No, in 1945 Sister Lucy shows us that the great tribulations of the papacy are still to come. If the third Secret is precisely the prophetic announcement of these tribulations, the reflection of Sister Lucy and her pressing invitation to pray unceasingly for the Holy Father is perfectly understandable.

Here is another echo of the private disclosures of Sister Lucy: we know that Father Schweigl, once he decided to go to Portugal to conduct a detailed investigation on Fatima, was entrusted by Pius XII with a secret mission concerning the seer. On September 2, 1952, he interrogated Sister Lucy at the Carmel of Coimbra. Although the Holy Office did not authorize the publication of this interrogation,¹⁰⁵⁰ on his return to the Russicum Father Schweigl confided this to one of his colleagues who questioned him on the Secret:

«I cannot reveal anything of what I learned at Fatima concerning the third Secret, but I can say that it has two parts: *one concerns the Pope*. The other, logically – although I must say nothing – would have to be the continuation of the words: *In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.*” Regarding the part that concerns the Pope, I had asked (our witness continues): “The present Pope or the next one?” To this question Father Schweigl made no reply.»¹⁰⁵¹

If Pope Pius XII already had, through Father Schweigl, a veiled indication of the subject matter of the third Secret, this would explain many things. Among other things, it would explain the mission of Cardinal Ottaviani in May 1955, his meeting with Sister Lucy and the fact that he questioned her on the third Secret. Perhaps it would also explain why in 1956 or the beginning of 1957, Rome demanded the transfer of this document to the Holy Office. It would also explain why Pius XII, already knowing enough to surmise the gravity of the events predicted in the Secret, preferred to wait, putting off till later the awesome decision to read it.

We might also reread the declarations of Sister Lucy to Father Fuentes in December 1957.¹⁰⁵² We will not find a single word there which does not fit perfectly well with everything we have said about the most probable content of the third Secret. On the contrary, the anguished thought of the crisis of the Church which was approaching, and the grave defects of the Shepherds, seems to be underlying everything she said in this conversation, from beginning to end.

WHY THE SECRET WAS NOT DISCLOSED

«The content of the third Secret must account for why it was not disclosed by Popes John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II.» This is one of four certain facts which we have solidly demonstrated at the beginning of our investigation.¹⁰⁵³

Since none of the hypotheses expressed up to now really satisfies this requirement, there is hardly any need for insistence to understand why the Popes, since 1960, have always obstinately refused – for different reasons which we will examine in a special chapter – to disclose this prophecy announcing... their own shortcomings and the tragic consequences which were to follow for the Church.

It is equally easy to understand why Cardinal Ottaviani, who tried in the name of Pope Paul VI to justify, for better or worse, the failure to disclose the Secret, declared insistently that the famous Secret «*was intended for the Holy Father*».¹⁰⁵⁴ It was a half-truth... or a half-lie: intended exclusively and explicitly for the Pope? Certainly not! But directly concerning the Pope? Without any doubt.

Father Alonso understood quite well to what extent the content of the Secret, and this alone, prevented the Popes from revealing it. In his last article on the Secret of Fatima, written just a few weeks before his death, while he prudently gave the appearance of justifying Rome's silence, he wrote these remarkably clairvoyant lines:

«An inopportune revelation of the text would only have further exasperated the two tendencies which continue to tear the Church apart: a traditionalism which would believe itself to be assisted by the Fatima prophecies, and a progressivism which would have lashed out against these apparitions, which in such a scandalous manner would seem to put the brakes on the conciliar Church's forward progress... Pope Paul VI judged it opportune and prudent to delay the revelation of the text until better times. Pope John XXIII declared

that the text did not refer to his pontificate... And the following Popes did not consider that the moment had come to lift the veil of mystery, in circumstances where the Church has still not overcome the frightening impact of twenty post-conciliar years, during which the crisis of the Faith has installed itself at every level.»¹⁰⁵⁵

Stupefying words: revealing Our Lady's prophecies, the Fatima expert explains to us, would come to clearly vindicate the defenders of tradition and uphold them in their struggle, and on the contrary, restrain and disavow the supporters of the "Conciliar Reform" to the point of infuriating them against Fatima.

Now the question arises: how long will our Pastors choose to please the enemies of the Blessed Virgin by remaining faithful to the "conciliar orientations" on which they fall back – and which have led the Church to her ruin – rather than humbly place their trust in the Queen of Heaven's prophecies, which are unquestionably opposed to the innovators? How long will they put off obeying such urgent requests of their Mother and Mistress, the Queen of Apostles, all-powerful Mediatrix of grace and mercy for the Church and the world?

*THE THOUGHT THAT HAUNTED THE THREE SEERS:
PRAY, PRAY MUCH FOR THE HOLY FATHER*

One constant concern of the little seers was to try to pray unceasingly for the Holy Father on whom the contents of the third Secret shed new light.

We know that after July 13 and the revelation of the great Secret, they began to offer their sacrifices and prayers for the Holy Father, especially Jacinta, who «*was very impressed by certain things revealed in the Secret*», as Lucy tells us.¹⁰⁵⁶

«When we were in prison (Lucy tells us), what made Jacinta suffer most, was to feel that their parents had abandoned them. With tears streaming down her cheeks, she would say: "Neither your parents nor mine have come to see us. They don't bother about us any more!" "Don't cry", said Francisco, "we can offer this to Jesus for sinners." Then, raising his eyes and hands to Heaven, he made the offering: "O my Jesus, this is for love of You, and for the conversion of sinners." Jacinta added: "***And also for the Holy Father***, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary."»¹⁰⁵⁷

Later on, after the threats of the Administrator, who let them believe he would kill them, Jacinta began crying:

«I went over and drew her close to me (says Lucy), asking her why she was crying. "Because we are going to die without ever seeing our parents again, not even our mothers!" With tears running down her cheeks, she added: "I would like at least to see my mother." "Don't you want, then, to offer this sacrifice for the conversion of sinners?" "I do want to, I do!" With her face bathed in tears, she joined her hands, raised her eyes to Heaven and made her offering:

«O my Jesus, this is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, **for the Holy Father**, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary!»¹⁰⁵⁸

In her account of their imprisonment at Ourem, which was so terrifying for children that age, Lucy relates another incident which shows that they were continually thinking of the Holy Father, just one month after the Secret was revealed:

«As the Blessed Virgin had told us to offer our prayers and sacrifices also in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we agreed that each of us would choose one of these intentions. One would offer for sinners, **another for the Holy Father** and yet another in reparation for the sins against the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Having decided on this, I told Jacinta to choose whichever intention she preferred. “I’m making the offering for all the intentions, because I love them all.”¹⁰⁵⁹

THE VISION OF THE HOLY FATHER INSULTED AND PERSECUTED

«One day (Lucy says), we spent our siesta down by my parents’ well. Jacinta sat on the stone slabs on top of the well. Francisco and I climbed up a steep bank in search of wild honey among the brambles in a nearby thicket.

«After a little while, Jacinta called out to me: “Didn’t you see the Holy Father?” “No.” “I don’t know how it happened, but **I saw the Holy Father in a very big house, kneeling by a table, with his head buried in his hands, and he was weeping. Outside the house, there were many people. Some of them were throwing stones, others were cursing him and using bad language. Poor Holy Father, we must pray very much for him.**”

«One day (Lucy continues), two priests recommended us to pray for the Holy Father, and explained to us who the Pope was. Afterwards, Jacinta asked me: “**Is he the one I saw weeping, the one Our Lady told us about in the Secret?**” “**Yes, he is.**” “The Lady must surely have shown him also to those priests. You see, I wasn’t mistaken. We need to pray a lot for him.”¹⁰⁶⁰

Some experts believed that this mysterious vision applied to Pope Pius XII. But it is more probable that this prophetic vision concerns the future. Does it perhaps concern the Pope who will finally decide to fulfil the requests of Our Lady, beginning with revealing Her final Secret to the world? If Sister Lucy experienced a real agony before writing it down, we can imagine the terrible sufferings of the Pope who would have to reveal it. It is also certain that when the Supreme Pontiff renounces the compromises, silence and concessions dictated by a too-human prudence and decides to act vigorously, in conformity with his duty as Vicar of Christ – that is, first of all as the fearless defender of the deposit of Faith, no longer hesitating to denounce by name the heretics who poison his flock – he will provoke the furor of his enemies, he will also have to bear the insults and hatred of his own misguided children, who for a long time have been serving the Enemy. He will be insulted, he will be pelted with stones, and he will be cursed. Yes, at that time more than ever, *«the*

Holy Father will have much to suffer».

THE VISION OF THE WAR AND THE HOLY FATHER IN PRAYER

«Another time (Lucy writes), we went to the cave called Lapa do Cabeço. As soon as we got there, we prostrated on the ground, saying the prayers the Angel had taught us.

«After some time, Jacinta stood up and called to me: **“Can’t you see all those highways and roads and fields full of people, who are crying with hunger and have nothing to eat? And the Holy Father in a church praying before the Immaculate Heart of Mary? And so many people praying with him?”**

«Some days later, she asked me: “Can I say that I saw the Holy Father and all those people?” **“No. Don’t you see that that’s part of the Secret? If you do, they’ll find out right away.”** “All right! Then I’ll say nothing at all.”»¹⁰⁶¹

This second prophetic vision, like the first, has undoubtedly not yet been fulfilled. The horrible war in question is undoubtedly the future war we are threatened with. As for the Holy Father «*praying before the Immaculate Heart of Mary*», we may believe that he is the Pope mentioned in the Secret: «*In the end... the Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me.*» Did Our Lady perhaps reveal to Her little confidante what a tragic situation we would be in when the consecration of Russia, requested so insistently by Heaven since 1929, would finally take place? «*They will do it, but it will be late*», Our Lord told Sister Lucy.

Only the disclosure of the third Secret, and fulfilment of the events predicted, will give us the whole truth about these visions of Jacinta. Be that as it may, the lesson Lucy wished us to draw from these accounts is simple, and more relevant and urgent than ever: we must pray, pray much and offer sacrifices for the Pope. Although in her Memoirs the seer could not reveal the reasons for her insistence – which undoubtedly directly depend on the revelations in the third Secret – she at least wished to set before us the moving example of her little cousin. Along with concern for saving sinners from hell, the thought of the Holy Father was what preoccupied her the most, surely because she knew of events that we did not – she knew what dangers, temptations and finally what terrible persecutions the Holy Father would have to put up with and suffer before the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

«This gave Jacinta such love for the Holy Father that every time she offered her sacrifices to Jesus, she added: **“And for the Holy Father”**. After the Rosary, she always said **three Hail Marys for the Holy Father.**»¹⁰⁶²

Shortly before he died, Francisco said to Jacinta and Lucy: «It won’t be long now before I go to Heaven. When I’m there, I’m going to console Our Lord and Our Lady very much. Jacinta is going to pray a lot for sinners, **for the Holy Father** and for you. You will stay here, because Our Lady wants it that way. Listen, you must do everything that She tells you!”»¹⁰⁶³

When the Blessed Virgin told her that soon she would leave for the hospital and that she would suffer much there, Jacinta said to her cousin:

«... I'll be there suffering all alone! But never mind! I'll suffer for love of Our Lord, to make reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of sinners **and for the Holy Father.**»¹⁰⁶⁴

A few months later, in July-August of 1919, the prophecy of Our Lady was fulfilled. Jacinta went to the hospital of Vila Nova de Ourem. Lucy could only visit her twice. She says:

«I found Jacinta joyful as ever, glad to suffer for the love of Our Good God and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for sinners **and for the Holy Father.** That was her ideal, and she could speak of nothing else.»¹⁰⁶⁵

When she returned to Aljustrel, Jacinta continued to think often about the events announced in the Secret:

«Don't be afraid, she told Lucy, in Heaven I'll be praying hard for you, **for the Holy Father,** for Portugal, so that the war will not come here, **and also for all priests.**»¹⁰⁶⁶

Finally, a few months before her death, shortly before she left for Lisbon, Lucy asked her:

«What are you going to do in Heaven?» «I'm going to love Jesus very much, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary too. I'm going to pray a lot for you, for sinners, **for the Holy Father,** for my parents and my brothers and sisters, and for all the people who have asked me to pray for them...»¹⁰⁶⁷

Although Lucy is always discreet when referring to herself, she shows us that she shared the intentions of her cousin. When she was overwhelmed by visitors and pilgrims who came to interrogate her and ask her to pray with them:

«I repeated my usual prayer from the depths of my heart: "O my God, this is for love of You, in reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of sinners **and for the Holy Father.**"»¹⁰⁶⁸

Similarly in the immensity of her sorrow at the death of her father:

«My God! My God! I exclaimed in the privacy of my room. I never thought You had so much suffering in store for me! But I suffer for love of You, in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, **for the Holy Father** and for the conversion of sinners.»¹⁰⁶⁹

Lucy even goes so far as to write:

«... **There was not a prayer or sacrifice we offered to God which did not include an invocation for His Holiness.**»¹⁰⁷⁰

This preoccupation, which is so surprising for such young children, is perfectly understandable if the third Secret mentions explicitly – and with details striking to the imagination – possible defects of the Supreme Pontiffs and the persecutions they will have to undergo later on (because of these failings). Moreover we find explicit mention of these tribulations that the Popes would undergo in the dramatic prophecy of Our Lord to Sister Lucy at Rianjo, in August 1931:

«Make it known to My ministers that, given they are following the example of the King of France in delaying the execution of My request, **they will follow him into misfortune**. It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.»¹⁰⁷¹

What misfortunes is Our Lord referring to? Undoubtedly it is the third Secret which provides the answer.

APPENDIX I - CARDINAL OTTAVIANI SPEAKS ABOUT THE THIRD SECRET OF FATIMA (FEBRUARY 11, 1967 - JULY 7, 1977)

On February 11, 1967, a meeting took place at Rome, at the seat of the Pontifical Marian Academy, in the great hall of the Antonianum. The meeting was in preparation for the Fifth Mariological Congress and the Twelfth International Marian Congress, which were to take place at Lisbon and Fatima some months later, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Fatima apparitions.

Pope Paul VI chose this occasion to make known his intentions regarding the third Secret, whose publication was hoped for once more, for the jubilee of the apparitions. He entrusted this thankless task to Cardinal Ottaviani, then the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

One can easily discern, in this discourse of the Cardinal, the four principal themes which the Pope had undoubtedly asked him to develop:

1. The third Secret will not be divulged, because it is addressed to the Holy Father, and to him alone.
2. Hence the faithful should be content with the public message: “Prayer and penance”, as at Lourdes.
3. It is useless to try to guess the contents of the Secret, for no part of it has been divulged.
4. We must dispel the fears aroused by the Secret: Fatima is not an alarming message. It is a message of hope.

The Cardinal obeyed – blindly. The result was a lamentable discourse in which ambiguities, inexact statements, grave errors and false statements followed, one after the other.¹⁰⁷²

Here is the integral text of this allocution, interspersed with our comments.[1073](#)

«*IT IS A QUESTION OF A SECRET...*»

«If it is a question of a Secret, how could I reveal it?»

«In any event, I will deal with some questions concerning the “Secret of Fatima”.»

Thus the Cardinal announces at the outset – in the first sentence – that he will tell us nothing about the Secret’s contents. But this is already at the price of a regrettable ambiguity: the Secret cannot be divulged because it is a Secret. The phrasing is so skilful that this might appear to be a truism. In reality, however, this is either a misplaced play on words or a gross sophism. For it is absolutely not true that the Cardinal is unable to reveal it because “it is a question of a secret”. It is well established that the Secret of Fatima was intended to remain secret only for a length of time, indicated with precision by the seer, who received from Heaven authorization to reveal each of its parts at the hour chosen by Divine Providence. In 1967, the moment to divulge the third part had long since arrived. If the Cardinal was unable to reveal it, in spite of Our Lady’s express desire, it was only because of the Pope’s formal prohibition – not because of the nature of the document.

THE CARDINAL RECALLS HIS PILGRIMAGE OF 1955

«The first time I was at Fatima was in 1955.

«As I walked up the hill which was to lead me to the Cova da Iria, I was already edified by the piety, by the spirit of sacrifice prayer demonstrated by so many people. They were going up this hill, carrying their provisions and everything they needed to spend *the night commemorating the event of October 13, 1917*.

«When I reached the top, at the Cova da Iria, I felt as though I was entering my Mother’s house; I seemed to hear my Mother telling me: “*Prayer, penance!*”

«All these good people, thousands and thousands of people who were spending the night outside, praying and singing, singing and praying, while the light from thousands of little torches illuminated the great square before the basilica – all these people really gave me the impression that they well understood the spirit of the Fatima message. (The written text adds:) *This huge crowd, which was in prayer, did not ask to know the mysterious Secret of Fatima. It was already in possession of the most essential Secret, the one embossed upon the soul of whoever reads the Gospel attentively: the secret of the ladder to Heaven, whose steps are called prayer and penance.*»

This introduction already calls for three corrections:

1. «The night commemorating the event of October 13, 1917»? It is difficult to understand what the Cardinal means here – especially since it was May 13, 1955 and not October 13 that the Cardinal came to Fatima...

2. Granted, in 1955 the crowd of pilgrims «did not ask to know the mysterious Secret of Fatima», and for a reason! They knew, they hoped, that the Secret would be revealed to them in 1960.

3. As for claiming that «the most essential Secret* of Fatima is found expressed in the two words «prayer and penance», this is totally distorting the true requests of Our Lady at the Cova da Iria!

THE THREE MESSAGES OF FATIMA

«The Most Holy Virgin, while placing Her virginal foot upon the land of the Cova da Iria, which She thus sanctified, entrusted three messages to little Lucy. One concerned the most intimate feelings of Lucy about her family, the prediction that *her little brother* Francisco and *her little sister* Jacinta would soon take their flight to Heaven. (No, this is not a simple slip of the tongue: in three places the Cardinal will state that Jacinta and Francisco are Lucy's *little brother and little sister!* This shows how much attention and care the Prefect of the Holy Office - who in 1956-1957 had requested the Bishop of Leiria for all Lucy's writings, to examine them – had taken to inform himself about Fatima events!) And the prophecy was fulfilled shortly afterwards. In the basilica which was built over the Cova da Iria, one sees, at the right and left of the high altar, the tombstone under which the mortal remains of Jacinta and Francisco await the glorious day of the resurrection, while their souls are already blessed in Heaven. When I asked Lucy what she wanted me to say to the Holy Father on her behalf, she had a sentiment which moved me. She thought of *her little brother and her little sister*: "Tell the Pope to advance quickly the cause for their beatification."

«Let us hope that Lucy's desire will be granted as quickly as possible.

«There, I was saying, in the Cova da Iria, one feels as though he were in his Mother's house, we seem to hear the voice of our Mother, repeating to us: "*Prayer and penance!*"

«The world has paid attention to Lucy's message. In this message, there was *the private part*, concerning *her brother and her sister*; there was *the part concerning the whole world* (it invited the whole world *to prayer and penance*); and finally there was *the third part of the things confided by the Holy Virgin*. And these things She had confided (to Lucy) *not for herself, not for the world – at least for the time being –, but for the Vicar of Christ.*»

Here the Cardinal establishes a distinction between the three messages given by the Virgin to Lucy:

1. A private message concerning Lucy and her cousins.

2. A “public message” addressed to the whole world, whose only contents are supposedly an invitation to prayer and penance.

3. A message addressed only to the Vicar of Christ.

This convenient distinction – is there any need to point out? – has no foundation in the authentic documents of Fatima. It is a purely imaginary construction elaborated by the Cardinal, for the needs of the bad cause he had been asked to defend.

For the announcement of the imminent death of Jacinta and Francisco is not part of the great Secret.¹⁰⁷⁴ As for the “public message”, does this mean the messages of May 13 to October 13, which were divulged right away, or the first two parts of the Secret divulged in 1942? The Cardinal gives no indication to us. But he makes not one precise mention of the known themes of the Secret: the vision of hell, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the request for the consecration of Russia, etc. As for maintaining that the third Secret was addressed explicitly and exclusively for the Holy Father, this is a patent untruth!¹⁰⁷⁵ Father Freire notes with reason, on this subject: «This statement is contrary to the facts, and information which is well known to all and entirely reliable.»¹⁰⁷⁶

THE HISTORY OF THE THIRD SECRET

«And Lucy has kept the secret. She has not spoken, which is not to say that some haven't tried to make her speak. Yes, there are “secrets of Fatima” circulating, which are attributed to her. Do not believe any of them! Lucy has kept the secret.

«And then, what did she do to obey the Most Holy Virgin? She wrote on a sheet of paper, in Portuguese, *what the Holy Virgin had asked her to tell the Holy Father* (sic).

«The Message was not to be opened before 1960. I asked Lucy: “Why this date?” And she answered me: “Because then it will be clearer (*mais claro*).” This made me think that the message was prophetic in tone, precisely because the prophecies, as we see in Sacred Scripture, are covered with a veil of mystery. They are generally not expressed in language which is manifest, clear, understandable for everybody; exegetes are still interpreting prophecies of the Old Testament today. And what are we to say, for example, of the prophecies contained in the Apocalypse? In 1960, she said, the message would be clearer.

«The envelope containing the “Secret of Fatima” was given, still sealed, to the Bishop of Leiria, and although Lucy had said he could read it, he didn't want to. He wished to respect the Secret, *if only out of respect for the Holy Father*. (Once again, the Cardinal is making it up!)

«He gave it to the Apostolic Nuncio, then Msgr. Cento, who is now a Cardinal, and is present here, who faithfully passed it on to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, as the latter had requested, *to prevent such a delicate thing, not intended to be given for general consumption to the public*, from falling into foreign hands for whatever reason, even by

chance. (We have already spoken of the inconsistency of this motive put forward for justifying the transfer of the Secret from Leiria to Rome.¹⁰⁷⁷)

«So the Secret arrived at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and – still sealed – it was handed to John XXIII. The Pope opened the envelope; he read it. *And, although the text was written in Portuguese, he told me later that he had understood it entirely.* (A new difficulty: if the Cardinal is reporting John XXIII’s statement exactly, the latter boasted that he had «understood entirely» a text which Msgr. Tavares had helped him translate.)

«Then he placed the Secret himself in another envelope, sealed it and placed it into one of these archives which are *like a deep, dark, dark well, to the bottom of which papers fall*, and nobody ever sees any more of them. *So, it is difficult to say where the Secret of Fatima is now.*»

At this point in his discourse, related Canon Galamba who was present at the conference, the Cardinal, who was standing, leaned down to the ground, by this gesture stressing how deep was the “dark, dark well” into which the Secret of Fatima had fallen. An odious formula! Moreover, it is inexact, since John XXIII had kept the manuscript on the writing table of his office. Was the Prefect of the Holy Office unaware of it? In any case, he knew that the Secret had not disappeared. He knew that Pope Paul had read it. Why then mislead the faithful once more, implying that John XXIII had buried it so well that “nobody ever saw any more of it”?

«WHAT MATTERS IS THE PUBLIC MESSAGE»

«However, what matters, and what ought to matter to the world, is what is contained in the public message, which has become universal, has spread throughout the whole world, and thanks to God has been received attentively by everybody. Now it is another thing to know if the world has put it in practice according to the desires of the Most Holy Virgin, *Who had exhorted us to prayer and penance* to avoid the sanctions foreseen in the divine book of Providence for a world which corresponds so badly to the gifts of the Lord’s grace. (One could not devise a more vague way of evoking the prophecies of the Virgin of Fatima, which are so limpid and precise!)»

THE SECRET HAS BEEN WELL KEPT

«You can imagine how many journalists and how many good priests, who desired to write something on the “Secret of Fatima”, went to tempt Lucy, but she has been really exemplary; she has not spoken.¹⁰⁷⁸

«It became necessary to defend the seer, who had become a religious, and to remove her from the curiosity of the world into a Carmelite monastery at Coimbra, where, rather than devotion, the curiosity of many worldly people sought to draw a few words out of her. In spite of Lucy’s reserve, these curious folk, avid for mysterious things, believed they were

able to make deductions. As a result, apocryphal texts of the Secret of Fatima transformed into legend, have been published here and there. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has had to forbid people of the world, and the curious, from having access to the convent of Coimbra, where Lucy prays, remembers, meditates, but does not speak. *A "Blue Army" has even been created, which gives a special tone and interpretation to the mystery of the Secret, that is, to something which cannot be interpreted because it is not known.* (On the following February 23, Vatican spokesman, Msgr. Vallainc, during his weekly press conference, tried to attenuate the scandal caused by this utterly thoughtless declaration concerning the "Blue Army".)

«Do not believe those who say that they have heard Lucy say this or that. I, who have had the grace and the gift to read the text of the Secret – although I too am held to secrecy because I am bound by the Secret – I can say that everything in circulation... (a few days ago, a journal spoke of the "Secret of Fatima", and gave the text). You can be quite sure that the true Secret has been kept in such a way that nobody has cast their eyes upon it.»

THE THIRD SECRET «WAS ADDRESSED TO THE HOLY FATHER»

«Consequently, there is nothing else to do except hold to what is public. The public message of Fatima, this is what matters. *The Secret matters for the Holy Father, to whom it was addressed. He was the one to whom the Secret was addressed.* And if the one to whom the Secret was addressed did not decide to say: "It is the moment to make it known to the world!" *we must hold to his wisdom, who wanted it to remain a secret.*»

Was the Pope «the one to whom the Secret was addressed»? «Cardinal Ottaviani's statement is totally lacking in historical foundation», comments Father Freire. «It has but one favour in its advantage: this is that he has read the Secret, and we have not... *But the truth cannot contradict itself. Somebody is mistaken.... Now we already know that at times, Cardinal Ottaviani is not very faithful to the truth...*»¹⁰⁷⁹ This is the least one could say! For we do not see how such a distortion of the truth can be other than a lie.¹⁰⁸⁰ If the Secret was addressed only to the Pope, Sister Lucy would have said so in 1944; this would have been known right away, and there would have been no problem! Besides, it must be remarked that the Cardinal's statements are incoherent. While falsely stating that the Pope is the only intended recipient of the Secret, he echoes the truth: in «*his wisdom*», the Pope «*did not decide to say: "It is the moment to make it known to the world"*». In other words, it is well understood that the Secret should have been divulged, but John XXIII and Paul VI judged that this was not opportune. And the Cardinal goes on to certify for us that in this they showed great wisdom. Wisdom no doubt superior to that of the Queen of Prophets, who had asked that Her Secret be divulged in 1960?!

Yet, an important truth underlies the Cardinal's statement: although he wrongly contends that the Secret was addressed solely to the Pope, he avows, and in this way informs us, that it is supremely important for the Pope. Quite possibly, this is because it has to do with him, because it concerns him. Surely this truth is what gave Cardinal Ottaviani, or rather Paul VI,

the idea of dodging the matter by claiming that the Secret was strictly reserved to the Holy Father. It is remarkable that in 1960, neither John XXIII nor Cardinal Ottaviani had thought of invoking this fraudulent argument.

«But what matters, as I was saying, is that we know how to conform our life, our actions, our activities to the spirit of the public message, because *Lucy was charged not only with passing on the secret message to the Pope* (No! the Virgin directed her to pass it on to her bishop, Msgr. da Silva), but also, to make known to the whole world *the public message, which is summarized in these two words: "Prayer and penance"*.

«The Holy Virgin had already pronounced these two words at Lourdes.»

At Fatima, Our Lady did not pronounce the word penance. Lucy made this clear to Canon Formigao on the evening of October 13: «*No, She said it is necessary to recite the Rosary, to amend our lives, to ask pardon of Our Lord, but She did not speak of penance.*» It is true however that Lucy herself, on the afternoon of October 13, addressed the crowd saying: «Do penance! Do penance! Our Lady wants you to do penance. If you do penance the war will end.»¹⁰⁸¹

«Today, when we commemorate the feast of the Apparition of the Most Holy Virgin at Lourdes, we have to link these two manifestations of the goodness of Mary who has come down from Heaven, has placed Her virginal feet upon the earth to sanctify it, and also to orient it towards better paths. We have to look to act in such a way that by our actions, our prayers, our example, by all the Christian virtues which we must practice, especially by prayer and penance, the message of Fatima may have the effects for which it was addressed to the world.»

THE REQUESTS AND THE PROMISES CONCERNING RUSSIA IGNORED OR DISTORTED

The Cardinal then goes on to evoke Our Lady's words concerning Russia. Yet he does so in terms which are so veiled, so vague, that the Virgin's message is unrecognizable, emptied of all precise content: the Cardinal quotes neither the request for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, nor the wonderful promise of its conversion. He does not even dare to pronounce the name of Russia, and uses circumlocutions:

«Emphasis has been given, equally, to the relationship of the Fatima message with conditions of the Church in certain regions where she feels the weight of persecutions, where there is a struggle against religion.

«Herein lies the message. On the public message, first of all there is also the message of hope, of conversion, and this can be hastened equally by the prayers of all those who have devotion to Our Lady of Fatima.

«Yes, on this day when we celebrate a Marian feast, that of the Apparition of Lourdes, we have to turn towards the Immaculate One, who appeared at Fatima as at Lourdes, to give

the world the consolation of seeing the fulfilment of the desires which are in the heart, in the mind, in the prayers, in the soul of every Christian.

«It is quite true that persecution still exists; there are still countries which are under the heel of the persecutor, the despot; there are regions which have been exterminated, interspersed with instruments of torture, with crosses, with prisons – prisons which are sanctified with so many martyrs – but we must have hope.»

A MISLEADING OPTIMISM

While deliberately ignoring Our Lady's most specific requests – requests which Pope Paul VI had no intention of obeying – the Cardinal preaches optimism. He wants to leave the impression that the promises of Fatima are about to be fulfilled.¹⁰⁸²

«But the trust with which the Fatima message is inspired, in the public part as well, causes us to examine, *in this second part of the sixties, in a serene abandonment to Providence, the first indications – although still nebulous – of a future restoration of the things of the world in the peace and kingdom of Christ.*

«*Already, it can be said, certain signs, the dawn of new situations are beginning to take shape.* Perhaps I am an optimist, but it seems to me that the Most Holy Virgin inspires us to have confidence. If She came down from Heaven, if She sanctified the land of France and of Portugal by Her virginal feet, as well as so many other lands where She has come down and appeared, She also did this to encourage us.

«It is true however, as we see in so many prophecies – because I imagine that the Fatima message has a prophetic tone, since Lucy said that in 1960 it would be clearer – that here there is something like a veiled sign, it is not a language which is altogether manifest and clear. We hope therefore, as I was saying, that the signs which have been given are in conformity with this hope we can draw from the Fatima message. True, the Virgin also appeared to tell us that we might perhaps have to suffer – as for that matter She had predicted the sufferings of the war of which we have all been the victims and witnesses – but She also came into the world to give us hope.

«She is the Mother of trust. All of us know how to invoke Her as “the motive of our hope and our trust.” Well, since She has given us this hope, let us pray that She obtain for us what all of us desire, and have in our hearts: that the reign of Christ come, in the peace of Christ.

«*In certain countries there are already revealing signs, which are like indications of an evolution, indications of the success of this ecumenism which is still bringing people closer together in a fraternal spirit, including those who are not Catholic but who are rightly proud to bear the name of Christians. Among these signs is the reception given to everything which the Pope does for peace.* Naturally I shall keep the necessary discretion, but just yesterday I was informed of new initiatives made in the last few days to facilitate the solution to the conflict in Vietnam.

«If then so many signs have been given us, letting us hope that, in this fiftieth anniversary of the events of Fatima, the Holy Virgin in some way will show Her love for Her children, will give the Christian world some new hope, we have to say: let us welcome this presage of the Holy Virgin; let us hasten the event by our prayers. Would that we could then hear what the Holy Virgin has been telling us since the time of Fatima: “Lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand.” And our reply wells up like a shout: “*Fiat! Fiat!*”»¹⁰⁸³

At the very moment when prelates were obstinately scorning Her prophetic Secret, and refusing to accomplish the slightest of Her requests, to dare maintain that Our Lady of Fatima’s promises were about to be fulfilled, to see the dawn of this fulfilment in the success of ecumenism – the Most Holy Virgin did not speak of ecumenism, She came to Fatima to offer the Pope the means of obtaining from Heaven the wonderful miracle of Russia’s conversion! – and in the pleasure with which the Masonic and Marxist world received the Pope’s initiatives for peace, notably in Vietnam, this was showing blind optimism. Later events did not fail to cruelly refute it. To speak as Cardinal Ottaviani did was also, and above all, to abuse the trust of the faithful, to deceive them, to shamefully mislead them on the true contents of the Secret revealed by the Immaculate Virgin for the salvation of the Church and of souls. It was tantamount to mocking God and His Holy Mother.

Really, this discourse full of falsehoods, pronounced in the Pope’s name by a Cardinal who was already aging and almost blind, does honour neither to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith – whose first function is precisely to defend the Faith and advance the truth in all things – nor to Pope Paul VI, whom the Prefect of the Holy Office felt obliged to obey, blindly.

A NEW DECLARATION OF CARDINAL OTTAVIANI: (JULY 7, 1977)

Was the Cardinal obeying orders again when, ten years later, he made a second pronouncement on the third Secret? This is probable.

In November 1977, these lines appeared in the review *Madre di Dio*.¹⁰⁸⁴

«Given the fact that our publication is continually receiving small works, fliers and other printed texts based on a certain text of the third Secret of Fatima, works which publish the most important passages from it, we are going to make public a very recent intervention of Cardinal Ottaviani, a direct and authoritative witness – if not the only witness – of the famous document of Lucy placed in the archives by Pope John XXIII. We publish below a letter of Cardinal Ottaviani, sent on July 7 of this year to the director of the “Union of Marian Publications” in response to the following questions:

«1. Is there confirmation of everything which the Cardinal communicated on the third Secret, in the discourse of February 11, 1967?

«2. Are the suppositions legitimate of those who say that the Holy See brought a part of the “third” Secret to the knowledge of the great powers – and that it is known today thanks to diplomatic indiscretions?

«3. Might the Secret be related to the present crisis of the Church, as some say?»

Here we have three questions, which are as clear as they are important. The first one concerns the value of declarations by the Cardinal himself in 1967. The second deals with the Secret of *Neues Europa*, and the third concerns Father Alonso’s thesis. Here is the reply of the former Prefect of the Holy Office:

«Very Reverend Father Stefano Andreatta,

«Regarding the questions which you asked me concerning the third Secret of Fatima, I must tell you that the many texts published in various journals are all the fruit of the supposition of those people who think they can deduce it from elements gathered from different books or publications.

«The true text of the “Secret”, written by the seer Lucy and sent to Pope John XXIII (sic), has really remained a secret, because the Sovereign Pontiff himself has revealed nothing of this matter. We are even completely ignorant where he placed the text which was sent to him.

«With my sentiments of esteem and devotion...

Cardinal Ottaviani.¹⁰⁸⁵»

The response is disappointing, but could not be more significant. The Cardinal denies the authenticity of the Secret of *Neues Europa*, while reaffirming that the Pope has revealed nothing of the contents of the Secret. But on the essential question, he is silent. He does not even dare to confirm his previous declarations. Above all, he has no response at all to the question on Father Alonso’s thesis. How significant is this silence...

APPENDIX II - FATHER FREIRE’S HYPOTHESIS: THE FINAL SECRET CONCERNS PORTUGAL

Father Alonso had published his little work on the third Secret during the summer of 1976.¹⁰⁸⁶ As we have seen, his essential thesis was simple, his demonstration convincing: the third Secret predicts the crisis of faith in the Church beginning in 1960, and grave defects of the pastors of the Church. In spite of the conspiracy of silence, this work could not go unnoticed. No doubt it was hardly appreciated at Rome.

A few months later, a professor of letters of the University of Coimbra, Father Geraldés Freire, proposed another thesis, claiming to refute that of Father Alonso. His study was first published as a series of articles, and appeared in October 1977, in a book with the significant title: «*The Secret of Fatima. Is the third part about Portugal?*»¹⁰⁸⁷

The author claims to demonstrate that «*the third part of the Secret refers to Portugal, to the errors Russia has spread and continues to spread among us, and to the wars and sufferings we are going through now...*»¹⁰⁸⁸

According to Father Freire, the Blessed Virgin is supposed to have predicted the colonial wars which became more dramatic after 1960, because of the faults committed by Salazar's government. She is also supposed to have prophesied the events which took place in Portugal after the revolution of April 25, 1974.

On what does the author base his hypothesis?

«We agree that Father Alonso started from a good principle. For we too think that the sentence: "In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved" is already an element of the third Secret of Fatima. *Quite simply, instead of placing the accent on "the dogma of the Faith", we find the "key to the Secret" in the phrase, "In Portugal".*»¹⁰⁸⁹

«We insist on the fact that *the "key" is Portugal, and not the rest of the expression related to the dogma of the Faith...*»¹⁰⁹⁰

Finally, Father Freire summarizes his thesis in this way. According to him, the third part of the Secret might contain the following six points:

- «1. A special appeal to Portugal, that it fulfil Our Lady's requests.
2. The prediction that if Portugal proves unfaithful, it will be chastised after the year 1960.
3. Russia "will spread its errors" in Portugal and its colonies, this will lead to wars and end with the independence of the colonies, and persecutions against the Church.
4. European Portugal will be chastised, it will suffer great social disturbances, and attacks against the Church's doctrine, to the point that many will stray from the way of salvation.
5. A warning announcing that a sign in the sky of Portugal will indicate that the peril of the domination of "Russia's errors" will not be over with the apparent pacification of public life.
6. A promise that "in Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved", and that "in the end the Immaculate Heart of Mary will triumph".»¹⁰⁹¹

Before we make any other comments, we must recognize that Father Freire's work, solidly documented, presents a lasting interest for the history of Fatima. The author has gathered together a certain number of interesting facts related to the third Secret; moreover, we have often referred to them. Several analyses of the gradual revelation of the essential themes of the second Secret are worth our attention. The merciless critique of Cardinal Ottaviani's allocution is equally pertinent.

FATHER ALONSO'S THESIS NOT REFUTED

That being said, the essential demonstration of the work appears very unconvincing. The critique of Father Alonso's thesis is inconsistent. If we are to believe our author, Cardinal Ottaviani's statement, according to which the Secret was «addressed to the Holy Father», is supposedly the principal argument serving to demonstrate that the third Secret concerns the crisis of the Church. And Father Freire contents himself almost exclusively with proving that the Cardinal is not telling the truth on this point. A slight understatement! And it fails to recognize the partial truth underlying the lie which tended to mislead the public: the third Secret might very well concern the Holy Father, without being explicitly and exclusively intended for him – especially since, from 1944 onwards, Sister Lucy would have liked Pius XII to be able to read it.¹⁰⁹²

Father Freire's positive proofs in favour of his thesis are not any more solid.

AN ERROR ON THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

First of all, we cannot see in the name of what the author can maintain that, in the phrase intentionally added by Sister Lucy, “in Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved”, «*the key is Portugal, and not the rest of the expression relative to the dogma of the Faith*». It is not a question of two words juxtaposed, between which we have the liberty of choosing the one which to us seems to fit better, in summarizing the eventual contents of the third Secret! It is a question of a subject, a verb and a complement of place, whose ordering indicate the obvious meaning of the phrase. What is more, the meaning has to be clear enough to make us guess the essential contents of the rest of the text, as Father Freire agrees. Now it is clear that Father Alonso interprets the phrase in its obvious and objective meaning. Father Freire, on the contrary, takes hold of the word “Portugal”, which he isolates from its immediate context, and claims that since we find the word “Portugal” in the third Secret, the Secret concerns Portugal only and the chastisements which will strike it!

If Father Freire was right, Sister Lucy would have been very clumsy in her written version of the fourth Memoir. To make us see the contents of the third Secret, she would have had to write: «If Portugal shows itself unfaithful, etc.» But she wrote, on the contrary: «In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.» This solemn promise of something which normally seems to go without saying for a Christian country clearly implies that other countries, other parts of the Church, will lose the Faith.

It is remarkable that in his hypothetical reconstruction of the Secret, Father Freire no longer knows where to locate this promise in favour of Portugal. It gives him a problem. Although Sister Lucy presents it to us in her fourth Memoir as the first phrase of the Secret (whose place is indicated by the word etc), Father Freire does not attach it to the third Secret properly speaking, but to the promise of the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In short, our author commits an error on the immediate context of the Secret.

A COMPLETE BREAK FROM THE GENERAL CONTEXT

He commits an even more obvious error by proposing a third Secret which would be in total disharmony, a complete break with the general context of the Secret. The Secret unquestionably has a worldwide significance from beginning to end. It concerns a design of salvation for the world: «God wants to establish *in the world* devotion to My Immaculate Heart.» Our Lady's requests are addressed *to the Pope*, who must act «*in union with all the bishops of the Catholic world*». The chastisements predicted are also worldwide in character: «Know that it is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish *the world...*» It is a question of the war of 1914-1918, and then the *Second World War* and its consequences: «Russia will spread her errors *throughout the world.*» The final promise which comes in conclusion to the third Secret is again, more than ever, of a universal order: «In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph... And a certain period of peace will be granted *to the world.*» The Secret evokes the fact that «various nations will be annihilated», but without specifying which ones. It mentions by name *only Russia, whose worldwide role is underlined, and Portugal.*

It is unthinkable that in such a context, the prophecy would suddenly be restricted to events which will happen in Portugal alone, as Father Freire maintains.¹⁰⁹³ On the contrary, the whole context of the Secret hints that Portugal is cited here, if not as the only exception, at least as the remarkable particular case, *forming a contrast with other regions of the world, and with a general situation of the Church which must be the principal subject of the third Secret.*

A SERIES OF INCREDIBLE ASSUMPTIONS

Father Freire considers the mention of the preservation of the dogma of the Faith completely unimportant, to centre everything on the propagation of Russia's errors, and the eventual chastisements of Portugal. In this hypothesis, the third Secret adds no really new element. Everything which it announced is already contained implicitly in the part of the Secret which is known, and in Our Lady's message to Jacinta for Canon Formigao.¹⁰⁹⁴

In this case, one no longer understands why the third Secret should not have been divulged at the same time as the first two. One no longer understands Sister Lucy's painful agony before being able to write it. Nor would we understand Bishop da Silva's attempt to pass it on to the Holy Office. Above all we would not understand why it remained the absolute secret of the Vatican. If it concerned only Portugal's future, how can we imagine that John XXIII revealed no part of it to the Portuguese bishops? How could he have spoken to Cardinal Cerejeira about the third Secret without hinting at least that it concerned Portugal's future? Finally, how could neither John XXIII, nor Paul VI, nor John Paul II, nor Cardinal Ottaviani have ever made the slightest allusion to this subject? On the contrary, we shall see that although they decided not to divulge it, once we discover that the Secret concerns the crisis of the Faith, we can easily discern allusions to the great prophecy of Fatima in their statements – allusions which are more or less explicit, but very clear,

whether intentional or not.

AN UNJUSTIFIED BIAS

Finally, let us point out that in 1976 Father Freire had just written a book to try to prove that the Church had not entirely “compromised” with the regime of Salazar and Marcello Caetano.¹⁰⁹⁵ He shows a lamentable blindness due to his partisan passion: throughout his work he insinuates that the third Secret more or less directly denounced Salazar’s policy, which supposedly was principally responsible for the loss of the Portuguese colonies, and all the country’s misfortunes.

Now Salazar was the man of Providence, who after having saved Portugal from democratic anarchy and Masonic tyranny, was able to govern it with rare wisdom for forty years, for the greatest good of the Church and the nation. So carried away is our author in his hatred for this providential man, which makes him blind to the most telling evidence, that it is useless to continue seeking to refute his allegations... Let us mention only the excellent article of Father Messias Coelho who, after the book appeared, protested vigorously against such a hypothesis, writing:

«Finally, *it is known how cordial were the relations between Lucy and Salazar*. If the text of the Secret concerned the latter, Lucy, with that skill which she demonstrated so many times, and with the supernatural help that always accompanies charisms, would have put to use *the several visits made to her by the former Prime Minister, as well as the letters which the two had exchanged*, to somehow alert him to the subject of the supposed revelation.

«The same thing can be said for the Bishop of Macao, Msgr. Paulo Tavares, who was called by John XXIII to explain the meaning of some expressions of the Secret and who, as a bishop of one of the colonies, more than anybody must have felt the gravity of what was shortly to come. The truth, however, is that he kept quiet just as did Lucy.»¹⁰⁹⁶

To claim, on the pretext that in 1959 Salazar’s government refused to introduce the Name of God in the constitution,¹⁰⁹⁷ that the third Secret contains a formal disavowal of his policy is both an infamy and an absurdity. It is remarkable that Father Martins, while considering the rejection of the Name of God in the constitution as «*one of the gravest national sins*», nevertheless points out:

«Up to the present, I have never come across any allusion to this sin in Sister Lucy’s very vast correspondence. For the seer, the national sins are of a different character.»¹⁰⁹⁸

No, the men really responsible for Portugal’s misfortune are not to be sought in this corner. Rather they should be sought at Paris,¹⁰⁹⁹ at the Vatican, where on July 1, 1970, Pope Paul VI received in private audience the terrorist leaders of Guinea, Angola and Mozambique – an unpardonable crime!¹¹⁰⁰ – and at the bishopric of Porto among Father Freire’s progressive friends, who since 1958, under the most hypocritical pretexts, unceasingly opposed all

Salazar's enterprises to the greater profit of his powerful outside enemies: world communism and the international plutocracy.

As we close this digression, it remains for us to point out that Father Freire, contrary to Father Alonso, elaborated and published his new thesis on the third Secret without being able to consult Sister Lucy directly. He was unable to bring the slightest indication of her encouragement or her agreement on the essential contents of his thesis. On the contrary, he is obliged to admit in the introduction to his book:

«I consider it my duty to declare flatly that I have no secret or confidential element at my disposal, which any investigator might produce or look into. I avow that the work I shall set out is only an interpretive hypothesis, which draws all its weight and value from the force of the arguments and facts which I will invoke.»¹¹⁰¹

We have seen what these arguments are worth.

AN OUTDATED HYPOTHESIS

We can even go further. After having been more or less supported by the hierarchical authorities, who saw in his attempt a convenient escape from Father Alonso's compelling demonstration – so bothersome for Rome! – a few years ago, Father Freire received a double refutation which to us seems decisive.

The first is the declaration of Bishop do Amaral on September 10, 1984. The Bishop of Fatima, of course, was familiar with Father Freire's work published in 1976, with his consent, by the services of the Sanctuary. Yet, in 1984 he makes not the slightest allusion to it. He states on the contrary that the content of the third Secret «*concerns only our Faith*», «*the loss of faith*».¹¹⁰² For anyone informed on the state of the question, it is clear that the Bishop of Fatima thus publicly pronounced in favour of Father Alonso's demonstration, leaving us to conclude that Father Freire's thesis is groundless.

Similarly, Cardinal Ratzinger's recent declaration on the contents of the third Secret – the text of which we will analyze in a later chapter – evidently brings a new refutation to Father Freire's thesis: while stating the principal themes of the third Secret, the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith makes no allusion to Portugal's political future. On the contrary, everything he says about the Secret comes as a luminous confirmation of Father Alonso's thesis, such as we explained it and developed it in preceding chapters.

CHAPTER VI

THE HOUR OF THE DECISIVE BATTLE BETWEEN OUR LADY AND THE DEVIL

The prediction of the great apostasy, the prophecy of grave shortcomings of the pastors of the Church: these are undoubtedly two essential themes of the final Secret of Fatima.

Although, with lesser certainty, we can discern a third theme of the redoubtable Secret: numerous indications, which are astonishingly convergent, lead us to think that this terrible crisis of the Church and this failure of its supreme Leaders, which has no comparable precedent in its two thousand year history, are situated by the Secret in a wider context, that of the supreme confrontation between the City of God and the Synagogue of Satan, the «decisive battle between the Virgin and the devil», to repeat Sister Lucy's expression.

I. SISTER LUCY'S DISCLOSURES TO FATHER FUENTES

Clearly, since it belongs to the hierarchy to reveal the great Secret, and not to her directly, we can be sure that Sister Lucy has been faithful to the orders of silence given to her by her superiors. She has not revealed the very text of the Secret to anybody.

However, nothing prevents her from discreetly mentioning, as a personal reflection, this or that revelation which is important and greatly salutary for souls, and belongs in reality to the Secret which has not been disclosed – she had already done so in her first two Memoirs for the first parts of the Secret, even before she was officially permitted to reveal them.¹¹⁰³ Thus in her conversation with Father Fuentes, she brings up several new themes, which are undoubtedly so many veiled allusions to various elements of the third Secret.

Lucy explains, «*The Most Holy Virgin made me understand that we are living in the last times of the world*», those of the great apocalyptic battle between the Blessed Virgin and the devil:

«She told me that ***the devil is in the process of engaging in a decisive battle against the Blessed Virgin***, and a decisive battle is the final battle where one side will be victorious and the other side will suffer defeat. Hence from now on we must choose sides. Either we are for God or we are for the devil. There is no other possibility.»¹¹⁰⁴

Even more notable is the fact that she unmasks the satanic plan which consists in attacking first the Pastors, all those who in some way are entrusted with souls:

«The devil is in the process of engaging in a decisive battle with the Virgin. And the devil knows what it is that most offends God and which in a short space of time will gain for him the greatest number of souls. Thus the devil does everything ***to overcome souls consecrated to God*** because, in this way, the devil will succeed in leaving the souls of the faithful abandoned by their leaders, and thereby the more easily will he seize them.»¹¹⁰⁵

«*To overcome souls consecrated to God.*» Could anybody see with greater precision the drama of the years following 1960, when by the hundreds, by the thousands and tens of thousands, priests, religious, nuns, and even bishops and Cardinals – to say nothing here of the Popes themselves – betrayed the cause of God, and His One, True Church? This they did either by leaving it with scandal; or by infiltrating to the highest posts, where they continue destroying the true faith, either by criminally refusing to defend dogmas against errors springing up in a way never seen before, or by openly preaching heresy. There, they work to make true charity die in souls, and to extinguish their supernatural hope in favour of their Masonic and diabolical substitutes: the promotion of the Rights of Man, faith in Man and the cult of Man.

In this dramatic struggle which has been predicted, it is stupefying that Lucy does not indicate, as the primary remedy, to follow with docility the recommendations of Church leaders in all things. No, on the contrary, she warns us that for the essentials they will not speak:

«We should not wait for an appeal to the world to come from Rome on the part of the Holy Father, to do penance. Nor should we wait for the call to penance to come from our bishops in our diocese, nor from the religious congregations. No...»

Would this opinion be comprehensible in the case of a fervent, faithful hierarchy, fully docile to Heaven's inspirations? And especially in the case of 1957, when Catholics still had their eyes turned towards Rome with unlimited confidence, to eagerly receive from it orders, directives, and exhortations in every area? It seems, on the contrary, that Sister Lucy is speaking to a flock abandoned to itself, and as it were abandoned by its Shepherds:

«That is why now, it is necessary for each one of us to begin to reform himself spiritually. Each person must not only save his own soul but also all the souls that God has placed on our path.»¹¹⁰⁶

Since we must undertake this reform by ourselves, this is tantamount to saying that a time would come when the Pastors, in very great number, would no longer preach «*the true reform of the people and clergy*» demanded by Heaven to turn away minds and hearts from the errors and snares of the world, and turn them back to God by the gentle, powerful mediation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.¹¹⁰⁷ No, the Pastors of the Church would not pay attention to the Message of the Immaculate One; they would not preach to the people – or only a negligible number would preach – the so simple requests and wonderful promises of Our Lady of Fatima, proposed by Heaven as the only effective means of warding off the terrible divine chastisements that threaten our apostate age.

«*SISTER LUCY – INVISIBLE*»

These words were so strong, so striking, that they aroused the violent reaction of the chancery of Coimbra, which on July 2, 1959, published the “official note” we have quoted.¹¹⁰⁸ We will not return to this regrettable affair. But Sister Lucy, like Father Fuentes, underwent

the consequences. From then on, she was bound to a much more rigorous silence on everything concerning Fatima, and especially the great themes of the Secret. At this time, also, doubts began being expressed publicly about the value of her declarations. Undoubtedly around this period, the Mother Prioress of the Carmel of Coimbra wrote to Father Messias Dias Coelho:

«The mission of Sister Lucy of the Immaculate Heart was to transmit Our Lady's message. She has done this magnificently. *Do not ask her, however, to interpret what she has written or said.* Ask this of the theologians, ask the hierarchy and the apostles of Fatima, whom the Holy Spirit raises up when and where He wills. *Ubi vult.*»¹¹⁰⁹

As we have seen, in its note of July 2, 1959, the chancery of Coimbra declared authoritatively that «*Sister Lucy has nothing more to say on Fatima*»! It also became increasingly difficult to see her, and for years no more of her writings were published. Her testimony was becoming bothersome. In 1962, Maria de Freitas remarked that «more and more, visits to Sister Lucy are forbidden; more and more she is becoming invisible».¹¹¹⁰

II. «A DIABOLICAL WAVE IS SWEEPING OVER THE WORLD»

However, we have a series of precious documents allowing us to understand the seer's thoughts on the present crisis of the Church: on May 13, 1971, Bishop Venancio gave the *imprimatur* to some letters of Sister Lucy written from 1969 to 1971. They were published in 1973 by Father Martins dos Reis in *Uma Vida ao serviço de Fatima*.¹¹¹¹ Unfortunately, the author only gives us excerpts, and the three which were reprinted at length could be only because they dealt solely with a very precise question: the recitation of the Rosary. Father Martins dos Reis presents them under the title, *A little treatise on the nature and recitation of the Rosary*. Some progressive theologians had conducted a campaign against the Rosary, always rehashing the same hackneyed grievances: the monotonous recitation of ready-made formulas is no longer in accord with the modern mentality; after the Council, the Rosary is outdated, etc. Several reviews and journals reacted vigorously, organizing a counter-campaign to exalt the beauty and utility of the Rosary, and even to ask the Portuguese bishops to request of Rome its «recognition as an official prayer of the Church».¹¹¹² The excerpts from Sister Lucy's letters must be situated in this context. Reserving for our next volume the seer's very beautiful and rich teaching on the Rosary, we give here only the passages dealing with the crisis of the Church – which moreover are very numerous, manifesting a constant preoccupation.

«*THIS DISORIENTATION IS DIABOLICAL*»

Sister Lucy has three nephews who are priests: Father José Valinho, a Salesian, Father Manuel Pereira, a Jesuit, and Father Thomé dos Santos Pereira, a Claretian. She wrote to one of them on December 29, 1969:

«... What **some disoriented souls** have spread against recitation of the Rosary is false. The light of the sun is older than the recitation of the Rosary, and they don't want to stop benefiting from its brightness; the psalms are more ancient, and they too, like the prayers that make up the Rosary, are part of the sacred liturgy.

«The repetition of the *Ave Maria, Pater Noster* and *Gloria Patri* is the chain that lifts us right up to God and unites us to Him, giving us a participation in His Divine Life, just as eating bite after bite of bread, from which we nourish ourselves, sustains the natural life in us; nobody calls that outdated!

«**This disorientation is diabolical! Do not let yourself be deceived.**»[1113](#)

OUR LADY WANTED «TO ARM US IN ADVANCE AGAINST THIS PERIOD OF THE DIABOLICAL CAMPAIGN...»

To another of her priest-nephews, Sister Lucy writes on April 4, 1970:

«... May your apostolate, like that of all our missionary brothers and sisters, be for souls the light of Faith which guides them on the way of Truth, Hope and Love! This light which the Lord speaks to us about in His Gospel: "You are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth."

«**It is necessary, for this purpose, not to be led by the doctrines of disoriented disputants... The campaign is diabolical.** We must stand up to it, without placing ourselves in conflict. We must tell souls that, now more than ever, we must pray for ourselves and for those who are against us! We must recite the Rosary every day. This is the prayer which Our Lady recommended the most, **as if to arm us in advance, foreseeing these days of diabolical campaign!** The devil knows that we shall save ourselves through prayer. Hence he leads his campaign against it to destroy us. Now that the month of May is about to begin, recite the Rosary every day. Do not be afraid to expose the Blessed Sacrament and recite the Rosary in His presence.

«It is false to say that this is not liturgical, because the prayers of the Rosary are all part of the sacred liturgy; and if they are not displeasing to God when we recite them as we celebrate the Holy Sacrifice, so also they do not displease Him if we recite them in His presence, when He is exposed for our adoration. On the contrary, this is the prayer which is the most pleasing to Him, because through it we praise Him the best...

«Why would the prayer which God taught us and so much recommended to us be outdated? *It is easy to recognize here the ruse of the devil and his followers, who want to lead souls away from God by leading them away from prayer...* Do not let yourselves be deceived. Enlighten the souls entrusted to you, and recite the Rosary with them every day. Say it in the church, in the streets, on the roads and in public squares. If it is possible for you, go through the streets praying and singing the Rosary with the people; and finish in the Church by giving Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. Do this in the spirit of prayer

and penance *to ask for peace for the Church, for our provinces beyond the sea, and for the world.*

«I am certain that if you made an appeal in this sense, souls would gladly follow, *because the sheep follow their Pastor when he knows how to guide them and lead them on the good road.*»¹¹¹⁴

In such a few words, it seems difficult to make this many remarks and requests so contrary to the new religion!

«*THE DIABOLICAL WAVE SWEEPING OVER THE WORLD...*»

On April 13, 1971, Sister Lucy wrote to her Salesian nephew, Father José Valinho:

«I see by your letter ***that you are preoccupied by the disorientation of our time. It is indeed sad that so many persons let themselves be dominated by the diabolical wave sweeping over the world, and that they are blinded to the point of being incapable of seeing error!*** Their principal fault is that they have abandoned prayer; thus they have left God, and without God they have nothing: “without Me, you can do nothing ...”

«The devil is very clever and looks for our weak points so as to attack us. If we are not diligent and attentive in obtaining strength from God, we will fall, ***for our times are very evil and we are weak.*** Only the strength of God can keep us standing.»¹¹¹⁵

«*THIS IS A DIABOLICAL DISORIENTATION INVADING THE WORLD AND MISLEADING SOULS*»

Two letters, quoted *in extenso* by Father Martins dos Reis, were written at the same time and addressed to a friend, Dona Maria Teresa da Cunha, who was zealously involved in the defence of Marian devotion, and undoubtedly would have liked to claim the official approval of the Fatima seer.¹¹¹⁶ In the name of her superior who was too busy, Sister Lucy answered on April 12, 1970:

«Our Mother cannot give the permission which you desire. But it is also unnecessary. I am neither obliged nor able to come out openly. *I must remain in silence, in prayer and in penance.* In this way I can and must help you the most. It is necessary that every apostolate have this foundation as its basis; *and such is the part the Lord has chosen for me: to pray and sacrifice myself for those who struggle and work in the Lord's vineyard and for the extension of His Kingdom...*»

Sister Lucy is clearly conscious of her own vocation: it is not her role to struggle or engage in polemics, but to «pray and sacrifice herself» for those who do. However, this vocation of constant silence and penance does not prevent her from passing a precise, firm judgment on the period in which we are living. She comes back to this point unceasingly, and

speaking of the Rosary or prayer, which are the themes she is permitted to talk about, she widely extends the import of her judgment.

Let us remark that it would be astonishing for such a humble soul to draw, purely from her own thinking, such grave considerations on the present situation of the Church and the world. Just as after January 25, 1938, when she announced the imminent peril of the world war, she was in fact relying on the prophecy of the great Secret not yet divulged, we may think that today, when she speaks so insistently about *«the diabolical disorientation»* invading the world, she is merely repeating a theme of the third Secret, without saying so:

«People must recite the Rosary every day. Our Lady repeated this in all Her apparitions, ***as if to arm us in advance against these times of diabolical disorientation, so that we would not let ourselves be fooled by false doctrines***, and that through prayer, the elevation of our soul to God would not be diminished.»

Further on, she expresses another key idea, to which she often returns – the responsibility of leaders:

«Unfortunately, in religious matters, the people for the most part are ignorant, and follow wherever they are led. ***Hence the great responsibility of those who have the duty of leading them*** (Here, curiously, as in several other places, on the same subject, Sister Lucy's thinking is brusquely cut short. When she spoke of Church authorities, as though she were afraid of having said too much she immediately extends her remark to all the faithful); and we are all leaders of one another, for we all have the duty of mutually helping each other to walk on the good road.»

Further on, there is a new polemical point against those who, in the name of Christ the only Mediator, reject prayer to the Blessed Virgin. In the same place where Father Martins dos Reis, in his commentary, sees only the elucubrations of “certain half-baked theologians”,¹¹¹⁷ Sister Lucy makes an all-embracing judgment:

«This is a diabolical disorientation invading the world and misleading souls! It is necessary to stand up to it; and for this purpose you can use what I tell you here, but as something coming from you, without saying my name... *And, staying in my place, I pray for you and for all those who work with you...»* And she goes on to recall the three great intentions, which correspond to the three great parts of the Secret: the salvation of souls, the peace of Holy Church, and peace in the world, especially for «Portugal and its provinces beyond the sea».¹¹¹⁸

THE INTREPID AUDACITY OF «THE DEVIL'S SUPPORTERS»

A letter of May 29, 1970, addressed to the same person, attests to the constancy and fervour with which Sister Lucy continues praying for the Pope, as Jacinta had done:

«I answer your letter on the anniversary of the Holy Father's ordination. Today, everything is for His Holiness. May Our Lady be the messenger of our poor and humble prayers...»

Sister Lucy continues, no doubt referring to articles in progressive journals which her friend had sent her. She refutes the liberalism and false modern charity, according to which, in principle, even the most dangerous innovators are always animated by the purest intentions, and in their own way, work for the good of the Church:

«We see how ***the supporters of the devil*** work for evil, and how they fear nothing – neither remaining badly placed, nor getting lost! They always go forward with intrepid audacity! And would we alone act with cowardice?! Is God less powerful than the devil? It is necessary to go forward without fear and without trepidation. *God is with us, and He will be victorious.*

«May God grant that the interview with Bishop de Mytilène go well, *and that His Excellency not be one of these fearful souls...* I think the best thing would be to go ahead after first informing Their Excellencies, but for them to have no responsibility (as if they didn't know), *and this to avoid the disadvantage of fear...* Later on, seeing the success, they can then declare themselves and take part in it... As for what you tell me *about the priest who is at Fatima, I also think that you must not be afraid of him...*»

Thus for the seer, the camps are well defined: there are the «*supporters of the devil*», completely devoted to his cause, and who work for evil with untiring ardour. There are the fearful and cowardly ones, who are afraid of compromising themselves. And then there are the faithful, the courageous ones who strive to hold on and resist. Sister Lucy exhorts them to be afraid of nothing because, she says, «God is with us, and He will be victorious».

«We must place our trust in God and in Our Lady's protection. We are only very weak instruments in Their hands, which They use for Their glory; but fear must not prevent us from serving Them for what They desire.»¹¹¹⁹

«*THE DEVIL HAS SUCCEEDED IN INFILTRATING EVIL UNDER COVER OF GOOD...*»

On September 16, 1970, Sister Lucy wrote to a friend in religion, Mother Martins, who had been her companion at Tuy, in the novitiate of the Dorothean Sisters. She had just been sorely tried by illness:

«... From what you tell me, I see that you have had much to suffer! This is the penance which Our Lord asks of you now; and these penances which He sends us Himself are the most painful ones. But they are also the ones which unite us the most to Him, Who was the Martyr of Sorrows.

«I too, was not feeling very well in my heart, my eyes, etc; but it is necessary to fill up in ourselves what is lacking to the Passion of Christ; it is necessary that His members be one with Him, *through physical pain and through moral anguish.* Poor Lord, He has saved us

with so much love and He is so little understood! so little loved! so badly served! ***It is painful to see such a great disorientation and in so many persons who occupy places of responsibility!...***

«For our part we must, as far as is possible for us, *try to make reparation* through an ever more intimate union with the Lord; and identify ourselves with Him *that He may be in us the Light of the world plunged in the darkness of error, immorality and pride*. It pains me to see what you tell me, now that that is going on over here...! ***It is because the devil has succeeded in infiltrating evil under cover of good, and the blind are beginning to guide others, as the Lord tells us in His Gospel, and souls are letting themselves be deceived.***

«Gladly I sacrifice myself and offer my life to God for peace in His Church, ***for priests and for all consecrated souls, especially for those who are so deceived and misled!***»

A long development follows on devotion to the holy Rosary, and the great benefits it procures for souls. Then Sister Lucy concludes:

«This is why the devil has waged such a war against it! ***And the worst is that he has succeeded in leading into error and deceiving souls having a heavy responsibility through the place which they occupy...! They are blind men guiding other blind men...***»¹¹²⁰

The following year, in December 1971, again in a letter to Mother Martins, Sister Lucy expresses the same thoughts:

«Thus the little pamphlets (referring to a text on the Rosary composed by Sister Lucy) will remain with souls, as an echo of Our Lady's voice, to remind them of ***the insistence with which She recommended the prayer of the Rosary to us, so many times. It is because She already knew that there had to come these times, during which the devil and his supporters would fight so much against this prayer, to lead souls away from God***. And without God, who shall be saved?! For this reason we must do everything in our power to lead souls back to God.»¹¹²¹

Let us conclude with a few passages of a letter of November 26, 1970, addressed to Don Umberto Pasquale, an Italian Salesian devoted to the cause of Fatima for a very long time:

«... The decadence which exists in the world is without any doubt the consequence of the lack of the spirit of prayer. ***Foreseeing this disorientation***, the Blessed Virgin recommended recitation of the Rosary with such insistence. And since the Rosary is, after the holy Eucharistic liturgy, ***the prayer most apt for preserving faith in souls, the devil has unchained his struggle against it. Unfortunately, we see the disasters he has caused.***

«... ***We must defend souls against the errors which can make them stray from the good road***. I cannot help them other than by my poor and humble prayers and my sacrifices; but for you, Father Umberto, you have a much more extended field of action to develop your

apostolate. We cannot and we must not stop ourselves, ***nor allow, as Our Lord says, the children of Darkness to be wiser than the children of Light...*** The Rosary is the most powerful weapon for defending ourselves on the field of battle.»¹¹²²

These few excerpts from Sister Lucy's letters – all the more significant as she surely did not write everything she wanted, and as her writings are severely censored before publication – agree perfectly with what we have already said about the contents of the third Secret. For her, the evil is not only in the world, «*plunged in the darkness of error, immorality and pride*». It is in the Church, where the devil has his «*followers*», and his «*supporters*», who act with superhuman energy. It is not just a question of lukewarmness or pastoral negligence; Sister Lucy clearly shows that the Faith itself is being attacked: she speaks of «*false doctrines*», of «*diabolical disorientation*», of «*blindness*»... And this among the very souls «*who have great responsibilities*» in the Church, and whose mission is to guide the souls of the faithful. She deplores the fact that so many Pastors «*let themselves be dominated by the diabolical wave invading the world*», and are so many «*blind men leading other blind men.*». Could anyone better describe the crisis of the Church, which has opened itself to a world... of which Satan is the Prince?

The question arises: would the seer have dared to employ such vigorous expressions if they were not a simple echo of revelations she had received, an echo of the prophecies of the third Secret? For us, the answer leaves no doubt.

«THE BLESSED VIRGIN KNEW THAT THESE TIMES OF DIABOLICAL DISORIENTATION HAD TO COME»

In effect it is clear that Sister Lucy wants to suggest to us that, in 1917, Our Lady had announced, had foreseen the crisis of the Faith, proposing Her message as the anticipated response, the divine remedy for this menacing apostasy:

«Foreseeing this (present) *disorientation*, the Virgin recommended recitation of the Rosary with such insistence» as «*the prayer most apt for preserving faith in souls*». «*It is because She already knew that these times had to come*, when the devil and his supporters would fight this prayer so much...» She insisted so much «*as if to arm us in advance* against this time of diabolical disorientation, so that we wouldn't let ourselves be fooled by false doctrines...»

These words of the seer are explained perfectly and take on all their significance, if on July 13, 1917, in Her third Secret, the Blessed Virgin announced precisely this «*diabolical disorientation*» which would suddenly invade the Church, if Her requests were not obeyed.

THE HOUR OF SATAN... THE HOUR OF PETER'S GREAT TRIAL

And if the times we are living in are those of “the Power of Darkness”, the hour of Satan’s final offensive against the Church of Christ, it is not astonishing that just as in the Gospel, this hour is also the hour of Peter’s great temptation, and perhaps his fall as well.

As Jesus said to Peter and the other Apostles before leaving the Cenacle:

«“Simon, Simon, *behold Satan has desired to have thee, that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith might not fail; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, confirm thy brethren.*” Peter told him: “Lord, with Thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death!” But He said, “I tell thee, Peter, a cock will not crow this day, until thou hast thrice denied that thou knowest Me.”» (Lk. 22:31-34)

And a few verses down, in this same twenty-second chapter of Saint Luke, the account of the triple betrayal by the Prince of the Apostles follows immediately after Our Lord’s words addressed to Satan’s henchmen, guided by the traitor, who had the audacity to arrest Him: «*But this is your hour and the power of darkness. Sed haec est hora vestra et potestas tenebrarum.*» (Lk. 22:53-62).

Indeed, we will provide additional evidence of this to complement Sister Lucy’s insistent allusions to «the diabolical wave sweeping over the world». It is very probable that the third Secret of Fatima situates the deficiencies of Pastors – and the great apostasy it announced – in the context of Satan’s supreme battle against Christ, in the apocalyptic framework of the final struggle between the Immaculate Virgin and the infernal Dragon.

CHAPTER VII

THE GREAT APOSTASY OF THE “LAST TIMES” PREDICTED BY THE SCRIPTURES

We know from a reliable source that a certain person, who was questioning Sister Lucy on the contents of the final Secret, finally obtained this laconic answer: «***It's in the Gospel and in the Apocalypse, read them!***» Far from being evasive, by the mere mention of the Apocalypse, the seer's answer brings us a precious indicator: the Secret of Fatima joins the great prophecies of the New Testament, predicting the Church's future until the end of time. On the other hand, did not Sister Lucy declare to Father Fuentes that the Blessed Virgin had made her see clearly that we were in «*the last times of the world*»?

Let us follow the seer's precious advice, then. Since we cannot know the final words of the great Secret of Mary, let us go to Holy Scripture, in the certainty that the Fatima prophecy can do nothing more than make it explicit and apply it to our time. Moreover, as we now know, the final Secret concerns “the dogmas of the Faith” and the Church's future. Thus in the vast teaching of Revelation dealing with the “last times”, we can confine ourselves to this aspect alone.

THE PROPHECIES DESPISED

The teaching of Jesus and the Apostles regarding the “last times” seems to have completely disappeared from the thinking of our theologians and our Pastors. Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, makes this sad observation at the beginning of a learned examination of all the data of Scripture and Tradition on this theme of the “last times”. At present, the official Church professes to know nothing about her future:

«It can be said that *she goes forward with her eyes blinded by the “knowledgeable”, and the imagination filled with the insane fantasies of too many “enlightened ones”*. Christ has revealed to her the end of time; she no longer knows how to read or say anything about it. She prefers to give herself over to prospective sociology to find the “signs of the times”! The last book of the Bible is *the Apocalypse*, that is, the *Revelation* of what must happen to the Church from the time of Christ until the consummation of the ages, and she despises it! Ask a modern priest, ask a licensed exegete about what is to come, what Scripture and Tradition reveal to us. Nine times out of ten he will answer you: “But my good friend, we know strictly nothing!”

«That is serious, it is a great shame, and it is an insult to a God Who has spoken in a manner useful for us and for our salvation. Due to a lack of intelligence networks, the best organized armies lose battles. Due to a lack of inspired warnings, the world is being lost...»¹¹²³

Let us observe that disdain for the prophecies of Fatima, for nearly thirty years, has gone hand in hand with disdain for the repeated warnings of Jesus and the Apostles concerning

“the last times”. John XXIII, Paul VI, and Vatican Council II all equally ignored them – consult the table of scriptural quotations in the conciliar documents! Out of a thousand references, we do not find any referring us to the most important texts we are going to quote.¹¹²⁴ It means that the terrible warnings of Jesus and the Apostles on «*the apostasy which must come*» seem to be totally foreign to the Council’s doctrine. In like manner, they are absent in our day from the teaching of John Paul II, who – two days after his pilgrimage to Fatima – made this incredible declaration at Coimbra, to the «Portuguese intellectuals and men of culture»:

«*The situation may appear desperate, and hint at a new “apocalypse”*. But in reality, this is not the case at all (sic). For humanity of the year 2,000 there surely exists a hopeful outcome, and many reasons for hope. It suffices (sic) that all men of good will, especially those who profess faith in Christ, engage in a profound renewal of culture, in the light of a sound anthropology and the principles of the Gospel.»¹¹²⁵

This blind optimism on the future of the Church and the world explains the wall of silence opposed to the prophecies of Fatima, and notably to Father Alonso’s studies on the contents of the final Secret. Did the Most Holy Virgin, in 1917, predict a terrible apostasy in the Church, grave shortcomings of the bishops and the Pope? It is impossible, unthinkable, our reformers believe. And they do not even examine this hypothesis. Besides, for the majority of our conciliar theologians, imbued with liberalism and relativism, there is no such thing any more as schism or heresy, properly speaking, and the word “apostasy” has no meaning. For aren’t all men, whatever be their religion, their agnosticism or their atheism, considered to be sincerely seeking the truth and to serve it in their own way?

Faced with these facts, a certain integristism, which still believes in a one and only Church still in possession of the truth, reassures itself to the point of voluntarily blinding itself, retaining from the Gospel only the promise which Our Lord made to Peter: «Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.» (Mt. 16:18) So, they think, there is nothing to fear!

This facile and reassuring position quite simply ignores the clear and simple, vitally important and urgent teaching of Our Lord and the Apostles, and the doctors and saints who came after them. It will be sufficient for us to recall the principal texts of Scripture, to immediately place ourselves back in the atmosphere and tonality of the Secret of Fatima. As we will see, this brief incursion into Holy Scripture, far from going off the subject, will lead us to important discoveries projecting incomparable lights on the entirety of the Fatima message.

To be sure, the study of the New Testament prophecies is complex and arduous, and it would be vain or even dangerous to venture into it without following a sure guide. In 1974, our Father published a masterly study on the subject, which will serve as a guiding thread for our exposition, and to which we refer our reader.¹¹²⁶

I. WE ARE IN THE TIME OF THE GREAT APOSTASY

The word is from Saint Paul: Our Lord Jesus Christ will return for His Second Coming, he explains to his Christians of Thessalonica, but «the apostasy must come first...» (2 Thess. 2:3)

THE PROPHECIES OF OUR LORD

However, it is Jesus Himself Who first predicted this terrible crisis of the Faith which will open the “last times”. Along with famines and earthquakes, wars and persecutions, Our Lord clearly predicts that there will also be grave deficiencies even within the Church:

«Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and will put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will fall away, and will betray one another, and will hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray. *And because iniquity will abound, the charity of the many will grow cold.* But whoever perseveres to the end, he shall be saved.» (Mt. 24:9-13)

«... For *false christs and false prophets will arise*, and will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold it to you.» (Mt. 24:24)¹¹²⁷

Finally, we are familiar with these stupefying words of Jesus: «***Yet when the Son of man comes, will He find, do you think, faith on the earth?***» (Lk. 18:8) This question of Our Lord, explained by His other prophecies on the last times – which are utterly definite and unconditional – takes on an even more dramatic resonance. The apostasy will come, Jesus evokes its most extreme extension, and He leaves us in uncertainty.

THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING

The Apostles understood this tragic teaching very well. There are countless texts where they evoke this menacing apostasy. They multiply warnings against its artisans, the false prophets and false doctors of all sorts, who come from the Church’s very bosom and are already at work against Her, striving furiously to destroy the Faith of the faithful. But “in the last days”, they make it clear, the false prophets will multiply most dangerously. We must reread chapters II and III of Saint Peter’s Second Epistle:

«But there were false prophets also among the people, just as among you *there will be lying teachers* who will bring in destructive sects. They even disown the Lord Who bought them, thus bringing upon themselves swift destruction.» (2 Pet. 2:1)

«This first you must know, that *in the last days* there will come deceitful scoffers, men walking according to their own lusts, saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”... But beloved, do not be ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord does not delay in His promises, but for your sake is long-suffering, not wishing that any should perish but that all should turn to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:3-9)

We must reread Saint Jude, taking up the same theme:

«Be mindful of the words that have been spoken beforehand by the apostles of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who kept saying to you that *at the end of time there will come scoffers, walking impiously according to their desires.*» (Jude 17)

As for Saint John, he denounces «*the Antichrist who is coming*», and the many antichrists who have already come, as his precursors and first manifestations.^{[1128](#)}

Saint Paul is no less insistent, from the beginning of his ministry until his last epistles to Timothy and Titus. He attacks the heretics who trouble his churches as the first of a long line of “deceitful spirits and liars”, who will go on multiplying during the “last times”. He writes to Timothy:

«Now the Spirit expressly says that *in the last times* some will depart from the Faith (literally: «*apostatize from the Faith*»), giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of devils, and having their conscience branded ...» (1 Tim. 4:1-2)

«But know this, that *in the last days* dangerous times will come.» Saint Paul goes on to describe the growing iniquity mentioned by Our Lord. How relevant that picture is! And note well – he is not speaking about the pagans, but about Christians at the time of the great apostasy. He continues:

«Men will be lovers of self, haughty, covetous, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, criminal, heartless, faithless, slanderous, incontinent, merciless, unkind, treacherous, stubborn, puffed up with pride, loving pleasure more than God; having a semblance indeed of piety, but disowning its power.» (2 Tim. 3:1-5)

In other words, under a surface piety, they will be overcome by the impiety around them and will fall into apostasy. The apostle continues:

«For *there will come a time* when they will not endure *the sound doctrine*; but having itching ears, will heap up to themselves teachers according to their own lusts, and they will turn away their hearing from the truth and turn aside rather to fables.» (2 Tim. 4:3-4)

An attentive reading of all these texts shows clearly that the Apostles, using the occasion of those who were stirring up trouble in their own time, definitely intended to give a more vast and prophetic teaching. «*There will come a time*», says Saint Paul.

A SECRET FOR THE TIME OF THE GREAT APOSTASY

If, as we have shown, the third Secret announces a terrible crisis of the Church, the loss of Faith on the scale of nations or entire continents, does it not correspond, in a striking manner, to the prophecies of Scripture concerning the apostasy of the “last times”? Perhaps it even refers to them in an explicit enough manner.

Sister Lucy, as we have seen, was not afraid to tell Father Fuentes that Our Lady's messages imply that we have entered «*the last times of the world*». We now have a solid proof that this theme really belongs to the third Secret, in Cardinal Ratzinger's declaration to Vittorio Messori, in August 1984. After stating that he had read the Secret, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith answered the journalist, who had asked why this Secret was still not revealed:

«Because, according to the judgment of the Popes, it adds nothing to what a Christian must already know from revelation: a radical call to conversion, the absolute gravity of history, *dangers threatening the faith and life of the Christian, and therefore the world. And also the importance of the "last times"...* But the things contained in this third Secret correspond to what is announced in Scripture...»¹¹²⁹

Here we have a declaration of capital importance! Granted, the Cardinal could have spoken without circumlocutions and told us simply, without ambiguous periphrases, what themes properly belong to the third Secret. It is clear however that in his enumeration, three elements, which cannot be connected with the message of Fatima already known, certainly refer us to the specific contents of the third Secret. They are:

1. «***Dangers to the faith.***»

2. «***The importance of the last times.***»

3. ***The fact that the prophecies «contained in the third Secret correspond to what is announced in Scripture.***» This is tantamount to stating in a different way that the third Secret concerns the "last times". What, in effect, are the prophecies of Scripture which have not yet been fulfilled, if not those which concern «the last times»?

Besides, as we will have occasion to repeat, there is the series of great manifestations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary (from 1673 to 1689); at the dawn of the 18th century, there is the extraordinary mission of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, apostle of Mary Mediatrix, and prophet of Her apocalyptic role in the great battle of the last times, whose imminence he foresaw; and in the nineteenth century there is the series of great apparitions of the Immaculate Virgin, especially those of Rue du Bac, La Salette, Lourdes, and Pontmain – all these are situated in this context of the "last times of the world",¹¹³⁰ preparing the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the striking victory of Christ the King, for the inauguration of the spiritual, social and political reign of Their two united Hearts. Did not Heaven propose the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and then devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to revive in souls charity, which had grown so cold «*in these last centuries*», and in some way propose them as the two final and divine remedies to the growing iniquity and menacing impiety?¹¹³¹

II. WE ARE IN THE TIME OF THE TRIUMPH OF THE ANTICHRIST POWERS

Since we have good reasons to think that the sad times we are living in really are “the last times”, marked by apostasy, the prophecies of Scripture are most especially addressed to us, and we would be inexcusable not to seek there our light, strength, and consolation in the great trial coming. So let us continue to listen, with docility, to the teaching of the Apostles on the future awaiting us...

«THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY», ACCORDING TO SAINT PAUL

The Apostle is speaking to his Christians of Thessalonica, who were persuaded of the imminent coming, or “parousia”, of Our Lord. No, he answers them, it is still not here. And here is the vitally important text, concerning the apostasy of the last times:

«Let no one deceive you in any way, for ***the day of the Lord will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the Man of sin (the Man of impiety) is revealed, the Son of perdition, the Adversary***, who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God and gives himself out as if he were God.» (2 Thess. 2:3-4)

Let us leave aside, for a moment, the verses dealing with the obstacle to his appearance, to describe right away his coming and his work:

«And *his coming* (i.e. the coming of the Impious one) is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all wicked deception to those who are perishing. For *they have not received the love of truth that they might be saved*. Therefore God sends them a misleading influence that they may believe falsehood, that all may be judged who have not believed the truth, but have preferred wickedness.» (2 Thess. 2:9-12)

WHO IS THIS «MAN OF SIN», THIS ANTICHRIST?

We can say Antichrist, although the word is not from Saint Paul, since all the exegetes are in accord in identifying the Impious one he speaks of with the Antichrist, whom Saint John speaks about in his epistles.¹¹³² Who is he, this artisan of apostasy? Saint Paul uses three terms to define him.

1. The first is difficult to translate: “*o anthrôpos tês anomias*”, *the Man of Sin, of Impiety*. The Greek term is more general and richer than all our translations: it is the Lawless man, in revolt against all laws, divine as well as human. He is the Impious one and the Revolutionary, in this sense, that he refuses to submit to all authority inasmuch as it derives from God, as well as all divine law: “I will not serve!” he cries. Parallel expressions well express the content of the word: he is the man «without faith or law», whose motto is «neither God nor a master»... other than himself.

2. This man is not only impious, *he is an apostate, that is, a traitor*: the term employed by Saint Paul, "*the Son of perdition*", "*o uios tês apôleias*", undoubtedly is reminiscent of Our Lord's words, reported to us by Saint John: in this way Jesus designated Judas, the Apostle who was going to betray Him. (Jn. 17:12)

In almost all the passages of Scripture dealing with the apostasy, we find this insistence on the betrayal of the Church by the faithful, and even the Pastors. Thus does Saint Paul denounce the "false apostles", writing to the Corinthians:

«For they are *false apostles*, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for *Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light*. It is no great thing, then, if *his ministers disguise themselves as ministers of justice*. But their end will be according to their works.» (2 Cor. 11:13)

Bidding his adieu to the "elders" of the Church of Ephesus, he solemnly warns them:

«Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as bishops, to rule the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own Blood. I know that after my departure *fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock. And from among your own selves men will rise speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them*. Watch, therefore...» (Acts 20:28-31)

3. Saint Paul, following an increasing progression in his description, finally applies to this "Man of Sin" the very name of the devil: he is "*the Adversary*", "Satan", whose henchman he is. Saint John tells us of Judas, who had decided to betray Jesus: «Satan entered into him...» (Jn. 13:37; Lk. 22:3) Similarly, the Antichrist is the instrument of Satan, «who communicates his superhuman power to him, a little like the way the Spirit of Christ communicates itself to Christians», comments Father Rigaux.¹¹³³ As in the Apocalypse, the Dragon, symbol of Satan, confers his power on the Beast, who symbolizes the powers in his service. (Apoc. 13:12)

«*THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY IS ALREADY AT WORK*»

Before the second coming, the parousia of Christ, must come that of the Impious one. (2 Thess. 2:1, 9) However, his diabolical work has already begun: «*the mystery of iniquity is already at work*». (2 Thess. 2:7) Already, in secret, the Powers of evil foment the apostasy. Saint John teaches exactly the same thing:

«*You have heard that an Antichrist is coming; so now many antichrists have arisen...*» (1 Jn. 2:18)

«... It is the spirit of Antichrist, *of whom you have heard that he is coming, and now is already in the world.*» (1 Jn. 4:3)

All the heretics that the Apostles denounce appear to them already as so many manifestations, embodiments of the Antichrist. The Antichrist is not an impersonal force. He never acts except through concrete persons. But he is not alone. The principle of unity is Satan, who inspires all his instruments, and makes them work in his service. What is clear, for Saint Paul as well as Saint John, is that every arch-heretic is already an antichrist, and every heresy is at bottom diabolically inspired.

This does not exclude that at the end of time, a «Son of perdition» will appear, who will embody within himself all satanic malice and perversity. He will lead the struggle against the Church to its paroxysm, and provoke the universal apostasy.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE ANTICHRIST POWERS

Finally, at the end of an unstinting battle, there will come a day when «the mystery of iniquity» will seem completely victorious. The apostasy being quasi universal, the Man of Sin will manifest himself openly and bring the Impiety to its fullness. This will be his “revelation”, his great “manifestation”, a diabolical aping of Christ’s manifestation. Saint Paul tells us that he will go so far that he will **«sit in the temple of God and give himself out as if he were God»**. (2 Thess. 2:3-4) These are very mysterious words. An old commentator asks:

«But what will be this temple of God in which he will sit? Perhaps it will be one of the most august churches of Rome, such as Saint Peter’s basilica, or perhaps the temple of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem...»¹¹³⁴

These words are all the more horrible since the text does not suggest a profanation coming from a persecuting power, such as Antiochus Epiphanes. It is in the *naos*, that is, the part of the temple where only the priests could enter, that the Impious one will sit – in other words, in the very heart of the Church. Moreover, the word *kathisai* does not include any nuance of usurpation by violence. It seems that he must sit through a fully legitimate right, as it was said to the Twelve: *katêsethe*, «you will sit».¹¹³⁵

FATIMA BEFORE THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

Does the final Secret of Fatima allude to this terrible teaching of Scripture touching on the “last times”? Sister Lucy’s insistence on «the diabolical wave sweeping over the world» seems to us an indication. Does it not mean, in effect, that we are living in the time of the triumph of the anti-Christ powers? If the Secret really does announce the great apostasy, how could it not refer more or less explicitly to Saint Paul’s prophecy where it is precisely this apostasy in question, inseparable from the “mystery of iniquity” at work in the world and the triumph of the Impious one in the Church’s very bosom?

A TEXT OF BISHOP VENANCIO. Bishop Venancio, who had probably received precise orders of John XXIII and then Paul VI, was always extremely discreet on the subject of the

third Secret. But as the Bishop of Fatima, he was probably aware of certain elements of its contents, either through Sister Lucy or through Pope John XXIII. In view of the celebration of the Fatima Jubilee, on July 25, 1966, he published a pastoral letter, where the few lines concerning the third Secret are worth retaining our attention.

«*Fatima has not yet said its last word.*» After explaining that these words of Cardinal Cerejeira concerning the third Secret have given rise to many illusory commentaries, the Bishop of Leiria continued:

«Neither has Fatima come to give reason to the prophets of imaginary world catastrophes. Fatima cannot be reduced to sensational prophecies of frightful wars... We affirm that Fatima is something much more serious than all that. *Fatima, really, in this too, "actualizes" the whole evangelical meaning of a Church launched eschatologically towards a future which is, to be sure, most assuredly in God's hands; but which, however, is continually threatened by the mystery of iniquity "which is already at work" (2 Thess. 2:7).*»¹¹³⁶

It would be astonishing that as he publicly brought up the question of the third Secret's real contents – this «subject so difficult and even perilous», as he himself says in his pastoral letter – Bishop Venancio would have cited by chance, and carelessly, “the mystery of iniquity already at work” spoken of by Saint Paul. This precise reference to the prophecy of the second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, in such a context and under the pen of a man as circumspect as Bishop Venancio, is undoubtedly significant.

THE LOGIC OF THE PROPHECIES. Moreover, do we not know that the manifestation of the Impious or wicked one spoken of by the Apostle will be tied to the apostasy as its final development, before the final triumph and arrival of Christ Jesus?

«And then the wicked one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming.» (2 Thess. 2:8)

But does not the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have to prepare and immediately precede that of Her Son? If this is so, do not the great apostasy and the revelation of the Impious one have to precede, in turn, the «final triumph» of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced by the conclusion of the Secret? In the unfolding of the prophecies, the events predicted by Saint Paul seem to correspond to the same “intermediate period” as the one directly touched on by Our Lady's third Secret.

We know that on July 6, 1851, Mélanie, the seer of La Salette, when writing down her secret so as to pass it on to Pope Pius IX, «asked the meaning of the word “*infallibly*”, and the correct spelling of the words “*polluted city*”, and “*antichrist*”.»¹¹³⁷

A STRIKING PROPHECY OF SAINT PIUS X

What we also know with sure knowledge, because it is an unquestionable fact, is the frightful progress made by impiety in our modern society. It is not an illusion to say that no

period of the world's history has seen this impiety, denounced by Saint Paul, pushed to such a point.

At the dawn of the century, Saint Pius X, in his inaugural encyclical, *E supremi apostolatus cathedra*, made this observation, seized with fright. The apostolic office frightened him, he avowed, precisely for this reason:

«We felt a sort of terror, considering the disastrous conditions of humanity at the present hour. Can we ignore such a profound and grave evil, which at this moment much more than in the past, is working away at its very marrow and leading it to its ruin? ***You know what this malady is, Venerable Brethren, it is the abandoning of God and apostasy from Him;*** and without any doubt, nothing leads more surely to ruin, according to these words of the prophet: “Those who depart far from You perish.” (Ps. 72:27)

«We understood that it belonged to Us, in virtue of the pontifical office entrusted to Us, to provide a remedy for such a great evil. We believed that this order of God was addressed to Us: “Behold, today I set you over nations and kingdoms, to tear down and destroy, to build up and to plant.”» (Jer. 1:10)

Further on, he denounces «the impious war which has been stirred up, and which continues almost everywhere, against God...» What is the remedy?

«It is necessary, by every means, and at the price of any effort, to uproot entirely ***this monstrous and detestable iniquity proper to the times we are living in, and through which man substitutes himself for God.***»

And Saint Pius X, referring to the text we have just commented on, goes so far as to state that the Apostle's prophecy has perhaps begun being fulfilled in our century:

«Truly, whoever ponders these things must necessarily and firmly fear whether such a perversion of minds is not the sign announcing, and the beginning of the last times, and that the Son of Perdition spoken of by the Apostle (2 Thess. 2:3) might already be living on this earth.

«So great is the audacity and so great the rage with which religion is mocked everywhere, and the dogmas of the faith are fought against, there is a stubborn effort to completely suppress man's duties towards God! ***Now this, according to the same Apostle, is the character proper to Antichrist; man, with unspeakable temerity, has usurped the place of the Creator,*** lifting himself above everything that bears the name of God. It has reached such a point that, being powerless to completely extinguish in himself the notion of God, he nevertheless shakes off the yoke of His Majesty, and dedicates the visible world to himself in the guise of the temple, where he pretends to receive the adoration of his own kind... *“He sits in the temple of God, and gives himself out as if he were God”* (2 Thess. 2:4).»¹¹³⁸

Saint Pius X gave this frightening diagnosis of the situation of the world on October 4, 1903. Who could dispute that since this date, the same evils he denounced then have only grown,

and in gigantic proportions? What would he say today, when the atheistic, satanic Bolshevik Revolution is little by little extending to the entire planet... with the active complicity of so many leaders of the Church? What would he say when the most scandalous immorality, when murder on a grand scale, are permitted and encouraged by the law in Catholic nations themselves? What would he say, now that Modernism, the “synthesis of all heresies”, manifests itself openly and enjoys the favour, or benevolent tolerance, of all the Pastors? In eighty-five years, the evil has grown beyond measure and penetrated the very heart of the Church; it has reached its highest summit.

One text alone is sufficient to show the immense distance covered, in falling into the abyss of apostasy. It is the discourse of Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, for the closing of the Council. It is impossible to reread these words, pronounced on such a solemn occasion, without pointing out the resemblances that impose themselves – both with the prophecy of the Apostle, as well as the interpretation clearly inspired by the Spirit given to us by Pius X, the saintly Pope of the twentieth century.

Here is the essential passage, but the discourse is completely in the same vein:

«The Church of the Council, it is true... has been very much occupied with man, with man such as he proposes himself in reality to our time: living man, man completely occupied with himself, man who makes himself not only the centre of everything that interests him, but who dares to proclaim himself the principle and ultimate reason of all reality. This whole phenomenal man, that is, clothed with his innumerable appearances, has been placed before the assembly of Council Fathers...»¹¹³⁹

«Secularizing and profane humanism has appeared finally in its terrible stature, and has, in a certain sense, defied the Council. The religion of God Who became man has encountered the religion (for it is one) of man who makes himself God.

«What happened? A clash, a battle, an anathema? This could have happened; but it did not take place. The old story of the Samaritan has been the model of the Council’s spirituality. An unlimited sympathy (sic) has pervaded it completely. The discovery of human needs (and they are all the greater, to the degree that the son of the earth [sic] makes himself greater) has absorbed our Synod’s attention.

«Recognize for it at least this merit, you modern humanists, who deny the transcendence of the highest things, and recognize our new humanism: we too, we more than anybody, have the cult of man.»¹¹⁴⁰

«Secularizing and profane humanism», the «religion of man who makes himself God», this is undoubtedly the Marxist religion – for it is a religion – and even more, the Masonic religion. But according to Saint Paul, and according to the entire, unanimous Catholic tradition up to Saint Pius X, up to Pius XII,¹¹⁴¹ this is precisely the religion of the Impious one, the religion of Antichrist.¹¹⁴²

Well, now! Towards this open, shameless Impiety, the supreme sin which Saint Paul abominates because it is satanic in its very essence, because it is the sin of the “Son of perdition”, who provokes God’s just wrath and merits eternal damnation – faced with «*this monstrous and detestable iniquity proper to the times we are living in, and through which man substitutes himself for God*», as Saint Pius X said – the Council felt no animosity, Pope Paul VI declares to us. On the contrary, before this «*son of the earth*», this «*modern humanist*» who today makes himself «*greater*» than ever in his open revolt against God, «*an unlimited sympathy has pervaded the entire Council*». For the first time, between the Ministers of God and the children of Belial, between the Vicar of Christ and the henchmen of the Adversary, there was neither a clash, nor a battle, nor an anathema. No, «*a current of affection and admiration has overflowed from the Council over the modern human world*».¹¹⁴³

It is hardly necessary to make it clear that neither Jesus, Who «is Love» (1 Jn. 4:8), nor Saint John His Evangelist, nor Saint Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, had ever thought of interpreting «*the old story [sic] of the Samaritan*» this way. This new exegesis confuses the victim – «the man who fell among robbers» and was left by them «half dead», over whom the “Good Samaritan”, Jesus Himself, lovingly bends – with the murderers, the “lawless men” which here mean Satan and his henchmen.¹¹⁴⁴ Is not this fallacious exegesis, instead, one of the «*lying prodigies*» of which Saint Paul speaks to the Thessalonians? And one wonders: by what «*misleading influence, that they may believe falsehood*» (2 Thess. 2:11-12), not a single one of the 2,400 bishops present dared to denounce, immediately, the Impiety of such statements?

Only one priest had the farsightedness and the courage to do so at that very moment,¹¹⁴⁵ and untiringly since then, even going so far as to complain about it openly to the Pope in 1973, making it the “capital accusation” of his *Liber accusationis*. Quoting and commenting on this Discourse of December 7, 1965, «a discourse, it is certain, such as there has never been in the Church’s annals, and never will be again, this discourse which culminates in the proclamation, before the face of the world and the Face of God, of the cult of Man», our Father wrote:

«See how this sentiment of immoderate love leads you to be reconciled with *the Goliath of the modern World*, to bend your knees before the Enemy of God, which defies you and hates you. Instead of taking courage and fighting, like David, against the Adversary, you declare yourself full of love for him, you adulate him and before long you place yourself at his exclusive service! *Your charity idolizes and serves the Enemy of God, and to flatter him, you go so far as to rival him in his error, even in his blasphemy.*

«*You are making a covenant with man, who makes himself God! You claim to surpass them all, these atheistic humanists of our time, mad with pride, in the fact of the cult of man.*»¹¹⁴⁶

One shudders to think that Pope Paul VI pronounced this impious discourse, where he dared to proclaim openly his own «*cult of man*», seated on his throne at Saint Peter’s, at Rome itself.

Has not the hour come to recite once more, with Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, his prophetic «*Prière embrasée*», beseeching God to intervene to save «*His Church, so weakened and so soiled by the crimes of its children*», to extinguish the raging fire of apostasy, which is in the process of devouring it:

«*Tempus faciendi, Domine, dissipaverunt legem tuam*: it is time, Lord, to do what You have promised to do. Your Divine Law is transgressed, Your Gospel is abandoned, the torrents of iniquity flood the entire world, and even carry away Your servants, the whole earth is desolate, *Impiety is on the throne, your Sanctuary has been profaned and the Abomination is even in the Holy Place (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15).*»

«Oh, permit me to shout everywhere: Fire, fire, fire! Help, help, help! *Fire in God's house, fire in souls, fire even in the Sanctuary!*»[1147](#)

Is it not this same prophetic warning, this same vehement appeal which the Immaculate Virgin Herself came to give the Church, in the triple Secret of July 13, 1917? «*Fire in souls*»: this is the first part of the Secret, the vision of hell. «*Fire in God's house*»: this is Christendom threatened by the Bolshevik conflagration. «*Fire in the Sanctuary*»: this is the devastating apostasy, which has reached even the summit of the Church; it is the prophecy of the third Secret.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE SECRETS OF FATIMA: AN APOCALYPSE FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

«*Signum magnum apparuit in coelo, Mulier amicta sole...* A great sign appeared in heaven: a Woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under Her feet and upon Her head a crown of twelve stars.»

«It was given to our century to see this wonderful Sign again. This Lady appeared in the sky of Fatima, it is indeed the same Woman as in the vision of Patmos. To become thus involved, by the events of our human history, in apocalyptic times seizes us with emotion and fright. The chapter which Our Lady of Fatima wrote has a limpid simplicity in its very greatness. *It takes us back to that of Saint John, it throws it into the present, and places it before Christians once more. The two mutually shed light on each other, to the point of no longer leaving in shadows what concerns the great tragedy of our twentieth century.*»¹¹⁴⁸

It could not be said better. Sister Lucy herself greatly recommends reading, studying, meditating on the Apocalypse. We have seen that when questioned on the contents of the third Secret, she answered: «*It's in the Gospel and the Apocalypse, read them!*» We even know that one day she indicated chapters 8 to 13.

In fact, as we go through these chapters, striking similarities stand out between the sacred text and the great prophecy of Fatima.

I. THE MYSTERY OF THE FIRST SECRET: FACING THE INFERNAL DRAGON, THE IMMACULATE ONE (Apoc. 11:19 - 12:17)

«And the temple of God in Heaven was opened, *and there was seen the Ark of His Covenant in His temple*, and there came flashes of lightning, and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and great hail.»¹¹⁴⁹

«And a great sign appeared in Heaven: *a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under Her feet, and upon Her head a crown of twelve stars. And being with child, She cried out in Her travail and was in the anguish of delivery.*

«Then another sign was seen in Heaven, and behold, *a great red Dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems. And his tail was dragging along the third part of the stars of Heaven, and it dashed them to the earth.*» (Apoc. 11:19; 12:4)

The continuation of the text shows us the final victory of the Woman over the dragon, who tries in vain to seize Her Son, the awaited Messiah, Who comes to reign over all nations.

THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON OF THE APOCALYPSE

Who is this Woman, called to play such a spectacular role? Certain interpreters want to see nothing more than the symbol of the people of God there. But the best exegetes are in agreement, recognizing in Her, simultaneously and indissociably, the symbol of the Church and the Blessed Virgin Mary Herself, who is the living Figure of the Church. Indeed why would this Woman, who is the Mother of a very individual Messiah, Christ Jesus, be less personal than He? It cannot be a question of the people of the Old Covenant here, because this Woman is also the Mother of the disciples of Jesus, who are «*the rest of Her offspring*» (Apoc. 12:17). And conversely, the Church of the New Testament, with the exception of the Blessed Virgin, is not the Mother of the Messiah. Only the historical and typological figure of the Blessed Virgin, who is simultaneously Mother of Christ and the living Figure of the Church, corresponds perfectly to all the demands of the inspired text.¹¹⁵⁰

To designate Satan, Saint John deliberately chose the image of the “Red dragon”. His seven heads and ten horns covered with diadems symbolize his power. He is indeed the “Prince of this world” (Jn. 12:31).

But he is also the tempter of Eve in the earthly paradise: «*that great Dragon, the ancient Serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, who leads astray the whole world...*» (Apoc. 12:9). Further on, in two places the Dragon is identified with the Serpent again, (Apoc. 12:14 & 15), referring us back with insistence to the account of the fall in the Book of Genesis, and giving us its inspired interpretation: God Himself, as He curses the Serpent, sets up the two antagonists of the great final combat, face to face:

«*God said to the **Serpent**: “I will place enmities between thee and **the Woman**, between your offspring and **Her offspring**. She shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for Her heel.”*» (Gen. 3:14-15)

We have a new explicit connection between the Apocalypse and the proto-Gospel; Saint John mentions “*the offspring*” of the Woman, found in Genesis:

The Serpent «was angered at **the Woman**, and went away to wage war with the rest of **Her offspring** who kept the commandments of God and hold fast to the testimony of Jesus.»¹¹⁵¹

The Serpent had managed to deceive the Mother of the living. But another Woman has come, the new Eve, Mother of the new human race, who will come away with the definitive victory over him after a long and terrible battle.

THE IMMACULATE ONE AND THE DEVIL IN THE FATIMA MESSAGE

Do not the apparitions and message of Fatima refer us back, in the clearest manner, to the two protagonists of the Holy Book?

FIRST OF ALL TO THE VIRGIN OF THE APOCALYPSE: Does not the description of Our Lady as She appeared in the Cova da Iria remind us irresistibly of «the Woman clothed with the sun», described by the seer of Patmos? Here is Sister Lucy's description:

«We beheld a Lady all dressed in white. She was *more brilliant than the sun*, and radiated a light more clear and intense than a crystal glass filled with sparkling water, *when the most ardent rays of the sun shine through it.*»¹¹⁵²

And on October 13, 1917, did not Our Lady appear to the children as «*a great sign in heaven*», beside the sun and more resplendent than it, Her clothes decorated with twelve stars, according to Lucy's description in the first account she wrote of the apparitions, on January 5, 1922.¹¹⁵³

If we adopt the very plausible hypothesis of Father Feuillet, who already interprets the apparition of the Ark of the Covenant (in Apoc. 11:19) as a symbolic prelude to the vision of chapter 12, and as an initial Marian manifestation – for it is very probable that for Saint John, as well as for Saint Luke, the true Ark of the Covenant is the Blessed Virgin¹¹⁵⁴ – the resemblance is even more striking. Have we not pointed out that the cloud visible to everyone present, above the little holm oak where the Immaculate One showed Herself to the seers – and this in each one of Her apparitions, from June 13 to October 13 – signified that She was the Ark of the New Covenant, the Abode and Temple of God?¹¹⁵⁵

There is a new parallel, which is moving and perhaps significant: the atmospheric signs, which caused the wonderment of the witnesses of Our Lady's apparitions at the Cova da Iria, correspond almost term for term with the signs accompanying the apparition of the Ark of the Covenant in the Apocalypse... As if the Blessed Virgin, appearing at the dawn of our century, had wanted to discreetly inform us of the apocalyptic dimension of Her manifestation. «*And there came flashes of lightning, and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and great hail*», we read in the sacred text.

We know that at Fatima, Our Lady announced Her coming to the three seers by one or two flashes of lightning. Indeed on May 13, the shepherds grew afraid: «*That's lightning; we may have a thunderstorm!*»¹¹⁵⁶ And on June 13, around noon, everybody heard Lucy suddenly shout: «*There's the lightning!... Our Lady is arriving!*»¹¹⁵⁷

And voices? They were also heard during the apparitions, although in a discreet manner: «*We began hearing something like a very light voice...*»¹¹⁵⁸

Still more remarkable: on July 13, «after Lucy had questioned the vision for the last time, we heard *something like a great clap of thunder* and the little arch, which had been put up to hang the two lanterns on, trembled *as if in an earthquake*». ¹¹⁵⁹ Again on August 13, in spite of the seers' absence, at the hour of the apparition, the crowd heard *a great clap of thunder*:

«Some said it came from the direction of the road, others from the tree; to me it seemed to come from a long way off. Everyone grew quiet, afraid; some of them began to cry out that we would be killed... *After the thunderclap came the flash of lightning, and then we began to*

see a little cloud, very delicate, very white, which stopped for a few moments over the holm oak and then rose in the air and disappeared.»¹¹⁶⁰

Only the «great hail» was missing at the Cova da Iria, as a sign accompanying the Ark of the New Covenant. There were only the deluge of rain and the wind of October 13, preceding the final apparition and the dance of the sun... Not without foundation we can attribute an eschatological significance to this dance of the sun: «*There will be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars... the powers of heaven will be shaken*», Our Lord said.¹¹⁶¹

In any case, the exegetes have highlighted the eschatological meaning of the apparition of the Ark of the Covenant in Apocalypse 11:19. Are not Our Lady of Fatima's spectacular apparitions equally vested with this same eschatological dimension as an announcement of the "last times"? Is it not the announcement of the imminent triumph of the Immaculate One, and through Her, the upcoming victory of Christ the King over all His enemies?

But before that, the great battle against the Dragon had to be completed victoriously...

THE DRAGON OF THE APOCALYPSE. Here also, the resemblance is striking. It was under the form of «frightful animals», immersed in a «sea of fire» (cf. Apoc. 19:20), all burning and spitting out flames, that the devils were shown to the three seers on July 13, 1917, as in the vision of the Apocalypse.¹¹⁶²

THE MYSTERY OF THE FIRST SECRET

As for the great apocalyptic battle between the fallen creature, defeated in Heaven and thrown down upon the earth, (Apoc. 12:7-17), cast into the Abyss and chained for a thousand years – the time of Christendom – then released for a little while (Apoc. 20:1-9; cf. 9:1-2) – the diabolical times we are living in – as we shall see, this great battle constitutes the dramatic arrangement of each of the three secrets.

First of all, there is the first Secret, which places the infernal Dragon, working furiously for the loss of souls, face to face with the Immaculate Virgin, their Mother, who interposes Herself to snatch them away from eternal fire, and lead them to Heaven: «*You have seen hell, where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.*»¹¹⁶³

Heaven and hell, the devil and the Immaculate Heart of Mary – this antagonism sums up the whole mystery of the first Secret. Under this sign the dramatic history of each one of our lives unfolds.

II. THE MYSTERY OF THE SECOND SECRET: THE BEAST IN THE SERVICE OF THE DRAGON (Apoc. 13:1-10)

If the first part of the Secret places the Blessed Virgin and the Dragon of the Apocalypse face to face, the second part also finds its parallel in the Holy Book, with a precision so stupefying that it cannot seem due to chance.

Conquered in Heaven by Saint Michael and his Angels, the Dragon and his own angels were thrown down to the earth. «The devil has gone down to you in great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time.» But the Woman and Her Child escaped him, and he was powerless to overcome Them: «And the dragon was angered at the Woman, and went away to wage war with the rest of Her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold fast the testimony of Jesus.» (Apoc. 12:7-17)

Then the Apocalypse describes in chapter thirteen Satan's battle against the Church, developing and making clear all the New Testament teachings on Antichrist and his work, all through the centuries.

THE FIRST BEAST OF THE APOCALYPSE

The first instrument of Satan in his battle against the Church, «the camp of the saints, the beloved City» (Apoc. 20:9), is the Beast, the first Beast:

«I was standing on the seashore. Then *I saw a Beast emerge from the sea: it had seven heads and ten horns, and upon its horns ten diadems, and upon its heads blasphemous titles.* And I saw that the Beast was like a leopard, with paws like a bear and a mouth like a lion.» (Apoc. 12:18 - 13:2).

The interpretation is clear. Let us quote Father Boismard, in the Jerusalem Bible: «According to (Apoc.) 17:10 and 12-14, the Beast symbolizes the Roman Empire, *the symbol for all powers which will rise against the Church*; the seven heads are a series of seven emperors; the ten horns with crowns are ten vassal-kings.» Father Allo wrote in the same sense: «This Beast, according to the context and the analogy of Daniel's Beasts, *can only be a political power; it represents – first of all but not exclusively, as we will establish – that of pagan Rome, persecuting the Church.*»¹¹⁶⁴ To be more precise, the horns symbolize the power, and the fact that they are crowned with diadems indicates that it is a royal, temporal power (cf. Apoc. 17:12-13). The blasphemous titles symbolize the Impiety of this power.

This first Beast, then, is the political power – supreme and totalitarian, impious and persecuting the Church. It resembles a panther, a bear and a lion, this description calling to mind the power and malice of the great empires of the past which preceded the Roman – the Babylonian, Persian and Greek.¹¹⁶⁵

Saint John continues: «*And the Dragon gave it its own might and his throne and an immense empire.*» (Apoc. 13:2)

We must not forget that Satan is the «*Prince of this world*», which «*lies entirely*» in his power. (Jn. 12:31; 1 Jn. 5:19) Let us recall the second temptation of Jesus in the desert:

«And the devil led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And he said to Him, “To thee will I give all this power and their glory; *for to me they have been delivered, and to whomever I will I give them*. If therefore falling down you worship me, all this will be thine.”» (Lk. 4:5-7)

The Beast, Saint John tells us, will arrive at universal domination:

«And *all the earth followed the Beast* in wonder. And they worshipped the Dragon because he gave authority to the Beast, and they worshipped the Beast, saying, “Who is like to the Beast, and who will be able to fight with it?” *And there was given to it a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies*; and there was given to it authority to work for forty-two months. And it opened its mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in Heaven. *And it was allowed to wage war with the saints and overcome them. And there was given to it authority over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation*. And all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb Who has been slain from the foundation of the world.» (Apoc. 13:3-8)

THE FIRST BEAST, RUSSIA AND FATIMA

Faithful to the most exact scientific exegesis, our Father makes these luminous comments, which cannot be questioned when one admits that the Apocalypse really has a prophetic meaning:

«*I see Lucifer stirring up, for the last four centuries, a series of political powers really from him, against the Church, against Christendom*. In this last century, from the depths of barbarism has arisen *the most frightful Beast of all times, communism, which persecutes the Church, announced and denounced by Our Lady of Fatima*. Through foreign wars, through interior subversion, with a skill, a coherence, a brutality without precedent, this last Empire absorbs nations, races and peoples without thereby losing any of its cohesion and strength.»¹¹⁶⁶

Our knowledgeable exegetes and our Pastors have to be blind not to grasp the meaning of this prophecy, which is so clear. This is even truer since Our Lady took the trouble to come to Fatima to indicate to us its fulfilment in advance: the second part of the Secret – completely centered on Russia, which will be Satan’s instrument, and whose errors will lead astray the world, if Christians are not converted and put off obeying Her requests – corresponds exactly to the description of the Beast of the Apocalypse. The impious errors, the wars and persecutions, world domination, Our Lady of Fatima applies all these traits of the Beast to Bolshevik Russia... And the parallel is remarkable. We find in the Holy Book the exact description of the systematic persecutions, the totalitarian enslavement which everywhere accompanies its inhuman and satanic tyranny:

«And it was permitted (the false prophet) to cause that whoever should not worship the image of the Beast should be killed. And it will cause *all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and slaves, to have a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and it will bring it about that no one may be able to buy or sell, except him who has the mark, either the name of the Beast or the number of his name.*» (Apoc. 13:15-17)

Is this not the Gulag Archipelago, word for word? Just one example:

During the celebration of Christmas 1929, «not only were hundreds of churches closed, many icons burned, all workers and school-children forced to work and Sundays suppressed, but they even forced all factory workers, men and women, to sign a declaration of formal apostasy and hatred against God, under pain of being deprived of their cards for bread, clothing and lodging, without which all inhabitants of this unfortunate country are reduced to dying of hunger, misery and the cold...»¹¹⁶⁷

Have not cynically planned famines to annihilate populations resisting Marxism been a consistent element of Bolshevik tyranny, everywhere it has been installed since 1917? It is a fact of history that lies and homicide, raised to a system of government, follow the institution of communism everywhere. These are the marks of Satan.

In effect, like the Beast arising from the infernal abyss (Apoc. 11:7; 17:8), like the Impious one spoken of by Saint Paul, Bolshevism has received all its power from Satan himself, who uses it as his instrument to provoke the universal apostasy. According to the message of Fatima, it is because Russian Bolshevism is fundamentally satanic that the battle against it must be supernatural above all. It is Satan who must be conquered. And then the diabolical power of Russia will disappear. It will return to the flock and take its place in Christendom once more, completely devoted to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who shall have saved it, liberated it from its chains as one delivers somebody possessed by the devil through an exorcism.

Finally, this exact correspondence between the prophecy of the Apocalypse, describing the Beast, and the prophecy of Our Lady of Fatima, denouncing Bolshevik Russia as the predator nation which has received from Satan the power to dominate the world – this convergence gives us the deepest and most realistic view of the drama we are living through, and from which we still have to suffer.

But this is not all. The same parallel between the revelations of the seer of Patmos and the great Secret of Mary continues in astonishing fashion.

**III. THE MYSTERY OF THE THIRD SECRET:
THE FALSE LAMB, FALSE PROPHET IN THE SERVICE OF THE BEAST
(Apoc. 13:11-18)**

How could the Catholic Faith be lost, and Christendom weaken and destroy itself to the point of letting the impious Beast dominate the whole earth? Here the Apocalypse brings a vital precision to Saint Paul's prophecy, or at least makes it clearer.

«And I saw another Beast coming up out of the earth, **and it had two horns like those of the lamb, but it spoke like the Dragon. In the service of the first Beast, it established its empire everywhere**, and it made the earth and the inhabitants therein to worship the first Beast whose deadly wound was healed. And it did great signs, so as even to make fire come down from Heaven upon earth in the sight of mankind. And it leads astray the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the signs it was permitted to do in the sight of the Beast, telling the inhabitants of the earth to make an image to the Beast which had the wound of the sword, and yet lived.» (Apoc. 13:11-14)

What is this second Beast? Saint John indicates it to us with precision, through a collection of traits whose interpretation leaves no doubt. Every word is important, and we must not neglect any element if we want to grasp the full richness of the inspired text.

THE FALSE PROPHET

“ANOTHER BEAST”... Like the first Beast, this one receives all its power from Satan; it is a new emanation from him. As Father Boismard stresses, «the Dragon, the first and second Beast are a caricature of the Trinity» (Jerusalem Bible). In effect, they form a triad and Saint John, in several places, seems to underline this aspect of the infernal caricature of the true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.¹¹⁶⁸ In short, through this expression, «another Beast», Saint John tells us straightway that it concerns a power satanic in its very essence.

“COMING UP OUT OF THE EARTH”. Yet, this second Beast is very clearly distinct from the first one. Moreover, it does not rise up from the infernal abyss like the Dragon, (Apoc. 9:1; 20:1-3), nor from the sea, symbol of the powers of evil, like the first Beast.¹¹⁶⁹ No, Saint John sees it «*coming up out of the earth*», from the Promised Land, which symbolizes the Church.¹¹⁷⁰

“THE FALSE PROPHET”. However, the expression which best defines this second Beast is furnished to us by the following chapters: in effect, in three places Saint John names it “*the False Prophet*”.¹¹⁷¹ This perfectly explicit term dispels all uncertainty. It refers us back to the prophecies of Jesus, announcing for the “last times” the coming of “false prophets” from within the Church herself:

«And many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray. (Mt. 24:11 & 24)

«Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits you shall know them.» (Mt. 7:15-16)¹¹⁷²

Saint John himself, in his first epistle, identifies the “*false prophets*” with the “*antichrists*”, who have already come into the world: «Many antichrists have already arisen... They went forth from us, but they were not of us.» (1 Jn. 2:18-19; 4:1-3)

In the same sense, Saint Paul denounces the «*false apostles*», these «*deceitful workers disguising themselves as Apostles of Christ.*» (2 Cor. 11:13). Similarly Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, and «*his ministers disguise themselves as ministers of justice.*»¹¹⁷³

These parallels shed sufficient light on the figure of the “False Prophet” of the Apocalypse. If the first Beast designated the political power, an impious power which stirs up persecutions, the second Beast, this famous “False Prophet”, surely designates a religious power. It is Heresy issuing from within the Church herself, hypocritically claiming to be based on the teaching of Christ, while in fact it is inspired by Satan, and completely at his service.

The commentary on the Holy Book leads us once again right back to the present hour... and also, undoubtedly, to the heart of the third Secret of Fatima.

THE FALSE PROPHETS OF MODERNISM

In the modern apostasy, and in the «monstrous and detestable iniquity proper to our time, and through which man substitutes himself for God», Saint Pius X had denounced the manifestation of the Impious one announced by Saint Paul. Similarly, the same saint, in 1907, in his encyclical *Pascendi* unmasked the Modernists as the false teachers and false prophets spoken of by Scripture. He observes at the outset that they are more numerous and more perfidious than they ever were:

«Owing to the efforts of the enemy of the human race, there have never been lacking “men speaking perverse things” (Acts 20:30), “vain talkers and seducers” (Tit. 1:10), “erring and driving into error” (2 Tim. 3:13). It must, however, be confessed that these latter days have witnessed a notable increase in the number of the enemies of the Cross of Christ, who, by arts entirely new and full of deceit, are striving to destroy the vital energy of the Church, and, as far as in them lies, utterly to subvert the very Kingdom of Christ.»¹¹⁷⁴

St. Pius X promptly goes on to describe the unprecedented gravity of the evil affecting the Church:

«The partisans of error are to be sought not only among the Church’s open enemies; *but... in her very bosom, and are the more mischievous the less they keep in the open.*» These enemies are lay people and priests «thoroughly imbued with the poisonous doctrines taught by the enemies of the Church», and who put themselves forward «as reformers of the Church».¹¹⁷⁵

St. Pius X insists:

«The Church has no greater enemies. *For they put into operation their designs for her undoing, not from without, but from within. Hence, the danger is present almost in the very veins and heart of the Church*, whose injury is the more certain from the very fact that their knowledge of her is more intimate.»¹¹⁷⁶ «They seize upon professorships in the seminaries and universities, and gradually make of them chairs of pestilence.»¹¹⁷⁷ «It is time to tear away the mask from these people and to show them to the Church such as they are.»¹¹⁷⁸

«In the midst of this great danger to souls» – the gravest there has ever been, because Modernism is the worst of all heresies, it is the *combination*, the synthesis, the sewer where heresies collect, one could say¹¹⁷⁹ – «*in the midst of this universal flood of errors*», Saint Pius X invokes, in conclusion, «*Jesus Christ, the author of our faith*» and «*the Immaculate Virgin, the destroyer of every heresy.*»¹¹⁸⁰

Three years later, in 1910, in his encyclical *Editae saepe Dei* on Saint Charles Borromeo, Saint Pius X again insisted on the gravity of the peril, branding the first reform, the Protestant reformation, which was logically followed by the second reform, the Modernist one, as the terrifying progress of «*the apostasy of modern times*», writing:

«The modern reformers propose to foment a universal denial of the Church's faith and discipline, *an apostasy much more disastrous than the one which once darkened the century Saint Charles lived in; it slips artfully and mysteriously into the very blood vessels of the Church.*»¹¹⁸¹

And on August 25, while condemning the revolutionary utopia of the Sillon, he accused it of being simply «a miserable current of *the great movement of apostasy* organized in all countries, for the establishment of a universal Church having neither dogmas nor hierarchy...»¹¹⁸²

Again, who could dispute that the errors condemned by Saint Pius X have today spread throughout the Church? Who could dispute that the Modernist theologians, brushed aside and reduced to silence by Pius XII, became in the sixties the most influential advisers of the bishops, the principal experts of the Council, and then its official interpreters... without ever having changed their doctrine in any way? They noisily boasted of all this to the point that in 1968 – during the “Year of Faith”! – Pope Paul VI decided to suppress the oath against Modernism.

Our Father is directly in line with the doctrine of Saint Pius X – the great Pope and great Doctor of the twentieth century, with such profound and prophetic views – when he discerns, in this supreme imposture of our revolutionary theologians and our reformist Pastors, the manifestation of the second Beast of the Apocalypse. Yes, they correspond to the letter of the description of the False Lamb, the False Prophet of chapter thirteen:

«Then, from the very centre of civilization, from the midst of our Catholic nations, in our families, arose *Modernism, the antithesis of Orthodoxy*. As soon as it appeared, Saint Pius X exposed and condemned it, so that nobody would have an excuse. *It is the spirit of Lies and*

perfidiousness, hidden under the veils of Catholicism, which undertook to place religion at the service of the enemy's power.»¹¹⁸³

Indeed there is something graver than this satanic heresy, which issued from within the Church's very bosom and perfidiously encrusts itself there with consummate hypocrisy, to provoke its ruin.

THE FALSE LAMB, FALSE PROPHET, «IN THE SERVICE OF THE FIRST BEAST»

Here Saint John brings to the teaching of the New Testament an original detail of extreme importance which is also, as we shall see, striking in its actuality.

The work proper to this False Prophet, the diabolical caricature of the Holy Spirit, is in effect to place itself in the service of the first Beast, at the service of the impious political power, in the image of the Divine Spirit, whose entire spiritual action is ordered to bringing about the reign of Christ. Through its deceitful words, «through its manoeuvres», «through its prodigies», the False Prophet misleads «the inhabitants of the earth», it nudges them into apostasy as it leads them to admire, serve and adore the impious Beast.

To enslave souls, Satan thus uses a double artifice – he puts religion at the service of politics – politics without God, of which he is the inspirer and sovereign master.

Now the question arises: what religious power is in question here? Father Allo, who has in mind the pagan religion and its imperial cult, has to recognize that at the period the Apocalypse was written, nothing in the political reality of the time corresponded to what the Apostle describes here: «Hence nowhere is the prophetic character of the Apocalypse manifested so spectacularly as in this chapter 13.»¹¹⁸⁴

This is particularly true because, contrary to fantastic hypotheses, nothing permits us to think of a pagan religious power, and still less any profane ideology. No, the text suggests irresistibly that a Christian power is in question here... And once more, the correct understanding of the prophetic Word throws us straight into our own times.

THE RED, PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANS IN THE SERVICE OF THE BEAST

Our Father goes on, continuing his commentary:

«See how the theologians, the Pastors, Priests and High Priests put all their virtue, their eloquence, their knowledge, their apostolic power to work to enrol us in politics – and not those of Christendom – *those of Freemasonry*, of the United Nations, of socialism, and finally, irresistibly, *those of world communist imperialism.*»¹¹⁸⁵

In fact, has there ever been witnessed, in all the Church's history, a treason more obvious, more shameless than that of our "Red Christians"? In the pre-war they were criminally

involved on the side of the “Reds” of Spain, fanatical persecutors of the Church,¹¹⁸⁶ and in the post-war they were at the service of all the colonial insurrections caused by Moscow, to gradually topple the Third World into the camp of atheistic Bolshevism, which persecutes the Church. Christians in name, Marxists at heart, their religion is the utopia – equally deadly, whether it is a bloody or a pacifist one – of the Revolution which must always and everywhere be promoted, to the contempt of the happiness of peoples, the good of souls, and the liberty of Holy Church.

The unprecedented drama is that since 1961 – as we will show in our next volume, exactly since the death of Cardinal Tardini, who as long as he lived succeeded in preventing the worst – this scandalous betrayal of the sacred interests of Christendom, in favour of the impious, religion-persecuting Beast and its projects for world domination, has become the doing of the Church’s highest authorities. They have been blinded by the most chimerical projects, deceived by traitors who have infiltrated the Church even to its highest spheres. This treason has received a name: it is *Ostpolitik*. Its effects are known: the revolutionary ideology, the «errors» of Russia, denounced by Our Lady of Fatima, have penetrated into the Church without an obstacle; since then it has been the ministers of Christ, who as they preach the Revolution under whatever form it takes, contribute in the most effective manner «to establishing the empire of the Beast everywhere», as it says in the Book of the Apocalypse...

WITH THE POWER OF THE LAMB

If the “False Prophet” has come forth from within Christendom, as a member of the Church, it is to better betray the Church in favour of the Adversary. It is not, however, just any promoter of heresy. No, the Apostle indicates to us that it will act in the name of the Lamb, with the power of the Lamb. It is remarkable that Saint John is not content to repeat the image of a ravening wolf in sheep’s clothing. In the Apocalypse the expression is stronger: this «*other Beast coming up out of the sea had two horns like those of the Lamb, but it spoke like the Dragon*».

What does this mean, if not that the False Prophet will have all the appearances of speaking in the name of Christ, but in reality his language will be that of Satan? For the Dragon is Satan, without any doubt. And the Lamb, in Saint John’s Gospel as well as in the Apocalypse – and again two verses higher¹¹⁸⁷ –, always designates Christ as the Priest and Victim of His redeeming sacrifice, and now the glorious Judge in Heaven.

Moreover, in biblical language, the horns symbolize power.¹¹⁸⁸ In preceding verses, Saint John described the first Beast: it has «ten horns»,¹¹⁸⁹ exactly like the Dragon. (Apoc. 12:3) This is undoubtedly to signify that it has received from it the plenitude of its evil power: «The dragon gave him his power and his throne.» (Apoc. 13:2) And there were «on his horns, ten diadems», perhaps to underline that political domination is in question, just as in the Book of Daniel.

The analogy sheds light on the description of the second Beast, which itself «has two horns like those of the Lamb». In the vision of the fifth chapter, Saint John had indeed mentioned the “horns of the Lamb”:

«And I saw; and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the ancients, a Lamb standing as it were slain, having seven horns and seven eyes: which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.» (Apoc. 5:6).

In this spectacular vision of Christ the Redeemer, Who is simultaneously Victim, King and High Priest of the New Covenant, founder of the new priesthood,¹¹⁹⁰ the seven horns and the seven eyes signify the divine plenitude of His power as “Prince of the kings of the earth”, and eternal Priest,¹¹⁹¹ Founder and Head of His Church, Who to spread it has received the fullness of the sevenfold Spirit.¹¹⁹²

A few pages further, describing the False Prophet as a second Beast «*having two horns like those of the Lamb*», does Saint John not suggest that it will act in some way with the power of the true Lamb, “*in the Name of Christ, in Nomine Domini*”? However, in this crime it does not act with the plenitude of the divine authority of Christ, symbolized by the seven horns of the vision of chapter five, seven being the figure of perfection. The Lamb in the service of the Beast has only two horns. This being said, under the evangelical appearances of humility and apostolic charity, disguised as an «apostle of Christ», as a «minister of justice», as Saint Paul said, it will speak like the Dragon, to the contempt of Divine Truth, misleading the faithful by this supreme imposture.

It is a bewildering prophecy, so terrible that the commentators – except for very rare exceptions – have preferred to propose the most unlikely hypotheses, as if to avoid reading what is written all the same. But today – alas! – the tragic reality opens our eyes to the obvious meaning of the prophecy.

Our Father comments:

«To make souls and not only bodies bend under its domination and obtain their adoration, the political power raises up *a religious power completely at its service*; thus the Lamb will become the vehicle of Error. The Church of heresy, schism and scandal *will voluntarily make itself the slave of the Beast and the Dragon who have conquered it*, the Spiritual Animator of Satan’s Empire.»¹¹⁹³

THE PRODIGIES OF THE FALSE PROPHET

To lead the faithful astray, the False Prophet of the Apocalypse will also work stunning prodigies. It will be like the false prophets mentioned by Deuteronomy, who to lead the children of Israel into «apostasy», performed astonishing prodigies. They were impostors who came from the people of God, but in reality they were «sons of Belial». (Deut. 13:1-19) The False Prophet will also act in the manner of the Impious one spoken of by Saint Paul,

who through «the power of Satan» will accomplish «signs and lying wonders» (2 Thess. 2:9).

However, always stressing the character of the diabolical imitation of Christ's true ministers, which defines the False Prophet, Saint John adds: «*It will even make fire from Heaven fall to the earth, before everybody's eyes.*» (Apoc. 13:13). The False Prophet will be like Elijah, the prophet *par excellence*, who was capable, merely by his word, of making fire fall from Heaven to consume the messengers of King Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:10-12). In the Apocalypse, it is "the Two Witnesses" who enjoy this privilege as ministers of God, who prophesy in His name and are vested with His power (Apoc 11:5). We also recall an episode of the Gospel, where we see the Apostles James and John, the "Sons of Thunder", who were badly received in a village of Samaria, suddenly ask Jesus: «Lord, wilt Thou that we bid fire come down from Heaven and consume them?» (Lk. 9:54-56). Saint John knew well that, like Elijah, the Apostles dispose of the power of judging in God's name. But they can also misuse it: «And Jesus rebuked them», Saint Luke reports.

The Apocalypse tells us that the False Prophet will also have this power. Must it be understood in the material sense, or only in the spiritual sense? What is certain is that outwardly it will act as one exercising authority in the name of God and in His service, while in reality it will be completely in the service of the Beast. Our Father comments:

«It will use fire from Heaven, which is the Word of God, the anathema, to disarm its enemies and conquer Christians. This is because "the Lamb" will then condemn what is holy and consecrate what comes from the Evil One.»¹¹⁹⁴

THE PROPHETIC WRITINGS, A SOURCE OF PATIENCE, CONSOLATION AND HOPE (Rom. 15:4)

We are here at the most extreme point of the triumph of Impiety, at the hour of the most complete victory of the «*mystery of iniquity*», as Saint Paul says, the «*mystery of the Beast*», as Saint John says (Apoc. 17:7). It is a bewildering mystery, this hour of the triumph of «the Power of Darkness»; yet it belongs to the divine economy of the plan of redemption. For before the triumph of Jesus Christ comes, before His universal Kingdom is instituted, during which «the Gospel of the Kingdom will be proclaimed in the whole world, as a witness before all peoples» (Mt. 24:14), «the apostasy must come», «the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition has to manifest himself»; the «False Prophet», the False Lamb must do its work of perversion «*that the Scripture may be fulfilled*», as Jesus said concerning the betrayal by Judas:

«I know whom I have chosen, but that the Scripture may be fulfilled.» (Jn. 13:18)

And in His priestly prayer, Jesus says:

«I watched over them, and not one of them perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scripture may be fulfilled.» (Jn. 17:12)

Saint Peter also, after the Ascension says:

«Brethren, the Scripture must be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit declared before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was the leader of those who arrested Jesus: inasmuch as *he had been numbered among us and allotted his share in this ministry...*» (Acts 1:16)

“BEHOLD, I HAVE FORETOLD IT TO YOU” (Mt. 24:25). As it happened in Our Lord’s earthly life, just before the victory of His resurrection, so also this “hour of the Power of Darkness” must be accomplished in the life of His pilgrim Church. So the Scriptures warn us.

«Knowing this (our Father explains), we are not astonished that the present times are terrible. This had to come. *This worldwide apostasy, which suddenly has become the major phenomenon of our times, no longer bewilders us; we know that it was written.*

«It is no longer the defeat of Christianity, the proof of its weakness, the crushing argument against its divine truth... On the contrary, the literal fulfilment of the prophecies comes as a strengthening of our faith, it alone can persuade the unbeliever, and it nourishes our hope.

«These times are diabolical; we knew it by our personal reflections; we felt it by the instinctive movement of our heart (the friend who would like to do so can re-read my *Lettres à mes amis* 140 and 141, where before the pontificate of Paul VI and the closing of the Council, I attempted a methodical description of the Antichrist already at work). But we needed the support, the absolute security of the Divine Word to dare to say it to ourselves and declare it openly. Strong in this revelation, we understand that we must hold on and not let up, remain in “*the camp of the saints*”, infiltrated from every side and rotted by traitors, preserve the faith intact even when the division is introduced into our own families and into our churches.

«In such a situation, we reach the point of thinking that the worst is yet to come. If the hour of Satan’s final assaults has arrived, then we are not finished suffering...»[195](#)

But what our Father did not yet dare to imagine at the time of this commentary (in August, 1974) is that the Blessed Virgin, the Virgin of the Apocalypse, came Herself in 1917, to confirm the penetrating intuitions of Saint Pius X, and clearly indicate to us where we are in the fulfilment of the prophecies of Holy Scripture...

THE MYSTERY OF THE THIRD SECRET

In effect we have good reasons to think that Our Lady of Fatima, appearing at the dawn of this century, at the very hour when the first Beast of the Apocalypse was taking shape – a Beast which She came to designate and denounce by name – announced equally, in Her third Secret, the events corresponding to the third image of the triptych in chapters 12 and 13 of the Apocalypse.

If Sister Lucy could declare that the third Secret was in the Apocalypse, would it not correspond precisely to this passage concerning the apostasy of the pastors of the Church, placing themselves at the service of an impious political power – chapter 13, verses 11 to 18? The fact that the first two parts of the Secret correspond, in an astonishing manner, to the preceding verses strongly inclines us to think so.

As the Secret in its entirety describes the final combat of the forces of Evil against the Immaculate Virgin, we would find there the three satanic powers described by Saint John: in the first part, the devil himself and the vision of hell corresponding to the Dragon of the Apocalypse; in the second part, the hegemony of Russian communism corresponds to the first Beast; finally, in the third part, the apostasy and treason of many pastors of the Church correspond to the description of the false lamb, the false prophet in the service of the Beast.

Moreover, in perfect coherence with our previous demonstrations on the most probable contents of the third Secret, its conclusion, full of an invincible hope and announcing a decisive victory, confirms us in this hypothesis. After the revelation of the third Secret, the Blessed Virgin continues:

***«In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph.
The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted,
and a certain period of peace will be granted to the world.»***

Such a triumph, announced so solemnly – and which, as we will see, is not without an evocation of the future Jerusalem, the Christendom of tomorrow, of Chapters 21 and 22 of the Apocalypse: “*and I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God...*” (Apoc. 21:2) – such a triumph of itself indicates above all the spiritual significance of the tragic battle preceding it. And its temporal expression – *«in the end»* – so heavy with implications, allows us to guess the furious struggle, no doubt even the reversals and seeming total defeat that will come before the final victory of the New Eve. Does not this triumph come to close a battle which was above all Her own, the one announced in the proto-Gospel? *«She shall crush thy head.»* Yes, it is She who will overcome the diabolical wave sweeping over the Church, the impiety installed even in the sanctuary, and all the obscure forces which foment apostasy. For clothed with the power of the Most High, She is more fearsome than an army in battle array: *«Fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in battle array»*, according to the words of the Canticle of Canticles (Ct. 6:10).

In short, the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary undoubtedly refers much more to the third Secret than even the second. For the recovery of peace will be a gift from Heaven, but it is not, properly speaking, *the triumph* of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Her victory is of another order, supernatural, and then temporal by addition. It will first be the victory of the Faith, which will put an end to the time of apostasy and the great shortcomings of the Church’s pastors.

This will be the final triumph of the Woman of the Apocalypse, the Mother of the faithful and the Queen of Apostles, crowned with twelve stars,¹¹⁹⁶ Her decisive victory over the Prince of lies, instigator of all heresy, all schism, all impiety and apostasy: “*Cunctas haereses*

tu sola interemisti in universo mundo!” You alone, O Mary Immaculate, Virgin Most Faithful and indestructible rampart of eternal Truth, have destroyed all heresies in the whole world!

APPENDIX - JOSEPH CARDINAL RATZINGER SPEAKS ABOUT THE THIRD SECRET (OCTOBER 1984 - JUNE 1985)

In November 1984, an account appeared in an Italian review of an interview granted in August by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to journalist Vittorio Messori. In this long article entitled, “Here is Why the Faith is in Crisis”, an important section was devoted to Fatima and its third Secret.¹¹⁹⁷

A few years ago, this interview of the Cardinal with the Italian journalist appeared in book form,¹¹⁹⁸ after having been developed and rearranged... on certain particularly red hot subjects. The few pages devoted to the Secret of Fatima¹¹⁹⁹ were profoundly modified.

On such an important subject, it is of course highly interesting to compare this text to the much more succinct original version of the same interview, which appeared six months earlier. For this reason we will present the two successive versions in parallel columns.

An attentive comparison of the two texts leads us to distinguish three parts in the entirety of the Cardinal’s declarations:

1. Identical passages in the two versions, which we will indicate *in italics* in the two columns of our synopsis.
2. Passages of the first version which were suppressed in the second version – which normally is the longer one – and which, therefore, were eliminated by design, with a precise intention. We will underline these significant omissions by CAPITAL LETTERS.
3. Certain developments were added in the second version. We will leave them in ordinary characters.¹²⁰⁰

NOVEMBER 1984 VERSION

JUNE 1985 VERSION

Women, a woman...
A remedy: Mary...
Fatima and environs.

THE MADONNA AS DEFENCE OF THE
FAITH. WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO TURN TO
MARY.

«YES, I HAVE READ IT»

One of the four sections of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the so-called disciplinary section) is entrusted with the task of judging Marian apparitions.

I ask: «Cardinal Ratzinger, have you read the so-called “third Secret of Fatima”, which Sister Lucy, the only survivor of the group who beheld the apparition, forwarded to Pope John XXIII, and which the Pope, after he had examined it, passed on to your predecessor, Cardinal Ottaviani, ordering him to deposit it in the archives of the Holy Office?»

The reply is immediate and dry: *«Yes, I have read it.»*

One of the four sections of the Congregations is entrusted the task of judging Marian apparitions.

«Cardinal Ratzinger, have you read the so-called “third Secret of Fatima”, which Sister Lucy forwarded to Pope John, who didn’t want to reveal it, and ordered it to be deposited in the archives?»

«Yes, I have read it.»

MESSORI EVOKES THE FALSE SECRETS

Undenied versions are circulating in the world, I continue, which describe the contents of that “Secret” as disquieting, apocalyptic, as warning of terrible sufferings. John Paul II himself, in his personal visit to Germany, seemed to confirm (albeit with prudent circumlocutions, privately, to a select group) the undeniably disconcerting contents of that text. Before him, Paul VI, during his pilgrimage to Fatima, also seems to have alluded to the “apocalyptic” themes of the “Secret”.

WHY HASN'T THE SECRET BEEN REVEALED?

Why (Messori continues) was it never decided «Why hasn't it been revealed?» to make it public, if only to counter rash speculations?

1. «IT WOULD ADD NOTHING»

«If this decision has not yet been made», he answers, «it is not because the Popes want to hide something terrible.»

Then there is “something terrible” in Sister Lucy’s manuscript, I insist?

«If that were so», he replies, avoiding going further, «that after all would only confirm the part of the message of Fatima already known. A stern warning has been launched from that place that is directed against the prevailing frivolity, a summons to the seriousness of life, of history, to the perils that threaten humanity. It is that which Jesus Himself recalls very frequently: “Unless you repent you will all perish...” (Lk. 13:3). Conversion – and Fatima fully recalls it to mind – is a constant demand of Christian life. We should already know that from the whole of Sacred Scripture.»

So there will be no publication, at least for now?

«The Holy Father deems that it would add nothing to what a Christian must know from Revelation, and also from the Marian apparitions approved by the Church in their known contents, which merely reconfirmed the urgency of penance, conversion, forgiveness and fasting.»

«Because, according to the judgment of the Popes, it would add nothing to what a Christian must know from Revelation: a radical call to conversion, the absolute seriousness of history, THE DANGERS THREATENING THE FAITH AND LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN, AND THEREFORE THE WORLD. AND ALSO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAST TIMES.

[The same idea is developed below]

2. THE DANGER OF «SENSATIONALISM»

«To publish the “third Secret” would mean exposing the Church to the danger of sensationalism, exploitation of the content.»

If it is not published – at least for the moment – it is to avoid confusing RELIGIOUS PROPHECY with sensationalism. BUT THE THINGS CONTAINED IN THIS THIRD SECRET CORRESPOND TO WHAT IS ANNOUNCED IN SCRIPTURE and are confirmed by many other

Marian apparitions, beginning with the Fatima apparitions themselves in their known contents. Conversion, penance are essential conditions of salvation.»

3. BECAUSE OF RUSSIA

Perhaps also political implications, I venture, since it seems that here, also, as in the two other “secrets”, Russia is mentioned?

At this point, however, the Cardinal declares that he is not in a position to go further into the matter and firmly refuses to discuss other particulars. On the other hand, at the time of our interview, the Pope proceeded to re-consecrate the world (with a particular mention of Eastern Europe) to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, precisely in accordance with the exhortation of the Virgin of Fatima, and the same John Paul II, wounded by his would-be assassin, on May 13 – anniversary of the first apparition in the Portuguese locality – went to Fatima in order to thank Mary, “whose hand (he said) had miraculously guided the bullet”, and seemed to refer to the forewarnings that had been transmitted through a group of children to humanity and that seemed to refer also to the person of the Pontiffs.»

I. THE REASONS FOR NON-PUBLICATION: TWO INCONSISTENT PRETEXTS

«Why hasn't the third Secret been revealed?» To this question, the Cardinal's reply has not varied – and it is disappointing. For Cardinal Ratzinger gives us two reasons for this non-publication, each one as insignificant as the other. Besides that, they are contradictory.

A SECRET WHICH WOULD TELL US NOTHING

«The Holy Father deems (thus it is John Paul II's personal opinion expressed here by the Cardinal) *that it would add nothing* to what a Christian must know from Revelation and also from the Marian apparitions approved by the Church in their known contents, which merely reconfirmed the urgency of penance, conversion, forgiveness and fasting.»

Unbelievable! The final Secret of Our Lady of Fatima would tell us nothing new which we didn't already know... And this is the reason why for almost thirty years, the Popes obstinately refuse to divulge it? Would then this message of the Blessed Virgin, which according to Her express will ought to have been revealed in 1960, be useless and superfluous, in contrast with the rest of the message, which is undeniably significant and urgent?

It is unthinkable, and one is astonished that a Cardinal of Holy Church dares to advance such a ludicrous argument in the Pope's name. Unless, that is, the Cardinal only meant to say that «the things contained in this third Secret» «correspond», are in harmony, in perfect coherence with the elements of Revelation and with the messages of other authentic Marian apparitions. But in this case, it is one more reason, and a very weighty one, to make it known to the faithful!

THE DANGER OF SENSATIONALISM

«*To avoid confusing religious prophecy with sensationalism*», to avoid «*the danger of sensationalism, exploitation of the content*» – here we have the second motive which would justify non-publication of the Secret!

This time, the argument is completely incredible. Our Father highlighted the fact in his “Open Letter to Cardinal Ratzinger” in January 1985:

«How could a “*religious prophecy*” which is colourless, odourless and without any particular savour give rise to “*sensationalism*”? And if this Secret adds nothing new, why hide it for the last thirty-five years! If it is from Heaven, how could it be inconsistent, or useless, or inopportune?! Why have they taken the indefensible position – and in the long run, the untenable, scandalous, and criminal position! – of cunningly refusing it to us, of wanting to make it be forgotten by the world, and recently again after the sign of May 13, 1981! And again during the pilgrimage to Fatima of May 13, 1982? If not because this third Secret carries, in twenty lines of a tiny school notebook, a condemnation and nullification of everything which has happened in the Church since 1960?...

«*Insignificant, this Heavenly Secret?* Come now! *Sensational* is pejorative, and is not any more fitting. “Apocalyptic” is the only just term. We know it from the source: *it reveals* that part of the ***Apocalypse*** which must come in our time.»¹²⁰¹

Yes, it is certain: because the great Fatima prophecy announces not only the crisis of the Faith which has come since 1960, but also the deficiencies of the highest members of the hierarchy, and because it denounces – in a more or less explicit manner, but sufficiently

clearly – the “great conciliar orientations” which have opened the Church to apostasy, as long as the Popes want to continue governing the Church in the spirit of the Council – exalting religious liberty, this abominable heresy, ecumenism, the ideals of 1789 and the cult of man – they can never reveal to the world the words of the Queen of Heaven, which condemn them.

The modifications brought by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger to the first version of his interview are, on this precise point, highly significant.

II. THE CONTENTS OF THE THIRD SECRET: THE TRUTH BETRAYED

Indeed in November 1984, undoubtedly still impressed by the reading of the Secret, Cardinal Ratzinger, while striving – quite clumsily! – to justify non-publication, nevertheless gave a glimpse of important truths concerning its content. We have already said that, while explaining that «according to the judgment of the Popes, it (the third Secret) would add nothing to what a Christian must know from Revelation», he indicated four important themes of this Revelation, which also belong to the Fatima message. But in this enumeration, every informed reader can easily discern what corresponds to the already known message: «a radical call to conversion», this is the essence of the public message, and equally of the first Secret; «the absolute seriousness of history», this is the content of the second Secret; and finally, what undoubtedly expressed the essential and specific themes of the third Secret: «*the dangers threatening the faith and life of the Christian, and therefore the world. And also the importance of the “last times”.*» Further on, the Cardinal pointed out still another positive element of the final Secret: «But the things contained in this third Secret correspond to what is *announced* in Scripture...» Earlier, on the subject of the Secret, he had employed the expression «*religious prophecy*». This was telling us that it really is a prophecy – which we know through other channels – and that it corresponds to those of Holy Scripture.

Although bound together in an enumeration which may seem banal, several important themes of the third Secret were thus explicitly mentioned by the Cardinal.

Now if we reread the “augmented version”, the Cardinal has carefully erased – and surely not for lack of space! – these few precise elements which informed us of the true content of the Secret: «*The dangers threatening the faith*»... have vanished. «*The importance of the last times*» has equally disappeared. *The concordance of the prophecies of the third Secret with those of Scripture* is no longer mentioned.

But above all, the Cardinal saw fit to modify the context in which he spoke about Fatima, from beginning to end. It is as if, in a first movement of frankness and loyalty, he had already said far too much, infringing the law of silence – not to say dissimulation and lying – which the Popes have imposed on Rome since 1960, regarding this terrible Secret which burns them up.

Six months previously, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had taken up the question of the third Secret in an article entitled: «*Here is Why the Faith is in Crisis*». The section devoted to the Secret bore the double title: «*The Madonna as Defence of the Faith. Why it is Necessary to Turn to Mary*.» And he began this way:

«If the *discourse on Mary* has always been *essential to the Christian faith, today it is indispensable and urgent, perhaps more than at any other period in the Church's history*. At the beginning of the Council (Cardinal Ratzinger confided), I didn't at all understand certain ancient formulas, such as "*Mary is the enemy of all heresies*". Others, such as "*de Maria, numquam satis*" (about Mary, one can never say enough) seemed excessive to me. As the situation changed, during the Council and after, and as I went deeper into this theme, I had to change my mind...»

Our Father commented, in his Letter to the Cardinal:

«Astonishing words, which you go on to justify luminously. All the great dogmas of our Faith are so closely connected with the glories and privileges of Mary that to believe in the latter is to avoid all error on the former. The two most ancient dogmas, the Perpetual Virginity and Divine Maternity of Mary, but also the two most recent ones, the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, practically secure faith in Jesus the Man-God, and preserve the privileges of the all-powerful Father, Who can intervene in matter itself, etc. One recognizes your present preoccupations touching the Faith: they have led you to consider faith in Mary quite simply as the defence of the Faith. As indeed it is!

«You equally consider with favour Marian devotion, if it is correct, so that it may guarantee for the Faith its dimension of the heart, using "heart" the way Pascal meant it. It reconciles reason with feeling. And also, you add, it corresponds to the expectations of modern women confronted with a certain feminism, showing them the feminine dimension of their profound nature, illumined and given singular worth by the virginity and maternity of Mary.

«The true devotees of Our Lady will find these theological considerations a little dry. They would be wrong to consider them superfluous.»¹²⁰²

In this context, where it is above all a question of the Faith, Fatima had been evoked. And the Blessed Virgin was proposed – along the very lines of the third Secret, we might add – *as the remedy for the present crisis of the Faith*.

Curiously, very curiously, in the new version Fatima is dealt with in the chapter entitled: «*Women, A Woman*».¹²⁰³ The Blessed Virgin is now presented as the remedy... for the problems of women! It is a question of the ordination of women, «the "banalization" of sex», "feminism in the convent" and Sisters who go now to psychoanalysis instead of confessors, the dizzying drop in women's religious vocations, the *aggiornamento* of religious life, and we come to... «*A remedy: Mary*».¹²⁰⁴ Then the Cardinal develops «*six reasons for not forgetting*», before finally reaching the three pages on Fatima. These pages

are placed under an innocuous title, which leaves no opportunity for any «sensationalist» interpretation: «*Fatima and environs*».

There is at least a change of perspective here, and a series of retouches was given to the first exposition. One easily guesses the hidden reason, while still deploring it...

THE CARDINAL HAD SAID TOO MUCH!

No doubt there was scant appreciation at Rome for the obvious interpretation of the Cardinal's original statements, expressed in all clarity by our Father in his "Open Letter", which he addressed to Cardinal Ratzinger in January 1985:

«We are immensely grateful to you for having been the first to thus reveal to us *con franchezza* – at least as far as permitted by the reserve demanded by your high functions, which obliges you to guard them – these things which had always been hidden from us. And even after Father Alonso, and we for our part, had guessed them, discovered and published them, they had been obstinately denied and negated! Thus this Secret exists, you have read it, the Popes have judged that it adds nothing new, you repeat this judgment without making it your own.

«And while we were misled about its contents, you find words so precise and placed in an order such that, for the specialists, it is just as if you wanted to let them know that they are not mistaken. Father Alonso was right, we are right: the Secret is not "strictly reserved to the Holy Father" (Declaration of Cardinal Ottaviani, February 11, 1967), it does not just concern Portugal (the thesis of Father G. Freire)... I will spell it out: "***We are running out of time, if we are not converted soon, we will fall into apostasy and we will die in terrible chastisements, which will already be among these cataclysms, wars, famines, and persecutions which the holy Books announce for the coming of the End of time.***"»

«Here is news given *for the first time* by an authoritative person, of prodigious interest. Your Eminence has read ***the final Secret***, the only secret at present which has an absolute, vital importance for the Church and for the whole world, involving simultaneously the temporal and eternal salvation of all. I am sure that it was reading this extraordinary Secret which changed your way of seeing the state of the Church and the world, and gave you the strength of soul to utter this great cry of alarm, this dossier on the crisis of the faith...»

«Continuing your revelations, you say: "***If it is not published, at least for the moment***" (*almeno per ora*. Ah, how this phrase makes our hearts tremble with a wonderful hope!)...»

«And thus we are heading towards the time of its indispensable revelation to the world. You are intimately persuaded of it, are you not? It must be published, this Secret coming from Heaven as a last act of mercy, a final *prayer* to men to be converted!»¹²⁰⁵

Well, no! Six months later, Rome closed the door again – inexorably – to this great hope. It is necessary to continue being silent, to dissimulate, even to lie, but at no price are the

faithful allowed to guess the words of their Heavenly Mother, which are absolutely not in accord with the new language used by their Popes and reformer bishops for over thirty years!

Alas! It seems that everything which the Cardinal – entrusted above all *with the safeguarding of the Faith* – decided to add in his book to his previous exposition on Fatima tends only to this purpose: to mislead, to deceive his readers on the authentic contents of the third Secret, to distract their attention from the prophecy concerning precisely *the loss of Faith*, which it is his duty to remedy!

III. CALCULATED AMBIGUITIES

If again we go through the Cardinal's two discourses on Fatima to find what has been added in the second version, our disappointment, far from being dispelled, will only increase.

In the first question asked by Vittorio Messori, but whose text has been revised by the Cardinal, an erroneous historical point has been corrected. In the account of the interview, the journalist declared: «*The third Secret, which Sister Lucy sent to Pope John...*» The new version, clumsily, corrects the error: «*The third Secret... which was sent to John XXIII on the part of Sister Lucy.*» (Translator's note: the English version says: which Sister Lucy... forwarded to Pope John XXIII). However, the second version adds a new error: «*the Pope (John XXIII), after he had examined it, passed it on to your predecessor, Cardinal Ottaviani, ordering him to deposit it in the archives of the Holy Office.*» This is not exact, since we know that John XXIII kept the manuscript «on the writing table of his bedroom». ¹²⁰⁶ So it was later on, after his death, that the Secret was again entrusted to the Holy Office, and without Cardinal Ottaviani's knowledge. ¹²⁰⁷

We also learn, in this second version, Cardinal Ratzinger's reply, «Yes, I have read it», «**was immediate and dry**». Was it, really? Or is the Cardinal determined to let us know that at Rome, today as well as yesterday, one speaks only «*dryly*» about the third Secret of Fatima?

A MANOEUVRE OF DIVERSION

Then a long digression begins – here there is no fear of being loquacious – on «*undenied versions*», presenting the Secret as «*disquieting, apocalyptic, as warning of terrible sufferings*». Clearly this is in reference to the false Secret of *Neues Europa*.

But even more astonishing is that, in speaking to the Cardinal, Messori mentions, as though they were unquestionably authentic, the highly doubtful statements attributed to Pope John Paul II during his trip to Germany in November 1980. ¹²⁰⁸ Was this incredible discourse, then, really pronounced by the Pope? We will not be any the wiser, for it is Messori who speaks, and the Cardinal will deign neither to confirm nor deny these statements. The procedure is, at the very least, irritating! Moreover, Messori minimizes the significance of the words attributed to the Holy Father: «... *albeit with prudent circumlocutions, privately, to*

a select group». Here is something even more stupefying. If the Pope really spoke about the Secret, and if what he said is true, this presents a lively interest for all Christians, and one asks why his replies were not made the object of an official declaration, leaving no doubts on their authenticity and the veracity of their contents. In short, all this is an obvious ruse. The only intention is to insinuate that John Paul II confirmed «*the undeniably disconcerting contents*» of the *Neues Europa* text.

Paul VI himself «*also seems to have alluded to the apocalyptic themes of the Secret*» in his homily at Fatima. Certainly, as we shall see, he spoke about peace and declared – but in the vaguest manner – that «*the world was in danger*». Much more remarkable was the fact that the primary intention of his pilgrimage was «*peace for the Church*» and the maintenance of the Faith.¹²⁰⁹ But the Cardinal's obvious purpose in this second version is to fix the reader's attention on the prediction of terrible material chastisements, wars or frightful cataclysms, to make them forget the essential, which he had let them guess too easily in his previous declaration: it concerns above all «*dangers threatening the Faith*».

Messori's long question is entirely oriented in this sense: to insinuate that the third Secret announces catastrophes so horrible that the Popes cannot divulge it. This was also the essence of John Paul II's supposed statements at Fulda:

«If it is a question of a message where it is said that the oceans will completely inundate certain parts of the earth, that from moment to moment millions and millions of men will perish, then the publication of such a secret message is no longer desirable.»

In other words, it is useless to make known such a baleful prophecy! This is the first hypothesis which comes to the reader's mind...

Well, no, it is not that. The Cardinal insists on telling us in the most categorical manner: «***If this decision [to reveal the Secret] has not yet been made, it is not because the Popes want to hide something terrible.***»

It is true, in effect, that such a dereliction would be odious and criminal. Then, the oracle which Yahweh addressed to the prophet Ezekiel would literally apply to the Sovereign Pontiff:

«Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from My mouth, you shall warn them for Me. ***If I say to the wicked man, "You shall surely die", and you do not warn him*** or speak out to dissuade him from his wicked conduct so that he might live, then that wicked man shall die for his sin, but ***I will hold you accountable for his blood***. If, on the other hand, you have warned the wicked man, yet he has not turned away from his evil nor from his wicked conduct, then he shall die for his sin, but you shall save your own life.» (Ez. 3:17-19; 33:1-9)

And what is true for the chastisement of bodily death is even more true if it concerns spiritual chastisements, if the Blessed Virgin announces grave «*dangers for the Faith*», grave dangers of damnation for innumerable souls, in a time when apostasy will strike the

Church herself. God could then demand an account from the Supreme Pastor for the eternal death of millions of the faithful, misled and disoriented by «the diabolical wave sweeping over the world».

The Pope is not withholding the Secret from us «*to hide something terrible*», the Cardinal assures us. But that being said, he continues to insinuate that it really is a terrible Secret. As all allusions to the great apostasy announced for the “last times”, and even to any spiritual danger, have been suppressed from his text on Fatima, his reader will conclude that the final Secret is only a despair-ridden announcement of frightful material chastisements. He will have been skilfully, odiously deceived.

RUSSIA AND FATIMA

There is one last significant addition: the whole development concerning Russia. Messori, conjecturing, puts forward one last reason which could justify John Paul II in not revealing the Secret:

«“Perhaps also political implications”, I venture, “since *it seems that here, also, as in the two other ‘secrets’, Russia is mentioned?*” At this point, however, the Cardinal declares that he is not in a position to go further into the matter and firmly refuses to discuss other particulars.»

Why this sudden and categorical refusal, if not because the journalist was correct? Yes, the reader will think, there are undoubtedly «political implications», and Russia is named in such a manner in this Secret that it is impossible for the Pope to make it known. This is what the Cardinal’s text tends to suggest... but is it really the case?

It is curious all the same that the Prefect of the former Holy Office, who has supreme responsibility for the question of Marian apparitions, and on these grounds speaks about Fatima, commits an enormous blunder on this subject – for he reviewed the text himself without correcting it – and that, to better pass off the hypothesis insidiously suggested to the reader, by declaring to us that Russia is mentioned in «*the two other Secrets*»... Hadn’t the Cardinal ever read the exact text of the first Secret where, as everybody knows, Russia is in no way mentioned?!

As for the mention of Russia in the third Secret, insinuated only by what we are told of the Cardinal’s sudden coolness and silence, we may wonder if it is not, once more, a misleading procedure designed to throw us off the track. For the Blessed Virgin’s words in the second Secret are so precise and so strong: «*Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated*» (and all this due to Bolshevik Russia!), that one can hardly imagine what important element the third Secret might add, which would risk further displeasing the Kremlin.^{[1210](#)}

No, the fear of provoking Russia is surely not the cause – or at least the principal cause – for not revealing the Secret. Besides, neither John XXIII nor Paul VI nor Cardinal Ottaviani ever made the slightest allusion in this sense. By the same token, this is probably one of the reasons for which the consecration to the Immaculate Heart has still not been done in the way Our Lady had requested, contrary to what is stated here by Messori, undoubtedly alluding to the ceremony of March 25, 1984. For this act, in view of which the bishops had only been invited to join the Pope – *an invitation most of them declined* – for a consecration where *Russia was not even designated by name*, still did not correspond to Our Lady's exact request. Sister Lucy insisted on making this known immediately. So it is false to say that this consecration of the world was performed «*precisely in accordance with the exhortation of the Virgin of Fatima*».

The end of this paragraph, which recalls to mind the assassination attempt against Pope John Paul II on May 13, 1981, insinuates that the Holy Father, by going to Fatima the following year in thanksgiving to Mary, «whose hand had miraculously guided the bullet», was referring «to the forewarnings that had been transmitted through a group of children [sic!] to humanity *and that seemed to refer also to the person of the Pontiffs*». We have so many indications that the third Secret «refers also to the person of the Pontiffs», that for us it is a certainty. But does this mean that the assassination attempt and the protection the Holy Father benefited from are announced in the third Secret? The text suggests it.¹²¹¹ But it is not the Cardinal who proposes this interpretation, and Messori himself stays on the hypothetical tone: «... *and that seemed to refer also...*»

This long-winded discourse, composed entirely of ambiguities and false suggestions, decidedly brings us no positive elements. It does not answer any question with the clarity of frankness and truth. It tends only to mislead us, to blind us through a smokescreen of vain and contradictory suppositions.

A SECRET ANNOUNCING RUIN

We find a new example of this manoeuvre of diversion a few pages further on, where the Cardinal again takes up the question of Fatima, moreover in a very distasteful context. After having proposed the Blessed Virgin as “the remedy” to “women's problems”, the Cardinal here presents the Fatima message as «one form of our answer» to give to the faithful who are disoriented, tempted by the sects:

«There is in these sects a sensibility (carried to extremes, but which is authentically Christian when in a balanced measure) *vis-à-vis the perils of our time and, therefore, to the possibility of an imminent end of history*. The correct evaluation of messages *such as those of Fatima* can represent one form of our answer: the Church hearkening to the message of Christ, delivered through Mary to our time, *feels the threat (of ruin) to all and to each individual*, and responds with a decisive conversion and penance.»¹²¹²

«The threat (of ruin) to all and to each individual», «the perils of our time», «the possibility of an imminent end of history»... However, let us not be mistaken. The third Secret cannot

announce the end of the world, which will not come before the fulfilment of the wonderful promise which concludes the Secret. But this promise of the imminent triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which is so comforting and generates such enthusiasm, a promise which ought to be preached unceasingly, in season and out of season, Cardinal Ratzinger ignores... And he speaks of the «imminent end of history» – which the reader will interpret in the sense of the “end of the world” – where it is surely a question of the “last times”, undoubtedly a time of terrible chastisements, but first of all a time of apostasy, blindness, and lying, when the “false prophets” and “false teachers” will mislead the multitudes, without respect for the truth and the true good of souls.

FATIMA: A MESSAGE FOR... «THE LAST CENTURY»!

Finally, we come to wonder what the Cardinal’s thinking is on the message of the Blessed Virgin of Fatima. He gives it to us in passing, while speaking about the apparitions of Medjugorje, moreover with a cautious but visible approval, which is as stupefying as his deliberate coolness regarding Fatima.¹²¹³

«The apparitions that the Church has officially approved – especially Lourdes and *Fatima* – have their precise place in the development of the life of the Church *in the last century*. They show, among other things, that Revelation – still unique, concluded and therefore unsurpassable – is still not a dead thing but something alive and vital.»¹²¹⁴

To place Fatima, like Lourdes, in the class of apparitions which «*have their precise place in the development of the life of the Church in the last century*» is such a gross blunder that one would have qualms about belabouring the point, taking into consideration the Cardinal’s august functions, the supreme guarantor, directly after the Sovereign Pontiff, of the maintenance and defence of Truth in the Church. But this error has all the appearances of a revealing lapse: it seems that for the Cardinal – as, alas! for the majority of Pastors who govern us – Fatima has played its role, a certain role, in a faraway past, before the Council, and universally assimilated... to the nineteenth century! Since 1960, it is thought, the message is no longer the order of the day. The page has been turned. Fatima is outdated. Or so at least they would like, so they would wish it, and they are irritated that things turn out otherwise.

A CONFIRMATION OF OUR DEMONSTRATIONS

For Fatima, like it or not, has unceasingly imposed itself on the Church, and its message, far from concerning a past which has been superseded – «*the last century*»! – remains more unavoidable and more urgent than ever. The final proof of its burning relevance... are precisely the “*variations*” of Cardinal Ratzinger on the contents of the third Secret. In November 1984 he declared, in an initial movement of sincerity, that it concerned «*dangers threatening the Faith*» and also «*the importance of the “last times”*». In January 1985, our Father, in an “Open Letter” addressed to him, drew the conclusions stemming from his

authoritative disclosures: they unquestionably confirm the truth of Father Alonso's thesis, he explained.

If this interpretation was erroneous, nothing was easier, nothing more necessary for the Cardinal than to say it clearly in the augmented version of his interview with Messori: "No, the third Secret does not concern the crisis of the Faith, it does not prophesy the shortcomings of the Pastors of the Church." Yet, this denial did not come.

On the contrary. The only really relevant question, the only one that mattered – and which Don Andreatta had already asked Cardinal Ottaviani in 1977, without obtaining from him the slightest response! – curiously, does not even seem to have been brought up during the interview: "*Yes or no: does the third Secret announce the present crisis of the Faith and grave deficiencies of the Church's Pastors?*" Not content with being completely silent on this decisive question, the only real one, the Cardinal was careful to purge the text of his original declarations of every allusion... to this *crisis of the Faith*, which all too obviously constitutes the essential contents of the third Secret! And so that nobody would notice, he strove to conceal these significant corrections in a mass of inconsistent hypotheses. The manoeuvre is all too obvious: the idea is to form a diversion, to reconstruct an aura of uncertainty and mystery around a Secret which has now been deciphered.

CONCLUSION

FROM THE THIRD SECRET TO THE “SECRET OF SECRETS”

Having reached the end of our inquiry, we are able to discern, with near certainty, the essential elements of Our Lady’s final Secret:

While «in Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved», in many nations, perhaps in almost the entire world, the Faith will be lost (chap. 4). The pastors of the Church will fail gravely in the duties of their office. Through their fault, consecrated souls and the faithful in great number will let themselves be seduced by pernicious errors spread everywhere (chap. 5). This will be the time of the decisive battle between the Blessed Virgin and the devil. A wave of diabolical disorientation will be hurled over the world. Satan will introduce himself even to the highest summit of the Church. He will blind the minds and harden the hearts of pastors. For God will deliver them to themselves as a chastisement for their refusal to obey the requests of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (chap. 6). This will be the great apostasy predicted for the “last times” (chap. 7); the “False Lamb” and “False Prophet” will betray the Church to the profit of “the Beast”, according to the prophecy of the Apocalypse (chap. 8).

Does perhaps the Secret also announce some of the chastisements prophesied by the Scriptures for the “last times”? Perhaps it evokes the persecutions which the Holy Father will have to suffer, when he «will return» to «confirm his brethren», and finally obey Our Lady’s requests.

*

If for the essentials, such is indeed the true content of Our Lady’s final Secret, nothing is so important, so necessary, so urgent as to make known the text in its limpid truth, in its full prophetic richness, in its divine profundity and transcendence. For between everything we could say about it, and the very words of the Queen of Prophets, there is of course an abyss! It is the abyss separating the shadow from the reality of which it is the projection. Yes, it is only too evident: everything we have been able to patiently discover about the contents of the third Secret only further highlights the urgent necessity for its publication.

And if we are mistaken? If the third Secret of Fatima announced, in reality, something completely different from what we have surmised? If in all the facts we have brought, all the proofs we have presented, one desired to see only pure calumnious suppositions, insulting for the pastors of the Church and for the Holy Father himself?

Well, our answer is simple. It concerns the Secret of Mary. And we know that Her will has not changed one iota since the hour of grace of July 13, 1917, when She revealed it to the three shepherds, since January 2, 1944, when, appearing to Sister Lucy in her convent at Tuy, She asked her to write the text. She wants this prophetic oracle to be revealed, to be

known. For it is a Secret of grace and mercy for the good of souls, for the salvation of Holy Church.

If we are mistaken, if we are misleading the faithful by false hypotheses, stirring up vain fears, nothing is easier for Rome than to dispel them for good, in the only way which can convince everybody: by finally letting Our Lady speak through the publication of Her Secret! *“Roma locuta est; causa finita est”*. Rome would have passed on to us, with all the guarantees of their authenticity, the words of our Heavenly Mother. The cause would have been heard.

But as long as this disclaimer is not given to us – and we have no fear that it will be, because the truth which will be revealed then cannot contradict the truths we have discovered – we will continue to see in the first Secret of Mary an urgent appeal to conversion; in the second, Heaven’s response to the Bolshevik revolution; and in the third, the prophetic prediction of the apostasy which preceded, accompanied and followed the conciliar Reform. This is why we will continue, untiringly, to request the Holy Father for its publication, sure that the publication of this message from Heaven will mark the dawn of the Church’s recovery.

While we wait – it will perhaps be said to us – you are only increasing the crushing burden of the Holy Father, who is overwhelmed with so much anguish and so many cares! To this we answer simply: if our Holy Father the Pope is completely dedicated to Mary, completely devoted to Her, *«Totus tuus»*, as he proclaims in his motto, *«I am all Thine, O Mary!»*, and if it is true, on the other hand – as we indeed want to believe – that he is justly filled with anguish at the sight of *«the autodestruction of the Church»* which has gone on uninterruptedly since 1960,¹²¹⁵ disturbed over the *«smoke of Satan»* which has invaded the Holy Place,¹²¹⁶ afraid of the storm which threatens, more than at any moment in its history, to sink the Barque of Peter, if he is completely lucid on the perils of the hour – as he has a duty to be – what could he do better than correspond to the most express order of Our Lord – the Sovereign Master of the Barque, Who alone can command the sea and the waves – by finally obeying the desires of His Most Holy Mother? Let him go once more to Fatima on pilgrimage, not at all to make any new discourses, but quite simply to say this:

«My dear children, we are in anxiety. The true Faith is being lost. Souls are being damned. The peace of the world is threatened. If we are not converted, we will soon undergo the terrible chastisements we have merited. I am going to read to you the Secret of Our Heavenly Mother. Here is the truthful account which the seer left us of the third apparition of Our Lady, that of July 13, 1917:

“As Our Lady spoke these last words, She opened Her hands once more, as She had done during the two previous months. The rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw as it were a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form... Terrified and as if to plead for succour, we looked up at Our Lady, who said to us, so kindly and so sadly:

“You have seen hell, where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart.

“If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse one will break out in the reign of Pius XI.

“When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that it is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions of the Church and the Holy Father.

“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays.

“If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.

“In Portugal the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved.”»

(And to read, finally, the mysterious Secret...)

“In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to Me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world.”[1217](#)

«This is why I have decided to accomplish “a solemn act of reparation and consecration of Russia to the most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and to order all the bishops of the Catholic world equally to do so”. I have also decided “to approve and recommend the practice of the reparatory devotion of the five first Saturdays of the month” in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.»[1218](#)

Would this not be the most simple, the most holy and the most effective of all discourses?

To be sure, the divisions, the controversies and disputes from which the Mystical Body of Christ suffers so cruelly would not thereby disappear overnight. But in a single blow, a divine light would be shed on them. The Blessed Virgin would have spoken. The Blessed Virgin shall have spoken, for it must happen – even if it is late, very late – that the Sovereign Pontiff finally decides on this final recourse. Then, those who dare to proclaim themselves *against the message of the Queen of Heaven*, which is so limpid, so prophetic, and bears within itself the unquestionable marks of its divine origin, will be justly “disqualified”. *And we will see where the true children of Mary are*, the true servants of the Church, the true defenders of the Holy Father when he decides to act with courage and prudence, to fulfil his entire duty as Vicar of Christ, infallible Guardian of the “dogmas of the faith”, and humble servant of Mary, Queen of Apostles.

It is then a challenge, and more than a challenge, a prayer which we must unceasingly address to the Supreme Pastor – and our Father, for his part, has repeated it on many occasions – to make known to us, finally, the last warning of the Immaculate One, Mother of Mercy. As sons of the Church, we are children of Mary, and we have the right to know the message which our Mother addresses to us to guard us and strengthen us in Faith, Hope and Love, in such a perilous time when the true Faith is being lost, when Hope is waning, and the Charity of a great number is growing cold and dying.

Our conclusion is simple: the final Secret of Mary is a terrible Secret, but a truthful and salutary one. As long as it is not revealed, the Church will continue, inexorably, heading toward its ruin. It will be buried, irremediably, in the abyss of apostasy.

* *

This is the object of our fourth volume: to show, with supporting proofs and documents, that from 1960 to 1990, like a malignant tumour in the Church's very body – to repeat an image of Pius XII concerning "progressivism"¹²¹⁹ – the apostasy has unceasingly become more aggravated, its necrosis touches on new tissues every day. The scorn for Mary's final Secret by the pastors of the Church, and consequently, their refusal to obey Her requests, have gone hand in hand with their own increasingly grave deficiencies. And this is not astonishing, for God cannot fill with His graces of light and strength, servants who are rebellious to His will. The despised prophetic warning... has therefore been fulfilled.

But we will not stop at the overwhelming consideration of these sad thirty years, which nevertheless will appear as a salutary lesson to us.

We will advance in the discovery of the most savoury part of the mystery of Fatima, commenting step by step on Our Lady's final words, the conclusion of Her Secret: «*In the end My Immaculate Heart will triumph...*» It is an extraordinary message of unshakeable hope. We will discover, to our wonder, the incomparable riches contained in it.

Then it will remain for us, in a final synthesis, to better penetrate the part of the message which concerns us, each one of us, most directly. For there is something even more important than the third Secret: it is the "*Secret of secrets*" which is, so to speak, the soul of the Fatima message, their incandescent hearth, capable of enlightening, with its ardent flame, our benighted times. It is the Secret which Jacinta recalled to her cousin as a last testament, shortly before Jacinta left her for Lisbon to die:

«Tell everybody that God grants us graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, that people are to ask Her for them, and that the Heart of Jesus wants the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be venerated at His side...»¹²²⁰

It is the admirable Secret of the mediation of Grace and Mercy by the Immaculate Heart of our Heavenly Mother. «It is a Secret almost unknown to nearly everybody»,¹²²¹ and which, however, is addressed to each one. As Sister Lucy says, so wonderfully:

«I always remember the great promise that fills me with joy: “I will never leave you alone. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way which will lead you to God.” I believe that this promise is not for myself alone, but for all souls who want to take refuge in the Heart of their Heavenly Mother, and let themselves be led along the paths marked out by Her...»[1222](#)

With all the desired clarity, we will indicate «this port of salvation for all the shipwrecked of this world», as the seer says again, making clear what Our Lady of Fatima asks of us *here and now*, that we may follow Her on the road to Heaven, taking with us «all the souls whom God has placed on our path».[1223](#)

Thus we will work in the most effective manner to hasten the hour of triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, necessary prelude to the universal reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As Saint Maximilian Kolbe said:

«Modern times are dominated by Satan, and they will be even more so in the future. *Only the Immaculate has received from God the promise of victory over Satan.* But in the glory of Heaven, She needs our cooperation today. She looks for souls who will consecrate themselves entirely to Her, and become in Her hands a force to conquer Satan, and the instruments to bring about the kingdom of God.»

*Maison Saint-Joseph
July 13, 1985
Anniversary of the revelation of the Secret.*

CHRONOLOGY OF THE THIRD SECRET

July-August 1941: While writing her third Memoir, Sister Lucy makes it clear that she will not reveal the third part of the Secret (35).¹²²⁴

October 7, 1941: Canon Galamba asks her to write down the third Secret. Sister Lucy responds that she has not yet received Heaven's permission (36-37).

October-December 1941: While writing her fourth Memoir, Sister Lucy puts down the first phrase of the third Secret: «*Em Portugal se conservara sempre o dogma da fé*» (37; 683-689).

June 1943: Sister Lucy comes down with pleurisy. Canon Galamba and Bishop da Silva fear that she may die without having revealed the final Secret (38-39).

Summer 1943: A memorable interview at Valença do Minho (40).

September 15, 1943: Bishop da Silva comes to Tuy and asks the seer to write the Secret (42).

Mid-October 1943: He gives her the formal order to write the text. Sister Lucy, mysteriously prevented, is unable to obey (44; 706-709).

January 2, 1944: The Blessed Virgin Mary appears to Sister Lucy. She strengthens her and confirms to her that it is indeed God's will that she write the words of the final Secret (46).

January 9, 1944: Sister Lucy informs Bishop da Silva that the Secret is written down (46).

Spring 1944: She confides to her spiritual director her desire to speak with Pope Pius XII (176-177; 469).

June 17, 1944: The envelope containing the third Secret is handed to Bishop da Silva (49), who refuses to open it (467-469).

1944: Bishop da Silva proposes to send the Secret to the Holy Office. Rome refuses (53).

December 8, 1945: Bishop da Silva places Sister Lucy's envelope in another envelope, also sealed with wax. He makes it clear that after his death the Secret must be passed on to Cardinal Cerejeira (53).

From 1946 to 1960: Numerous testimonies stating that the third Secret «will have to be read to the world in 1960», «because the Holy Virgin wishes it so» (470-479).

May 1946: Sister Lucy goes to Fatima. There is an idea that she go to Rome to make the third Secret known to the Holy Father (228).

September 2, 1952: Father Schweigl questions Sister Lucy, notably on the third Secret (338-339; 709-711).

May 1955: Cardinal Ottaviani speaks with Sister Lucy. He questions her on the third Secret (408-474).

End of 1956 - early 1957: The Holy Office asks for a copy of all writings of Sister Lucy, as well as the manuscript of the third Secret, which Bishop da Silva did not want to read (479).

Mid-March 1957: Bishop Venancio brings the Apostolic Nuncio at Lisbon the sealed envelope containing the third Secret (481-484; 651).

April 16, 1957: The envelope reaches Rome (482).

May 14, 1957: Mother Pasqualina confides to Robert Serrou that the third Secret is in the Holy Father's apartment, in the safe reserved for "secrets of the Holy Office" (484-486).

December 4, 1957: Death of Bishop da Silva.

December 26, 1957: Sister Lucy declares to Father Fuentes on the subject of the third Secret: «Only the Holy Father and the Bishop of Fatima could have known it, but they did not want to read it.» (489)

October 9, 1958: Pope Pius XII dies, without having read the Secret (486-488).

January 25, 1959: John XXIII announces the calling of the Council (571, no. 8).

August 17, 1959: John XXIII receives the envelope of the third Secret at Castelgandolfo. He reads it a few days later (555-559).

1959-1960: Everybody waits for disclosure of the Secret (528; 573-577).

February 1960 (?): Pope John XXIII has Cardinal Ottaviani read the third Secret (557-558; 727-728).

February 8, 1960: Communiqué of the press agency ANI: the Vatican announces that the Secret will not be divulged (578-586).

February 24, 1960: Cardinal Cerejeira declares: «I was not consulted»(586).

May 17, 1960: Bishop Venancio addresses a letter to the bishops of the whole world (601-606).

May-June 1960: Bishop Venancio is received by John XXIII (606).

June 18, 1960: A lying article by Father Caprile, S.J., in *Civiltà cattolica* (592-601).

September 1960: At Fatima, a gesture of John XXIII is hoped for on the occasion of October 13 (606-607).

October 13, 1960: Rome is silent. At Fatima, a pilgrimage of penance (609-613).

June 3, 1963: Death of John XXIII. He never made any public declaration concerning the third Secret (634-636).

Summer 1963: Shortly after his election (June 21), Pope Paul VI asks for the text of the third Secret (635).

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July 7, 1977: Cardinal Ottaviani answers three questions on the Secret of Fatima (733-734).

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September 1981: Declaration of the Bishop of Leiria (661-662).

Early 1982: Before his pilgrimage to Fatima for May 13, John Paul II consults a Portuguese priest of the Curia, so that he translate the Secret for the Pope «with all the nuances of the language» (636).

September 10, 1984: The Bishop of Leiria-Fatima declares: «The contents of the third Secret concern only our Faith..., the loss of Faith...» (675-677).

October 1984 - June, 1985: Cardinal Ratzinger's "variations" on the subject of the third Secret (818-840).

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ENDNOTES

[1] Cf. our Volume I, p. 158-159.

[2] Letter to Father Aparicio, September 1, 1940. A. M. Martins, Documentos de Fatima. p. 491-493.

[3] Alonso, Fatima, Espana, Rusia, p. 46-47.

[4] Interviews in February, 1946.

[5] Fatima, Altar do mundo, Vol. II, p. 32-33.

[6] See our own Vol. II, p. 607-655.

[7] Ed. Publicaciones Claretianas, Centro Mariano, Victor Pradera 65. Madrid 8; 140 pages.

[8] Cf. our own Vol. II, p. 463.

[9] This text was written in January 1943. The subtitles have been added by us. For the essential message, Father Alonso quotes the original Portuguese text. Unfortunately, he omitted one passage, marked by the three dots in parentheses.

[10] This precise disclosure of Sister Lucy manifests to what extent «Fatima is the continuation of Paray-le-Monial», as Cardinal Cerejeira liked to say. Indeed here are the Sacred Heart's words to Saint Margaret Mary: «Every night between Thursday and Friday, I will make you participate in this mortal sadness which I wanted to feel in the garden of Olives, and this sadness, without you being able to understand it, will reduce you to a species of agony harsher to bear than death. And to accompany Me in this humble prayer which I presented then to My Father amidst all My anguish, you will rise between eleven o'clock and midnight to prostrate yourself for an hour with Me, with your face to the ground, to appease the divine wrath while asking mercy for sinners, to mitigate in some way the bitterness I felt from the desertion of My apostles, which obliged Me to reproach them for not having been able to watch one hour with Me, and during this hour you will do what I shall teach you.» (Saint Margaret Mary, *Autobiographie, Vie et oeuvres*, Vol. II, p. 73, Paris, 1920). Does not Our Lord speak today to His messenger from Fatima as He once did to His confidante at Paray-le-Monial?

[11] FER, p. 64-66.

[12] Letter of February 28, 1943, soon to be quoted.

[13] Letter of Sister Lucy shortly afterwards, addressed to Archbishop Garcia y Garcia, quoted by Alonso, FER, p. 81.

[\[14\]](#) Saint Margaret Mary, Autobiography, no. 92. Certain publishers saw fit to correct the abrupt character of these words: «What is most painful to Me is that *often, among those who offend Me so*, are hearts consecrated to Me.» (Father Salgas, *Le message de 1689 du Sacré-Coeur à la France*, an otherwise excellent work, p. 24. Résiac, 1982)

[\[15\]](#) *Actes de saint Pie X*, Vol. III, p. 10-15. Already on April 19, 1904, in an initial letter to Cardinal Neto, Saint Pius X had complained about the Portuguese bishops' lack of interest for the "Portuguese College" of Rome. On December 16, 1907, Pius X accepted Cardinal Neto's resignation.

[\[16\]](#) Let us note in passing that, without having sought it in the slightest, Sister Lucy had the privilege of being directed and advised throughout her life as seer by an impressive series of priests whose intelligence, supernatural wisdom, spirit of discernment and often even personal sanctity were unanimously recognized. This fact undoubtedly corresponded to a design of Providence, for thus all were able to guarantee the authenticity of her apparitions or divine communications.

At Aljustrel, we recall, after the good and holy Father Cruz, there were Canon Formigao and the dean of Olival, who both equally enjoyed a great renown for sanctity (On the uncommon virtues of the dean of Olival, read Canon Galamba's testimony in *Jacinta*, p. 139-140. For Canon Formigao, we have already cited the voluminous biography by Father Alonso, which concludes with the request for the opening of his process of beatification).

At Asilo de Vilar, Lucy was directed by two priests, one of whom became later on titular Bishop of Gurza, then auxiliary Bishop of Lisbon with the title of Archbishop of Cizico (Bishop Manuel Pereira), and the other became vicar general of Porto (Msgr. Pereira Lopes). At Pontevedra and Tuy, after Don Lino Garcia, there were two wise and holy Jesuits, Fathers Aparicio and Gonçalves, who were entrusted with her soul. When they left for the missions, we find our seer in continued communications with Bishop Manuel Ferreira and with the Bishop of Tuy, of whom we will speak later. Now none of these eminent ecclesiastics who had the privilege of knowing the secrets of her soul, including Bishop da Silva or Cardinal Cerejeira, ever doubted the authenticity of the divine communications with which she was favoured. It must be said that few mystics have received so many marks of esteem and trust from the hierarchical Church.

[\[17\]](#) FER, p. 60.

[\[18\]](#) While still a scholastic with the Jesuits at the convent of Valladolid, Bernard de Hoyos received in 1733 several communications from the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Ordained a priest, he died a holy death a few months later (1735). His process of beatification was opened in 1902.

[\[19\]](#) Quoted by Alonso, FER, p. 60.

[\[20\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[21] A. M. Martins, *Fatima e o Coração de Maria*, p. 104-105, Loyola, 1984.

[22] This is the source of numerous errors concerning this letter, whose date of composition was confused with various dates when it was read publicly (cf. for example Barthas, VND, p. 81).

[23] Let us point out here that Saint Margaret Mary felt a repugnance analogous to that expressed by Sister Lucy, when she had to make known the state of her soul and the divine communications she had received. In her Autobiography, she speaks of «the violence which must be done to me to overcome the repugnance and confusion I feel in writing all this», and again, of «this species of martyrdom which I suffer while doing this writing, every word of which seems like a sacrifice to me» (no. 79).

[24] Doc., p. 445-447.

[25] Letter to Father Gonçalves of August 18, 1940, where Sister Lucy underlines the importance of the message of October 13. Cf. our Vol. II, p. 462 and Vol. I, p. 293-296. Father Messias Dias Coelho, with good reason, insists on these words of Our Lady, announced by her in 1917 as her most express will: «What I want.» (“Nucleo central da mensagem de Fatima”, in *Apelo e resposta*, p. 151-165; 1983).

[26] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 493-494.

[27] *Documents pontificaux de S.S. Pie XII*, 1942, p. 321-323.

[28] Doc., p. 441-443. Cf. A. M. Martins, *Fatima, caminho da Paz*, p. 74-75; 1983.

[29] *Vie authentique de Catherine Labouré*, R. Laurentin, p. 86, DDB, 1980. *Catherine Labouré et la médaille miraculeuse*, Vol. I, p. 354-355, Lethielleux, 1976.

[30] Father Martins quotes long excerpts from it in *Fatima, caminho da Paz*, p. 82-85; cf. from the same author, *Cartas da Irma Lucia*, introduction, p. 26-27.

[31] FER, p. 74.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[34] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 728.

[35] Let us recall from memory this vitally important yet almost unknown message: «Later on, in an intimate communication, Our Lord complained to me, saying: “They did not wish to heed My request. Like the king of France, they will repent *and do it, but it will be late*. Russia will have already spread her errors throughout the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church; the Holy Father will have much to suffer.”» Cf. our Vol. II, p. 530-531; 543-551.

[36] FER, p. 71.

[37] Cf. *infra*, “A Universal Conspiracy Against Spain”, p. 137-142.

[38] Cf. our Vol. N, p. 753-754; 762-763.

[39] In her letter to Pope Pius XII of October 24, 1940, she had omitted the vision of hell and had not mentioned the existence of a final Secret, contenting herself with explaining the contents of the second part, while «leaving to God the opportunity for a more favourable moment» to say more about it (cf. our Vol. II, p. 737-738, 743-744.).

[40] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 762-763.

[41] IV, p. 153-154.

[42] Doc., p. 340.

[43] Doc., p. 497.

[44] Letter of March 19, 1984. In addition to this letter, from which I have borrowed the essential part of the reconstruction of the Valença conversation, I have used several accounts of this interview which mutually complete each other: *Mensagem de Fatima*, September-October 1976, p. 4-5; Jaime Vilalta Berbel, *Los Secretos de Fatima*, p. 132; Apio Garcia, (*Bodas de oro de Fatima*, p. 73-74) reports the testimony of Bishop Venancio, who knew Bishop da Silva and Canon Galamba very well; Finally, Father Caillon, who reports to us the more detailed testimony furnished by Canon Galamba, *L'épopée mariale en notre temps* (distributed by Téqui).

[45] For the rest of our account, we borrow almost all the facts of our exposition from Father Alonso, in *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fatima*, p. 36. The English translation is entitled, *The Secret of Fatima: Fact and Legend*, Ravengate books, 1979.

[46] Quoted by Alonso, “O Segredo de Fatima”, *Fatima 50*, October 13, 1967, p. 11.

[47] VSF, p. 37-38 (our references to this work are to the English version which we have followed, occasionally correcting it according to the original).

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[50] VSF, p. 38.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[52] P. 41.

[53] P. 40.

[54] Father Sebastiao Martins dos Reis has accused Don Garcia of being opposed to the writing down of the third part of the Secret, giving Sister Lucy orders contrary to those which she had received from Bishop da Silva (*O Milagre do sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 121, Salesianas, Porto, 1966). In his desire to defend the reputation of the venerable Spanish prelate who, in fact, surely does not merit this accusation, Father Alonso, it seems to us, shows himself for his part much too severe on Mother Maria do Carmo. He goes so far as to say that it would have been much better had Lucy known and followed Don Antonio's directives: «Although this correspondence would certainly have delayed the moment for writing the Secret, it would have guaranteed an atmosphere of inner peace and calm.» (p. 41) What does that mean? Since Lucy finally wrote the Secret in all peace and tranquillity of soul, this reserve is not justified.

[55] Alonso, VSF, p. 41.

[56] Quoted by Alonso, *Fatima 50*, October 13, 1967, p. 11. It is a shame that Father Alonso does not quote this sentence in his book on the Secret!

[57] *O Milagre do Sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 121.

[58] *Sintese critica de Fatima*, p. 153. In his *Novos Documentos* (September 1984), Father A.M. Martins confirms his information: «According to the written declarations of Mother Cunha Matos, Lucy's superior at Tuy, Our Lady appeared to the seer on January 2, 1944, and told her to write the third part of the Secret.» (p. XXV).

[59] VSF, p. 82.

[60] *Ibid.*, (Spanish edition), p. 81. As for saying that the text was written down «in less than an hour», as Father Laurentin states (article in *Le Figaro*, May 12, 1982), we are unaware of where this information came from. Perhaps, quite simply, it came from a faulty translation of Father Alonso's article, quoted by our over-hasty journalist. Here is what Father Alonso writes: «*El documento esta escrito en una hoja, metida dentro de un sobre, que a su vez fue lacrado por Lucia.*» (“De nuevo el Secreto de Fatima”, p. 86, *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, 1982, vol. 32, fasc. 1) «*En una hoja*» means «in one page”, not «in one hour»!

[61] Regarding this memorable day, Father Alonso quotes the testimony of Msgr. José Manuel Ferreira da Silva (*Fatima 50*, October 1967, p. 11).

[62] Cf. our Vol. II, respectively, p. 514-515; 463, 730, 762-763.

[63] VSF, p. 44.

[64] VSF, p. 60.

[65] José Geraldo Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima, a terceira parte é sobre Portugal?*, p. 27, Sant. Fatima, 1978.

[66] This photograph is exhibited in Fatima, at the museum of the vice-postulation for Jacinta and Francisco.

[67] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 802-803.

[68] FER, p. 45-46. Cf. the letter quoted in the appendix.

[69] Cf. the complete text of this letter (*supra*, p. 19) and that of May 4, 1943, to Father Gonçalves (p. 20-21).

[70] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 731-733, 805-806.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 724-725, 740.

[72] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 465. «I await, with anxiety, His Holiness' order to the bishops», wrote Sister Lucy in November 1942.

[73] Cf. Lucy's letter to Cardinal Cerejeira, December 1, 1940 (quoted in our Vol. II, p. 476).

[74] Alonso, FER, p. 46.

[75] Cf. the very evocative photographs reproduced by Alonso in *Fatima ante la Esfinge*.

[76] A. M. Martins, *Fatima e o Coração de Maria*, p. 103-104, Loyola, 1984.

[77] *La question mariale*, p. 15, Seuil, 1963.

[78] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 782-805.

[79] Again quite recently, Jean Chelini, in *L'Église sous Pie XII, La tourmente, 1939-1945* (Fayard, 1983), manages to write 355 pages on «the tragic beginning of the pontificate., without saying a single word about this solemn act which Pius XII considered one of the most important of his pontificate. All the same, this is an astonishing omission in a work presented as a "History of the Church"! (cf. the review by Joel Pottier, which highlights the fact. *Lecture et Tradition*, November-December 1983, p. 48.)

[80] So as to encourage them more strongly, on November 17, 1942, he had granted an indulgence of three years to all those who would piously recite this same act of consecration slightly modified, and a plenary indulgence to be gained once a month on the usual conditions, to the faithful who would recite it each day of the month (*Documents pontificaux de S.S. Pie XII*, 1942, p. 286-287).

[81] F. Carret-Petit, *Notre-Dame du Rosaire de Fatima*, p. 164-165; La Bonne Presse, 1943. Alonso, FER, p. 111.

[82] *Oeuvres complètes de saint Louis-Marie*, p. 484, Seuil.

[83] Pius XII took up the same theme again in his Letter of November 25, 1943 (Doc. pont., 1943, p. 273).

[84] Doc. pont., 1943, p. 95.

[85] Cf. our Vol. II, p. 791-792. Father da Fonseca's work, which had had three editions up until 1941, had two others in 1942, and five in 1943! On February 12, F. Carret-Petit reports, Father da Fonseca gave a conference on Fatima at the Vatican. In March, it was Father Luigi Moresco who spoke on Fatima in the great hall of the Gregorian University. Because of the turnout, he had to repeat the same conference two other times (p. 178-179). These are all so many indications proving that the sudden interest aroused by Fatima surpassed all expectations.

[86] Father Luciano Guerra, "Fatima e o romano Pontifice", p. 92 (in *Apelo e resposta, semana de estudos sobre a mensagem de Fatima*, Convento dos Capuchinhos, Fatima, July 1983). F. Carret-Petit, p. 133.

[87] Doc. pont., 1943, p. 206.

[88] Ibid., p. 274.

[89] FER, p. 111, 114.

[90] Father Louis Devineau, O.M.I., *Une extraordinaire odyssée dans le sillage de la Vierge*, Apostolat de la Presse, 1963, 200 pages. Cf. Msgr. Guerry, *L'Église catholique en France sous l'Occupation*, p. 228-234, 1947, Flammarion.

[91] Devineau, p. 13-18; cf. p. 32, 37.

[92] Ibid., p. 27-28.

[93] EDITOR'S NOTE: A Mass of Communion is a Mass in certain European countries at the time about which this passage describes, in which the faithful were particularly encouraged to receive Holy Communion.

[94] Devineau, p. 104.

[95] *Les catholiques français sous l'Occupation*, Jacques Duquesne, p. 25. Grasset, 1966.

[96] Devineau, p. 31. Very quickly, in effect, a search was made for the three copies of Our Lady of Boulogne which had served for the Marian Congress of 1938. Four routes were organized by Father Ranson: the east route, the west route, the centre route and the maritime route. Thus over seventy thousand miles were traversed on foot by the itinerant teams.

[97] Ibid., p. 35. We would like to be able to quote long excerpts from documents of the time. Let us mention only the pamphlet published at Troyes in 1945: "Le Grand Retour,

Notre-Dame de Boulogne dans l'Aube, November 5, 1944 - January 30, 1945", with a preface by Msgr. Le Couedic, bishop of the diocese.

What emotion in reading the brief account established for each of the 177 parishes visited by Our Lady! During these three winter months, in our diocese, dechristianized as it was, the Virgin of Boulogne drew after Her, on the roads and in the freezing churches, over 100,000 of the Faithful.

Are some examples needed of this beautiful fervour? Here are a few which will astonish readers familiar with these villages or towns: here, at Saint-Parres-lès-Vaudes, the parish priest wanted all the streets to profit from the passage of the Holy Virgin, and, to create no jealousies in anyone, even to the last house. At Clérey, 500 people participated in the nocturnal vigil. At Bar-sur-Seine, 250 of the faithful made their consecration to the Immaculate Heart. At Villemaur, for the vigil 300 faithful were counted! At Estissac, the penitents were so numerous that the missionaries had to remain in the confessional until two o'clock in the morning. At Faux-Villecerf, the passage of the Virgin was prepared by an eight day retreat, etc. At Troyes, seven to eight thousand of the faithful escorted Our Lady's car right up to the cathedral.

[\[98\]](#) Devineau, p. 35-36.

[\[99\]](#) Quoted by Devineau, p. 119. Another leader of Catholic Action avowed, «For years we tried to raise the problem of religion in the most dechristianized circles. Our efforts were in vain. Our Lady of the Great Return passes through – it is not to be believed – and in a few days, She becomes the only object of conversations, not only among Christians, but also among men and women whom one would have thought far from our faith. Everybody works, makes garlands, raises triumphal arches.» (ibid.)

[\[100\]](#) Ibid., p. 145.

[\[101\]](#) Foreword for the second edition, p. 9, 1943; cf. *La Croix* of November 19, 1942.

[\[102\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 741-742.

[\[103\]](#) Ibid., p. 729.

[\[104\]](#) FCM, p. 63. Further on we will quote the integral text of this admirable letter (*infra*, p. 222-223).

[\[105\]](#) *Acta apostolicae Sedis*, 1945, p. 37-52.

[\[106\]](#) In question is the letter of February 28, 1943, quoted earlier, p. 18-19.

[\[107\]](#) FER, p. 74-75. Already in 1936, it was Father Moran who, being aware of the request for the consecration of Russia, and judging after mature examination that it came very certainly from God, had incited Bishop da Silva to write to Pope Pius XI (cf. Nov. Doc., p. 174-175).

[\(108\)](#) FER, p. 75-76.

[\(109\)](#) FER, p. 73.

[\(110\)](#) Doc., p. 497.

[\(111\)](#) Doc. pont., 1945, p. 31-38.

[\(112\)](#) Doc. pont., 1945, p. 94. Already the preceding year, he had insisted on this necessary reform: «Whoever would like to implore the Blessed Virgin to stop the scourges, without this firm resolution to reform public or private life, would simply be asking for impunity for his faults, the right to regulate his own conduct not according to God's law, but according to unbridled passions. Such a supplication would be the negation and the opposite of Christian prayer; it would be an injury done to God, a provocation of His just wrath, obstinacy in sin, which is the world's only real evil.» (Doc. Pont., June 11, 1944, p. 97).

[\(113\)](#) Doc. pont., 1945, p. 239.

[\(114\)](#) Ibid., p. 357-358.

[\(115\)](#) Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1521-1522.

[\(116\)](#) Doc. pont., 1946, p. 209.

[\(117\)](#) Doc. pont., 1946, p. 234-246.

[\(118\)](#) Ibid., p. 251; 268; 272.

[\(119\)](#) *La Documentation catholique*, which in its thousands of pages from the years 1944 to 1948 systematically ignores the Great Return, does not quote this text. The *Documents pontificaux de S.S. Pie XII* also omit it.

[\(120\)](#) Quoted by Devineau, p. 191-195.

[\(121\)](#) Doc. pont., 1946, p. 374.

[\(122\)](#) Father da Fonseca, a professor at the Biblical Institute in Rome, assisted at the ceremonies as a member of the Cardinal legate's train. Let us note that he had undoubtedly contributed to preparing the discourse which the Holy Father would pronounce, as well as the one for October 31, 1942.

[\(123\)](#) Father da Fonseca, *Nossa Senhora da Fatima*, p. 205.

[\(124\)](#) As on October 31, 1942, Pius XII pronounced his discourse in Portuguese. The subtitles have been added by us.

[\(125\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 796-805.

[\(126\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 4-12.

[\(127\)](#) This is in reference to the Duke of Bragança, acclaimed king under the name of John IV on December 1, 1640. Cf. our Vol. I, p. 13.

[\(128\)](#) Ibid., p. 111-113.

[\(129\)](#) Act of acclamation of Our Lady of the Conception, patroness of Portugal, by the Cortes of Lisbon in 1646.

[\(130\)](#) «The Angel Guardian of Portugal» had appeared at Aljustrel exactly thirty years earlier, as precursor of Our Lady.

[\(131\)](#) Cf. Leo XIII, encyclical *Adjutricem*, of September 5, 1895.

[\(132\)](#) Barthas, *Les colombes de la Vierge*, p. 14-15. Résiac, 1977. This work is the French adaptation of *A pombas da Virgem de Fatima* by Father Martins dos Reis (1963).

[\(133\)](#) *Obras pastorais*, Vol. III, p. 231-233.

[\(134\)](#) Ibid., p. 222-223.

[\(135\)](#) CLV, p. 17.

[\(136\)](#) Barthas, *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 338.

[\(137\)](#) Report of Father Domingos da Apresentação Fernandes, *Obras pastorais*, Vol. III, p. 233.

[\(138\)](#) Ibid. We will have the opportunity to cite other examples of the “miracle of the doves”. But what also have to be read, in Barthas, are the many testimonies and demonstration of the supernatural character of this phenomenon. (*Les colombes de la Vierge*, passim).

[\(139\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 790-791.

[\(140\)](#) Quoted by Devineau, p. 163.

[\(141\)](#) Ibid., p. 163-164.

[\(142\)](#) Doc. pont., 1947, p. 169-174.

[\(143\)](#) Named by Pius XII Archbishop of Esztergom and prince primate of Hungary on September 16, 1945, he had been created Cardinal during the first consistory of the pontificate, February 16, 1946.

[\(144\)](#) *Mémoires*, p. 75-76, Diane Books, 1974.

[\(145\)](#) Jazsef Kozi Horvath, *Cardinal Mindszenty, un confesseur et martyr de notre temps*, p. 23, Aid to the Church in Need, 1977.

[\(146\)](#) Cardinal Mindszenty, *Mémoires*, p. 77. From that time on, the prince primate was very devoted to Our Lady of Fatima. According to an article in the review *Fatima 50*, the Marian Year (1947-1948) was apparently placed entirely under the sign of Fatima, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the apparitions (no. 11, March 1968, p. 15-16).

[\(147\)](#) Horvath, p. 23.

[\(148\)](#) Doc. pont., 1947, p. 306-309.

[\(149\)](#) Ibid., p. 443-445.

[\(150\)](#) EDITOR'S NOTE: During the French Revolution, an uprising in favour of the King and the Catholic Faith was brutally suppressed, resulting in the slaughter of men, women and children. This occurred in the Vendée region of France.

[\(151\)](#) Ibid., p. 219-228.

[\(152\)](#) Doc. pont., 1947, p. 229-237.

[\(153\)](#) Ibid., p. 410-415.

[\(154\)](#) Cf. da Fonseca, *Nossa Senhora de Fatima*, chap. 25: "Atraves da Europa", p. 329-344.

[\(155\)](#) On the various projects which prepared the carrying out of the "World Tour of Fatima", cf. Merv. XXe s., p. 272-276. Let us merely make clear the bond attaching it to the Great Return: as Father Devineau recently wrote to me, «What is certain is that the World Tour of Fatima was born of the Great Return. Father Ranson and myself had designated Father Demoutiez to go to Portugal to study the modalities of such a voyage across Europe, and from there, all over the world.» (letter of July 29, 1984).

[\(156\)](#) Later on, Mrs. Teresa Pereira da Cunha published the journal of the World Tour of Our Lady of Fatima in the four volumes of *Nossa Senhora de Fatima peregrina do mundo* (Lisbon, Livraria Sampedro).

[\(157\)](#) Merv. XXe s., p. 275-276.

[\(158\)](#) Ibid., p. 277.

[\(159\)](#) FER, p. 105.

[\(160\)](#) Merv. XXe s., p. 278.

[\[161\]](#) Merv. XXe s., p. 278-279; *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 304.

[\[162\]](#) Doc. pont., 1947, p. 261-263.

[\[163\]](#) Merv. XXe s., p. 282.

[\[164\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 276.

[\[165\]](#) *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 305.

[\[166\]](#) Merv. XXe s., p. 287-288; Devineau, p. 165.

[\[167\]](#) We borrow this brief synthesis from the excellent pamphlet by M. Dias Coelho, "Exercito Azul de Nossa Senhora de Fatima", published in 1956, and which traces well the spirit of the movement to its origins (ed. da Sede internacional, 60 p.) Cf. also J. Haffert, *Dear Bishop!*

[\[168\]](#) Cf. da Fonseca, p. 317-319.

[\[169\]](#) CLV, p. 59-60.

[\[170\]](#) Cf. for example Barthas, CLV, p. 24-30.

[\[171\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[\[172\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[\[173\]](#) Letter of Father Janssens concerning the Apostolate of Prayer, September 19, 1948; Doc. pont., p. 324.

[\[174\]](#) March 10, 1948, Doc. pont., 1948, p. 120.

[\[175\]](#) He made the announcement to the bishops of the world in a discourse to the Sacred College on June 2, 1948. Doc. pont., p. 219.

[\[176\]](#) Letter "To our dear son G. Ranson, S.J., director of the Great Return", quoted by Devineau, p. 6-8.

[\[177\]](#) October 7, 1953, *Obras pastorais*, Vol. IV, p. 282.

[\[178\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, "The war of Hitler or the war of Moscow?" p. 437-441.

[\[179\]](#) *L'erreur de l'Occident*, p. 84, Grasset, 1980.

[\[180\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 737-738.

[\[181\]](#) Quoted by De Marchi, p. 347.

[\(182\)](#) William Thomas Walsh, *Our Lady of Fatima*, p. 221. Cf. Father Antonio Maria Martins, FCM, p. 80.

[\(183\)](#) Cf., for example, Jean Chelini, *l'Église sous Pie XII*, chap. 2: "La Pologne martyre", p. 129-155; or Msgr. Roche, *Pie XII devant l'histoire*, appendix XVI: "l'Église de Pologne persécutée par Hitler"; or better still, the source of these two works: *Actes et Documents du Saint-Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (A.D.S.S.), Vol. III, *Le Saint-Siège et la situation religieuse en Pologne et dans les Pays baltes, 1939-1945*, p. 38-55 et passim (Vatican City, 1967).

[\(184\)](#) Archbishop Sheptytsky, a bishop since 1900, had been the personal friend of Soloviev and had received the powers and privileges of a patriarch from Saint Pius X. The sanctity of his life is so well attested that the canonical process in view of his beatification was opened in 1955 (cf. U. Floridi, *Moscow and the Vatican*, p. 167-168, Ardis books. 1986.

[\(185\)](#) J. Chelini, *l'Église sous Pie XII*, p. 133-134. Cf. in *Le Livre rouge de l'Église persécutée*, the overwhelming chapter devoted to Ukraine, p. 80-105. This masterly work, published in 1956, deals with the persecutions in countries of the East, from 1939 to 1956. Fleurus, 510 pages. Read especially the admirable letters and reports of the bishops for the intention of Pope Pius XII: A.D.S.S., III* nos. 79, 283, 297, 324, III** 482.

[\(186\)](#) Ibid., p. 54-76.

[\(187\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 764.

[\(188\)](#) Ibid., p. 736-742.

[\(189\)](#) FCM, p. 89.

[\(190\)](#) EDITOR'S NOTE: The condemnations of Nazism and Communism.

[\(191\)](#) A. M. Martins, *Novos Documentos*, p. 262, September 1984.

[\(192\)](#) *L'erreur de l'Occident*, p. 81-82.

[\(193\)](#) A.D.S.S., III** no. 406, letter of August 29, 1942. Cf. Chelini, p. 134; Heller and Nekrich, p. 331-337.

[\(194\)](#) *L'erreur de l'Occident*, p. 84.

[\(195\)](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 296, 346-347.

[\(196\)](#) The disorganization of the Russian front and the Red Army's stupefying lack of preparation during the German attack of June 1941 are not mysterious. In effect it has now been proven that, since autumn of 1940, Moscow had been warned by its own espionage network, and by that of the Allies. Cf. Heller and Nekrich, p. 303-311; Paul Carell, *Opération Barbarossa, l'invasion de la Russie du 22 juin à Stalingrad*, p. 46-68: «Was it possible to

better and more fully inform Stalin and the Red high command? Hitler's secrets were lying on the Kremlin's table. Thus during the first twenty-four hours Moscow could have transformed this entire operation "Barbarossa", which was founded only on surprise, into the greatest military defeat Hitler could suffer. On one condition: from all this information Stalin had to draw the appropriate consequences from the military viewpoint. Why didn't he?» (p. 59). Laffont, 1963, 586 pages. Cf. finally Walter Ciszek, *L'espion du Vatican*, p. 46, 69-70. Salvator, 1968. (The English version of this book is "With God in Russia.)

[\[197\]](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 346-348.

[\[198\]](#) *L'erreur de l'Occident*, p. 80.

[\[199\]](#) Doc. cath., 1948, col. 397-398. Cf. Heller and Nekrich, p. 344.

[\[200\]](#) D. Rops, *Ces chrétiens nos frères*, p. 518. Fayard, 1965.

[\[201\]](#) Cf. Maxime Mourin, *Le Vatican et l'Urss*, p. 102. Payot, 1965.

[\[202\]](#) Doc. pont., 1946, p. 85.

[\[203\]](#) Quoted by U. Floridi, p. 44.

[\[204\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 647.

[\[205\]](#) And all the more easily since in this summer of 1941 relations between the Vatican and the White House were excellent. The *Actes et documents du Saint-Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre mondiale* show how Roosevelt had succeeded, in April 1939, in securing close and continuous, even friendly relations with Pope Pius XII, who it must be said came to be the prisoner of these relations in some sense: I, p. 52-60, "Pie XII et Roosevelt", and the very numerous documents cited; IV, nos. 103, 203, 277, 315, 319.

[\[206\]](#) Cf. in the A.D.S.S., Vol. V, the many letters and accounts of audiences dealing with this diplomatic mission with decisive consequences, nos. 56-57, 59, 61, 68-69, 72, 74, 78, 81-82, 92, 94, 113.

[\[207\]](#) «Diplomatic questions belonged in principle to his colleague Tardini. But it was not rare for an ambassador or a minister to find a reason to explain his views to Msgr. Montini.» (A.D.S.S., introduction, p. 6) While Msgr. Tardini never ceased reminding all his interlocutors of the gravity of the Bolshevik peril, the substitute (Msgr. Montini) was known at this time for the complacency with which he listened to and passed on all propositions for an understanding between Moscow and the Vatican.

[\[208\]](#) *Pie XII devant l'histoire*, p. 326.

[\[209\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, no. 59: cf. our Vol. II, p. 756-757.

[\[210\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, no. 93.

[\(211\)](#) Quoted by Mourin, p. 109.

[\(212\)](#) It does seem as though the American government did everything to provoke the Japanese attack and nothing to prevent it when it was informed. Read the impressive demonstration of Rear Admiral R. A. Theobald, *Le Secret de Pearl Harbour*, December 7, 1941, 160 pages, Payot, 1955.

[\(213\)](#) *Le Meraviglie di Fatima*, fourth edition, April 1942.

[\(214\)](#) *Madonna di Fatima*, May 1942.

[\(215\)](#) Jacques Delebecque, in *L'Action française* of February 18, 1943, warned his readers against this foolish propaganda carried out in the name of Fatima.

[\(216\)](#) "Fatima e a critica", *Broteria*, 1951, p. 527-529.

[\(217\)](#) Let us simply point out that, in 1942, Cardinal Schuster had had the courage to give publicly an openly anti-communist interpretation of the Secret of Fatima: *Rivista diocesana milanese*, 1942, p. 297-298, quoted by Father Robert A. Graham, S.J., "Profezie di Guerra, Fatima e la Russia nella propaganda dei belligeranti dopo il 1942", *La Civiltà cattolica*, October 3, 1981, p. 17. Cf. also Alonso, FAE, p. 101, and our Vol. II, p. 790-791.

Finally let us recall that on October 13, in Portugal, in the third edition of *Jacinta*, Canon Galamba quoted the exact text of the first two parts of the Secret. Unfortunately, in the immediate present it was Father da Fonseca's work, soon to be translated by Canon Barthas, which had the greatest influence in Europe.

[\(218\)](#) Stehle's work, which appeared in its German version in 1975, was translated into English and appeared in 1981: *Eastern Politics of the Vatican. 1917-1979*, 466 pages, Ohio University Press. Our references are to this last edition.

[\(219\)](#) Stehle, p, 222.

[\(220\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, nos. 166, 171; Stehle, p. 222.

[\(221\)](#) FCM, p. 89-90. Father Martins does not indicate the exact date of this letter.

[\(222\)](#) Vol. V. p. 754.

[\(223\)](#) Ibid., no. 344, p. 538.

[\(224\)](#) Ibid., no. 344, p. 538.

[\(225\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, no. 246.

[\(226\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, nos. 274-275, 284, 287-288, 294; Stehle, p. 222-223.

[\(227\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, p. 637-638.

[\(228\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, no. 430, p. 638.

[\(229\)](#) Ibid., p. 638; Stehle, p. 224.

[\(230\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. VIII, no. 442. Stehle, p. 223.

[\(231\)](#) A. M. Martins, FCM, p. 90.

[\(232\)](#) A. M. Martins, FCM, p. 90.

[\(233\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, p. 51-58, "Retour de Taylor au Vatican", and documents 455, 472-473, 476-478, 480-481, 484-487, 489-492.

[\(234\)](#) Ibid, p. 51-53.

[\(235\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol.V. no. 480, p. 695. Let us note that in December 1933, after the disastrous fall of Bishop d'Herbigny's Ostpolitik, it was Msgr. Tardini who had been entrusted with the mission "*Pro Russia*" until its reorganization in December 1934. Cf. our Vol. II, p. 617-619.

[\(236\)](#) We have already spoken about the total inaneity of such an evolution. Cf. *supra*, p. 137.

[\(237\)](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. V, no. 481.

[\(238\)](#) Msgr. Roche's letter to Jean Madiran, May 14, 1984. *Itinéraires*, July-August 1984, p. 153.

[\(239\)](#) Document 6795, cited by Msgr. Roche, p. 379.

[\(240\)](#) Whatever his previous commitments may have been, during his radio message for Christmas 1942 he nevertheless had the courage to pronounce a brief warning against communism: «Guided always by religious motives, the Church has condemned the various systems of Marxist socialism and condemns them again today, in conformity with its duty and permanent right to protect men from currents and influences which would imperil their eternal salvation.» (Doc. pont., 1942, p. 338). These few words were better than complete silence, but what a feeble echo of *Divini Redemptoris* and the Secret of Fatima! Moreover, and it is a very astonishing fact, in the twenty bulky volumes of "Pontifical documents of H.H. Pius XII" one does not find a single explicit reference to Pius XI's encyclical condemning communism.

[\(241\)](#) Cf. Robert A. Graham, "G. B. Montini, substitute secretary of State (in tandem with Domenico Tardini)", in *Paul VI et la modernité dans l'Église*, p. 67-84. Rome, 1984.

[\[242\]](#) Conference of October 20, 1959. French version of *L'Osservatore Romano*, November 6 and 19, 1959. *Documentation catholique*, 1960, nos. 1326, 1327, 1328. The passage we have quoted is found in col. 625-627.

[\[243\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 18, 59-65.

[\[244\]](#) Many historians have observed this fact. Cf. for example Father Blet, in A.D.S.S., Vol. VII, p. 3; Henri Michel, "La Seconde Guerre mondiale", *Encyclopaedia universalis*, vol. 8, p. 135.

[\[245\]](#) Father R. Payrière, *Fatima, le signe du Ciel*, p. 14.

[\[246\]](#) As long as the forces of the two opposing blocs seemed equal to each other, it looked as though the conflict must go on forever. «Today, Venerable Brethren, you are with Us for the fourth time, overwhelmed by the nightmare of the war, *in the obscure wait for a future whose trials might even surpass the sufferings already endured, if the hand of God does not intervene.*» These grave words which Pope Pius XII spoke to the members of the Sacred College on December 24, 1942, attest to the anguish which then gripped the most clear-thinking men (Doc. pont., 1942, p. 324).

[\[247\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. VII, no. 126, p. 241-248. The text, written in French, includes some stylistic errors which we take the liberty of correcting.

[\[248\]](#) On June 29, 1456, Pope Callixtus III ordered the bells of all churches to be rung between noon and three in the afternoon, to invite the faithful to invoke divine assistance against the Turkish threat.

[\[249\]](#) Cf. the very farsighted and insistent reports of the nuncio at Bern, Archbishop Bernardini, from November 1942 to March 1943 (A.D.S.S., Vol. VII, nos. 36, 60, 113, 119, 121).

[\[250\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. VII, nos. 133, 137.

[\[251\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. VII, nos. 138, 153-154, 162, 216.

[\[252\]](#) Doc. pont., 1943, p. 139-142.

[\[253\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 764-765.

[\[254\]](#) Millions of human lives surely could have been spared while obtaining the same military results, had not Stalin applied himself so skilfully to provoking this frightful slaughter within his own people, to make of it his major argument with the Allies, and obtain from them maximum territorial advantages: how could anyone resist a head of State who had contributed to the Allied victory at the price of 20 million Russian lives? (cf. Heller and Nekrich, p. 370-372).

[\(255\)](#) “The theft of Poland, a model of Soviet aggression”, by Stanislaus Mikolajczyk, Appendix VII, p. 317-318.

[\(256\)](#) «The governments of the victorious states decided that this problem would be passed over in silence, and the Katyn massacre would never be studied in detail.» (Churchill’s Memoirs) Quoted by Heller and Nekrich, p. 342. Since then, the British government has always been opposed to the erection of a monument, even in England, in honour of the victims of Katyn.

[\(257\)](#) David J. Irving, *La destruction des villes allemandes*, p. 99. 315 pages. France-Empire, 1965.

[\(258\)](#) Ibid., chap. 7, “Düsseldorf, manifestation de masse pour Staline”, p. 99-109.

[\(259\)](#) Ibid., p. 109.

[\(260\)](#) Ibid., p. 259-266.

[\(261\)](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 349.

[\(262\)](#) Quoted by Jacques Marteaux, *L’Église de France devant la Révolution marxiste*, Vol. I, p. 647. La Table Ronde, 1958.

[\(263\)](#) Walter Cizek, *L’espion du Vatican*, p. 146-147, Salvator, 1968. This exceptional testimony is must reading. (The English version of this book is “With God in Russia”.)

[\(264\)](#) Quoted by Mourin, p. 123.

[\(265\)](#) Georges Ollivier, *Franklin Roosevelt, l’homme de Yalta*, p. 210. La librairie française, 1955.

[\(266\)](#) *Franklin Roosevelt, l’homme de Yalta*, p. 209-213.

[\(267\)](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 370.

[\(268\)](#) Stehle, p. 230.

[\(269\)](#) P. 404-405.

[\(270\)](#) Stehle, p. 231.

[\(271\)](#) J. Elleinstein, *Staline*, p. 411. Fayard, 1984. Orlemanski even tried to meet with the apostolic delegate in Washington, and the press announced that he would be received by the Pope! (A.D.S.S., Vol. XI, nos. 289, 298).

[\(272\)](#) Read René Chambe, *Le maréchal Juin, duc du Garigliano*, chap. 16: “L’Italie, victoire inexploitée malgré les avis de Juin”, p. 320-344. Presse de la Cité, 1968.

[\[273\]](#) M. Laran, *Encyclopaedia universalis*, "Pologne", p. 278, 1980 edition. Very curiously, in the *Grande encyclopédie Larousse* (1981 edition), Céline Gervais repeats word for word the same false formula (article "Pologne", p. 9657). In works which number, respectively, no less than 20,000 and 12,000 pages, these four misleading lines devoted to the terrible Warsaw insurrection are significant.

[\[274\]](#) Arthur Bliss Lane (American ambassador to Poland from 1944 to 1947): *J'ai vu la Pologne trahie* (the English version of this work is "I Saw Poland Betrayed"), chap. 3: "Un crime incroyable", p. 38-52; Sfelt, 1949. S. Mikolajczyk (former prime minister of Poland): "Le viol de la Pologne, un modèle d'aggression soviétique", chap. 6: "Trahison", p. 82-112; Plon, 1949. Isaac Deutscher, *Staline*, p. 406-407; NRF, 1953. Heller and Nekrich (very incomplete!), p. 351.

[\[275\]](#) Bliss Lane, p. 39.

[\[276\]](#) Mikolajczyk quotes *in extenso* this long call to arms broadcast by the Moscow station Kosciuszko and equally rebroadcast by the BBC (p. 85-86).

[\[277\]](#) Mikolajczyk, p. 96; Deutscher, p. 407.

[\[278\]](#) A.D.S.S., Vol. IX, no. 313. This moving appeal was transmitted by the Secretariat of State of the American government, without result.

[\[279\]](#) Ambroise Jobert, in his *Histoire de la Pologne* (collection "Que sais-je?", 1974) draws attention to the call to arms broadcast by Radio Moscow on July 29 (p. 117-118). Yet he makes no allusion to this double refusal of Stalin, which manifests beyond any question the criminal design of the master of the Kremlin.

[\[280\]](#) Bliss Lane, p. 52. Why are these tragic events, which clearly show the intrinsically perverse and fundamentally satanic character of communism, the object of a universal conspiracy of silence? Unfortunately, in the discourses and biographies of our Pope, John Paul II, I have not found any denunciation of this abominable crime of Bolshevism against the capital of his Polish fatherland. Who, then, will talk about it?

[\[281\]](#) Mourin, p. 122 and A.D.S.S., Vol. XI, p. 49-57.

[\[282\]](#) Jacques Duquesne, *Les catholiques français sous l'Occupation*, p. 336-337. Grasset, 1966.

[\[283\]](#) Canon Papin, *Le dernier étage du Vatican, témoignage de Pie XI à Paul VI*, p. 92. Albatros, 1977. Cf. A.D.S.S., Vol. XI, p. 28.

[\[284\]](#) Jacques Marteaux, *L'Église de France devant la révolution marxiste*, Vol. I, p. 648. La Table Ronde, 1958.

[\(285\)](#) Pius XII made this decision on October 14, 1944. (A.D.S.S., Vol. XI, p. 572). Only Bishop Dutoit (of Arras), Bishop du Bois de La Villerabel (of Aix) and Bishop Auvity (of Mende) had to resign.

[\(286\)](#) J. Marteaux, *L'Église de France devant la révolution marxiste*, Vol. II, p. 106.

[\(287\)](#) Ibid., p. 67.

[\(288\)](#) Jacques Marteaux, Vol. II, p. 67. General de Gaulle made similar declarations (A.D.S.S., Vol. XI, no. 479).

[\(289\)](#) Ibid., p. 70.

[\(290\)](#) FER, p. 85.

[\(291\)](#) FER, p. 85.

[\(292\)](#) It was also in 1923 that Sister Josefa Menendez, the messenger of the Sacred Heart, had accompanied a superior of her congregation to Rome and had the opportunity to see Pope Pius XI (cf. *Un appel à l'amour*, p. 563. Apostolat de la prière, 1972).

[\(293\)](#) Cf. for example Jacques Duquesne, *Les catholiques français sous l'Occupation*, chap. XIV, "Le petit concile de l'Église de France, p. 396-456.

[\(294\)](#) Doc. pont., 1944, p. 236-241.

[\(295\)](#) Ibid., p. 242-256.

[\(296\)](#) On the contrary, this radio message corresponds in an astonishing, almost liberal fashion, with the thinking of Msgr. Montini, then the substitute at the Secretariat of State, and known to have collaborated often in the composition of pontifical discourses. Was the text of this radio message prepared by the substitute, who was the original inspiration behind it? We will show that many indications allow us to suppose so.

[\(297\)](#) Doc. pont., 1944, p. 244.

[\(298\)](#) Ibid.

[\(299\)](#) Ibid., p. 254.

[\(300\)](#) A letter of enthusiastic felicitations addressed to Maurice Blondel by Msgr. Montini on December 2, 1944, is one of the indications permitting us to suppose that the substitute – who had always been passionately democratic and thus whose hour of triumph had come – was perhaps not a stranger to this radio message, and perhaps had inspired it and even been the first to draft it. In this letter to the Christian Democrat and semi-modernist Blondel, Msgr. Montini in effect developed several themes which appear again, three weeks later, in the pontifical discourse. Above all, the tone, the atmosphere, the

judgment made on the world in 1944 are the same. Msgr. Montini wrote, for example: «The tormented world of today is so much into the search for truth, and the roads which lead to it most surely... Your intellectual charity as Good Samaritan, bending over wounded humanity, while striving to understand it and speak its language, will contribute effectively to placing it once more on the indeclinable and salvific perspectives of its divine vocation.» (Doc. cath., 1945, col. 498-499) Is this not already, just as in the radio message, the whole Montinian optimism for which the Church has no enemies? This optimism is so foreign to the usual thinking of Pius XII, who never forgets the implacable battle of the two Cities, of light and darkness, of the world and the Church, of the Faithful of Christ and the henchmen of Satan. Let it be noted that on December 7, 1965, in his famous discourse for the closing of the Council, Paul VI repeated this same image of the Good Samaritan, comparing to the poor wounded man of the parable the Goliath of the modern world, which in its revolt against God professes «the cult of man and the religion (for such it is) of man who makes himself God». (*Documentation catholique*, January 2, 1966, col. 63.)

The ardent democratic passion which inspires this text was undoubtedly completely foreign to Pius XII: his rehabilitation of *Action française*, his admiration for Franco and Salazar, and for Marshal Pétain all attest to it, as well as the following anecdote. On December 2, 1954, Pius XII, who was ill, agreed to consult several doctors. Professor Galeazzi-Lisi, senior pontifical doctor, reports that «In spite of his condition, he was preoccupied not only with the scientific quality of the consultants but also their political opinions... “They tell me he is a monarchist”, he said, speaking of one of the proposed consultants. “We ourselves are monarchist, for that matter. That is better than these...” He never completed his sentence, and I could not know what he was thinking about.» (*Dans l'ombre et dans la lumière de Pie XII*, p. 225. Flammarion, 1960) One can easily guess “what he was thinking about”...

In November 1958, Father Leiber, who was his private secretary for thirty-four years, wanted to clarify this subject: «Those who interpreted his teaching on democracy, given in his radio message of Christmas, 1944, as a praise of democracy, placed above all other forms of government, have misunderstood it.» (Doc. cath., 1959, col. 169) In the feverish atmosphere of the Liberation, Pius XII allowed himself to be convinced (and here the influence of Msgr. Montini might have been decisive) that if the future really belonged to democracy, the Church had to «strive to explain the principal moral postulates of a democratic order which would be just and sound» (Allocution to the Sacred College, June 2, 1946, Doc. pont., p. 159).

[301] *L'erreur de l'Occident*, p. 85-86.

[302] “Quid 1980”, p. 768. Cf. Heller and Nekrich, p. 375-377.

[303] David J. Irving, *La destruction des villes allemandes*, p. 287. France-Empire, 1965.

[304] *Ibid.*, p. 285.

[\[305\]](#) Ibid., read the whole chapter: “Dresde, la grande conspiration du silence”, p. 285-313.

[\[306\]](#) G. Ollivier, *Franklin Roosevelt, l’homme de Yalta*, p. 227.

[\[307\]](#) Ibid., p. 228.

[\[308\]](#) Quoted by J. R. D. Bourcart, *L’espionnage soviétique*, p. 150; Fayard, 1962.

[\[309\]](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 367.

[\[310\]](#) Ibid., p. 368.

[\[311\]](#) G. Ollivier, p. 228.

[\[312\]](#) Nerin Gun, *Les secrets des archives américaines*, Vol. II, p. 52. Albin Michel, 1983.

[\[313\]](#) Ibid., p. 46.

[\[314\]](#) Cf. J. R. D. Bourcart, *L’espionnage soviétique*, the chapter on atomic espionage, p. 172-189. Fayard, 1962.

[\[315\]](#) Ibid., p. 163. Cf. the entire chapter on Soviet espionage in North America, p. 145-171.

[\[316\]](#) Ibid., p. 150.

[\[317\]](#) G. Ollivier, op. cit., p. 220.

[\[318\]](#) The first died opportunely in August 1948, before being tried. The latter was convicted and sentenced to prison in 1949.

[\[319\]](#) Ibid., p. 222-223.

[\[320\]](#) Bourcart, p. 166.

[\[321\]](#) The moving accounts must be read, for example, in the *Livre rouge de l’Église persécutée*, p. 62 for Latvia, p. 76-78 for Lithuania, p. 56 for Estonia.

[\[322\]](#) Quoted by Mourin, *Le Vatican et l’Urss*, p. 125.

[\[323\]](#) “Église des martyrs”, Aid to the Church in Need, March 1981, p. 5-6. For the detailed account of this atrocious persecution, cf. *Chrétiens d’Ukraine*, p. 43-56 (Aid to the Church in Need); Mourin, p. 157-161, or the *Livre rouge de l’Église persécutée*, p. 88-105.

[\[324\]](#) One of the first students of the College, Feodor Romza, who later became Bishop of Munkacs, was put to death in 1946. Father Bielarol was burned alive in his church in the presence of his faithful, who were forced to be present at the scene. Father Homkin was

hung in Ukraine. Fathers Helvegas, Kaski, Kellner, and still others, were also the victims of repression by the Russian political police. (Doc. cath., 1960, no. 1330, col. 743).

[\(325\)](#) Heller and Nekrich, p. 390-391.

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to Josyp Terelya, the leading spokesman for the Ukrainian Catholic underground Church, speaking on *FATIMA: "The Moment Has Come"* TV program hosted by Father Gruner and airing across North America in 1990, there were two man-made famines caused deliberately by Communist Russia causing the death by starvation of 10,000,000 Ukrainians in the early 1920's and a second Russian Communist purposely induced famine killing 8,000,000 Ukrainians in the early 1930's.

[\(326\)](#) Ibid., chap. 9, "L'empire des camps", p. 410-415.

[\(327\)](#) Thus the troops of General Patton were able, without any difficulty, to occupy Prague and the whole sector around it, which was offered to them by the Germans. But Patton received the express order to interrupt his offensive, so as to leave the Soviets with the job of "liberating" the city. Vienna and Berlin could equally have been liberated by the Allies before the arrival of the Russians, if they had not been reserved for the Russians in advance, or rather sacrificed.

[\(328\)](#) Moscow knew that a more or less long phase of biding its time was necessary. «The directives emanating from the Kremlin prescribed avoiding, for the moment, the outbreak of troubles whose interpretation in the West would create useless difficulties with the latter. The communists themselves declared that whoever stated that Bolshevism was hostile to religion could only be a fascist slanderer, and an enemy of democracy... Some sections of the Communist party had their banners blessed by priests who consented to lend themselves to this ceremony; they set up teams of specialized workers to rebuild churches. In Hungary, the government continued to give subsidies for the exercise of worship and religious instruction. The heads of state, and civil authorities were present at religious ceremonies, and Marshal Vorochilov himself came to Budapest, at Saint Stephen's cathedral. The doctrine was that the new regime practiced a "policy of realities", and that the Church constituted a reality that had to be taken into account»... while waiting for the power to enslave it, or completely destroy it. For this misleading benevolence was hardly going to last.

[\(329\)](#) *Le Livre rouge de l'Église persécutée*, p. 107-125.

[\(330\)](#) Ibid., p. 175-232.

[\(331\)](#) Ibid., p. 233-266.

[\(332\)](#) Ibid., p. 311-361.

[\(333\)](#) Cf. *L'Église roumaine unie, trente ans de persécutions, 1945-1975*, "Chrétiens de l'Est", no. 8, 1975, 75 pages.

[\(334\)](#) “Le Livre rouge”, p. 129-140.

[\(335\)](#) Pastoral letter of September 20, 1945. Cf. M. Landercy, *Le Cardinal Stepinac*, p. 112-119, Apostolat des Éditions, 1981.

[\(336\)](#) “Le Livre rouge”, p. 423-445.

[\(337\)](#) Cf. the recent work of Jean-Pierre Brulé, *La Corée du Nord de Kim Il-Sung*, 280 pages, Barré-Dayez, 1982.

[\(338\)](#) THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND AT THE VATICAN. Here we must open a little digression to point out that during this period of intensive Bolshevization and persecution, the Kremlin strived to attenuate the vigour of the Vatican’s eventual reactions by actively pursuing its policy of the outstretched hand, and its attempts to open talks with Rome.

During the summer of 1945, two influential religious from the Hungarian clergy were invited to talks in this sense. Their interlocutors were Ambassador Pushkin, one of the most skilled Soviet diplomats, and Ossukin, a member of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. «The conversations got under way and were to last two years. The two Russians made it clear that they had in mind a general accord with the Holy See, that this proposition was made by Stalin to the Pope himself, that the Soviet government, anxious to secure peaceful relations with Rome, was disposed to make broad concessions in all regions occupied by the Red Army... At one of these meetings, one of the Russian negotiators declared that the general accord sought by Moscow, and which had to be followed by separate accords with the different states, had to be signed with some solemnity. On this occasion Stalin sent the Pope a religious manuscript trimmed with illuminations, and a bible in Russian adorned with jewels. The Sovereign Pontiff had to send gifts of equal importance...

«At the Vatican. these comings and goings were greeted with scepticism. The reports of the Hungarian religious were listened to only with the intention of discerning what the Russians desired most intensely. It appeared that they wanted most that the Church dignitaries in satellite countries of the USSR tone down their criticisms of the Communist regime... At Rome, the Hungarian negotiator was invited to suggest to Soviet authorities that if they really wanted to establish a true convention, they should use the normal diplomatic route, speaking to a nuncio in some capital where there was also a representative of the Soviet Union. But this proposition received no response. The negotiations at this moment, in 1947, were practically broken off.» (Mourin, p. 162-163).

Hansjakob Stehle points out that other advances were made to the Vatican. At the request of Soviet General Leonid Georgiev, Josef Muller, the founder of Christian Democracy in Bavaria, organized at Berlin in 1946 a conversation between vicar general Prange and the Soviet diplomat Smirnov. After this talk, Muller himself, during a private audience, passed on to Pope Pius XII an offer of an accord from Moscow (p. 261). Cf. also, G. Zananiri, *Le Saint-Siège et Moscou*, p. 69. Spes, 1967.

[\[339\]](#) «If the bishops of Spain take into account Our Lord's desires and undertake a true reform among the people and clergy, good! If not, Russia will again be the enemy through which God will chastise them once more.» (February 28; cf. *supra*, p. 18).

[\[340\]](#) Claude Martin, *Franco, soldat et chef d'État*, p. 347-348. Quatre fils Aymon, Paris, 1959.

[\[341\]](#) Nerin Gun, *Les archives secrètes américaines*, Vol. II, p. 167-168. This is the work which furnishes the most tangible proofs of the reality of the Bolshevik menace in Spain from 1944 to 1947. Cf. Part Three, "Madrid", p. 163-193. Albin Michel, 1983.

[\[342\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 38-40.

[\[343\]](#) Claude Martin, *Franco, soldat et chef d'État*, p. 353, 358.

[\[344\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 178-179.

[\[345\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 361.

[\[346\]](#) Nerin Gun, Vol. II, p. 170.

[\[347\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 165.

[\[348\]](#) Nerin Gun, Vol. II, p. 166.

[\[349\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[\[350\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 177.

[\[351\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 175, 181.

[\[352\]](#) Claude Martin, p. 364-366.

[\[353\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 110-111.

[\[354\]](#) Claude Martin, p. 378-379.

[\[355\]](#) FER, p. 139.

[\[356\]](#) E. J. Hughes, *L'Espagne de Franco*, p. 8. One has to read this pamphlet written by an American Christian Democrat and published in France in 1948, by the very progressive *Éditions du Temps présent* to see what blind hatred was then devouring our Christian Democrats, who were in Moscow's pocket, regarding the Spain of the Crusade.

[\[357\]](#) Cf. FER, p. 100-116.

[\[358\]](#) When the general died, Fred Zeller, then the Grandmaster of the Grand Orient of France, recalled with emotion how Freemasonry, dissolved by Marshal Pétain's

government, «owed its rebirth to the decree signed at Alger (on December 15, 1943) by General de Gaulle.» It was thanks to this decree that Masonry regained strength and vigour. To delegates of the Grand Orient and the Grand Lodge de Gaulle had declared, «*I am going to give the Republic back to France, I can also give her back the Freemasons!*» *Trois points c'est tout*, p. 320, 411. Laffont, 1976.

[359] Devineau, *Dans le sillage de la Vierge*, p. 23-26.

[360] Cf. *supra*, p. 109-111.

[361] “*Note sur la diffusion du message de Fatima en France*”, January 1, 1971. Undoubtedly *La Croix* of Paris is in question, rather than the daily edition of the same journal, in which we did not find the article cited.

[362] Cf. *supra*, p. 111-112.

[363] *Fatima, merv. du XX siècle*, p. 282.

[364] Letter of Father Devineau, July 29, 1984.

[365] One of his works was put on the Index on March 23, 1942 (Doc. pont., 1942, p. 356).

[366] R. Laurentin, *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 1968, p. 525.

[367] *Les faits mystérieux de l'Île-Bouchard*, Gibert-Clarey, Tours, 1951.

[368] Pierre de Villemarest, *L'espionnage soviétique en France, 1944-1969*, p. 70. Let us quote only the titles and subtitles of chap. V of this work; they are sufficient to show the reality of the danger France incurred back then: «France escapes a Soviet-Communist coup d'état. – Activities and orders for a revolution. – Panic in high places. – The tide goes back and forth.»

[369] P. de Villemarest, p. 76-77.

[370] Nerin Gun, Vol. II, p. 115-116.

[371] Cf. Pierre de Villemarest, p. 78-79.

[372] August 15, 1945. Doc., pont., 1945, p. 178-179.

[373] In this perspective, the admirable radio message of May 13, 1946, should be read over again (*supra*, p. 91-98). Never before had the Pope spoken of Fatima, of its miracles of peace and conversion, with so much fervour and enthusiasm.

As for the increasingly farsighted judgment Pius XII made on the perils of the hour, the *Documents pontificaux* for the years 1945-1947 attest to it. The optimism of the radio

message for Christmas 1944 had scarcely lasted. It did not even express the whole thinking of the Holy Father. Indeed we observe that in January 1945, he shows that he is very disturbed about the world's situation. And the vigorous warnings, not only against fallacious Communist propaganda, but also – which is much more effective – against their accomplices even within the Church, multiplied more and more as the months and years passed. Thus on January 21, 1945: «You know that the enemies of Christ and His Church never lay down their arms, even when they pretend to have good intentions. Apart from bloody persecutions and violent assaults, they have other methods of war: perversion, poisoning of minds, to which is added the unconscious contribution of numerous misled minds, which allow themselves to be led astray by them and led away from the good road.» (Doc. pont., 1945, p. 35). Likewise on April 29 (ibid., p. 98), and also on August 15 (p. 178-179). In the autumn, while receiving American journalist Nerin Gun, Pius XII again insists on the Bolshevik danger (*Les secrets des archives américaines*, Vol. I, p. 317; Vol. II, p. 291). On December 23, in his encyclical *Orientalis omnes*, where he denounces the terrible persecution raging in Ukraine, he is not afraid to designate by name the schismatic instigators And he invites the Catholics to resist the most perfidious traps laid for them, and to remain true to the faith, even to the point of martyrdom (p. 380-385).

On June 1, 1946, he denounced «the forces of revolution and atheism» (Doc. pont., 1946, p. 173), and when in September Cardinal Stepinac, Archbishop of Zagreb, was arrested by the Communists, and then condemned to sixteen years in prison on October 11, the Vatican reacted immediately: on the 14th, it declared to be excommunicated all those who cooperated physically or morally, in this «arbitrary arrest», this imprisonment and «this unjust condemnation», In 1947, the Rome-Moscow opposition grew even harsher. The discourse of June 2 (Doc. pont., 1947, p. 161-162) and the excommunications of June 24 and September 8 against Yugoslavian Communists who inflicted ill-treatment on two bishops (p. 478-480) eloquently attest to this.

At the end of 1947, two important documents, the encyclical *Optatissima pax* of December 18 (Doc. Pont., 1947, p. 454-458), requesting prayers for peace, and the Christmas radio message (p. 459-470), are almost entirely directed against the lies of communist propaganda and against its accomplices, who «in the titanic struggle between the two opposing spirits contending with each other for the world» are «deserters and traitors».

[\[374\]](#) The emphasis is Sister Lucy's.

[\[375\]](#) A. M. Martins, FCM, p. 62-63.

[\[376\]](#) FCM, p. 21-22.

[\[377\]](#) *Fatima, Altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 130. The testimony of the late Canon Galamba, who died on September 25, 1984, is happily completed by the detailed account which Sister Lucy herself wrote of these memorable days. The text is quoted by S. Martins dos Reis, *A vidente de Fatima dialoga e responde pelas Aparicoes*, p. 117-130.

[\[378\]](#) Sister Lucy's testimony, *A vidente de Fatima*, p. 117-120.

[\[379\]](#) Cf. our Vol. I, «A prelude: The three apparitions of 1915» (p. 62-66) and «The three apparitions of 1916» (p. 66-97).

[\[380\]](#) On April 11, 1945, she had confided to her superior, Mother Maria do Carmo Cunha Matos: «The place where I would prefer to go is where the Angel gave us Holy Communion.» (S. Martins dos Reis, *“Dialoga”*, p. 122).

[\[381\]](#) *Fatima, Altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 130-133.

[\[382\]](#) In fact, Sister Lucy left Fatima in the afternoon of this day, May 22.

[\[383\]](#) S. Martins dos Reis, *A vidente de Fatima dialoga...*, p. 115-116.

[\[384\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[\[385\]](#) *Los Secretos de Fatima*, p. 65. Fatima, 1979.

[\[386\]](#) Alonso, FER, p. 49.

[\[387\]](#) FER, p. 48.

[\[388\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 143.

[\[389\]](#) If, as is probably the case, this is in reference to Bishop da Silva, all approaches were in vain. The Bishop of Leiria, who had entrusted Lucy in her adolescence to the Dorothean Sisters, clearly intended her to remain in this friendly congregation, which he had chosen for her.

[\[390\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 619-622.

[\[391\]](#) *Altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 135-142 .

[\[392\]](#) FER, p. 48.

[\[393\]](#) *Documentos*, p. 497-499.

[\[394\]](#) As we have said, the congregation of the Dorotheans was intimately connected to the Jesuit order, which generally took care of the chaplaincy and spiritual direction of the religious.

[\[395\]](#) Father Dhanis had launched his first offensive against Fatima in 1944, in the review *Streven*. The following year, he had collected his articles into book form (cf. our Vol. I, p. 11-12). Lucy is undoubtedly alluding to one of his disciples within the Society.

[\[396\]](#) *Doc.*, p. 449.

[397] May 1946, p. 7-12; July 1946, p. 32-35; October 1946, p. 110-112. This text was reproduced very imprecisely by Father de Marchi and Father da Fonseca. Cf. the corrections by Father Alonso (HLF, p. 54-56) and Father Martins dos Reis, *A vidente de Fatima dialoga*, p. 65-83.

[398] Cf. *supra*, p. 153-154. Since Lucy's superiors seem to have decided on this trip, the refusal had to have come from Rome.

[399] Cf. *supra*, p. 123-124.

[400] *Our Lady of Fatima*, p. 221.

[401] Alonso, HLF, p. 56.

[402] *Ibid.*, p. 57; cf. S. Martins dos Reis, *A vidente de Fatima dialoga*, p. 19-50.

[403] HLF, p. 57. Cf. the account of this interview in *Dear Bishop!* by John Haffert.

[404] TPE, p. 246.

[405] Alonso, FAE, p. 108.

[406] Letter from Miss Posnoff to the author, February 23, 1984.

[407] FCM, p. 109-111.

[408] We do not know if in her letter of July 1946, Lucy had received permission from her superiors to ask the Pope clearly for the consecration of Russia such as it had to be done.

[409] Unfortunately, Father A. M. Martins quotes only this truncated sentence from Lucy's letter. FCM, p. 80. Let it be noted that the formula is quite close to an account of the vision of Tuy, found by Father Alonso in Sister Lucy's «journal»: «Our Lady said: "The moment has arrived when God asks the Holy Father to make, and to order that in union with him, *and at the same time*, all the bishops of the world make the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, promising to convert it because of *this day of worldwide prayer and reparation*."» This text had remained unpublished. Father Martins published it for the first time in September 1984. FCM, p. 77-79.

[410] It must be noted that according to Vilalta Berbel (*Los secretos de Fatima*, p. 66), the document bore the signature of Msgr. Montini, then the undersecretary for ordinary affairs.

[411] FER, p. 48.

[412] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

[\(413\)](#) Doc. pont., 1948, p. 324.

[\(414\)](#) Doc. pont., 1948, p. 41, 336.

[\(415\)](#) Letter to the Polish episcopate, January 18, 1948, Doc. pont., p. 36. Cf. also the discourses of February 22 and March 10.

[\(416\)](#) January 15, 1948, Doc. pont., p. 27.

[\(417\)](#) Doc. pont., 1948, p. 120, 156.

[\(418\)](#) Ibid., p. 179. Cf. also the Letter of July 2, 1948, to Father Ranson quoted above, p. 84.

[\(419\)](#) Ibid., p. 230.

[\(420\)](#) *Nossa Senhora da Fatima*; cf. all chap. XXIV, "A peregrinação a Madrid, p. 321-328.

[\(421\)](#) FER, p. 107-110. Father da Fonseca cites the cases of healings, p. 324.

[\(422\)](#) Da Fonseca, p. 323. Is it necessary to recall that the head of state in question was General Franco, who two years earlier had been ostracized by other nations, as unworthy to govern his country! In the name of democracy, Stalin and his accomplices had wanted to force him to leave, to deliver Spain to the Reds. The truth was different: Franco was surely, at the time, the head of state most beloved of his people as well as the most sincerely and profoundly Catholic one, and he proved it by effectively helping the Church with all his power.

[\(423\)](#) Barthas, *Les colombes de la Vierge*, p. 41-42.

[\(424\)](#) FER, p. 108-109.

[\(425\)](#) Ibid., p. 109.

[\(426\)](#) Ibid., p. 110.

[\(427\)](#) Barthas, *Fatima et les destins du monde*, p. 56-57.

[\(428\)](#) CLV, p. 37.54.

[\(429\)](#) Ibid., p. 38-40.

[\(430\)](#) Alonso, FER, p. 116-119.

[\(431\)](#) FER, p. 41; Berbel, p. 69.

[\(432\)](#) FER, p. 138, p. 7.

[\(433\)](#) CLV, p. 63-64.

[\(434\)](#) Ibid., p. 69-70.

[\(435\)](#) Cf. Merv. XXe s., p. 284-286, 288.

[\(436\)](#) Radio message to the pilgrims of Fatima, October 13, 1951. Doc. pont., 1951, p. 415.

[\(437\)](#) Doc. pont., 1948, p. 212-213.

[\(438\)](#) Cf. *L'Église roumaine unie, 30 ans de persécution (1945-1975), Chrétiens de l'Est*, no. 8, 1975, 72 pages.

[\(439\)](#) All these details concerning the preparation of a council under Pius XII were revealed for the first time by Father Caprile, S.J., in an article entitled: "Pius XII and a new project of an ecumenical council". It first appeared in *Civiltà cattolica* of August 6-20, 1966, and was reprinted in *Documentation catholique* of January 1, 1967 (col. 49-68), as a sequel to an article by the same author on "Pius XI and the resumption of the Vatican Council" (Doc. cath., December 18, 1966).

[\(440\)](#) Doc. cath., January 1, 1967, col. 49-51.

[\(441\)](#) Ibid., col. 54.

[\(442\)](#) Doc. cath., 1967, col. 57-58.

[\(443\)](#) Ibid., col. 68.

[\(444\)](#) It is very suggestive to reread, in this thought, the magnificent letter of Pius XII for the four hundredth anniversary of the Council of Trent, on November 21, 1945 (Doc. pont., 1945, p. 304-311).

[\(445\)](#) *Lettre à mes amis*, no. 184, September 25, 1964.

[\(446\)](#) Doc. cath., January 1, 1967, col. 65-66.

[\(447\)](#) While Pius XI, who hardly appreciated his predecessor, had left his cause of beatification on the back burner since 1931, Pius XII, only a few weeks after his election, took the measures necessary to get it going again, and on August 19, 1939, he made known his keen desire to grant Pius X the honour of being raised to the altar, without delay. Cf. our Vol. II, p. 773-774. When the apostolic processes had happily concluded, Pius XII intervened personally again: canon 2101 forbade discussing the heroicity of the virtues of the servant of God until fifty years after his death. Was it necessary to wait until 1964 to proclaim Pius X venerable? On May 2, 1949, Pius XII granted the dispensation necessary for the Process to continue without delay.

Adversaries of the holy Pope then began striving to prevent the cause from succeeding. On November 29, 1949, during the ante-preparatory Congregation in view of recognition of the servant of God's heroic virtues, unforeseen objections were raised within the Congregation. Certain members maintained that Pius X had perhaps been lacking in prudence and charity. One can guess on what occasions! Was this opposition going to succeed in paralyzing the cause's progress? This would fail to take into consideration the firm resolution of Pius XII. With wisdom, far from silencing the objections, he had the historical commission of the Sacred Congregation do an additional inquiry, which soon dispelled all the shadows cast upon the holy Pope's virtues. And the cause was able to follow its course: on September 3, 1950, decree on the heroicity of the virtues; on February 11, 1951, the apostolic brief proclaiming Pius X blessed, while awaiting the canonization of 1954 (cf. Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1463; Father Fernesolle, *Pie X*, p. 508-511. Lethielleux, 1953).

[\(448\)](#) One need only remember the formula of Father Bremond in his discourse of reception into the Académie française, in 1923: «I have lived under four pontiffs: Pius IX, Leo XIII, Benedict XV, Pius XI». Saint Pius X? For our crypto-modernist, he had not existed. «This saint is not of my parish», Mauriac would soon say, during the canonization.

[\(449\)](#) Doc. pont., 1951, p. 230-241.

[\(450\)](#) June 5, 1948, Doc. pont., p. 220-222.

[\(451\)](#) Doc. pont., 1949, p. 102-103.

[\(452\)](#) Doc. pont., 1950, p. 394-442.

[\(453\)](#) Ibid., p. 300-330.

[\(454\)](#) Doc. pont., 1949, p. 55-62. Cf. the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites on this subject, which repeats the same extremely firm statements: «Very recently, our Most Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, to root out the execrable crime of atheism, to oppose a rampart and a remedy to deadly impiety, *in expiation for the sins and impiety of our epoch*, having permitted... etc.» Ibid., p. 63.

[\(455\)](#) Ibid., p. 67-72.

[\(456\)](#) Ibid., p. 84-85.

[\(457\)](#) Ibid., p. 233.

[\(458\)](#) Doc. pont., 1949, p. 249-250. For greater brevity, we have condensed into one the two parts of this document, composed of questions and answers.

[\(459\)](#) Doc. pont., 1949, p. 198-204, 526-542.

[\(460\)](#) Cf. the discourses of May 17 and September 20, 1950, and June 4, 1951 (Videira, *Pio XII e Fatima*, p. 10).

[\[461\]](#) Cf. Da Fonseca, *Nossa senhora da Fatima*, p. 172.

[\[462\]](#) J. J. Mowatt, *Russia e Fatima*, p. 32, Exercito Azul, 1956.

[\[463\]](#) *Nova et Vetera*, May-August, 1948, p. 186-188, reprinted in *La Vie Spirituelle*, 1948, p. 537-539. Cf. our Vol. I, p. 391, 502.

[\[464\]](#) In 1944-1945, Dhanis surely would not have published his skilful anti-Fatima articles without the consent of his provincial superior. It so happens that from 1938 to 1946, this Provincial was none other than Father Janssens, who was also Visitor to Belgium from 1943 to 1945. Another mark of visible protection by Father Janssens: in 1949, four Jesuits were proposed to Pius XII for the post of secretary general of the Central Commission for the Ecumenical Council in preparation. They were Fathers Bea, Boyer, Charles and Dhanis, who was still prefect of studies at the College of Louvain (Doc. cath., 1946, col. 1318-1319; 1967, col. 54). Finally, the icy silence of the Jesuit Superior General is in astonishing contrast with the enthusiastic attitude of Father Suarez, who was elected Master General of the Dominicans in 1946.

[\[465\]](#) Doc. cath., January 1, 1967, col. 61-62.

[\[466\]](#) "Fatima e a critica", *Broteria*, 1951, p. 506-507.

[\[467\]](#) This audience took place on January 19, 1950. Cf. *Apelo e resposta*, p. 93.

[\[468\]](#) *Fatima altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 191. This declaration of Pius XII was published on May 10, 1950, in the review *Bote von Fatima*, and in 1953 in *Revue du Rosaire*, published by the Dominicans.

[\[469\]](#) Castelbranco, p. 187. This enthusiasm highlights, by way of contrast, the extreme reserve of the higher authorities of the Society of Jesus. That being said, we do not forget the decisive role of the Portuguese Jesuits in the service of the apparitions and message of Fatima. We have seen the so important role played by Fathers Aparicio and Gonçalves with the seer, by Father Moran with Bishop da Silva (cf. *supra*, p. 84), by Father da Fonseca, at Rome at the side of Pius XII, who several times had recourse to his services, and also for the last fifteen years, by Father Antonio Maria Martins, whose numerous publications of unpublished documents have so happily renewed the history of Fatima.

[\[470\]](#) M. Dias Coelho, *Exercito Azul de Nossa Senhora de Fatima*, p. 15-16. Fatima, 1956.

[\[471\]](#) Cf. the encyclical *Anni sacri* of March 12 (Doc. pont., 1950, p. 79-86), the March 26 exhortation "To the people of Rome and the world" (p. 98-105), and the homily on Easter day (p. 108-111) where we find this solemn warning, which only makes explicit the motto of Saint Pius X, "to restore all things in Christ": «Let everybody realize (Pius XII declares) that there can be no serene tranquillity either for minds, or for peoples, or for nations, except on the condition that everything be established in the order born from the precepts of the Gospel, and which is confirmed and fortified by divine grace.»

[\[472\]](#) Ibid., p. 155-168.

[\[473\]](#) Ibid., p. 228-230.

[\[474\]](#) *Contre-Réforme catholique*, no. 25, October 1969, p. 5.

[\[475\]](#) Read the correction which Father Congar made in *L'Observateur politique, économique et littéraire* published in 1950, and compare it with the same man's declarations to Jean Puyo in 1975. In 1950, he wants people to believe that he is not even among the suspects. Twenty-five years later, he humbly places himself in the ranks of the martyrs who courageously underwent the atrocious persecution of Pius XII! (Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1309; and *Jean Puyo interroge le Père Congar*, chap. V, "Les années sombres" (sic), p. 98-123.)

[\[476\]](#) Doc. cath., November 5, 1950, col. 1463.

[\[477\]](#) Doc. pont., 1950, p. 394-442.

[\[478\]](#) Ibid., p. 455-456; cf. on the same subject the Letter of February 11, 1950, p. 34-36.

[\[479\]](#) Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1503-1508.

[\[480\]](#) On May 17; cf. Videira, *Pio XII e Fatima*, p. 48; Sept. 20, *ibid.*; Oct. 2.

[\[481\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 631.

[\[482\]](#) Ibid., p. 727.

[\[483\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 142.

[\[484\]](#) Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1493-1496.

[\[485\]](#) Castelbranco, p. 195.

[\[486\]](#) Father da Fonseca states that it is a note handwritten by the Pope for Cardinal Tedeschini (*Nossa Senhora de Fatima*, p. 311, third ed.)

[\[487\]](#) The next day, Pius XII confided this unusual vision to one of his longstanding friends, Msgr. Tedeschini: «During the days of the definition of the Assumption... on the occasion of a meeting, the Holy Father, visibly moved, deigned to confide the following to me: "Yesterday, I saw a prodigy which profoundly impressed me." And he described how he had seen the sun, under what form, with what prodigies, in what apocalyptic convulsion, which we know took place before 70,000 persons at Fatima.» *Attualita di Fatima*, Roma 1954, p. 76-79, article: "Il papa dell'Assunzione e Fatima", by Cardinal Tedeschini.

[\[488\]](#) The solemnities of the morning and the festive atmosphere reigning that day undoubtedly misled the Sister. October 31 was a Tuesday.

[489] Sister M. Pascalina Lehnert, *Ich durfte ihm dienen*, p. 154-155. Naumann, 1982, Wurzburg.

[490] Ibid., p. 155.

[491] Ibid., p. 157.

[492] Sister Pascalina, *ibid.*, p. 154.

[493] Text quoted by Cardinal Tedeschini, *ibid.* Reprinted by Barthas, *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 160-162. G. Renault, *Fatima*, p. 206-207, quotes the original Italian text.

[494] *Ich durfte ihm dienen*, p. 155.

[495] Quoted by De Marchi, p. 355.

[496] Sister Pascalina, p. 183.

[497] Cf. *Pie IX*, by Pierre Fernessolle, Vol. I, p. 264-269. Lethielleux, 1960.

[498] September 8, 1953. Doc. pont., 1953, p. 372.

[499] Cf. *infra*, p. 317-318.

[500] Cf. *supra*, p. 279.

[501] No doubt Pius XII was conscious of having already done a lot for Fatima, and how true this was! But surely he also knew that something still had to be done. And even at Rome, Father da Fonseca, whom he had already consulted on this subject several times, was in a position to furnish him with all the precisions necessary.

[502] Doc. pont., 1950, p. 566, 604.

[503] Quoted by Caprile, article cited, D.C. 1967, col. 61-62.

[504] *Ibid.*, col. 62.

[505] Although Father Caprile does not name him, an anecdote reported by Mother Pascalina permits us to state that the Secretary for Extraordinary Affairs was informed of the work and undoubtedly participated: «I recall very well how the Holy Father told Msgr. Tardini, before leaving him after the evening audience: “And now, Monsignor, twenty years of utterly intensive preparation are needed to be able to begin! And by that time I won’t be alive any longer, and perhaps neither will you.” Monsignor laughed heartily and left the Holy Father. I had heard these last words because Pius XII had raised his voice, and I had to see the Monsignor out of the room. And I asked, filled with astonishment: “Excellency, for what business is a twenty-year preparation needed?” He answered: “The Holy Father was speaking about a future Council he is preparing, and he thinks that to really do it well, a lot

of work, intense work, is needed. You know how Pius XII wants everything to be utterly perfect.”» Mother Pascalina does not indicate the date of this remark of Pius XII; no doubt it dates from the beginning of the preparatory work, in 1948 or 1949. (Sister M. Pascalina Lehnert, *Ich durfte ihm dienen*, p. 143. Naumann, 1982, Wurzburg)

[\(506\)](#) Ibid., col. 63.

[\(507\)](#) Ibid., col. 63.

[\(508\)](#) Ibid., col. 64.

[\(509\)](#) Ibid., col. 64.

[\(510\)](#) Ibid., col. 65.

[\(511\)](#) Ibid., col. 66.

[\(512\)](#) Must it be recalled that at the opening of Vatican Council I, on December 8, 1869, Pius IX was over 77 years old? As for John XXIII, he was over 81 years old when he opened Vatican Council II!

[\(513\)](#) Sister Pascalina, p. 152.

[\(514\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 546-551.

[\(515\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 344; 546-551.

[\(516\)](#) Cf. an allusion to this solemn ceremony in the allocution to the consistory of December 11, 1950 (Doc. pont., 1950, p. 607).

[\(517\)](#) *Pie XII et la Russie*, p. 31. This pamphlet gives the text of the apostolic letter *Sacro vergente anno* to the peoples of Russia, with comments by Miss Posnoff who today directs the “*Foyer Oriental Chrétien*” of Brussels (206, av. de la Couronne, 1050 Brussels).

[\(518\)](#) *Lettre du Foyer Oriental Chrétien*, October 1978, p. 3-4. In a letter of February 23, 1984, Miss Posnoff told me: «We had decided to send the text of the petition to all the Russian Catholic centres of the world, asking them to confirm their agreement and to send it to the Russicum.»

[\(519\)](#) Doc. pont., 1950, p. 615-630, and the Apostolic Constitution *Per annum sacrum* of December 25, p. 631-641.

[\(520\)](#) Cf. *Fatima, altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 314.

[\(521\)](#) May 1951, p. 505-542.

[\(522\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 264-267.

[\[523\]](#) Cf. Barthas, *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 268.

[\[524\]](#) Doc. pont., 1951, p. 375-382.

[\[525\]](#) Quoted by Barthas, FDM, p. 117-118.

[\[526\]](#) *Fatima 1917-1968*, p. 369.

[\[527\]](#) Bishop Meletieff, the former schismatic Bishop of Arkhangel'sk, who returned to the Catholic fold, was imprisoned for several years. It was only after long sufferings – a veritable martyrdom – that he was able to obtain his freedom. (cf. *Fatima, altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 486).

[\[528\]](#) The feast is «Our Lady of Ivron, one of the fondest invocations of Our Lady for the Russian people. Her principal sanctuary was near Moscow. It was an ornate chapel which was destroyed by the Bolshevik fury» (ibid., p. 486).

[\[529\]](#) And the Cardinal described the prodigy according to the account Pius XII had given to him.

[\[530\]](#) Quoted by the Portuguese review *Lumen*, November-December 1951, p. 689-609. This declaration was reprinted by *L'Osservatore Romano* of November 18, 1951.

[\[531\]](#) De Marchi, p. 332-334.

[\[532\]](#) Let us, however, stress the scandalous silence of the French press. *La Documentation catholique* does not even quote the Pope's radio message, and devotes only twelve insignificant lines to the international congress of Lisbon and Cardinal Tedeschini's homily reporting the vision of the solar miracle by the Pope (col. 1597, 1600).

Let us point out that several biographers of Pius XII, taking no account of Cardinal Tedeschini's declarations, present the most fantastic accounts of these visions of 1950 (cf. Louis Chaigne, *Portrait et vie de Pie XII*, p. 204-205; and even Msgr. Roche, *Pie XII devant l'histoire*, p. 280, 437-438).

[\[533\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, "The Salvation of Portugal, a Miracle and an Exemplar", p. 303-437.

[\[534\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 138-140. Here are some examples of these falsifications, which are more and more lamentable as the years pass: in 1947, in *Francisco o pastorinho de Fatima*, Father Rolim quite simply suppresses in the text of the Secret, the formulation of the requests: «To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the communion of reparation on the five first Saturdays of the month.» (p. 55-56).

Cardinal Cerejeira himself, in his magnificent homily of May 30, 1948 at Madrid, states that «the Queen of Peace came to Fatima to ask for *the consecration of the world* to Her Immaculate Heart as a pledge of peace» (FER, p. 109).

In 1951, Msgr. McGrath, in his *Fatima or World Suicide* quotes the watered-down text of the Secret: «To prevent this, I shall come to ask for *the consecration of the world* to My Immaculate Heart, and the communion of reparation on the first Saturdays of the month... In *Fatima* by Icilio Felici, the same erroneous formula appears.

Even more serious is that Canon Barthas, in 1952, in *Fatima, merveille du XXe siècle*, also uses the watered-down version (p. 77-78). In 1954, Benjamin Lejonne, in *Le soleil a dansé à Fatima*, copies Barthas (p. 76). Even more inexcusably, in 1980 (!) Father Paul, in *Un signe du Ciel pour notre temps, la Vierge à Fatima*, still quotes this false version (p. 71).

[\(535\)](#) *Merv. XXe siècle*, p. 346-347.

[\(536\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 348.

[\(537\)](#) Cf. on this subject the article by Jean d'Hospital in *Le Monde* of October 23, 1951. The author falsely states (but following so many Fatima historians!) that the Blessed Virgin had promised the conversion of Russia if the world was consecrated to Her Immaculate Heart. Now «Pius XII proceeded to this consecration in 1942». And the journalist of *Le Monde* waxes ironic: «Beautiful occasion, isn't it, to uncork the sarcasm. Which hasn't been lacking, for since 1942 nothing really indicates...»

[\(538\)](#) In his recent work, John Haffert reports a fact which tells us a great deal about the subject. He recalls his first visit to Sister Lucy, on August 12, 1946:

«The bishop of Fatima had earlier told me that Lucia had recently received further apparitions from Our Lady, so I began to ask her about these visions and the messages conveyed to her. *She said tersely: "I am not permitted to speak of anything which has happened since 1917."*» *Dear Bishop!* p.36. AMI Press, 1981.

[\(539\)](#) Quoted by A. M. Martins, FCM, p. 111.

[\(540\)](#) Letter to the author, February 23, 1984.

[\(541\)](#) Translated from the Russian through our efforts.

[\(542\)](#) While receiving recently the translation of the Russian text, unknown up till then, not without emotion I discovered the expression of this same thought which I had set out in the introduction to the second part of this work (cf. *supra*, p. 63-65). I said that this twofold progress of anti-religious Bolshevism and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, proceeding in an astonishing parallel, was for Pope Pius XII the most pressing invitation to accomplish the consecration of Russia requested by Our Lady of Fatima. Well, it happens that the Russian Catholics, at the very moment of the event, had made the same analysis and gave it a prominent place in their request addressed to the Holy Father.

[\(543\)](#) *Il pellegrinaggio delle meraviglie*, p. 440. Rome 1960. This same work, published under the auspices of the Italian bishops, states that this message was communicated to

Pius XII in June. Let us add that Canon Barthas mentioned this apparition in his communication to the Mariological Congress of Lisbon-Fatima in 1967 (*De Primordiis cultus mariani, Acta congressus mariologici-mariani in Lusitania anno 1967 celebrati*, p. 517. Rome, 1970).

[\[544\]](#) NRT, p. 580-606.

[\[545\]](#) P. 11-40; 81-89.

[\[546\]](#) P. 595.

[\[547\]](#) Akathystos of the feast of the Patronage of the Most Holy Mother of God.

[\[548\]](#) Preface of Christ the King.

[\[549\]](#) Doc. pont., 1952, p. 292-300.

[\[550\]](#) *Marie sous le symbole du Coeur*, p. 56. Téqui, 1973

[\[551\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 631.

[\[552\]](#) *L'Osservatore Romano* published the text on July 24, and *La Documentation catholique* on August 24, a month and a half after the event, without any commentary (no. 1128, col. 1025-1032). A highly significant fact is that the entire following issue of *La Documentation catholique* was devoted to the theme "Communism and religion. The doctrine, the methods, the facts" (no. 1129, col. 1090-1206). In this long article, which is moreover solidly informed, only a single mention of *Sacro vergente anno* is found, in three lines, to say that the Pope recalled the condemnation of communism there. What about the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? It is passed over in silence. As for its relation with Fatima, except for the Russian Catholics who had addressed their petition to the Holy Father to correspond to its message, nobody could have guessed it! *L'ami du clergé* itself did not publish the text until October 23, and without any comments! (p. 653-656).

[\[553\]](#) Father Schweigl, of whom we will speak again because he was perfectly well informed about everything having to do with the consecration of Russia, stresses that the great Secret «seems to suppose a victorious, triumphant, but difficult and heroic decision» of the Holy Father. He continues, «In fact on July 7, 1952, the Holy Father consecrated the peoples of Russia in a special way to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, *although many circles were against the opportuneness of such a consecration.*» (*Fatima e la conversione della Russia*, p. 15. Pontificio Collegio Russico, 1956).

[\[554\]](#) Quoted by Alonso, MSC, p. 56. Cf. FAE, p. 120.

[\[555\]](#) *Immaculatum Cor Mariae et Russia*, Romae 1963, Pro Patribus Concilii tantum (a four page typed text).

[\[556\]](#) Indeed we read in the Russicum's diary: «*P. Schweigl parte per Lisboa-Fatima 17 agosto 1952; ritorna 13 settembre.*»

[\[557\]](#) *Historia da Literatura sobre Fatima*, p. 60.

[\[558\]](#) *Fatima e la conversione della Russia*, p. 3. Pontificio Collegio Russico, 31 pages.

[\[559\]](#) «Father Wetter told me that Father Schweigl went to Portugal “of his own accord”», Father Caillon reports.

[\[560\]](#) If, in his studies published after 1952, he shows himself very discreet on the necessary participation of all the bishops of the world in the solemn act of consecration of Russia, it is because he was bound by the absolute secret required of him by the Pope and by the Holy Office on the reasons for his mission to Portugal.

[\[561\]](#) *Dans l'ombre et dans la lumière de Pie XII*, p. 209. Flammarion, 1960.

[\[562\]](#) Apparition of June 13, 1917; cf. our Vol. I, p. 159, 162-165, 167.

[\[563\]](#) Dr. Ottavio Musumeci, theological canon of the cathedral of Syracuse. *A Syracuse, la Madone a pleuré*, p. 30. Salvator, 1956, 210 pages. From this highly documented work, with a preface by the Archbishop of Syracuse, we borrow all the elements of our account. The articles in *Revue du Rosaire* may also be consulted: October-November 1970, p. 290-305; January 1971, p. 2-24; March 1974, p. 92-94; October-November 1974, p. 315-316.

[\[564\]](#) Op. cit., p. 64-65.

[\[565\]](#) Ibid., p. 72.

[\[566\]](#) P. 95-99.

[\[567\]](#) P. 86-90.

[\[568\]](#) P. 101-104.

[\[569\]](#) P. 148.

[\[570\]](#) P. 186-187.

[\[571\]](#) P. 146.

[\[572\]](#) P. 195-196.

[\[573\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 247.

[\[574\]](#) July 30, col. 1023.

[\[575\]](#) It is quoted by Jean Madiran in *Itinéraires*, November 1980, p. 152-153.

[\[576\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 263.

[\[577\]](#) Op. cit., p 154.

[\[578\]](#) «Counsels were not lacking to them (wrote the holy Pope), *admonitions* came after the counsels; but we had pain in seeing *advice and reproaches bounce off their elusive souls* and remain without results.» (no. 5) «Thus they go, against the grain of Catholic doctrine, towards a condemned ideal.» (no. 9) «The dream of the Sillon... builds its city on a theory contrary to Catholic truth.» (nos. 19-20). «The breath of the Revolution has passed through there, and we can conclude that if the social doctrines of the Sillon are erroneous, its spirit is dangerous and its education deadly.» (no. 29). «Yes, alas, the equivocations are shattered; the social action of the Sillon is no longer Catholic... Yes, truly it can be said that the Sillon conveys socialism, its eye fixed on a chimera.» (no. 38). What became of the Catholicism of the Sillon? Alas, «this limpid and impetuous current has been taken over in its path by the modern enemies of the Church, and henceforth forms only a miserable current of the great movement of apostasy organized in all countries for the establishment of a universal church with neither dogmas, nor hierarchy, nor a rule for the mind, nor a bridle for the passions...» (no. 40).

The integral text of this masterly document has to be read to grasp the scandalous character of Nuncio Roncalli's letter (cf. *La Contre-Réforme Catholique au XXe siècle*, no. 47, August 1971).

[\[579\]](#) Read the incredible eulogy pronounced on May 30 by Edouard Herriot, a radical-socialist known for his equal sympathy for the masters of the Kremlin, whose best propaganda agent he was in France (cf. our Vol. II, p. 566-567; cf. equally Reine Josy, "Edouard Herriot en Ukraine" in *Échanges*, a Franco-Ukrainian review, Spécial Génocide 1933, December 1983, p. 95-109) and for the Christian Democrats who had rallied to the ideal of the Revolution. Marc Sangnier, like Lammenais, Herriot explained to the tribune of the National Assembly, embodied the true Gospel in the purest line of primitive Christianity! (Doc. cath., 1950, col. 1263-1264).

[\[580\]](#) Each volume of *Documents pontificaux* includes a "table of quotations from acts of the Holy See". It is easy to observe that the "Letter on the Sillon" is never mentioned there.

[\[581\]](#) Jean Guilton, *Dialogues avec Paul VI*, p. 25, Fayard, 1967.

[\[582\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[\[583\]](#) Enamoured of French culture – and not always the best! – in theology, in philosophy, as in politics, his preferred teachers are Frenchmen: they are Maritain and Journet, Bremond and Blondel, Guilton and de Lubac, finally Congar... all of the most suspect orthodoxy.

[\[584\]](#) CRC 97, October 1975, p. 11 and Marian retreat of June 1981, "Tout sur Fatima".

[\[585\]](#) Jean Guitton, *Dialogues avec Paul VI*, p. 20.

[\[586\]](#) Here are the first words of the first chapter. They give the tone: «In my eyes, what spoils several books written about the Blessed Virgin is that they go beyond all measure. Truly, *for the taste of a modern man, it is a subject spoiled by hyperbole.*» (*La Vierge Marie*, p. 7. Aubier, coll. "Les Religions", 1949).

As for the author, who has resolved not to upset modern taste – meaning in this case the suspicions of the Protestants – he shows himself to be skilfully minimalistic and subtly involved on the slippery slope of modernism. To show that, it suffices to read the passage devoted to the Annunciation: «How, *in fact*, did things take place *in the Virgin's soul?*... Was it perhaps a *completely interior* ecstasy, and these words were pronounced without *any vision* accompanying them? Do we perhaps have here, condensed in *a symbolic instant*, what was, as for Joan of Arc, *a long secret history?*» (Ibid., p. 38-39).

Another test – the Nativity of Our Lord: «*The Gospel gathers together* around this child everything that is best, *sicut in coelo et in terra*. In Heaven, the angels announce peace "to men with whom God is pleased". On the earth, the conspiracy of the *people* and the *elite*, which has always saved the Spirit (sic), (because the intermediaries are in compromise): The shepherds and the wise kings and magi. These precursors are *figures* of the history of the Gospel preaching: as long as there shall be before the Child *a flock of simple souls* and *some princes of the mind* (such as Jean Guitton of the French Academy!) the essential will be safe.» (p. 53). And that is all about the events of the Nativity!

The few pages devoted «to the mariophanies of the contemporary period» must also be read. They subtly tend to weaken their objectivity, and reduce their importance for the Church. Lourdes and la Salette are evoked, but Fatima is not named!

[\[587\]](#) Jean Guitton, *Paul VI secret*, p. 21.

[\[588\]](#) Ibid., p. 160, cf. p. 47-48. DDB, 1979.

[\[589\]](#) "Dossier de la Documentation catholique", Marc Sangnier, col. 1259-1273.

[\[590\]](#) *Vu et entendu au Concile*, p. 47-48, Rocher, 1965.

[\[591\]](#) Ibid.

[\[592\]](#) *La Contre-Réforme catholique*, no. 97, October 1975, p. 11.

[\[593\]](#) Doc. cath., November 15, 1959, col. 1493.

[\[594\]](#) *Civilta cattolica*, August 6-20, 1966; Doc. cath., January 1, 1967, col. 49-68.

[\[595\]](#) Doc. cath., 1951, col. 327.

[596] Doc. cath., July 2, 1950, col. 929-933. What comrade Joliot-Curie does not say is that, like the Rosenbergs in the USA, he had himself delivered much more than a parcel of French science, so that the Soviet Union would be able to wage war on the rest of the world! (cf. J. Bourcart, *L'espionnage soviétique*, p. 192-193. Fayard, 1962).

[597] Doc. cath., July 30, 1950, cf. 991-1000. "*L'Appel de Stockholm. L'équivoque dénoncée*".

[598] Doc. cath., October 8, 1950, col. 1317-1339.

[599] Doc. cath., November 5, 1950, col. 1442-1444. Cf. Doc. cath., December 17, 1950, col. 1621-1622.

[600] Doc. cath., 1951, col. 327-329.

[601] No. 57. For the context, cf. our Vol. II, p. 646.

[602] Cf. *supra*, p. 271-272.

[603] Doc. cath., March 25, 1951, col. 327-330.

[604] Doc. pont., 1951, p. 209.

[605] "G. B. Montini, substitute secretary of State (in tandem with Domenico Tardini)", p. 78. In *Paul VI et la modernité dans l'Église*, acts of the colloquium organized by the École française of Rome, 876 pages, Rome, 1984.

[606] Pius XII went so far as to refuse the president of the Council an audience he had requested, and threatened to encourage the foundation of a new Catholic party rivalling the Christian Democrats.

[607] In 1944, while a horribly bloody purge was raging in Italy, just as in France, against Mussolini's former supporters, the young leaders of Christian Democracy were preparing their upcoming seizure of power with Msgr. Montini. Father Graham reveals to us that «Msgr. Montini had presided then at the Vatican (!) over a study meeting of the future political and democratic structure of Italy» (Ibid., p. 76). This was at the end of 1944, which furnishes us with one more indication to support the hypothesis that Msgr. Montini – then improvising in the role of political theorist – was no stranger to the radio message on democracy pronounced by Pius XII for Christmas 1944.

[608] On the "civic committees" of Luigi Gedda, cf. Th. Godechot, *Le Parti démocrate chrétien italien*, p. 157-163. Paris, 1964.

[609] *La Contre-Réforme catholique*, no. 97, October 1975, p. 11.

[610] Étienne Fouilloux, "G.B. Montini face aux débats ecclésiastiques de son temps (1944-1954)", p. 95, 97, in *Paul VI et la modernité dans l'Église*, 1984. The work had appeared at

the end of 1950, published by Cerf. A few months later, our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, who had perceived all the poison contained in this work at the outset, had made a point of drawing it to the attention of the Holy Office, to Cardinal Ottaviani:

«In June 1951 (he relates), my First pilgrimage for the beatification of Pius X was that of a young priest full of devotion for Rome, for the beatified Pope whose reliquary was exposed at Saint Peter's, and for Pope Pius XII, who beatified him. My immense admiration for the City dates from these first days, and only grew greater. But another circumstance of this pilgrimage is memorable. I had just been dismissed by the religious order where I was teaching theology for several disagreements, on Luther whom they wanted to rehabilitate, on Sangnier, whose death had been the occasion for a greater eulogy which I could not admit, and on Congar.

«Just then I came to Rome to point out the extreme danger represented by the argument of his last book, *True and False Reform in the Church...* The Reform he advocates can become the pretext and the means of a total, universal subversion of the Church, such as we now see at work in France.

«I was well received and listened to. Still I found the Romans too disdainful of our French quarrels. and too sure of their own solidity, as well as their authority over the rest of the universe. The future appeared to me more disturbing than they feared...» (*La Contre-Réforme catholique*, no. 67, April 1973, p. 1). As often happened in the reign of Pius XII, the sanction taken was only a half-measure: the work was neither condemned nor put on the Index. Rome only forbade new editions or translations (cf. *Jean Puyo interroge le P. Congar*, p. 106-107, Le Centurion, 1975).

[\[611\]](#) “*Le Pape pour la première fois ouvre les portes du Vatican à un journal: Paris-Match*”, reporting by Jean Farran and Willy Rizzo, assisted by Pierre Gendron, “a specialist in religious questions”.

[\[612\]](#) Ibid., p. 15.

[\[613\]](#) Doc. pont., 1953, p. 40. Msgr. Tardini and Msgr. Montini had both been named Pro-Secretaries of State on November 29, 1952.

[\[614\]](#) CRC no. 97, p. 12.

[\[615\]](#) *Trois papes au tournant de l'histoire*, p. 178. Librairie académique Perrin, 1969.

[\[616\]](#) “G. B. Montini, substitute secretary of State (in tandem with Domenico Tardini)”, p. 70. In *Paul VI et modernité dans l'Église*, Rome, 1984.

[\[617\]](#) *Pie XII*, p. 63-64, 137-138.

[\[618\]](#) Ibid., p. 60. During the same consistory, Archbishop Roncalli named a Cardinal, was removed from Paris. The Pope desired to send somebody more firm there to try to get a hold of the Church in France, by settling the affair of the worker priests, to begin with.

[\[619\]](#) CRC 97, October 1975, p. 12.

[\[620\]](#) “*La vie secrète du Vatican, une grande enquête de Jean Neuvecelle*”.

[\[621\]](#) Article cited, p. 79.

[\[622\]](#) Cf. E. Poulat, *Une Église ébranlée*, chap. V, “Rome et les prêtres-ouvriers”, p. 119-130. Cf. equally Canon Ledré, *Un siècle sous la tiare*, “Les prêtres-ouvriers”, p. 262-274.

[\[623\]](#) *Giovanni Battista Montini face aux débats ecclésiiaux de son temps (1944-1954)*, p. 97.

[\[624\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 317-318.

[\[625\]](#) Let us point out that *L’Osservatore Romano* again published Cardinal Tedeschini’s declarations in its weekly edition of November 23, 1951.

[\[626\]](#) Quoted by S. Martins dos Reis, *Na orbita de Fatima, rectificações e achegas*, p. 95.

[\[627\]](#) P. 629-630.

[\[628\]](#) Quoted by S. Martins dos Reis, *Na orbita de Fatima*, p 97 .

[\[629\]](#) Again in 1977, Gérard de Sède found in this affair, whose different episodes he gladly recalls, a convenient alibi for his disarray when confronted with the countless authentic testimonies of the true and unquestionable miracle of the dance of the sun (*Fatima, enquête sur une imposture*, p. 207-211; 267-270. Cf. our Vol. I, p. 473-477).

[\[630\]](#) In 1956, Father Payrière, in *Fatima, le signe du Ciel*, made this sad observation: «It must be recognized, to be truthful, that Cardinal Tedeschini’s declarations did not produce, due to scepticism and rationalist criticism, that strengthening and those graces of support for the apostolate which the Vatican organ foresaw.» (p. 58).

[\[631\]](#) Doc. pont., 1953, p. 598.

[\[632\]](#) Doc. pont., 1953, p. 624-632.

[\[633\]](#) On November 1, 1959, Cardinal Ruffini, Archbishop of Palermo, gave the following extremely important testimony: «The conviction that a council would be greatly useful grew in me when, during the summer of 1950, I was received in audience at Castelgandolfo and speaking freely from the heart I said to the Pope: “*Beatissimo Padre*, I would like to present you with my warm felicitations...” He interrupted me, “No doubt for the encyclical *Humani Generis*?” I answered timidly, “Yes, *Santo Padre*, I too wanted to congratulate you

for this celebrated document.” “It was quite necessary”, Pius XII answered in a resolute tone, otherwise “*non si salvava piu niente*, everything was lost!” This phrase penetrated me like a knife. I was aware of many errors, theories more or less subversive in the domain of faith and morals. I would never have come to expressing such a disconcerting judgment. I have to admit that the evil is much graver than I thought.» (Quoted by A. Wenger, *Vatican II, Première Session*, p. 25-26. Centurion, 1963).

Vilalta Berbel reports another statement of Pius XII in 1953: «*The day when the Sacred Congregation that watches over the Faith relaxes its hand, on that day the hour will sound for the assault against the fortress of the Church, perpetrated by enemy elements encrusted within her very bosom.*» (*Los Secretos de Fatima*, p. 80-81).

[\[634\]](#) “Ainda algumas confisões e erros sobre Fatima”, *Broteria*, February 1953, p. 170-191.

[\[635\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 298.

[\[636\]](#) “Sguardo su Fatima e bilancio di una discussione”, May 16, p. 392-406.

[\[637\]](#) The liturgy of February 11 obviously presupposes that the Church affirms *the reality of the fact of the apparition of the Most Holy Virgin at Lourdes*. The oration for the day includes the expression, «*ut eiusdem Virginis Apparitionem celebrantes...*», which cannot be interpreted otherwise. Similarly the antiphon at the Magnificat: «Today, the glorious Queen of Heaven *appeared on the earth (in terris apparuit)*.» Finally, the readings at Matins present the detailed account of the apparitions.

[\[638\]](#) The great Marian apparitions of the nineteenth and twentieth century – which constitute a radically new fact in the Church’s history – in effect pose important questions for theologians, with greater urgency:

1. With what degree of certainty can the Church pronounce on their reality?
2. What type of adherence must the faithful give to them?
3. As for the Pope and the bishops, to what extent are they able and obliged to accomplish the requests addressed to them in this way by Our Lord or the Blessed Virgin?

Several interesting studies have appeared on this subject: René Laurentin, “Fonction et statut des apparitions” in *Vraies et fausses apparitions dans l’Église*, p. 153-205. Lethielleux, 1976. See also the various communications during the Mariological Congress of Lourdes in 1958: *Maria et Ecclesia*, Vol. XII: *Apparitiones marianae earumque momentum in ecclesia*, Rome, 1962, 377 pages. We will take up the question in depth in Vol. IV.

[\[639\]](#) Among others, a passage of the encyclical *Haurietis aquas*, on which we shall return.

[\[640\]](#) P. 90-92.

[\[641\]](#) One could say that Father Dhanis insists with obvious satisfaction on this point, as if to suggest to informed readers that he was not a stranger to this surprising omission.

[\[642\]](#) Op. cit. p. 91.

[\[643\]](#) Op. cit. p. 134.

[\[644\]](#) Op. cit. p. 372.

[\[645\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 419.

[\[646\]](#) Ibid., p. 541.

[\[647\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, *Ad Coeli Reginam*, p. 432-433.

[\[648\]](#) We will return, with all the desired details, to this sad episode of Pius XII's pontificate (cf. *infra*, appendix IV).

[\[649\]](#) Galeazzi-Lisi, *Dans l'ombre et dans la lumière de Pie XII*, p. 224, 234.

[\[650\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 440-441.

[\[651\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 444-445.

[\[652\]](#) On May 8, 1954, Cardinal Ruffini, Archbishop of Palermo, and almost all the Sicilian bishops had come to venerate the miraculous Image, and the following day, on the square of Victory, the Cardinal had laid the cornerstone of the future sanctuary. On August 29, for the first anniversary of the prodigy, the humble house where the apparitions took place had been transformed into an oratory, and on September 1, the city of Syracuse was consecrated to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

[\[653\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 456-457.

[\[654\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 456.

[\[655\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 465-466. Cf. already an almost analogous formula in the encyclical *Ad Coeli Reginam*, *ibid.*, p. 431-432.

[\[656\]](#) *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 1962, p. 330. Cf. *La question mariale*, p. 18 and 119.

[\[657\]](#) The encyclical *Ad Coeli Reginam* indicated no new date for the feast of Mary Mediatrix, making no allusion to it. To be sure, it was not formally suppressed, but the new solemnity tended to cause its disappearance.

[\[658\]](#) Is it necessary to recall that in 1962, during the preparation for Vatican II, Cardinals Bea and Montini – the former confessor and former Pro-Secretary of State for

Pius XII! – were the two most furious adversaries of the definition of the dogma of Mary Mediatrix, so ardently desired by a good number of Fathers? Msgr. Montini declared at the time, «The proposition of a new title, especially that of Mediatrix, to be granted to Mary Most Holy *seems to me inopportune and even harmful (damnosa).*»

He goes on to repeat the Protestant bromide, a hundred times refuted: «The term Mediator must be attributed uniquely and exclusively only to Christ, according to what the Apostle says: “*Unus est Mediator*”. And he continues with a patent untruth: «The extension of this title *does not seem to favour true piety*... It is better to speak of the spiritual motherhood of Mary Most Holy, of Her Queenship, and Her most benign intercession, *but not Her mediation (non vero de mediatione).*» Discussion of June 20, 1962. *Acta et documenta concilio oecumenico Vaticano II apparando*, Series II, *Praeparatoria*, vol. II, part IV, p. 777-778. Romae, Vatican Polyglot Press, 1968. It is to be noted that in 1969, Msgr. Montini, after becoming Pope, definitively suppressed from the Roman Missal the feast of Mary Mediatrix, which still figured there in the formularies “for certain places”.

[\(659\)](#) Letter to Cardinal Micara, Vicar of Rome, on the occasion of the closing of the Marian Year (November 28, 1954). Doc. pont., 1954, p. 508-512.

[\(660\)](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 534-548.

[\(661\)](#) The rescript granting this favour had been renewed several times: on July 9, 1932, on January 3, 1938, and on March 23, 1943.

[\(662\)](#) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1955, p. 668.

[\(663\)](#) Let us point out that on September 24, 1951, in the official letter naming Cardinal Tedeschini pontifical legate for the closing of the Holy Year at Fatima, the Pope had still used the restrictive formula, so often employed in Roman documents when it concerns revelations or miracles: «As according to custom a great multitude of the Faithful will come to venerate the image of Our Lady of Fatima on October 13, the anniversary of the day when – *as it is reported (uti fertur)* – the Blessed Virgin Mary made Her final apparition.» (Quoted in Fatima, *Altar do mundo*, Vol. II, p. 315). In his article in *Civiltà cattolica* of May 1953, Father Dhanis did not fail to give heavy stress to this Roman reserve.

[\(664\)](#) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1955, p. 210-211.

[\(665\)](#) Msgr. Luciano Guerra, present rector of Fatima writes: «In the sanctuary archives there exist copies, in Latin, of the request made to the Holy Father by all the bishops of Portugal, and presented by Their Excellencies Cardinals Cerejeira and de Gouveia (Archbishop of Lourenço Marques in Mozambique), by the bishops of Braga and Evora, and by the Bishop of Leiria. It is an unsigned copy of the proposition of the text, having as the title: *Die 13 maii in Apparitione Beatae Mariae Virginis de Sacratissimo Rosario. Duplex II classis*. This copy presents handwritten corrections, observations in the margin and an introduction, which allows us to suppose that it does not come from the original sent to

Rome, but is rather a preliminary study, although a developed one.» (Msgr. Luciano Guerra, “Fatima e o Romano Pontificate”, p. 85: cf. p. 44, 46, 51 and 94, in *Apelo e resposta*, 1983).

[\(666\)](#) Msgr. Luciano Guerra, p. 51.

[\(667\)](#) In the next chapter we will furnish the proof of this constant and decisive influence of Father Dhanis.

[\(668\)](#) «We all consider ourselves at home in the place where the Virgin appeared, in the place where the Mother of God spoke... When She appeared, Her Virginal Hands were intertwined with the Rosary... Now the Most Holy Virgin, by showing Herself here with the Rosary, indicated to us that such is the weapon with which She, who has overcome all heresies, wants to lead us to implore the Lord for deliverance from the horrible evils tormenting the world.» (Quoted by Msgr. Luciano Guerra, *Apelo e resposta*, p. 76).

[\(669\)](#) G. Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 44. Cf. *Novidades* of May 18, 1955.

[\(670\)](#) Allocution of Cardinal Ottaviani: “Concerning the Secret of Fatima”, February 11, 1967 (Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 542).

[\(671\)](#) Quoted by Doc. cath., March 25, 1951, col. 353-356. It is reprinted in the collections of Cardinal Ottaviani’s writings, *L’Église et la Cité*, p. 165-172, Rome, 1963.

[\(672\)](#) *Dear Bishop!* AMI Press, 1981, p. 44.

[\(673\)](#) Doc. cath., August 7, 1960, col. 982.

[\(674\)](#) On the mystical doctrine of this text, cf. Abbé Georges de Nantes, *Lettres à mes amis*, Vol. IV, no. 229.

[\(675\)](#) Doc. pont., 1956, p. 307-308.

[\(676\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 247.

[\(677\)](#) Doc. pont., 1956, p. 296-297.

[\(678\)](#) *Oeuvres complètes*, Vol. I, p. 63-64; Vol. II, p. 278-288; Vol. VI, p. 13-14. Beauchesne, 1906. R. P. Georges, Saint Jean Eudes, p. 247. Lethielleux, 1936.

[\(679\)](#) *Oeuvres complètes*, Vol. II, p. 354, 364.

[\(680\)](#) Cf. *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, articles Croiset and Gallifet.

[\(681\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 533-534.

[\(682\)](#) Emile Poulat, *Une Église ébranlée*, p. 136.

[\(683\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[\(684\)](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 143-146.

[\(685\)](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 172-179.

[\(686\)](#) Ibid., p. 180-186.

[\(687\)](#) *Le dernier étage du Vatican, témoignage de Pie XI à Paul VI*, p. 65-66. Albatros, 1977.

[\(688\)](#) Msgr. Pierre Veillot, *Notre Sacerdoce*, p. III-XVII. Fleurus, September 1954.

[\(689\)](#) Doc. cath., 1957, col. 87-96.

[\(690\)](#) Quoted by Jacques Ploncard d'Assac, *Salazar*, p. 228.

[\(691\)](#) *Mensagem de Fatima*, November-December 1977, p. 6.

[\(692\)](#) Barthas, FDM, p. 86.

[\(693\)](#) On the betrayal by Rome (in 1955!) cf. F. Méjan, *Le Vatican contre la France d'Outre-mer?* p. 78-84, Fischbacher, 1957.

[\(694\)](#) Let us however point out that the date of May 13, 1955 given by certain writers as the day Moscow agreed on the retreat of its troops, is perhaps not rigorously exact. The accords between Austria and the USA, Great Britain and France were signed on May 10. As for the "treaty of state" between Austria and the USSR, it was signed at Vienna on May 15. On May 13, 1956, the victory of the Catholics at the elections completed the removal of the socialo-communist menace.

[\(695\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 245-251.

[\(696\)](#) Alonso, FER, p. 106.

[\(697\)](#) Doc. cath., 1952, col. 778-779.

[\(698\)](#) Doc. pont., 1953, p. 347-366. This accord, prepared at Rome by Msgr. Tardini, is in addition a document witnessing to the Church's faith on several points of capital importance, among others the question of religious liberty. In the final protocol of the Concordat, article 6 of the Spanish charter (*Fuero de los Espanoles*), approved by the Cortes on July 13, 1945, is in effect solemnly reaffirmed. It is the exact expression of the purest Catholic doctrine on the matter: «The profession and the practice of the Catholic religion, which is that of the Spanish state, will enjoy *official protection*. Nobody shall be disturbed for his religious beliefs, nor for the private exercise of his worship. *No ceremonies or other manifestations shall be authorized other than those of the Catholic religion.*»

The insertion of this article in the text of the Concordat was a victory of the Catholic faith. It was violently attacked by some non-Catholics and even within the Church by some

liberal theologians – especially in the USA. Cardinal Ottaviani defended its foundation in a conference given at the pontifical Athenaeum of the Lateran, on March 3, 1953 (*L'Église et la Cité*, p. 169-296. Vatican Polyglot Press, 1963). No doubt it was also to settle this controversy that Pope Pius XII gave a masterly treatment of this question of religious liberty and tolerance on December 6, 1953, in a discourse to Italian Catholic jurists (Doc. pont., p. 610-619; quoted by CRC 142, p. 5-6, June 1979).

[\(699\)](#) TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Cortes is the Spanish legislative assembly in Madrid.

[\(700\)](#) Quoted by C. Martin, *Franco soldat et chef d'État*, p. 394. Les Quatre fils Aymon, 1959.

[\(701\)](#) *Fatima, Espana, Rusia*, p. 120-123.

[\(702\)](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 442-445.

[\(703\)](#) GCV, p. 194. On the extraordinary breadth of this movement of devotion to Our Lady of Fatima in the United States, cf. *Fatima or World Suicide* by Msgr. McGrath (1950).

[\(704\)](#) The final years of Pius XII's pontificate were marked equally by the rapid development of the Blue Army of Fatima, henceforth encouraged by Cardinal Tisserant. At Fatima, on October 13, 1954, Bishop da Silva blessed the cornerstone of *Domus Pacis*, which became the Blue Army's international headquarters. In France Bishop Rupp, then the auxiliary Bishop of Paris, supported it with all his power. In 1956, its statutes were approved on a trial basis by the Holy See, and on October 13 of the same year, Cardinal Tisserant blessed *Domus Pacis* as papal legate. In 1959, the Blue Army counted close to 15 million adherents.

[\(705\)](#) Barthas, CLV, p. 57.

[\(706\)](#) Quoted by Barthas, FDM, p. 119-121.

[\(707\)](#) *Obras pastorais*, Vol. IV, p. 280-281.

[\(708\)](#) Maxime Mourin, *Le Vatican et l'Urss*, p. 190. Payot, 1965.

[\(709\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 227.

[\(710\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 222.

[\(711\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 222.

[\(712\)](#) Cf. Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979*, p. 288.

[\(713\)](#) Mourin, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

[\(714\)](#) *Vu et entendu au Concile*, p. 92. Rocher, 1964.

[\(715\)](#) Doc. pont., 1955, p. 480-482.

[\(716\)](#) Mourin, op. cit., p. 219.

[\(717\)](#) Mourin op. cit., p. 219.

[\(718\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 160-163.

[\(719\)](#) Mourin, op. cit., p. 224-225.

[\(720\)](#) We will see, once more, how this grave error had disturbing consequences for the cause of Fatima.

[\(721\)](#) Here is what he refers to: in June 1956, Bogomolov, the Soviet ambassador to the Quirinal, had confided during a reception, to Archbishop Fietta, Apostolic Nuncio to the Italian government, his desire to secure more diplomatic relations with him. Two months later, in the absence of the ambassador, the Soviet chargé d'affaires at Rome, Pojidaiev, had requested an audience with the Apostolic Nuncio. Archbishop Fietta received him on August 21. The Russian diplomat handed him the memorandum of the Supreme Soviet on disarmament, and the declaration of the Soviet government on the Suez question. Immediately, Radio Moscow proclaimed that «Soviet Russia had just made its first official contact with the Vatican since the October Revolution!» In Italy, journals of the left presented this audience «as a sensational event in the process of detente» (Mourin, p. 225-227). It was exploited so noisily by the communist press that on September 9, *L'Osservatore Romano* published a vigorous correction denouncing the new tactic of the communists (Doc. cath., 1956, col. 1258-1262).

[\(722\)](#) *Fatima et les destins du monde*, first edition, December 1955; second edition, early 1957, p. 91-95.

[\(723\)](#) *Fatima, 1917-1957*, p. XXII-XXIII.

[\(724\)](#) In 1970, in a new edition of his work, under the title *Actualité de Fatima*, Colonel Rémy omits without comments (cf. p. 20!) this long development on the alleged conversion of Russia which events had so cruelly refuted. (Apostolat des Éditions).

[\(725\)](#) Audience of December 26, 1957.

[\(726\)](#) Julliard, 1962. Quoted by Jean Boisson-Pradier, *L'Église et l'Algérie*, p. 257-258. *Études et recherches historiques*, Paris, 1962.

[\(727\)](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 571-572.

[\(728\)](#) In the *Documents pontificaux* of 1953, we count no less than twenty warnings against atheistic communism. Among others, on December 7: the Pope declared, «In our recent encyclical *Fulgens corona*, we denounced yet once more the realization of a terrifying plan seeking to radically wrest minds away from the faith of Christ, to a *world*

domination by the enemy of men of God. And they are men – miserable men – who serve as the instruments for this destructive work. A struggle is in progress, which so to speak increases each day in its proportions and in violence; hence it is necessary that all Christians, but especially all Catholic militants, be on their toes and fight, even to the death if necessary, for their Mother the Church, with the weapons permitted to them.» (Doc. pont., 1953, p. 630).

[\(729\)](#) Doc. pont., 1955, p. 482. Since Pope Pius XII almost always gave the term nationalism pejorative epithets, it was easy to conclude that in his eyes nationalism was a danger in itself. This is what Marcel Clément does in his *Enquête sur le nationalisme* (with a preface by Jean Madiran, NEL, 1957), completely directed against the integral nationalism of Charles Maurras and Action Française – once protected and encouraged by Saint Pius X – to try to impose on the French right wing the new orientations of pontifical policy.

[\(730\)](#) Doc, pont., 1956, p. 437.

[\(731\)](#) Ibid., p. 402-407.

[\(732\)](#) Ibid., 1956, p. 488-489.

[\(733\)](#) Cf. the encyclical *Luctuosissimi eventus*, «on the occasion of the bloody events in Hungary», October 28. On November 5, the encyclical *Datis nuperrime*, «to deplore and condemn the events in Hungary»; on November 10, the “radio message on the anxieties of the world at the present hour”; on November 18, in a discourse to a pilgrimage of Italian workers (p. 712). Finally and especially, in his radio message of Christmas 1956 (p. 763-766) where he denounces as useless and dangerous «talks and meetings» between communists and Christians, whether laymen or clerics: «Out of simple respect for the name of Christian (he declared), we must cease lending ourselves to these manoeuvres, for according to the Apostle’s warning, it is contradictory to want to sit at the table of God and that of His enemies (1 Cor. 10:21). And if any were still hesitant, in spite of the painful testimony of ten years of cruelty, the blood which has just been shed and the immolation of many lives offered by a martyred people should finally persuade them.» (Doc. pont., p. 763-764).

[\(734\)](#) Doc. pont., 1957, p. 165-167.

[\(735\)](#) The following facts have already been published, for the essentials, for several years by Reinhard Raffalt (former director of the “Goethe Institute” at Rome), in 1973, in *Wohin steuert der Vatikan?* (p. 124-127, Muchen, 1973). They have been reported in a very succinct, and somewhat inexact manner by Msgr. Roche and Philippe Saint-Germain in *Pie XII devant l’histoire* (p. 116, 435, 440). Finally, with more precision, in *Il Borghese* of August 15, 1976.

We are in a position to add to this point information undoubtedly still unpublished. We received it from Mr. Henri Le Caron, editor of *La revue de Rome et d’ailleurs*, who received it

from the very lips of his friend, Colonel Arnould, in 1964, shortly after Msgr. Montini's election to the sovereign pontificate.

[\[736\]](#) Our personal research allows us to state that it was Archbishop Yngue Torgny Brilioth (1891-1959), Archbishop of Uppsala since 1950, and who was indeed very open to Catholics (Okumene Lexicon, p. 196. Lembek Knecht, 1983).

[\[737\]](#) Cf. Doc. pont., 1954, p. 640.

[\[738\]](#) "G. B. Montini, substitute secretary of State (in tandem with Domenico Tardini)", p.77. In *Paul VI et la modernité dans l'Église*, acts of the colloquium organized by the École française of Rome, 876 pages, Rome 1984.

[\[739\]](#) Ibid., p. 79.

[\[740\]](#) P. 82.

[\[741\]](#) P. 71.

[\[742\]](#) Abbé Georges de Nantes, CRC 97, October 1975, p. 12.

[\[743\]](#) Doc. pont., 1954, p. 407-417.

[\[744\]](#) P. 14, DDB, 1979.

[\[745\]](#) Paul VI secret, p. 144.

[\[746\]](#) Doc. cath., 1960, col. 636.

[\[747\]](#) Galeazzi-Lisi, p. 225.

[\[748\]](#) Doc. cath., 1960, col. 637.

[\[749\]](#) Ibid., col. 638. While reporting the event in 1959, Cardinal Tardini abstains from any commentary. But following who knows what indiscretion – over which Pius XII himself had «openly shown his displeasure» – the fact had been made known to the major papers in 1955, and a few months later, in its December 11 issue, *L'Osservatore Romano* devoted a long and rather clumsy article to it, where the vision was commented on in such hyperbolic terms that the effect produced on the public was most often contrary to the author's intentions. It was regrettable (Doc. cath., 1955, col. 1601-1606).

[\[750\]](#) Doc. pont., 1955, p. 17-18.

[\[751\]](#) Jean Guilton points out that the review *Ambrosius*, XXX year, Fasc. VI, Nov.-Dec. 1954, printed a curious salutation, inspired by a medieval acclamation from an Ambrosian manuscript: "*dignus es iustus es / Iohannes Baptista Montini / papa tu eris*". (*Dialogues avec Paul VI*, p. 376.)

On January 9, 1955, *La Documentation catholique* published Msgr. Montini's preface to Msgr. Veuillot's work, *Notre sacerdoce* (col. 49-54). In 1956, it published his pastoral letter on "The duties of the Christian before the evolution, the social and religious crisis of the modern world" (col. 597-607). In September, the archbishop of Milan, invited by Cardinal Roncalli, was solemnly received at Venice and he pronounced there a famous discourse reprinted by *La Documentation catholique* (col. 1633-1638).

From October 5-13, 1957, the second World Congress on the Apostolate of the Laity took place at Rome. Even more than Pius XII's allocution, it was the long intervention by Msgr. Montini which was considered «the high point of the congress», to repeat the expression of Father Rouquette in *Les Études* (Dec. 1957). This "discourse-program" on "The mission of the Church" was again quoted in full by *La Documentation catholique* (Dec. 22, 1957, col. 1619-1636). Here are some significant passages:

«The problem of contacts between the mission of the Church and the world is a problem always open, both because the world, especially today, is in a phase of profound and rapid evolution, and because the application and *enunciation of the Christian message admit variations of time and form*. However, it belongs to the Church's government to determine *if the hour has come to promote reforms*, and what reforms are to be accomplished... For the rest have confidence, Rome is moving ahead and the Pope is guiding her...

«This is why, in the first place, the program of the Apostle – and of you lay people in particular – will be *to present to the world a Christianity which arouses admiration, sympathy, which draws men...*

«Here arises another great practical problem. Apostolic love leads to a contact with the world to be converted, a contact which can be full of dangers. Saint Paul allows us to become a Jew with the Jews, and weak with the weak: "I made myself all things to all men to save all." (1 Cor. 9:20) How far does this apostolic relativism go? How far does this intransigence go? To what extent is tolerance allowed to Catholics? He who guides the Church will say: the question is extremely delicate. *We will watch* so that our attitude of love and respect towards those who are not Catholics does not degenerate into indifference, eclecticism, sympathy, defection...

«We will be watchful, I say. But we shall not forget that *the fundamental attitude of Catholics who want to convert the world must be to love it*. Here is the genius of the apostolate: to know how to love.

«I would like that from this Christian precept we make our resolution and our program, here at Rome, the centre of the Catholic apostolate. We shall love those who are near to us and those who are far from us. We shall love our country, we shall love our enemies. We shall love the Catholics, we shall love the schismatics, the Protestants, the Anglicans, the indifferent, the Moslems, the pagans, the atheists. We shall love all the social classes, but especially those most needing aid, assistance, and promotion. We shall love children and old people, the poor and the sick. We shall love those who mock us, those who despise us, those who oppose us and who persecute us. We shall love those who deserve to be loved

and those who do not. We shall love our adversaries: they are men, and we do not want to hold any of them as our enemy. We shall love our time, our civilization, our technology, our art, our sports, our world. We shall love while striving to understand, to have compassion, to esteem, to serve, to suffer. We shall love with the heart of Christ: "Come to Me, all of you..." (Mt. 11:28). We shall love with the fullness of God: "God so loved the world..." (Jn. 3:16).

«Is this speaking too much of the world? Are these words exaggerated? Is it enthusiasm which grips us and makes us presumptuous and childish? Where is humility?

«Humility remains, and so does the vision of reality. But the mission of the Church opens these immense horizons, and it is not pride and folly to lift up our eyes to God's Heaven. It is hope. It is prayer.

«Moreover, the kingdom of God is already with you potentially. I see the spectacle of it before me. Listen to the voice of Christ: "In truth I tell you, lift up your eyes and see the fields ripe for the harvest." (Jn. 4:35).»

Rather than the expression of the Church's traditional mission, completely oriented to obtaining eternal salvation for the greatest possible number of souls, this emphatic declaration of universal love seems to bear witness to another spirit. It expresses the new ideal which Giovanni Battista Montini – with traces of a personal messianism – strives to designate for the Church as the purpose of her apostolic action: to understand, to esteem, to serve, in a word *to love the world*, even before seeking to convert it. Abandoning all scorn, all defiance, all anathemas, the Church must finally learn to passionately love the modern world such as it is, under all its aspects, without any exclusions – this is the number one objective of the new pastoral approach proposed by Archbishop Montini. We shall see how it soon came to be imposed on the Church.

[\(752\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 47-48.

[\(753\)](#) Translator's note: "Liberation" refers to the liberation of France in 1944.

[\(754\)](#) *La Verdad sobre el Secreto de Fatima* (= VSF). Unless otherwise stated, we quote it in its English version. P. 45.

[\(755\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[\(756\)](#) Quoted by Vilalta Berbel, *Los Secretos de Fatima*, p. 76.

[\(757\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 38-39.

[\(758\)](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 541-546.

[\(759\)](#) VSF, p.47.

[\(760\)](#) We recall that on December 8, 1945, Bishop da Silva placed the envelope sealed by Sister Lucy in a larger envelope, also sealed with wax, and on which he wrote himself: «This envelope with its contents will be given to His Eminence Cardinal Don Manuel, Patriarch of Lisbon, after my death. Leiria, December 8, 1945. José, Bishop of Leiria.»

[\(761\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 176.

[\(762\)](#) VSF, p. 48.

[\(763\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 228-229, 234.

[\(764\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 229.

[\(765\)](#) Quoted by Alonso, VSF, p. 46-47.

[\(766\)](#) *Revue Médiatrice et Reine*, October 1946, p. 110-112.

[\(767\)](#) John Haffert, *Dear Bishop!* AMI 1981, p. 3-4.

[\(768\)](#) *Obras pastorais*, Vol. III, p. 101.

[\(769\)](#) *Novidades*, February 24, 1960, quoted by *La Documentation catholique*, June 19, 1960, col. 751, We do not think the date 1960 appears on the envelope. But the Cardinal's material error at least attests to the clarity of the orders Bishop da Silva had transmitted to him on this subject.

[\(770\)](#) Barthas, *Fatima, merveille du XXe siècle*, p. 83. Fatima-editions, 1952. It must be noted that Canon Barthas published this account after having the privilege of meeting Sister Lucy again, on October 15, 1950, in the company of Msgr. Breynat, O.M.I., vicar apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie, in the Great Canadian North (TPE, p. 246).

[\(771\)](#) *Fatima, altar do mundo*, Vol II, p. 147.

[\(772\)](#) In *Fatima as suas provas e o seus problemas*, p. 323-325. Salesianas, Porto, 1953.

[\(773\)](#) Although his work was published in 1953, Father Martins dos Reis explained in 1966 that he had already finished writing it in 1951. This excuses him for not having taken into account the most decisive testimonies, those of Canon Barthas and Canon Galamba, published in 1952 and 1953. Hence he places as the point of departure of his demonstration this regrettable error of fact: «*First of all, nowhere was it said that Sister Lucy – the only authoritative and sure source for this question! – promised or stated such a thing.*» Then he states – failing to make it clear that Bishop da Silva and Cardinal Cerejeira, and they alone, were concerned – that «the hierarchy had fixed no date in advance for revealing the Secret. A second deplorable error! And he concludes: «It is not fitting, and it can be dangerous to wait for... what was neither promised nor assured!»

Later on, Father Martins dos Reis was able to boast of having seen clearly before everybody. In fact, he reasoned correctly on false information, and yet it so happens that events have proved him right!

Let us point out also, to be exhaustive, that on October 25, 1954, in the journal *União*, Father José Pedro da Silva, future bishop of Viseu, no doubt echoing the exposition of Father Martins dos Reis, declared in the same sense: «It does not seem very plausible that the Bishop of Leiria consciously made such a promise (to reveal the Secret in 1960), while being ignorant of the contents of the Secret, as he was.» (Quoted by Martins dos Reis, *O Milagre do sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 130. Salesianas, Porto, 1966.) We have all the proofs that Bishop da Silva made this promise, and Cardinal Cerejeira after him. And it was fully justified, for if they were ignorant of the contents of the third Secret, they knew the rest of the message, and they knew the messenger, in whom they had complete confidence.

[\(774\)](#) A. O. Armstrong, *Fatima. Pilgrimage to peace*, p. 119-120. The World's Work, Kingswood, Surrey, 1955.

[\(775\)](#) Quoted by G. Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 25.

[\(776\)](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 542.

[\(777\)](#) Quoted by G. Renault, *Fatima*, p. 225, Plon, 1957.

[\(778\)](#) *Fatima e la conversione della Russia*, p. 13. Rome, 1956.

[\(779\)](#) VSF, p. 46.

[\(780\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 54.

[\(781\)](#) Cf. *supra*, Chap. IV, note 40.

[\(782\)](#) S. Martins dos Reis, *O Milagre do Sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 131-135.

[\(783\)](#) While alluding to the decisive passage of *Fatima, merveille du XXe siècle* (quoted earlier, p. 314), Father Martins dos Reis is quite careful not to quote this text, which spoils his hypothesis. He substitutes another for it, excerpted from *Fatima et les destins du monde*, which he can twist more easily to the sense of his thesis!

[\(784\)](#) VSF, p. 46.

[\(785\)](#) Such is the thinking developed by Canon Barthas in 1957, while insisting on the fact that «the envelope had to be opened only in 1960» (FDM, p. 103-106), or again when he writes, during the first three months of 1960: «We know that there remains an element still reserved, of which it is useless to try to guess the content (this is directed against overly impatient curiosity!). Moreover, it will soon be known, since Lucy affirms that Our Lady wills that it can be published beginning in 1960.» Cf. *De la grotte au chêne-vert*, p. 108-109; cf. also p. 96: «It is written in a document kept by His Eminence the Cardinal Patriarch

of Lisbon (the transfer to Rome was still unknown to the public and even the experts), *to be published in 1960.*» We find the same thought in Castelbranco, *Le prodige inouïe de Fatima* (1956 edition, p. 73; 1958 edition, p. 3 and 72). (The English version of this book is “More About Fatima”).

[\[786\]](#) In the first edition of this work I cited here, following Father Pierre Caillon in his conferences on *L'épopée mariale de notre temps*, the testimony of the Archbishop of Lanciano. This Italian bishop stated that, in October 1956, in the company of the Nuncio at Madrid whose secretary he was at the time, he had visited the Bishop of Coimbra, who had declared to them: «*I have in my drawer the third part of the Secret of Fatima, which Lucy gave me. She told me that I could read it, but I have no idea of reading it!*»

This testimony, taken by Father Caillon in August 1978, was of the highest importance, for it implied that Sister Lucy had written the Secret a second time. But when questioned insistently a second time by Father Caillon, the Bishop of Lanciano recognized finally that he had been mistaken and had confused... Leiria and Coimbra! And the statements he had heard had been pronounced not by Bishop Ernesto Sena de Oliveira, but by Bishop da Silva, who in effect had the habit of responding in this way to all those who questioned him on the third Secret (Letter of Father Pierre Caillon to the author, January 15, 1986).

[\[787\]](#) VSF, p. 48-49.

[\[788\]](#) Ibid., p. 48.

[\[789\]](#) *L'épopée mariale de notre temps*. Father G. Freire's exposition (*O Segredo de Fatima, a terceira parte é sobre Portugal?* p. 50-51) brings some useful precisions.

[\[790\]](#) Father Pierre Caillon is the source.

[\[791\]](#) Alonso, “De nuevo el Secreto de Fatima”, p. 86. *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, 1982.

[\[792\]](#) Msgr. Luciano Guerra, “Fatima e o Romano Pontifice”, in *Apelo e resposta*, p. 44-45, Fatima, July 1983.

[\[793\]](#) Cf. *ibid.*, “Elenco cronologico”, no. 85, p. 94. Father Freire situates this request for a photocopy of Lucy's manuscripts at the end of 1956; Father Alonso places it at the beginning of 1957.

[\[794\]](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 543.

[\[795\]](#) *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 50-51.

[\[796\]](#) VSF, p. 48.

[\[797\]](#) *Le prodige inouïe de Fatima*, p. 74, 1967 and 1972 editions.

[\[798\]](#) *L'épopée mariale de notre temps*.

[\[799\]](#) No. 497, October 18, 1958, p. 82 and the special issue no. 2, fourth trimester 1958, *Le nouveau Pape. Pie XII. Le Vatican. Jean XXIII*, p. 60.

[\[800\]](#) Letter to the author of January 10, 1985.

[\[801\]](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 542-543.

[\[802\]](#) Cf. G. Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 191.

[\[803\]](#) Ibid., p. 56.

[\[804\]](#) VSF, p. 49.

[\[805\]](#) “De nuevo el Secreto de Fatima”, Eph. Mar., 1982, p. 86-87.

[\[806\]](#) Quoted by Father Alonso, VSF (Spanish original version), p. 103-104. Later on we shall produce the integral text of this document with the critical justification given by Father Alonso.

[\[807\]](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 407-410.

[\[808\]](#) FDM, the photocopy of the document.

[\[809\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 794.

[\[810\]](#) Published by the Russicum.

[\[811\]](#) Doc. pont., 1957, p. 95.

[\[812\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 404.

[\[813\]](#) AAS, 1958, p. 146.

[\[814\]](#) Ibid., p. 135, 137.

[\[815\]](#) To be sure, the Pope brought up the harmony recovered between the Church and State, after the persecutions of the beginning of the century: «The historic accords of 1940, observed in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, have given precious fruits... It is a renewal of the good which is owed to the farsightedness and magnificent, persistent dedication of meritorious men. But if we rise above the sensible world, who does not see the action of Providence, which at the opportune hour prepares, raises up and accompanies its instruments until the final triumph? Do not Le Sameiro, throne of the Immaculate (cf. our Vol. I, p. 113) and Fatima, a miracle of the motherly tenderness of Her who proclaimed Herself Queen of the Rosary, these centres of simple, humble and penitent prayer, manifestly prove the action of Providence?... Providential coincidences and important events of our tormented pontificate and your history bind us to this “Land of Holy Mary”.» (Doc. pont., 1957, p. 270-273; cf. Doc. cath., June 9, 1957, col. 719-722).

[\[816\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 796.

[\[817\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 91.

[\[818\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 313-314.

[\[819\]](#) *Pio XII e Fatima*, p. 30.

[\[820\]](#) Doc. pont., 1957, p. 592.

[\[821\]](#) On Lourdes, cf. the encyclical of the hundredth anniversary, published on July 2, 1957 (Doc. pont., p. 348-360); the discourse of October 7 and the apostolic constitution of November 1, 1957 (*ibid.*, p. 586 and 628), the messages of February 2, July 2 and September 17, 1958 (Doc. pont., 1958, p. 64, 362, 520).

[\[822\]](#) Doc. pont., 1958, p. 168.

[\[823\]](#) Cf. the acts of this Congress, *Maria et Ecclesia*, twelve volumes, Rome, Pontificia Academia mariana internationalis, 1959-1962.

[\[824\]](#) *Pie XII* by Father Lieber, S.J., Doc. cath., February 1, 1959, col. 165.

[\[825\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 473.

[\[826\]](#) «Many are those who are damned... many are lost», such is the essence of the statements made by Sister Lucy during this interview (cf. our Vol. II, p. 44 and Alonso, VSF, p. 106). The account of this interview appeared in *L'Osservatore della Domenica*, February 7, 1954 (Father Alonso erroneously gives this as the date of the interview), and later in *Voz da Fatima* of April 13 of the same year. Father Antonio Maria Martins stresses, with good reason, that there is no reason to suspect Father Lombardi of not having faithfully reported Sister Lucy's words (*O Segredo de Fatima e o futuro de Portugal*, p. XII, Porto, 1974), in opposition to the first studies of Father Alonso (HLF, p. 60; VFA, p. 84 and 94; "Fatima et le Coeur Immaculée de Marie", Eph. Mar., 1972, p. 432).

[\[827\]](#) Since the diocesan process had not been completed yet, the future postulator worked on preparatory studies for the organization of the apostolic processes.

[\[828\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 599-600; and Martins dos Reis, *O Milagre do sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 123.

[\[829\]](#) Cf. Freire, p. 30.

[\[830\]](#) VSF, p. 110-111. Archbishop Sanchez of Vera Cruz gave the imprimatur.

[\[831\]](#) The original Spanish text is given in full by Father Alonso in VSF, (Spanish edition), p. 103-106.

[\[832\]](#) The English version is more precise than the French version here. It was first published by Father Ryan in *Fatima Findings*, June 1959.

This version was followed by the *Messagero del Cuore de Maria*, no. 8-9, August-September 1961, Rome. Cf. Abbé Georges de Nantes, *Lettres à mes amis*, Vol. II, 1963 and CRC 87, December 1974, p. 12.

[\[833\]](#) This last sentence is not found in the Spanish or French versions.

[\[834\]](#) Quoted by J. Calbrette, *La crise actuelle du catholicisme français*, p. 22, Librairie Française.

[\[835\]](#) Letters quoted by Father Antonio Maria Martins in *Fatima Caminho de paz*, p. 78. Braga, January 1983.

[\[836\]](#) Letter *Notre charge apostolique*, no. 40. Cf. CRC 47, August 1971.

[\[837\]](#) Msgr. Tardini recalls, «I will never forget this day in January 1939, when at the end of the audience he granted me, I saw Pope Pius XI place his elbows on his desk and hide his face in his hands, while he said to me: “*Monsignor, tell me, have we really done everything we ought to have done?*” As I tried to set him at rest, he answered: “We are soon going to present ourselves before the tribunal of God.”» (*Pie XII*, p. 132) On February 10, Pius XI died.

[\[838\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 543-544.

[\[839\]](#) Radio message of Christmas 1954, Doc. pont., 1954, p. 560.

[\[840\]](#) Message of July 13, 1917.

[\[841\]](#), René Laurentin, *La question mariale*, p. 17. Seuil, 1963.

[\[842\]](#) The *Documents pontificaux de S.S. Pie XII* quote fourteen radio messages pronounced on the occasion of Marian Congresses in 1954.

[\[843\]](#) *Les Enseignements pontificaux*, “Notre Dame”, p. 225-473, Desclée, 1959.

[\[844\]](#) *Les Enseignements pontificaux*, “Le Saint Rosaire”, p. 169-209. Desclée, 1966.

[\[845\]](#) Cf. supra, p. 465.

[\[846\]](#) Cf. Louis Bassette, *Le fait de La Salette*, 1846-1854, p. 204-221. New edition, Cerf, 1965.

[\[847\]](#) «Father Barthe, canon of Rodez, states that Pius IX declared to him *that it had been useful for him to know its contents in the sad circumstances through which the Church is passing.*» To a Jesuit who questioned him on the secrets of La Salette, Pius IX replied: «*It is*

fortunate that we were informed; otherwise we would have found ourselves in an impasse from which we could not have escaped.» Quoted by Msgr. Joseph Giray. *Les miracles de La Salette, étude hisiorique et critique*, Vol. II, p. 431-432. Grenoble, 1921).

[\[848\]](#) Is it necessary to recall that in China, with the communist persecution came the creation of a schismatic “Patriotic Church”, whose alarming developments darkened the final months of Pius XII’s pontificate? (cf. the encyclical *Ad Apostolorum Principis* of June 29, 1958).

Let us add that the persecution was undoubtedly not the principal cause of this new schism. Since Benedict XV and Pius XI, then under Pius XII with the Instruction of December 8, 1939, on the Chinese rites (Doc. pont., 1951, p. 208-211; 223-225), Rome, breaking with the Church’s age-old tradition, had imprudently and demagogically preached adaptation to various cultures, and unduly exalted the native clergy. The Chinese schism was the poisoned fruit of this new missiology inspired by the pernicious views of Father Lebbe which the Vatican (alas!) had contributed to spreading throughout the Asiatic and African missions.

[\[849\]](#) Father G. de Nantes, CRC, supplement to No. 178, June 1982, p. 24.

[\[850\]](#) CRC 97, October 1975, p. 5.

[\[851\]](#) Doc. cath., 1959, col. 274-275.

[\[852\]](#) “Le fait de Lourdes devant le magistère”, *Maria et Ecclesia*, Vol. XII, Rome 1962.

[\[853\]](#) Doc. cath., 1959, col. 589.

[\[854\]](#) Let us note that they also correspond to the thinking of Cardinal Tardini, who as Cardinal Secretary of State supervised the preparation of pontifical documents.

[\[855\]](#) Freire, p. 190-191.

[\[856\]](#) Christmas radio message, December 23, 1958, quoted again on May 17, 1959. Doc. cath., 1959, col. 40, 772.

[\[857\]](#) *Dear Bishop!* AMI 1981, p. 116.

[\[858\]](#) On this event, which was a new high point of Portuguese religious life, read the admirable, abundantly illustrated work published by the “National Secretariat of the Monument”: *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei, Memoria historica*, 1936-1959, (347 pages, Lisbon, 1965).

[\[859\]](#) Cf. the integral text in the album quoted above, p. 195-196.

[\[860\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 388-393.

[861] The 28 metre statue rests upon a tower 85 metres high, erected at the summit of the hill of the Almada, which itself dominates the 113 metre Tagus River. This shows how spectacular the site is.

[862] Cardinal Cerejeira, *ibid.*, p. 121-123; or in *Obras Pastorais*, Vol. V, p. 239-243.

[863] *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei*, p. 155-158.

[864] *Ibid.*, p. 164-170; 216-221.

[865] *Les colombes de la Vierge*, p. 118.

[866] *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei*, p. 171-186.

[867] *Ibid.*, p. 183-186.

[868] The integral text will be found in an appendix to this chapter.

[869] *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei*, p. 203-204.

[870] LCV, p. 118-119.

[871] Cf. *supra*, p. 76.

[872] *Il pellegrinaggio delle meraviglie*, Rome, 1960, 443 pages.

[873] CLV, p. 94.

[874] In De Marchi, *Témoignages*, p. 335.

[875] *Il pellegrinaggio delle meraviglie*, p. 24.

[876] It was composed by Cardinal Cerejeira and read by him on May 17, during the ceremony of blessing of the monument to Christ the King. We shall quote the integral text according to the original Portuguese reprinted in *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei*, p. 199-202 (cf. *Obras Pastorais*, Vol. VI, p. 53-58). The subtitles are added by us.

[877] *La Vérité de Fatima*, p. 186. S.O.S., 1980.

[878] The text of this letter as well as the entirety of our exposition are borrowed from the commemorative album published by the National Secretariat of the monument and prefaced by Cardinal Cerejeira: *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei. Memoria historica*, 1936-1959, appendix No. V, "O ropodio do sol", p 223-237.

[879] The commemorative album also reprints a photograph of the crowd during the *Te Deum*. In fact, it is plain that a good number of the faithful – perhaps a third – have their heads craned backwards, their eyes lifted up to the sky, and are staring at the same point.

[\[880\]](#) Let us point out that all these authentic depositions are preserved in the archives of the secretariat of the monument.

[\[881\]](#) Did all those who were able to see the sun contemplate the prodigy? It does not seem so. It would be interesting on this subject to consult, along with the written accounts, all photographs of the crowd taken at the moment of the *Te Deum*.

[\[882\]](#) On the occasion of the first anniversary of the inauguration of the monument, Cardinal Cerejeira was not afraid to evoke these meteorological phenomena «which it is difficult to label other than miraculous, and which proved how pleasing the consecration of Portugal to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary was to God» (cf. *Novidades*, May 17, 1960, which also cites the testimony of a renowned scientist, Antonio de Vasconcelos). Cardinal Cerejeira also brought up the event of May 17, 1959, in an interview with Father Richard, in May 1960 (*L'Homme nouveau*, No. 282, June 1960).

[\[883\]](#) This text was published on July 4 in *Novidades*, the Portuguese Catholic daily. At Rome, the *Civiltà cattolica*, which expresses so often, unofficially, the positions adopted by the Vatican, reprinted it the following October 3, highlighting its «extremely opportune» character, at the approach of the year when the third Secret had to be divulged (1959, Vol. IV, Oct. 3, p. 90-91). The Portuguese original is quoted by S. Martins dos Reis, *O Milagre do sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 126-127. A translation appeared in the *Documentation catholique* of August 7, 1960, col. 981-982.

[\[884\]](#) Quoted by the Doc. cath., August 7, 1960, col. 981-982.

[\[885\]](#) Ibid., p. 60.

[\[886\]](#) “Histoire ancienne et histoire nouvelle de Fatima”, in *Vraies et fausses apparitions dans l'Église*, p. 84 and note 55, p. 98. Lethielleux, second edition, 1976. Father Alonso had made a similar declaration in August 1971, at the international seminar of Fatima; cf. Eph. Mar., 1972, p. 432.

[\[887\]](#) On May 22, 1958.

[\[888\]](#) VSF, p. 112-113.

[\[889\]](#) Archbishop Capovilla's response to Father Alonso's questions, quoted by Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 189-190.

[\[890\]](#) Freire, p. 181-182.

[\[891\]](#) Ibid., p. 189-191.

[\[892\]](#) Quoted by Freire, p. 181. Archbishop Capovilla replied to Father Alonso: «All I know is that the Pope made no pronouncement on this subject. He said that he preferred to leave the decision to others (to his successor?).» (ibid., p. 190).

[\[893\]](#) VSF, p. 51.

[\[894\]](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 544.

[\[895\]](#) Perhaps at the beginning of February (1960), suggests Father G. Freire (*O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 45).

[\[896\]](#) *Le Figaro*, May 4, 1981: «Le troisième Secret de Fatima “enterré” par Jean XXIII».

[\[897\]](#) Freire, p. 181, 190.

[\[898\]](#) Ibid., p. 190. According to Father Caillon, Pope John XXIII also consulted Cardinal Tardini, Msgr. Dell'Acqua, and Bishop Venancio (*L'épopée mariale de notre temps*).

[\[899\]](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 543.

[\[900\]](#) Quoted by Freire, p. 181.

[\[901\]](#) Ibid., p. 190.

[\[902\]](#) P. 191.

[\[903\]](#) Read for example the remarkable discourse of Cardinal Siri, presenting Fatima as the world's great hope (*Il Pellegrinaggio delle Meraviglie*, p. 406-408). In contrast, Archbishop Montini's discourse is significantly cool. The Archbishop of Milan deliberately ignores Fatima and its message, to stick with generalities dealing with Marian devotion (ibid., p. 408-410). We can point out, in the same sense, the article by Father Domenico Mandrone, S.J., published in the *Civiltà cattolica* of July 3, 1959, on the subject of the consecration of Italy to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Father Mandrone alludes to Fatima, but always in the spirit of Father Dhanis (ibid., p. 401-404).

[\[904\]](#) Cf. Alonso, HLF, p. 62.

[\[905\]](#) Quoted by Doc. cath. of August 7, 1960, col. 982.

[\[906\]](#) *La question mariale*, p. 82, Le Seuil, 1963.

[\[907\]](#) Ibid., p. 178.

[\[908\]](#) Doc. cath., October 18, 1959, col. 1289-1292.

[\[909\]](#) It is remarkable that John XXIII, while speaking to the bishops of the Peninsula, does not associate himself personally with the act of consecration of the nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On a similar occasion, October 12, 1954, Pius XII had himself pronounced a consecration of Spain to the Immaculate Heart of Mary: «Before Your throne, O Most Holy Virgin of Pilar... as the common Father of the Christian family, as Vicar of Him to whom all power on Heaven and earth was given, we entrust, we hand over and we

consecrate to Your Immaculate Heart not only this whole immense crowd here present, but also the whole Spanish nation...» (Doc. pont., 1954, p. 445; cf. *supra*, p. 396-398, 431-435).

[\[910\]](#) *Il pellegrinaggio delle meraviglie*, p. 54. Father Laurentin, relying on G. M. Besutti (in *Marianum*, 24, 1962, p. 279), wrongly states that the mention of John XXIII's radio message was omitted in the voluminous collection of 440 pages devoted to the "Pilgrimage of Mary" in Italy. «We cannot explain such a text being forgotten», Besutti wrote. In fact, this text was not forgotten, but the authors contented themselves with publishing the few lines dealing with the national consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

[\[911\]](#) Quoted by the review *Itinéraires*, December 1959, "La royauté de Marie et la consécration à son Coeur Immaculé", p. 114.

[\[912\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[\[913\]](#) *Ibid.*, p. 110-111. It is remarkable that already on May 17, 1959, in his radio message on the occasion of the blessing of the monument of Christ the King at Lisbon – a message of twenty absolutely insignificant lines (AAS, 1959, p. 431) – Pope John XXIII had not made the slightest allusion to the renewal of the consecration of Portugal to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The authors of the commemorative album strive to justify this omission thus: «It was not as yet certain that this consecration would be official when this allocution of the Pope was written and registered, this is why it does not refer to it.» *Monumento nacional a Cristo Rei*, p. 199). This reason is hardly convincing, for on January 16, 1959, in their "collective pastoral letter", the bishops had announced for May 17 the renewal of the consecration of Portugal to the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary (*ibid.*, p. 156-158; cf. *supra*, p. 530).

[\[914\]](#) This request is attested by Msgr. Luciano Guerra, present rector of the sanctuary, in "Fatima e o Romano Pontifice", p. 96 in *Apelo et resposta*.

[\[915\]](#) *Civiltà cattolica*, p. 159, Vol. IV, October 3, p. 90-91.

[\[916\]](#) *Mensagem de Fatima*, July-August 1959.

[\[917\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 568-572.

[\[918\]](#) Freire, *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 181-182.

[\[919\]](#) These answers to Father Alonso's questions were published by the review of the Marian Eucharistic Movement, *Lampade viventi* (March 1978, p. 72-74). We borrow the text from the work of Father Freire, p. 188-191. The numbering of the paragraphs is from us.

[\[920\]](#) Archbishop Capovilla indicates six references to the discourses of John XXIII for the whole duration of his pontificate, which is very little in reality. And it would still be necessary to verify the exact contents of these texts and their authority!

[\(921\)](#) *O que falta para a conversão da Rússia. Exposição da mensagem de Fatima, seu conteúdo e importância, suas profecias e promessas.*

[\(922\)](#) “Le Secret de Fatima aux rendez-vous des grandes explications Est-Ouest de 1960”, introduction by Father Richard and article by Father Messias Dias Coelho, *L’Homme nouveau*, No. 269. November 22, 1959.

[\(923\)](#) Quoted by Father Alonso, VSF, p. 54.

[\(924\)](#) Ibid., p. 55.

[\(925\)](#) *Lettres à mes amis*, No. 63, January 1960.

[\(926\)](#) *Agencia Nacional de Informação.*

[\(927\)](#) Alonso, VSF, p. 55.

[\(928\)](#) Quoted by Father Martins dos Reis, *O Milagre do sol e o Segredo de Fatima*, p. 127-128. Cf. Alonso, VSF, p. 55-56.

[\(929\)](#) Quoted by Doc. cath., 1960, col. 752.

[\(930\)](#) January-February 1960 issue.

[\(931\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 470.

[\(932\)](#) VSF, p. 61.

[\(933\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, Part Two Chapters I and 3.

[\(934\)](#) Quoted by the *Documentation catholique*, June 19, 1960, col. 751-752. Let us point out that *L’Homme nouveau* had reprinted this interview on March 6, 1960, in its special issue on Fatima (NO. 276).

[\(935\)](#) Answers to Father Alonso, July 24, 1977; cf. *supra*, p. 382.

[\(936\)](#) To be convinced of that, it is enough to read his autobiographical work, *L’Église est Liberté*, 233 pages, Laffont, 1980. There is not a line of this work which a high-level freemason would have refused to sign. The Cardinal who was Architect of the Vatican Ostpolitik in the sixties, is unsparing in his praise for Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. His great admiration: Teilhard de Chardin. His greatest friendship: the Dalai Lama!

[\(937\)](#) *L’épopée mariale en notre temps.*

[\(938\)](#) Msgr. Luciano Guerra, in “Fatima e o Romano pontificate”, mentions this audience without indicating the precise date (p. 96).

[\[939\]](#) *L'Homme nouveau*, No. 282, June 5, 1960.

[\[940\]](#) *Voz da Fatima*, June 1960.

[\[941\]](#) *Oggi*, May 26, 1960.

[\[942\]](#) Alonso, VSF (original Spanish version), p. 46.

[\[943\]](#) Quoted by Doc. cath., of August 7, 1960, col. 979-984.

[\[944\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 467-479.

[\[945\]](#) This declaration, reported by a press agency, is simply a repetition of the communiqué of February 8.

[\[946\]](#) We have already underlined the inaneity of this last argument. Cf. *supra*, p. 295.

[\[947\]](#) "Quale è il messaggio di Fatima?" in *Ecclesia*, (Vatican City), May 1960, p. 213-217. Father Balic, a renowned mariologist, had published in 1953 a study entitled, *Fatima nella luce della critica*, where the influence of Father Dhanis was already very notable (cf. Alonso, HLF, p. 62).

[\[948\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 375.

[\[949\]](#) *Dear Bishop!* AMI 1891, p. 118, 122.

[\[950\]](#) Bishop Venancio made it public, quoting from it some weeks later in *Voz da Fatima* of June 1960. It was also reprinted by the Bishop of Viseu, then published in the country's press. We follow the French translation which appeared in *L'Homme nouveau* (No. 285, July 31, 1960). We have taken the liberty of adding some subtitles.

[\[951\]](#) Father Richard recalls that «The sun remained absent, and a tenacious rain, with moments of torrential access, fully justified the reputation of a penitential place attached to the Cova da Iria.

«And yet on May 12, at six o'clock in the morning, under torrents of water and in the mud, a long Way of the Cross presided over by the bishop drew with it a crowd as far as Valinhos. At each station, the sufferings of one of the countries under the communist yoke were evoked. Once again, in the evening, «at about ten o'clock the Cova was filled to overflowing with a crowd of stoical pilgrims under the thin rain».

Let us point out that in the morning one could admire two doves, faithful in keeping their post as guards of honour at Our Lady's feet: «Since the morning, two doves, coming from who knows where, adorned the statue with a white bouquet without any spot.» (*Le 13 mai à Fatima, j'étais un des 500,000 pèlerins*), by Father A. Richard, *L'Homme nouveau*, No. 282, June 5, 1960.)

[\(952\)](#) The Bishop of Leiria had the custom of inviting each year a foreign Cardinal to preside over the ceremonies of May 13. Cardinal Lercaro had been invited for May 13, 1960. Prevented by illness, he sent the text of his homily, which was read to the pilgrims by Bishop Venancio.

[\(953\)](#) To be sure, one may regret that in the text of his letter Bishop Venancio did not dare to be clearer on the subject of this condition laid down by Our Lady for the consecration of Russia: «That the Holy Father deign to make, and order all the bishops of the Catholic world to make...», etc. But at least he implied that not everything had been accomplished yet, and that this was the reason Our Lady's promise had not yet been fulfilled.

In 1958, during the tenth Marian Congress of Lourdes, Cardinal Tisserant, designated by Pius XII as legate *a latere*, had pronounced a conference on the necessary consecration of individuals, families and nations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the light of Fatima. In this excellent historical exposition, to which we will have to return later, the Cardinal legate did not allude a single time to the consecration of *Russia* by the Pope and all the bishops of the world, requested by the Blessed Virgin. Retracing the history of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Cardinal declared: «It is the Blessed Virgin Herself who prepared subsequent developments, when She said to the young seer of Fatima that God wanted devotion to Her Immaculate Heart, and that *the world* had to be consecrated to Her.» (Doc. cath., October 12, 1958, col. 1299-1311).

During the same Marian Congress of Lourdes, on this same September 16, 1958, during a long conference on «*Mary's victorious interventions in the life of the Church*», Cardinal Ottaviani, although the context of his exposition clearly lent itself to it, did not make a single allusion to the Fatima revelations related to the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the promise of its conversion (*ibid.*, col. 1311-1316, and the integral text in *L'Église et la Cité*, p. 247-265). This shows how the subject had become tacitly forbidden since before Pius XII's death.

[\(954\)](#) The text is quoted by *L'Homme nouveau*, No. 288, October 2, 1960.

[\(955\)](#) Doc. cath., 1960, col. 1249-1252.

[\(956\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 398-400.

[\(957\)](#) “*Ce que fut Fatima les 12 et 13 octobre*”, by Father Réginald Simonin. This article, which appeared in *L'Homme nouveau* of November 6, 1960, is composed of excerpts of Portuguese papers which all gave a very detailed account of this memorable pilgrimage, when the participation of foreign pilgrims was more important than usual.

[\(958\)](#) *L'Homme nouveau*, of November 6, 1960: “*Je reviens de Fatima la catholique.*”

[\(959\)](#) Later, remarks Canon Barthas, the prodigy became much rarer. Some cases were still pointed out, but they were very infrequent, and «never with the solemnity and impact

they had had before (1960), when the white birds flew before innumerable crowds, presided over by the authorities of the cities visited.» (*Les colombes de la Vierge*, p. 121-122).

[\[960\]](#) Cf. Mt. 12:31-32; Lk. 12:10.

[\[961\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 504-508.

[\[962\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 526.

[\[963\]](#) *Lettres à mes amis*, No. 81, January 1961.

[\[964\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 543-544.

[\[965\]](#) Quoted by Alonso, *O Dr. Formigao*, p. 295-296.

[\[966\]](#) Cf. our first Vol., Part Two, Chapters 1 and 3.

[\[967\]](#) On this fundamental unity of the Secret, cf. our Vol. II, «A unique and triple Secret», p. 8-15 and p. 281-282.

[\[968\]](#) Sister Lucy, Third Memoir p 102-104.

[\[969\]](#) “Le Secret de Fatima”, in *L’Homme nouveau*, No. 269, November 22, 1959.

[\[970\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 37-48.

[\[971\]](#) Archbishop Capovilla’s letter to Father Freire, cf. *supra*, p. 381.

[\[972\]](#) Quoted by Freire, p. 58.

[\[973\]](#) Cf. CRC 178, June 1982, p. 1.

[\[974\]](#) Quoted by *La Croix*, May 13, 1982.

[\[975\]](#) In a later chapter we will quote Cardinal Ratzinger’s declaration.

[\[976\]](#) VSF, p.63.

[\[977\]](#) On this question, which we will explain in detail in our fourth volume, see *La consécration de la Russie aux Très Saints Coeurs de Jésus et de Marie* by Father Pierre Caillon (Téqui, 1983, 64 pages).

[\[978\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 474.

[\[979\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 504.

[\[980\]](#) *Neues Europa*, bimonthly review of Stuttgart, No. 20, October 15, 1963, p. 5. Emphasis ours.

[\[981\]](#) These two articles of *Neues Europa* are quoted in *Les derniers temps avant la fin du monde*, p. 26-31. "Action-Fatima-La-Salette", 1965.

[\[982\]](#) No. 44, September-October 1964. *Voz do Pastor* reprinted it in its turn on December 5, 1964.

[\[983\]](#) *Mensagem de Fatima*, No. 86, September-October 1971. In the same spirit our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, published the central part in his *Lettre à mes amis* of Christmas 1966, No. 239. In a second edition, in 1978, he denounced its fraudulent character.

[\[984\]](#) VSF, p. 116.

[\[985\]](#) VSF (Spanish edition), p. 60.

[\[986\]](#) Cf. Merv. XXe s., p. 114.

[\[987\]](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 182-183.

[\[988\]](#) Ibid., p. 294-296.

[\[989\]](#) These excerpts of a work published by Louis Emrich in 1964 are reprinted by Father Boyer without any rectification (*Les derniers temps avant la fin du monde*, p. 43-44).

[\[990\]](#) *Le troisième Secret de Fatima*, p. 102-103. France Loisirs, 1983, 187 pages.

[\[991\]](#) *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 31-33.

[\[992\]](#) *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 38-39.

[\[993\]](#) "Fatima explorada", September-October, 1976, No. 115.

[\[994\]](#) Doc. cath., January 7, 1979, col. 48; cf. the correction of February 18, col. 196.

[\[995\]](#) No. 10, October 1981, "Vox Fidei".

[\[996\]](#) John Paul II stayed at Fulda on November 17 and 18, 1980.

[\[997\]](#) In *Bote von Fatima*, July-August 1981.

[\[998\]](#) The recent statements of Vittorio Messori (*infra*, p. 354, 562-563) still do not settle in a decisive manner the double question of the authenticity and veracity of the words attributed to the Pope. We do not even know if he had read the Secret at this period (cf. the chronology of the third Secret at the end of this volume).

[999] Quoted by the bulletin of the vice-postulation: *Les voyants de Fatima*, Sept.-Dec. 1981.

[1000] Cf. *supra*, p. 593.

[1001] Conference of February 11, 1967, Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 542, 545.

[1002] «Christ predicted the fall of Jerusalem. This took place; we know the history of it very well. Everything coincides very exactly with the precise details given by Jesus describing the persecutions, seditions and wars heralding the destruction, then the horrors of the siege and the final destruction of the Temple, of which one stone did not remain standing upon another. In the light of the prophecy, the Christian community of Jerusalem set up the chronology perfectly, worked out the timetable of events, its eyes opened by Christ. They left Jerusalem on time, just before the lid slammed shut on the reprobate people... at the time marked, forty years after the prophecy » (CRC 83, August 1974, p. 11-12).

[1003] VSF, p. 66-67.

[1004] “Le Secret de Fatima”, *L’Homme nouveau*, No. 269, November 22, 1959.

[1005] *L’épopée mariale de notre temps*.

[1006] *Our Lady of Fatima*, Image books.

[1007] Mt. 24:44; 25:13; cf. Mk 13:32-33.

[1008] Cf. *supra*, p. 336.

[1009] VSF, p. 76-77.

[1010] Also quoted by Msgr. Colgan in the review *Soul of May* 1961. Cf. *L’appel de Notre-Dame*, No. 24, 1961.

[1011] *Mensagem de Fatima*, No. 161, February 1985, p. 1.

[1012] Thus, in *Fatima, merveille du XXe siècle*, in January 1952, Canon Barthas points it out only in a footnote (p. 78). In *Fatima 1917-1968*, he omits it again in his account of the apparition of July 13 (p. 88), to quote it only in an appendix, and without any comments (p. 95).

The majority of older works do not point it out, and even many more recent works, which is less excusable: thus Cerbelaud-Salagnac, *Fatima et notre temps* (1967), cf. p. 118; Rémy, *Actualité de Fatima* (1970), p. 77; Father Paul, *Un signe du Ciel pour notre temps* (1980), p. 25; Jean Madiran, “Le Secret de Fatima”, p. 8, *Itinéraires*, May 1982. As for Dom Jean-Nesmy, in *La vérité de Fatima*, he quotes this sentence of the Secret, but without the slightest explanation (cf. p. 87 and 231-235).

[\(1013\)](#) VSF (Spanish edition), p. 64.

[\(1014\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 727-728.

[\(1015\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 741.

[\(1016\)](#) *Mensagem de Fatima*, No. 162, April 1985, p. 3.

[\(1017\)](#) Father Alonso explains this illogical presentation this way: while writing the text of the Secret in her Fourth Memoir, Lucy followed her previous written versions, where the sentence in question did not yet appear. And this is why she added it at the end (VSF, p. 79-80). It seems to us rather that this was intentional: she preferred to leave the new sentence at the end of the paragraph so as not to draw attention to it before the opportune moment – which succeeded perfectly!

[\(1018\)](#) VSF, p. 70.

[\(1019\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[\(1020\)](#) P. 80.

[\(1021\)](#) P. 81.

[\(1022\)](#) P. 69.

[\(1023\)](#) *Les messages de la Vierge Marie*, p. 195. Téqui, 1968.

[\(1024\)](#) Quoted by Freire, p. 160-161.

[\(1025\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 676.

[\(1026\)](#) “Vittorio Messori speaks with Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger: Here is why the faith is in crisis”, in the review *Jesus*, November 1984. On this terribly alarming diagnosis of the present situation of the Church, cf. the “Open Letter to Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger” published by our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, in January 1985 (CRC 207).

[\(1027\)](#) *Lettres à mes amis*, No. 58 et sq.

[\(1028\)](#) VSF (Spanish ed.), p. 74; cf. Engl. ed., p. 81.

[\(1029\)](#) “De nuevo el secreto de Fatima”, p. 92. *Ephemerides mariologicae*, 1982.

[\(1030\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 639-641.

[\(1031\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 34.

[\(1032\)](#) On the structure of the Secret, cf. our Vol. II, p. 8-15, 281-282, and the appendix: “Remarks on the structure of the Secret”, p. 292-299.

[\(1033\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 465.

[\(1034\)](#) Ibid., p. 524.

[\(1035\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 399. Letter of May 18, 1936, to Father Gonçalves.

[\(1036\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, “In the reign of Pius XI or Pius XII?” p. 695-702.

[\(1037\)](#) Ibid., p. 544.

[\(1038\)](#) Letter of April 4, 1970, quoted by Father Martins dos Reis, *Uma vida*, p. 380-382.

[\(1039\)](#) VSF, p. 80-81.

[\(1040\)](#) Literally: «... *de altos Jerarcas*”, VSF (Span.) p. 75.

[\(1041\)](#) Ibid., p. 73.

[\(1042\)](#) *Broteria*, 1967, p. 22. Cf. *Historia da literatura sobre Fatima* (p. 25), where Father Alonso repeats the same expressions.

[\(1043\)](#) VSF, p. 80.

[\(1044\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 37-48.

[\(1045\)](#) We have related how on January 2, 1944, the Blessed Virgin Mary came Herself, through an apparition, to finally dispel the seer’s darkness and put an end to her sorrowful trial.

[\(1046\)](#) VSF, p. 82.

[\(1047\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 7-30.

[\(1048\)](#) *Documentos*, p. 497-499; cf. *supra*, p. 233-234.

[\(1049\)](#) In 1974, Father Antonio Maria Martins had publicly adopted Father Alonso’s thesis – which is also the thesis of almost all the Portuguese experts – on the third Secret. He wrote in the preface to one of his works: «Two thirds of the Secret are found in this Volume. *The third part, which has not yet been published, deals only with what is called “the crisis of the Church”*. It is time to put an end to the unhealthy fantasies, the irrational doubts...» (*O Segredo de Fatima nas Memórias da Irma Lucia*, p. XVIII). Later on, subsequent to an interview with Cardinal Seper, Father Martins rallied to the thesis of Father Freire (cf. Appendix II, p. 735-743).

[\(1050\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 337-339.

[\(1051\)](#) Letter to the author, November 30, 1984.

[\(1052\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 503-508.

[\(1053\)](#) Ibid., p. 425-429.

[\(1054\)](#) Cf. *infra*, p. 488. Father Richard relates, «Cardinal Ottaviani told me himself that this Secret is very important, but that it is for the Sovereign Pontiff.» (*Appel de Notre-Dame*, January 1982).

[\(1055\)](#) “De nuevo el Secreto de Fatima”, p. 93. *Ephemerides mariologicae*, 1982.

[\(1056\)](#) III, p. 114.

[\(1057\)](#) III, p. 35.

[\(1058\)](#) III, p. 35.

[\(1059\)](#) III, p. 36.

[\(1060\)](#) III, p. 112-113. Cf. our Vol. III, p. 75-78.

[\(1061\)](#) III, p. 113.

[\(1062\)](#) I, p. 34.

[\(1063\)](#) IV, p. 143.

[\(1064\)](#) I, p. 43.

[\(1065\)](#) I, p. 43.

[\(1066\)](#) III, p. 113.

[\(1067\)](#) I, p. 45.

[\(1068\)](#) II, p. 82-83.

[\(1069\)](#) II, p. 93.

[\(1070\)](#) II, p. 83; cf. I, p. 34.

[\(1071\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 543-544.

[\(1072\)](#) Cf. the very severe, but fundamentally just critique of this allocution in *O Segredo de Fatima by Father Freire*, p. 44-57.

[\(1073\)](#) We follow the translation of the *Documentation catholique* established after taping the conference. We insert into it passages of the written text given beforehand to the press and which the Cardinal, speaking without a written text, failed to pronounce.

[\(1074\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 182-183.

[\(1075\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 467-478.

[\(1076\)](#) *O Segredo de Fatima*, p. 53.

[\(1077\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 481-484.

[\(1078\)](#) The following paragraph is excerpted from the written text.

[\(1079\)](#) Fr. Freire, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[\(1080\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 467-478.

[\(1081\)](#) On the meaning of this penance in the Fatima message, cf. our Vol. I, p. 295- 296 and *supra*, p. 18-23.

[\(1082\)](#) The following paragraph is borrowed from the written text of the conference.

[\(1083\)](#) Doc. cath., March 19, 1967, col. 541-546.

[\(1084\)](#) No. 10, Nov. 1977, p. 7.

[\(1085\)](#) Quoted by Freire, p. 58-59.

[\(1086\)](#) *La Verdad sobre el Secreto de Fatima*, Centro Mariano, Madrid, 120 pages.

[\(1087\)](#) *O Segredo de Fatima, a terceira parte é sobre Portugal?* Edição do Santuario de Fatima, 250 pages. Although the book was published by the Sanctuary, the author made it clear in his introduction: «... This does not imply any responsibility or approval (explicit or implicit) on the part of the Sanctuary, nor the Authority on which it depends (the Bishop of Leiria), concerning the opinions set out here.» (p. 6). A second revised and augmented edition, to which we refer, was published in October 1978.

[\(1088\)](#) *Op. cit.*, p. 98.

[\(1089\)](#) *Ibid.*, p 63.

[\(1090\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[\(1091\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 171. Let us point out that Father A. M. Martins – the only Fatima expert to finally rally (cf. *supra*, 709, p. 19) to Father Freire’s thesis, at least to our knowledge – adds an argument in favour of this thesis. In a letter of December 19, 1940 to Cardinal Cerejeira, Sister Lucy stated: «It would be good at this time not to forget that, when Our Lord promised a special protection over our nation, He said that it was guilty as well, and announced that it too would suffer something. *This something will consist of consequences of foreign wars, which could become more or less serious, according to our correspondence to*

the wishes of Our Lord.» Father Martins relates that in March 1980 he questioned on this matter Cardinal Seper, then the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The latter answered: *«It is referring to the wars of liberation in Africa.»*

Taking into account this answer, and the fact that the third Secret was not «addressed to the Pope», Father Martins concluded: «I am inclined to admit as very probable the hypothesis proposed by Father Gerald Freire, according to which the third Secret deals with the triumph of communism in Portugal and in the former provinces beyond the sea.» (*Novos Documentos de Fatima*, p. XXVI-XXVII.)

In our opinion, this is granting Cardinal Seper's reflection a trust which it undoubtedly does not merit. First of all, is it certain that Pope Paul VI had given the Cardinal the opportunity to read the third Secret? Besides, his statement deals with the interpretation of a letter of Sister Lucy written in 1940, and not explicitly the third Secret. Finally, this interpretation itself appears to us open to question, in spite of its justification by Father Martins in *Fatima, caminho da Paz* (p. 74-79). To us it seems more probable that, like the promise of a special protection in favour of Portugal, the peril evoked here by Sister Lucy concerned the world war which was then ravaging Europe. This does not exclude Sister Lucy very quickly realizing the gravity of the wars of independence. Yet nothing proves to us that this theme is related to the specific contents of the third Secret.

[\[1092\]](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 469.

[\[1093\]](#) Father Martins himself agrees: «Although the hypothesis of Dr. Gerald Freire seems very probable to me (he writes), I do not thereby want to say definitely that the text of the Secret is restricted to predicting events of the history of Portugal and its provinces beyond the sea after the sixties. It is possible that *this prediction is part of another, wider one, of worldwide scope.*» (*Novos Documentos*, p. XXVII). For Father Messias Dias Coelho (cf. "O Segredo de Fatima, a terceira parte é sobre Portugal?" *Mensagem de Fatima*, No. 123, November-December 1977) or for the late Canon Galamba, whom I had the happiness of meeting and being able to question at Marrazes in February 1984, this worldwide scope of the third Secret is not in the slightest doubt. Canon Galamba, like other Fatima experts consulted in Portugal, was not afraid to tell me that Father Freire's hypothesis seemed groundless to him.

[\[1094\]](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 166-169.

[\[1095\]](#) *Resistência Católica ao Salazarismo-Marcelismo*, with a letter prefaced by the Bishop of Porto, Don Antonio Ferreira Gomes, who in 1958 had assumed leadership of the Catholic opposition to Salazar's government (Livraria Telos Editora, Porto 1976, 261 pages).

[\[1096\]](#) *Mensagem de Fatima*, No. 123, November-December 1977. This long article is moreover a solid refutation of the principal thesis of Father Freire's work.

[\(1097\)](#) We shall not enter here into this difficult debate, which caused so much ink to be spilt in Portugal. The proposition was surely excellent. Was Salazar right or wrong, judging that the modification of the constitution on this point was not opportune? It is not for us to judge. Be that as it may, it is surely abusive to see as this affair as the cause of all the evils which overtook Portugal after the sixties. These were most often only the disturbing result of the cowardly derelictions of other European Catholic nations. The truth, rather, is that without Salazar's farsightedness, Portugal would have lost its colonies fifteen or twenty years earlier, at the same time as France or Belgium. And if there had only been Salazar, without the constraining force of international pressure, and without the treason of blind and criminal members of the Church, undoubtedly the Land of Holy Mary would have preserved its beautiful provinces beyond the sea and its flourishing missions even longer.

[\(1098\)](#) *Fatima, caminho da Paz*, p. 86-87.

[\(1099\)](#) If General de Gaulle, called to power in 1958 to guard Algeria for France, had not shamefully betrayed it, delivering it in 1962 to the Moslem cutthroats guided by Moscow, Portugal certainly would have been in a better posture to continue defending its provinces beyond the sea from the Bolshevik menace.

[\(1100\)](#) Cf. the dossier of the *Documentation catholique*, August 2, 1970, p. 717-719.

[\(1101\)](#) P. 6.

[\(1102\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 676.

[\(1103\)](#) Cf. the detailed analysis by Father Freire, who concludes: «There is no doubt that Lucy mentions elements of the Secret before its official revelation, because she judges that the reference is sufficiently veiled so that nobody can relate it to her Secret.» (Op. cit., p. 88).

[\(1104\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 504-508.

[\(1105\)](#) Ibid.

[\(1106\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 504-508.

[\(1107\)](#) Cf. the message to the bishops of Spain, *supra*, p. 8, sq.

[\(1108\)](#) Cf. *supra*. p. 549-551.

[\(1109\)](#) Father Messias Dias Coelho, *O que falta para a conversao da Russia*, p. 91. Quoted by Alonso, VSF, p. 89.

[\(1110\)](#) "Soeur Lucie... l'invisible", *L'appel de Notre-Dame*, No. 29.

[\(1111\)](#) P. 371-384.

[\(1112\)](#) Ibid., p. 385-386.

[\(1113\)](#) *Uma Vida*, p. 380.

[\(1114\)](#) *Uma Vida*, p. 380-382.

[\(1115\)](#) Quoted by the *Voice of Fatima*, April 15, 1972.

[\(1116\)](#) Let us recall that Dona Maria Teresa had been, with Father Demoutiez, behind the “World Tour” of Our Lady of Fatima in 1947 (cf. *supra*, p. 110).

[\(1117\)](#) *Uma Vida*, p. 385.

[\(1118\)](#) Ibid., p. 371-374.

[\(1119\)](#) *Uma Vida*, p. 374-377.

[\(1120\)](#) *Uma Vida*, p. 377-379. In our Vol. IV, we shall return to this important letter, which we will quote and comment on in full.

[\(1121\)](#) Ibid, p. 390-391.

[\(1122\)](#) Quoted by *L'Osservatore Romano* in 1984, under the title *Il Rosario è l'arma potente che ci difende nella battaglia*. Regarding Don Umberto, who recently died at Rome, cf. our Vol. II, p. 683 note 17.

[\(1123\)](#) CRC no. 83, August 1974, p. 9-10.

[\(1124\)](#) Cf. for example, *Concile oecuménique Vatican II*, Centurion, p. 739 sq., 1967.

[\(1125\)](#) *Documentation catholique*, June 6, 1982, p. 550. Cf. CRC 178, June 1982, p. 2.

[\(1126\)](#) CRC no. 83, August 1974, “The future of the world”. Cf. also a study on the parousia, CRC no. 39, December 1970.

[\(1127\)](#) Cf. Mt. 7:15: «Beware of *false prophets*, who come to you in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits you shall know them.»

[\(1128\)](#) 1 Jn. 2:18-29; 4:1-6; 2 Jn. 7-11.

[\(1129\)](#) *Jesus*, November 1984, p. 79. We shall analyze this text *in extenso*, in a later chapter.

[\(1130\)](#) On this apocalyptic significance of the Marian apparitions since 1830, cf. Father A. Richard, *Signes pour notre temps, Fatima, Vatican II*, p. 25-29.

[\(1131\)](#) «*I have reserved devotion to My Sacred Heart (Our Lord said to Saint Margaret Mary) for the last centuries, so as to win men over by this final benefit of My love, and to*

enrich them with the treasures of which My Heart is the source.» (Quoted by Pierre Salgas, *Le message de 1689 du Sacré Coeur à la France*, p. 25. Résiac, 1982).

[\(1132\)](#) Cf. 1 Jn. 2:18; 4:3.

[\(1133\)](#) Jerusalem Bible.

[\(1134\)](#) Mannoury, *Commentaire des épîtres de saint Paul*, p. 583.

[\(1135\)](#) Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30. Cf. Mt. 23:1: «The scribes and Pharisees have sat upon the chair of Moses, *kathedras ekathisan*.» Cf. Is. 14:13; Ez. 28:2; Dn. 11:36.

[\(1136\)](#) D. Joao Pereira Venancio, *Fatima e Leiria, Carta pastoral sobre o cinquentenario das Aparições de Fatima e da restauração da Diocese de Leiria, 1917-1918*, p. 12-13.

[\(1137\)](#) Louis Bassette, *Le fait de La Salette*, p. 211. Cerf, 1965.

[\(1138\)](#) *Actes de saint Pie X*, Vol. I, p. 30-47 (translation reviewed according to the Latin text).

[\(1139\)](#) A little further up, without the slightest mark of being overwhelmed, or even of simple sadness at the sight of such impiety, but on the contrary with great respect and a visible sympathy, Pope Paul VI had drawn this picture of the «modern human world» at the period when the Council was taking place:

«It is in a time which all recognize as being oriented to *the conquest of the earthly kingdom* rather than towards the Kingdom of Heaven, a time when *forgetfulness of God* becomes current and seems, wrongly, to be suggested by scientific progress, a time when *the human person*, which has become more conscious of itself and its liberty, *tends essentially to assert itself in an absolute autonomy, and to go against every law which goes beyond it*. (Let us remark that this is, word for word, “The Man of Sin, the lawless man”, this odious monster, this veritable henchman of Satan, according to Saint Paul.)

«It is in a time when *laicism* seems to flow normally from modern thought, and to represent the ultimate wisdom of the temporal social order... A time when one can observe, finally, even in the great religions, which share among themselves the peoples of the earth (sic), *signs of trouble and regression such as have never been seen*. This is the time in which the Council was held...»

Was the Vicar of Christ going to denounce or at least deplore this «growing iniquity», this criminal, atheistic and antichrist apostasy which had become the trademark of modern society? That is evidently what Saint Pius X would have done, and also all his predecessors, without any exception – as well as his successors, Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII. Paul VI and the Council had decided to act differently...

[\(1140\)](#) Doc. cath., January 2, 1966, col. 59-66.

[\(1141\)](#) Reread the “apostolic exhortation” of February 11, 1949 (quoted *supra*, p. 269-270.) and compare it with the discourse of December 7, 1965. In both cases it is a question of the same modern and antichrist humanism. Between these two pontifical discourses pronounced sixteen years apart the contrast is striking; and it is evident that it is not the same Spirit which could have inspired such contradictory judgements and attitudes.

[\(1142\)](#) On “the spirit of the Antichrist”, who denies the Father and the Son, cf. 1 Jn, 2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 7.

[\(1143\)](#) *Ibid.*, col. 64.

[\(1144\)](#) Lk. 10:29-38; cf. 1 Jn. 3:12. Granted, Jesus does not exclude anybody from His mercy. On the cross He is still the “Good Samaritan”: but it is with regard to the “Good Thief”, chastised and repentant, filled now «with the fear of God», with compassionate love for Jesus his Saviour, and with faith in his upcoming victory over death! This thief really has nothing to do with “the modern humanist”, the apostle hardened in his Promethean pride, who instead resembles the other thief, who was also obstinate and incredulous and who «insulted» his Savior (Lk. 23:39-43).

[\(1145\)](#) *Lettres à mes amis*, no. 238, p. 7.

[\(1146\)](#) *Liber accusationis*, p. 19-20. *La Contre-Réforme catholique*.

[\(1147\)](#) Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, *Prière embrasée*, nos. 20, 5, 28. *Oeuvres complètes*, p. 683, 676, 687.

[\(1148\)](#) Abbé Georges de Nantes, *Lettres à mes amis*, no. 247, June 5, 1967, p. 1.

[\(1149\)](#) Here we follow Father Allo, who considers this verse as «a short symbolic prologue» to the vision of the Woman and the Dragon, which comes immediately after (*L'Apocalypse*, p. 153), Gabalda, 1921. Father André Feuillet also adopts this solution.

[\(1150\)](#) For an insightful exegesis of this text and its unquestionable Marian implications, see for example: André Feuillet, *Jésus et sa Mère, d'après les récits lucaniens de l'enfance et d'après saint Jean*, p. 30-46; 128-130 (Gabalda, 1973). Braun, *La Mère des fidèles, essai de théologie johannique*, chap. V, “La Femme de l'Apocalypse”, p. 134-177 (Casterman, 1953). Abbé de Nantes, *Théologie mariale*, 1980 (taped conferences, 5 hours). Fathers Cerfaux and Dubarle, and Abbé Laurentin equally stress this Marian dimension of the text.

[\(1151\)](#) Apoc. 12:17. Cf. the excellent exposition of R. Laurentin, *Court traité de théologie mariale*, p. 33-34. Lethielleux, 1959.

[\(1152\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 113-114.

[\(1153\)](#) Martins dos Reis, *Uma Vida*, p. 321.

[\(1154\)](#) *Jésus et sa Mère*, p. 42-43. Cf. R. Laurentin, *Structure et théologie de Luc I-II*, p. 148-161. And particularly page 160, note 2. Gabalda, 1957.

[\(1155\)](#) Cf. Ex. 40:34-35; 1 Kg. 8:10-13. Our Vol. I, p. 184, 260, 264-266.

[\(1156\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 112.

[\(1157\)](#) *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[\(1158\)](#) P. 160, 183.

[\(1159\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 184.

[\(1160\)](#) Account of Maria Carreira, p. 223-224.

[\(1161\)](#) Lk. 21:25. Cf. Vol. I, p. 365.

[\(1162\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, Chap. 1, p. 21-49, and particularly the vision of Francisco, p. 31-32.

[\(1163\)](#) Cf. Vol. II, Chap. 2: "The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Salvation of souls", p. 53-68.

[\(1164\)](#) *L'Apocalypse*, p. 184, second edition, Gabalda, 1921.

[\(1165\)](#) Cf. CRC no. 83, p. 12.

[\(1166\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 13.

[\(1167\)](#) Letter of Pope Pius XI to Cardinal Pompili, February 2, 1930. *Actes de S.S. Pie XI*, Vol. VI, p. 148-151 (Bonne Presse, 1934). Cf. our Vol. II, p. 539.

[\(1168\)](#) In Apoc. 13:11-12; 16:13 and 20:10.

[\(1169\)](#) Apoc. 13:1. In 11:7 and 17:8 we are also told that the first Beast comes up from the Abyss, as if to mark its openly diabolical character.

[\(1170\)](#) Cf. CRC no. 83, p. 12.

[\(1171\)](#) Apoc. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10.

[\(1172\)](#) Cf. in 7:22 the judgment of these false prophets who shall have claimed to act in the name of Christ. Cf. also 2 Pet. 2:1.

[\(1173\)](#) 2 Cor. 11:13. Cf. also the Apostle's warning: «... fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock. And from among your own selves men will rise speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.» (Acts 20:28-31).

[\(1174\)](#) No. 1.

[\(1175\)](#) No. 2.

[\(1176\)](#) No. 3.

[\(1177\)](#) No. 61.

[\(1178\)](#) No. 3.

[\(1179\)](#) No. 53.

[\(1180\)](#) *Actes de saint Pie X*, Vol. III, p. 84-177.

[\(1181\)](#) May 26, 1910. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 90, 95. Cf. CRC no. 4, p. 7 and 9.

[\(1182\)](#) Letter, *Notre charge apostolique*. *Ibid.*, Vol. V.

[\(1183\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 13.

[\(1184\)](#) *L'Apocalypse*, p. 204.

[\(1185\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 13.

[\(1186\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 607-655.

[\(1187\)](#) Apoc. 13:8 «... the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.»

[\(1188\)](#) Cf. for example Ps. 75:6 and 11; Ps. 132:17; Sir. 47:11; Lk. 1:69.

[\(1189\)](#) Apoc. 13:1. Cf. Dan. 7:7.

[\(1190\)](#) Apoc. 5:10: «... Thou hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign.»

[\(1191\)](#) Cf. Apoc. 1:5-6 and 12-16.

[\(1192\)](#) Apoc. 5:6; 3:1. Commenting on this last text, Father Allo writes: «The seven spirits are the Holy Spirit (cf. 1:4). It belongs to the Son – as to the Lamb, in 5:6 – because Jesus distributes the different powers of the “life-giving Spirit”, on which depends the life of all the Churches (cf. Acts 2:33 and John 16:14).» (*L'Apocalypse*, p. 36; cf. p. 8-9).

[\(1193\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 12.

[\(1194\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 12.

[\(1195\)](#) CRC no. 83, p. 13.

[\(1196\)](#) On the significance of the figure 12, which symbolizes not only the twelve tribes of Israel, but more directly and principally the twelve Apostles, cf. 21:14: «The walls of the

city (the new Jerusalem, the Church restored after the great trial) rest on *twelve foundations*, and each one bears *the name of one of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.*»

[\(1197\)](#) *Ecco perché la fede è in crisi*, in the review *Jesus*, p. 79.

[\(1198\)](#) *The Ratzinger Report*, Ignatius Press, 1985.

[\(1199\)](#) P. 109-111, 118.

[\(1200\)](#) The subtitles in the centre have been added by us.

[\(1201\)](#) CRC no. 207, January 1985, p. 12.

[\(1202\)](#) CRC no. 207, January 1985, p. 11-12.

[\(1203\)](#) P. 93.

[\(1204\)](#) P. 104.

[\(1205\)](#) CRC no. 207, January 1985, p. 12.

[\(1206\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 374.

[\(1207\)](#) Cf. his letter of July 7, 1977, *supra*, p. 493.

[\(1208\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 442.

[\(1209\)](#) Doc. cath., June 4, 1967, col. 976-980.

[\(1210\)](#) Unless it prophesies, with some all too obvious details, the treason of the “False Prophet” in the service of the “Beast”. There are, in this area, many secrets which the Vatican does not want to see suddenly becoming public knowledge. The publication of any one of them would be quite annoying, not so much for Moscow as for the Vatican. However, we make it clear that – outside of Cardinal Ratzinger’s deliberately ambiguous statements – no evidence allows us to suppose that the great prophecy of Fatima makes explicit allusions to the scandals of Vatican Ostpolitik.

[\(1211\)](#) We know that Ali Agca recently declared, during his trial: «I want to say something to the court: the assassination attempt against the Pope is connected with the third Secret of the Madonna of Fatima.» (*Le Figaro*, May 29, 1985). We are hardly disposed to lend credence to the declarations of the criminal who, teleguided by Moscow, dared to attempt to assassinate the Vicar of Christ.

However, perhaps these statements are not altogether negligible. Our Father, the Abbé de Nantes, thinks for his part that given the infiltration of Soviet espionage even in the highest spheres of the Vatican, the Kremlin today might very well know the contents of the third Secret.

[\(1212\)](#) P. 118.

[\(1213\)](#) Read the exposé of our Father in his “Open Letter” to the Cardinal: “Fatima, narrow way of the world’s salvation. Medjugorje, broad way to perdition”, CRC no. 207, p. 12 and 13. Cf. *Apparitions à Medjugorje?* taken from a study published by *La Contre-Réforme catholique*, nos. 200-208, May 1984 - February 1985, 53 pages.

[\(1214\)](#) P. 111.

[\(1215\)](#) Paul VI, discourse of December 7, 1968, three years after the closing of the Council: «The Church finds herself in an hour of disquiet, of autocriticism, one could even say *autodestruction*. It is like a bitter and complex interior upheaval, which nobody would have expected, after the Council... One would have expected a flourishing, a sound expansion of the concepts matured in the great foundations of the Council. This aspect also exists... But... we also come to remark on the sorrowful aspect. *It is as if the Church were striking herself.*» (Doc. cath., January 5, 1969, col. 12.)

[\(1216\)](#) Paul VI, homily of June 29, 1972: «*Through some crack the smoke of Satan has entered into the temple of God: doubt, uncertainty, problems, disquiet, and dissatisfaction have appeared...*

«We would have believed that the days following the Council would be bright days for the Church. But we have found *new tempests*. We seek to dig new abysses instead of filling them up.» (Doc. cath., July 16, 1972, col. 658-659.)

[\(1217\)](#) Cf. our Vol. I, p. 182-183.

[\(1218\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 465.

[\(1219\)](#) Cf. *supra*, p. 255.

[\(1220\)](#) Cf. our Vol. II, p. 66.

[\(1221\)](#) Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, *The Secret of Mary*, No. 70.

[\(1222\)](#) Letter of April 14, 1945, quoted by A.M. Martins, FCM, p. 62-63.

[\(1223\)](#) Sister Lucy to Father Fuentes, *supra*, p. 337.

[\(1224\)](#) The numbers between brackets refer to the corresponding pages of this book.