

Chapter 3

Terrible Words

We have considered briefly the evidence of the general nature and location of the Secret. But what precisely is *in* the Secret if, as Socci has concluded, it is more than simply the vision of the bishop in white?

Over the decades that have elapsed since suppression of the Secret in 1960, the “Fatimist” literature has taken note of numerous testimonies by reliable witnesses who have either read the Secret themselves or received information from Sister Lucia or the Pope indicating its contents. The testimony of all the witnesses converges on the conclusion Socci has reached: that the Secret includes “the words of the Madonna [which] preannounce an apocalyptic crisis of the faith in the Church starting at the top” and “a devastation of the world.”⁸⁹ Let us survey the testimony.

The future Pius XII – 1931

When he was still Cardinal Pacelli, serving as Vatican Secretary of State under Pope Pius XI, the future Pius XII made this astonishing observation regarding the Message of Fatima:

I am worried by the Blessed Virgin’s messages to little Lucia of Fatima. This persistence of Mary about the dangers which menace the Church is a divine warning against *the suicide of altering the faith, in her liturgy, her theology and her soul....* I hear all around me *innovators* who wish to dismantle the Sacred Chapel, destroy the universal flame of the Church, reject her ornaments and make her feel remorse for her historical past.⁹⁰

The first two parts of the Message of Fatima contain no

⁸⁹Socci, *Fourth Secret*, pp. 63, 82.

⁹⁰Msgr. Georges Roche, *Pie XII Devant L’Histoire* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1972), p. 52.

warning about the “suicide” of alterations in the Church’s liturgy, theology and soul. Yet the future Pope linked his prediction of all these events to “the Blessed Virgin’s messages to little Lucia of Fatima.” It seems probable, then, that in his capacity as Vatican Secretary of State the future Pope had obtained information from Sister Lucia or from the Fatima archives pertaining to the Third Secret, and that this information concerned a coming crisis in the Church of enormous magnitude, amounting even to the “suicide” of the Church itself (relatively speaking, of course).

Father Augustin Fuentes – 1957

On December 26, 1957, Father Augustin Fuentes, the postulator of the causes for beatification of Francisco and Jacinta Marto, met with Sister Lucia at the convent in Coimbra, Portugal. After interviewing Lucia, Father Fuentes published a report on the interview with “every guarantee of authenticity and with due episcopal approval, including that of the Bishop of Fatima.”⁹¹

In speaking with Father Fuentes, Sister Lucia focused on the fast-approaching “deadline” of 1960 and of an even worse chastisement than World War II and the already manifest spread of Communism—a chastisement she reveals *is predicted in the Third Secret*:

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....

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.... This is the third part of

⁹¹Alonso, *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fátima*, pp. 110-111; quoted in *WTAF*, Vol. III, p. 503. Archbishop Sanchez of Veracruz gave the *imprimatur*. *Ibid.*

*the Message of Our Lady, which will remain secret until 1960.*⁹²

While Sister Lucia said she could not give “details” of the Third Secret, she did say this 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 beforehand obtain the conversion of that poor nation....

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 offends God the most, 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....

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....

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.⁹³

There is no reference to a diabolical attack on consecrated souls

⁹²Ibid., pp. 103-106; quoted in *WTAF*, Vol. III, pp. 504-508; and in Francis Alban and Christopher A. Ferrara, *Fatima Priest* (Pound Ridge, New York: Good Counsel Publications, 1997, Second Edition), pp. 295-298 (also at <http://www.fatimapriest.com/Appendix3.htm>).

⁹³Ibid.

in the first two parts of the Fatima message. Yet Lucia here clearly relates this attack to “the third part of the Message of Our Lady, which will remain secret until 1960.” Thus, Sister Lucia all but confirmed that within the “etc” she had placed at the end of Our Lady’s reference to the preservation of dogma in Portugal is to be found a heavenly prophecy of apostasy in the Catholic Church.

Notice also that Sister Lucia—*after* World War II and the rise of international Communism—warned of “the material punishments which are certain to come if the world does not pray and do penance beforehand.” Thus, Lucia intimates that the Third Secret foretells *parallel chastisements*: spiritual and material. The loss of faith in the Church would be accompanied by temporal punishments of the whole world.

Despite an ecclesiastical campaign to destroy his good name, Father Fuentes would ultimately be rehabilitated. By 1976 the official Fatima archivist, Father Joaquin Alonso (who had been persuaded for a time that the Fuentes interview was faked), had concluded from his review of the Fatima archives that the interview “contains nothing that Sister Lucia has not already said in her numerous published writings.”⁹⁴ Indeed, it contained nothing that, in substance, Pius XII himself had not long before connected with the Fatima prophecy when he was still Cardinal Pacelli.

Soon after the Father Fuentes interview appeared, Sister Lucia was silenced by order of the Vatican. No more freely given interviews. No more visits from anyone not pre-approved in Rome. Socci notes that from 1960 forward “Sister Lucia could receive in fact only family and those who came authorized by the Vatican.” Socci calls this an “inexplicable gagging” of the “only living witness” to the apparitions, and “one of the most incomprehensible paradoxes of Fatima.”⁹⁵ After 1960 it would be only through her letters and certain limited encounters, approved or by chance, that Lucia would be able to communicate bits and pieces of what concerns us here.

Father Joaquin Alonso – 1965

As the official Fatima archivist, Father Alonso had unrestricted

⁹⁴Alonso, *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fátima*, pp. 112-113, quoted in *WTAF*, Vol. III, pp. 552-553. See also “Silencing of the Messengers: Father Fuentes (1959 – 1965)” at <http://www.fatima.org/essentials/opposed/frfuentes.asp>.

⁹⁵Socci, *Fourth Secret*, p. 112.

access to Sister Lucia and her voluminous writings and was able to conduct innumerable interviews of the seer. Based on what Sister Lucia had said and written, Father Alonso reached these conclusions about what followed the mysterious “etc”:

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.

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...⁹⁶

Elsewhere, Father Alonso summed up his conclusions thus: “It is therefore completely probable that the text makes concrete references to the crisis of faith within the Church and to the negligence of the pastors themselves,” to “internal struggles in the very bosom of the Church and of grave pastoral negligence by the upper hierarchy,” and “deficiencies of the upper hierarchy of the Church.”⁹⁷

Sister Lucia – post 1960

Even after she was ordered not to receive any visitors except those approved by the Vatican, Sister Lucia wrote many times to reliable witnesses of a “diabolical disorientation” in the Church and the world of which Our Lady had warned her. For example:

There is a diabolical disorientation invading the world and misleading souls.... [T]he devil has succeeded in infiltrating evil under the cover of good, and the blind are beginning to guide others.... 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 leading other blind men... [They] let

⁹⁶Father Joaquin Alonso, *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fátima*, p. 70; quoted in WTAF, Vol. III, p. 687.

⁹⁷Alonso, *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fátima*, pp. 75, 80-81, quoted in WTAF, Vol. III, p. 704.

themselves be dominated by the diabolical wave invading the world....⁹⁸

Even more dramatically, when asked about the content of the Third Secret, Sister Lucia replied simply: "It's in the Gospel and *the Apocalypse*. Read them!"⁹⁹ Since the first two parts of the Message of Fatima say nothing of diabolical disorientation in the Church or any connection of the Message to the Book of the Apocalypse, the only reasonable inference is that these matters pertain to the Third Secret.

Cardinal Ottaviani – 1967

During a press conference concerning the Third Secret in 1967, Cardinal Ottaviani, then Pro-Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (which had replaced the Holy Office), stated that the Third Secret had not been revealed in order "To avoid that something so delicate, not destined for public consumption, come for whatever reason, even fortuitous, to fall into alien hands."¹⁰⁰

What could be so "delicate" about the Secret that the Vatican was afraid it would fall into "alien hands"? From the evidence already discussed, we have a good idea of the answer to that question.

Pope Paul VI – 1967

On May 13, 1967, during his trip to Fatima, Paul VI introduced his encyclical letter *Signum Magnum*, whose opening line, in keeping with the revelation of Sister Lucia just mentioned, links the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima to Chapter 12 of the Book of the Apocalypse: "The great sign which the Apostle John saw in Heaven, 'a woman clothed with the sun,' is interpreted by the sacred Liturgy, not without foundation, as referring to the most blessed Mary, the mother of all men by the grace of Christ the Redeemer."

It cannot have been a mere happenstance that Paul VI chose the occasion of his sermon at Fatima on this date to lament that the

⁹⁸Excerpts from letters, quoted in *The Whole Truth About Fatima (WTAF)*, Vol. III, pp. 758-760.

⁹⁹WTAF, Vol. III, p. 763.

¹⁰⁰*Documentation Catholique*, March 19, 1967, Col. 543.

“renewal” of the Church after Vatican II was going wrong: “What an evil it would be if an arbitrary interpretation, not authorized by the Magisterium, transformed this renewal into a *disquieting disintegration of her traditional structure and constitution...*”

Joining the theme of material chastisement to the spiritual chastisement clearly already in progress, Pope Paul declared: “We say: *the world is in danger*. Therefore, we have come on foot to demand of the Queen of Peace as a gift what only God can give, peace.... Men, think of the gravity and the greatness of this hour, which can decide the history of the present and of future generations.”¹⁰¹ Note well Pope Paul’s linkage—at *Fatima*—of the ecclesial crisis with danger to the whole world.

John Paul II – 1980

Thirteen years later, Pope John Paul II made the same linkage. At a meeting with a select group of Catholic intellectuals at Fulda, Germany the Pope was asked: “What about the Third Secret of Fatima? Should it not have already been published by 1960?” The Pope replied:

Given *the seriousness of the contents*, my predecessors in the Petrine office diplomatically preferred to postpone publication so as not to encourage the world power of Communism to make certain moves.

On the other hand, it should be sufficient for all Christians to know this: *if there is a message in which it is written that the oceans will flood whole areas of the earth, and that from one moment to the next millions of people will perish, truly the publication of such a message is no longer something to be so much desired....*¹⁰²

¹⁰¹See Sermon of Pope Paul VI at Fatima, May 13, 1967, (in Italian) at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/homilies/1967/documents/hf_p-vi_hom_19670513_it.html.

¹⁰²*Stimme Des Glaubens* (Voice of Faith), October 1981. This translation was made by Rev. M. Crowley for *Approaches* magazine, edited by Mr. Hamish Fraser of Scotland. It was translated from an Italian publication by the Roman priest Father Francis Putti, publisher of *Si Si No No*. All three magazines are credible sources. In his 2007 television appearance, which is the subject of Chapter 8, Cardinal Bertone, confronted by the Pope’s reported statements at Fulda, avoided any comment, while Giuseppe de Carli, co-author of the Cardinal’s book attacking Socci, offered the explanation that Cardinal Ratzinger had offered an “interpretation” of the Pope’s remarks that eliminated any apocalyptic reading. No one on the show, however, denied that the Pope had spoken as he did at Fulda. The verbatim transcript of the Pope’s remarks in *Stimme Des Glaubens*

The Pope was then asked: “What is going to happen to the Church?” To this question the Pope replied:

We must prepare ourselves to suffer great trials before long, such as will demand of us a disposition to give up even life, and a total dedication to Christ and for Christ ... With your and my prayer it is possible to mitigate this tribulation, *but it is no longer possible to avert it, because only thus can the Church be effectively renewed.* How many times has the renewal of the Church sprung from blood! This time, too, it will not be otherwise. We must be strong and prepared, and trust in Christ and His Mother, and be very, very assiduous in praying the Rosary.¹⁰³

Thus, in 1980, the Pope warned of *both* a material and a spiritual chastisement in connection with his discussion of the Third Secret.

John Paul II - 1982

On May 13, 1982, during his trip to Fatima after the assassination attempt, Pope John Paul II once again linked the Message of Fatima to apocalyptic developments not mentioned in the first two parts. In his sermon, which I quoted earlier, he revealed that Our Lady of Fatima had issued what Pius XII had called “a divine warning” about an attack on the dogmas of the Faith:

Can the Mother, who with all the force of the love that she fosters in the Holy Spirit and desires the salvation of every man, can she remain silent when she sees *the very bases of her children's salvation undermined?* No, she cannot remain silent.¹⁰⁴

These “bases” of salvation must refer to firm adherence to the Catholic faith as found in the dogmatic teachings of the Church

matches in all particulars the detailed notes taken by a German priest who attended the same conference. See “World War III and Worse?”, interview with Father Paul Kramer, *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 82 (Spring 2006), p. 11 (also at <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr82/cr82pg11.asp>).

¹⁰³*Stimme Des Glaubens*, loc. cit.

¹⁰⁴“Può la Madre, la quale con tutta la potenza del suo amore, che nutre nello Spirito Santo, desidera la salvezza di ogni uomo, tacere su ciò *che mina le basi stesse di questa salvezza?* No, non lo può!”

and in her sacraments, the means by which souls are saved.¹⁰⁵ Thus, albeit in a veiled way, the Pope was linking the Message of Fatima to a threat to dogma and discipline in the Church, just as the future Pius XII did in 1931.¹⁰⁶ But where in the Message is there such a warning? Certainly not in the parts that had already been published as of 1982.

During the same trip to Fatima, John Paul II discussed with Sister Lucia the question why the Third Secret had not yet been revealed. As Sister Lucia informed Cardinal Oddi, while the Cardinal was in Fatima for the annual May 13th celebration of the apparitions in 1985, the Pope told her that the Secret had not been divulged “because it could be badly interpreted.”¹⁰⁷ Here the Pope provided a further hint that the Secret would be embarrassing to Church authorities because it concerns a crisis of faith and discipline for which they themselves are responsible.

Bishop do Amaral – 1984

On September 10, 1984 Bishop Alberto Cosme do Amaral, the Bishop of Fatima, emphasized the Secret’s prediction of apostasy in the Church. During a question and answer session in the *aula magna* of the Technical University of Vienna, Austria he flatly declared: “Its (the Third Secret’s) content concerns only our faith ... 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.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵As the opening lines of the St. Athanasius Creed state: *Quicumque vult salvus esse, ante omnia opus est, ut teneat catholicam fidem: Quam nisi quisque integram inviolatamque servaverit, absque dubio in aeternum peribit.* (“Whoever wishes to be saved must before all else adhere to the Catholic faith. He must preserve this faith whole and inviolate; otherwise he shall most certainly perish forever.”)

¹⁰⁶See, “Pope John Paul II Has Twice Revealed the Essence of the Secret” and “The Attack is From Within the Church”, in *The Devil’s Final Battle*, Chapter 13, pp. 170, 185 (also at <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/ch13.htm>).

¹⁰⁷30 Giorni, April 1991; cited in Soggi, *Fourth Secret*, p. 131. See also Lucio Brunelli, “The Third Secret Regards ‘Apostasy in the Church’”, *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 33 (Summer 1990), pp. 14ff (also at <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr33/cr33pg14.asp>), an interview with Cardinal Oddi originally published on March 17, 1990, in *Il Sabato* magazine, Rome.

¹⁰⁸Remarks recorded in *Mensagem de Fátima*, February 1985, published by Father Messias Coelho.

Cardinal Ratzinger – 1984

On November 11, 1984, Cardinal Ratzinger, in an interview in *Jesus* magazine, revealed that he had read the Third Secret and that it concerns “dangers *threatening the faith* and the life of the Christian and therefore of the world.” There is, of course, no reference in the first two parts of the Message of Fatima to “dangers threatening the *faith*” as distinct from dangers to the Pope and other *believers* in the form of wars and persecutions of the Church by external enemies. The Cardinal further revealed that “the things contained in this ‘Third Secret’ correspond to what has been announced in Scripture and has been said again and again in *many other Marian apparitions...*”¹⁰⁹

As to why the Secret had not been published, the Cardinal said: “If it is not published, at least for now, it is to avoid confusing *religious prophecy with sensationalism...*”¹¹⁰ Apparently contradicting himself, however, the Cardinal added that the Secret had not been revealed “Because, according to the judgment of the Popes, it adds nothing that differs from what a Christian should know from Revelation...” A secret that “adds nothing” to what a Christian should know would not be “sensational”; in fact, it would not even be a secret.¹¹¹ Why, then, had the text of the Secret been placed “forever under absolute seal” in 1960? The Cardinal’s suggestion that the Secret contains nothing we do not already know hardly comported with the way the Vatican had been handling it for decades.

¹⁰⁹*Jesus* magazine, November 11, 1984, p. 79 (see photo of extract of original Italian article in [photo insert section](#)). See also Father Paul Kramer, *The Devil’s Final Battle*, pp. 33, 274-276 (also at <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/ch4.htm>, <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/appendix.htm>); “Published Testimony: Cardinal Ratzinger (November 1984)” at <http://www.fatima.org/thirdsecret/ratzinger.asp>; *WTAF*, Vol. III, pp. 822-823; “Cardinal Ratzinger Speaks on: The Third Secret of Fatima”, *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 18 (Oct.-Dec. 1985), pp. S4ff (also at <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr18/cr18pgS4.asp>); *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 37 (Summer 1991), p. 7 (<http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr37/cr37pg6.asp>); and *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 64, (Summer 2000), p. 118 (<http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr64/cr64pg28.asp>).

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹¹The complete sentence in question reads: “Because, according to the judgment of the Popes, it adds nothing to what a Christian must know from Revelation: i.e., a radical call for conversion; the absolute importance of history; the dangers threatening the faith and the life of the Christian and therefore of the world.”

Cardinal Ratzinger and Our Lady of Akita

The Cardinal's linkage of the "religious prophecy" of the Third Secret to "other Marian apparitions" in his 1984 interview was abundantly revealing. The apparition of Our Lady of Akita to Sister Agnes Katsuko Sasagawa, a Japanese nun, on October 13, 1973—the very anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun—was found to be authentic and worthy of belief after an investigation by Bishop Ito of the Diocese of Akita. Here is what Our Lady said to Sister Agnes:

As I told you, if men do not repent and better themselves, the Father will inflict a terrible punishment on all humanity. It will be a punishment greater than the deluge, such as one will never have seen before. *Fire will fall from the sky and will wipe out a great part of humanity, the good as well as the bad, sparing neither priests nor faithful. The survivors will find themselves so desolate that they will envy the dead.*¹¹² The only arms which will remain for you will be the Rosary and the Sign left by My Son. Each day recite the prayers of the Rosary. With the Rosary, pray for the Pope, the bishops and priests.

The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see cardinals opposing cardinals, bishops against bishops. The priests who venerate me will be scorned and opposed by their confreres... churches and altars sacked; the Church will be full of those who accept compromises and the demon will press many priests and consecrated souls to leave the service of the Lord.

Howard Dee, former Philippine ambassador to the Vatican, revealed in a 1998 interview with *Inside the Vatican* that "Bishop Ito was certain Akita was an extension of Fatima, and *Cardinal*

¹¹²It might be asked how the punishment of fire falling from Heaven is consistent with the Pope's remarks at Fulda about the inundation of nations by the oceans and millions of deaths as a result. Both events are consistent with a cometary or asteroidal impact causing tsunamis. The Book of the Apocalypse speaks of how "the second angel sounded the trumpet: and as it were a great *mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea*, and the third part of the sea became blood..." (Apoc. 8:8) A prediction of an event of that magnitude would explain why the words of the Virgin were placed "forever under absolute seal" in 1960, and why the Secret has been treated as such a "delicate" matter since then.

*Ratzinger personally confirmed to me that these two messages, of Fatima and Akita, are essentially the same.*¹¹³

If the messages of Fatima and Akita are, as Cardinal Ratzinger admitted, “essentially the same”—a great crisis of faith within the Church accompanied by a worldwide chastisement—then it appears we must look to the Third Secret for the content that would make such a comparison apt. The Third Secret, then, as does the Akita prophecy, would make explicit Sister Lucia’s own reference to a combined spiritual and material chastisement of the Church much worse than what had already transpired with World War II and the rise of world Communism.

Cardinal Ratzinger - 1985

Adding further to the enigma the Cardinal’s own words had created in 1984, the text of this interview, which the Cardinal had reviewed and approved before its publication, was mysteriously revised for republication in the book entitled *Report on the Faith*, which appeared in June 1985. In the *Report* the Cardinal’s original reference to “dangers threatening the faith and the life of the Christian and therefore of the world” was “sanitized” to read “the dangers threatening humanity.” Had the Cardinal said too much? At the same time, however, the reference to the “sensational” content of the Third Secret was made even clearer: “To publish the Third Secret would also signify exposing oneself to the danger of the sensationalistic use of the contents.”¹¹⁴

Cardinal Oddi - 1990

On March 17, 1990, Cardinal Silvio Oddi, a close personal friend of John XXIII, declared that the Third Secret “has nothing to do with Gorbachev. The Blessed Virgin was alerting us against apostasy in the Church.”¹¹⁵

¹¹³Reported by *Catholic World News*, October 11, 2001; See www.cwnews.com/news/viewstory.cfm?recnum=20583.

¹¹⁴Quoted in Soggi, *Fourth Secret*, p. 102; see also WTAF, Vol. III, pp. 818-840; “Cardinal Ratzinger on the Third Secret”, *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 64 (Summer 2000), pp. 35ff (also at <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr64/cr64pg35.asp>).

¹¹⁵*Il Sabato*, Rome, March 17, 1990. See also “Apostasy in the Church”, *The Fatima Crusader*, No. 33 (Summer 1990), pp. 14-15 (also at <http://www.fatimacrusader.com/cr33/cr33pg14.asp>).

Cardinal Ciappi – 1995

In 1995 Cardinal Luigi Ciappi, no less than the papal theologian to Popes Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I and John Paul II—a span of 40 years—made this revelation concerning the contents of the Secret: “In the Third Secret it is foretold, among other things, that the great apostasy in the Church begins at the top.”¹¹⁶

Cardinal Ratzinger – 1996

A year later, giving further indications that the Third Secret would cause a sensation, Cardinal Ratzinger said during an interview with a leading Portuguese journalist, Aura Miguel, that “The divulging of the secret should be done only when it will not be able to create one-sidedness and disequilibrium, *concentrating only on its details*; the revelation should be made only when it [the Third Secret] will be able to be understood as an aid to the progress of the faith.”¹¹⁷

What are these “details” on which we must not “concentrate,” lest they cause “disequilibrium” in the Church? From what we have seen thus far, we are dealing with some very precise content that could only involve particular predictions by the Blessed Virgin, as distinct from the unexplained meaning of the wordless vision of the bishop in white.

John Paul II – 2000: the “compromise solution”

Finally, on May 13, 2000 John Paul II renewed the apocalyptic theme of Paul VI at Fatima 33 years earlier, once again linking Our Lady of Fatima to Chapter 12 of the Book of the Apocalypse. In his sermon at the Mass for the beatification of Jacinta and Francisco, John Paul declared:

According to the divine plan, “a woman clothed with the sun” (Apoc. 12: 1) came down from heaven to this earth to visit the privileged children of the Father. She speaks to them with a mother’s voice and

¹¹⁶Personal communication to Professor Baumgartner in Salzburg, Austria.

¹¹⁷Aura Miguel, *Totus Tuus: Il Segreto di Fatima nel Pontificato de Giovanni Paolo II* (Itaca: Castel Bolognese, 2003), p. 137.

heart: she asks them to offer themselves as victims of reparation, saying that she was ready to lead them safely to God...

“Another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon” (Apoc. 12: 3). These words from the first reading of the Mass make us think of the great struggle between good and evil, showing how, when man puts God aside, he cannot achieve happiness, but ends up destroying himself....

The Message of Fatima is a call to conversion, alerting humanity to have nothing to do with the “dragon” whose “tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth” (Apoc. 12: 4). Man’s final goal is heaven, his true home, where the heavenly Father awaits everyone with His merciful love....

In her motherly concern, the Blessed Virgin came here to Fátima to ask men and women “to stop offending God, Our Lord, who is already very offended”. It is a mother’s sorrow that compels her to speak; *the destiny of her children is at stake*....¹¹⁸

Here we encounter the evidence of what Socci has called the “compromise solution” on disclosure of the Third Secret: a papal sermon revealing its apocalyptic content indirectly. As already noted, Sister Lucia also revealed that the Third Secret is related to the Book of the Apocalypse. At Fatima, John Paul II could not have made this more explicit. But, even more important, the Pope’s association of the Message of Fatima with the “the stars of heaven” being swept down from Heaven by the tail of the dragon who appears in Chapter 12, verses 3 and 4 of the Apocalypse was an unmistakable linkage of the Fatima message to the threat of apostasy in the Church.¹¹⁹ How do we know this? We know it because the fall of one-third of the “stars of heaven” is traditionally interpreted to mean the fall of *consecrated souls*.

¹¹⁸See www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/travels/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20000513_beatification-fatima_en.html.

¹¹⁹See, “The Secretary of State Targets the Message of Fatima” (in Chapter 8) and “Pope John Paul II Has Twice Revealed the Essence of the Secret” (in Chapter 13) in *The Devil’s Final Battle*, pp. 100-101, 170-171 (also at <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/ch8.htm> and <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/ch13.htm>).

Father Herman B. Kramer discusses the traditional exegesis in his commentary on the Apocalypse, *The Book of Destiny*, first published with an *imprimatur*, providentially enough, in 1956, only six years before the opening of Vatican II. As Father Kramer notes, the symbol of one-third of the stars in Heaven signifies “one-third of the clergy,” who “shall follow the dragon.” By means of these apostate clergy, the devil will probably enforce upon the Church “the acceptance of unchristian morals, false doctrines, *compromise with error*, or obedience to the civil rulers in violation of conscience.” Further, “The symbolic meaning of the dragon’s tail may reveal that the clergy who are ripe for apostasy will hold the influential positions in the Church, having won preferment by hypocrisy, deceit and flattery.” These wayward clergy will include those “who neglected to preach the truth or to admonish the sinner by a good example, but rather sought popularity by being lax and the slaves of human respect,” those “who fear for their own interests and will not remonstrate against evil practices in the Church,” and bishops “who abhor upright priests who dare to tell the truth.”¹²⁰

Surely this scenario sounds familiar to contemporary Catholics, although it would have been viewed with amazement in the 1950s. Pope John Paul cannot have been unaware of the traditional understanding of the apocalyptic passages he had cited at Fatima and linked to the Fatima message. The Pope could only have been evoking the very thing Sister Lucia had confided to Father Fuentes: that the Message of Fatima, in the part that must be kept secret until 1960, warns of a massive defection of priests and religious under the influence of the devil, and consequent apostasy among the faithful who are left without shepherds. To recall Sister Lucia’s words: “The devil knows that religious and priests who fall away from their beautiful vocation *drag numerous souls to hell*.”¹²¹

Again, however, the vision of “the Bishop dressed in white” contains no indication of any such apostasy in the Church. It contains *no words at all* which could explain its content, but only the angel’s single word, repeated thrice: Penance! It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that here the Pope was indirectly revealing the *words* of

¹²⁰Father Herman B. Kramer, *The Book of Destiny* (first published 1955, republished by TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, Illinois, 1975), pp. 279-284; cited in *The Devil’s Final Battle*, pp. 101-102 (also at <http://www.devilsfinalbattle.com/ch8.htm>).

¹²¹Alonso, *La verdad sobre el Secreto de Fátima*, pp. 103-106; quoted in WTAF, Vol. III, pp. 504-506; and in *Fatima Priest*, pp. 296-297 (also at <http://www.fatimapriest.com/Appendix3.htm>).

the Virgin explaining the vision as contained in the text of the Secret that has yet to be produced. As Socci notes, that Sister Lucia, Paul VI and John Paul II *all* linked the Third Secret to the Apocalypse “cannot be casual,” but must indicate “a strict link between the prophetic book of the Apostle John and the Third Secret.”¹²²

A summary of the evidence on this point

In sum, before the Vatican’s publication of the vision of “the Bishop dressed in white” on June 26, 2000, there was already a large body of evidence that the text of the Third Secret involved—

- a “divine warning” about “suicidal” alterations in the liturgy, theology and soul of the Church (the future Pius XII in 1931);
- a prediction that after 1960 “the devil will succeed in leaving the souls of the faithful abandoned by their leaders,” by causing “religious and priests [to] fall away from their beautiful vocation... drag[ging] numerous souls to hell,” and that “nations will disappear from the face of the earth” (Sister Lucia to Father Fuentes in 1957);
- contents “so delicate” that they cannot be allowed “for whatever reason, even fortuitous, to fall into alien hands” (Cardinal Ottaviani in 1967);
- a text “diplomatically” withheld because of the “seriousness of its contents” and which predicts, *after 1980*, “great trials” and “tribulation” for the Church which “it is no longer possible to avert” and the destruction of “whole areas of the earth” so that “from one moment to the next millions of people will perish” (John Paul II at Fulda, 1980);
- details that could be “badly interpreted” (John Paul II in 1982);
- a “religious prophecy” of “dangers threatening the faith and the life of the Christian and therefore of the world” (Cardinal Ratzinger in 1984);
- matters which would make for the “sensationalistic

¹²²Socci, *Fourth Secret*, p. 97.

utilization of its contents” (Cardinal Ratzinger in 1985);

- a prediction of apostasy in the Church that “begins at the top” (Cardinal Ciappi in 1995);
- “details” that would cause “disequilibrium” in the Church (Cardinal Ratzinger in 1996);
- a warning of a material chastisement of the world which accompanies the great apostasy in the Church, like that predicted in the approved apparition of Our Lady of Akita in 1973, whose message is “essentially the same” as the message of Our Lady of Fatima (Cardinal Ratzinger to Howard Dee, as reported in 1998);
- a warning to avoid the “tail of the dragon” (the devil) referred to in the Book of the Apocalypse (12:3-4), which sweeps one-third of “the stars” (priests and other consecrated souls) from Heaven (their vocations) (John Paul II in 2000).

The vision, as we shall see, involves *none* of these elements—a fact that has led Socci and many other Catholics to conclude that there must be a missing text of the Third Secret.

A movement emerges

The body of evidence we have surveyed in this and the preceding chapter is so compelling that it gave rise to a movement in the Church composed of loyal Catholics unjustly derided as “Fatimists”—Catholics who could see that the Secret had been suppressed because its contents were both precise and terrible. Over the decades that followed 1960 this movement grew larger, and the pressure for disclosure of the truth about the Secret, the whole truth, steadily intensified. The issue of the Third Secret would simply not go away; nor could it, given the Secret’s heavenly origin and the universal destination of the Message of Fatima as a whole. As Pope John Paul himself declared at Fatima on May 13, 1982: “This Message¹²³ is addressed to every human being.”¹²³ Thus was the stage set for the Vatican’s purported revelation of the Secret in June of 2000.

¹²³“Questo messaggio è rivolto ad ogni uomo.” *Papal Homily at Fatima Sanctuary*, May 13, 1982 at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820513_fatima_it.html.