

# Chapter 12

## POPE BENEDICT REFUTES THE PARTY LINE

On May 11, 2010, a week after De Carli's appearance at *The Fatima Challenge* conference, and only four days after the conference ended, Pope Benedict was on his way to Portugal for a pilgrimage to the Fatima shrine at the Cova da Iria on May 13, 2010, the anniversary of Our Lady's first apparition at the Cova. The Fatima Center's technical team had detected monitoring of the conference proceedings from an IP (Internet Provider) address within the Vatican. Surely, Cardinal Bertone had watched some or all of the proceedings, including De Carli's appearance on his behalf. And it is probable that the Pope himself had seen or been informed of the proceedings—a conclusion well supported by what the Pope said on the papal plane en route to Portugal.

Speaking calmly and deliberately to reporters on the plane, the Pope reopened the entire Third Secret controversy by expressly rejecting—at last!—the universally disbelieved Sodano/Bertone “interpretation” of the vision as nothing more than a tableau of 20th century events, including the 1981 assassination attempt, which “belong to the past.” Rather, said the Pope, the Third Secret prophesies what is happening in the Church today, is not at all limited to “the past,” and predicts *future* events in the Church *which are still developing day by day*. Here is the question and the pertinent parts of the Pope's answer, which he gave as Cardinal Bertone literally hovered behind him on camera:

**Lombardi:** Holiness, what significance do the apparitions of Fatima have for us today? And when you presented the text of the Third Secret, in the Vatican Press Office, in June 2000, *it was asked of you whether the Message could be extended, beyond the attack on John Paul II*, also to the other sufferings of the Pope. Is it possible, according to you, to frame also in that vision the sufferings of the Church of today for the sins of the sexual abuse of minors?

**Pope Benedict:** Beyond this great vision of the suffering of the Pope, which we can in substance refer to John Paul II, *are indicated future realities of the Church which are little by little developing and revealing themselves*. Thus, it is true that beyond the moment indicated in the vision, it is *spoken*, it is seen, the necessity of *a passion of the Church that naturally is reflected in the person of the Pope; but the Pope is in the Church, and therefore the sufferings of the Church are what is announced....*

As for the novelty that we can discover today in this message, it is that *attacks on the Pope and the Church do not come only from outside, but the sufferings of the Church come precisely from within the Church*, from sins that exist in the Church. This has always been known, but today we see it *in a really terrifying way*: that the greatest persecution of the Church *does not come from enemies outside, but arises from sin in the Church*.<sup>257</sup>

First of all, it is critical to note that the Pope's explosive remarks were not some off-the-cuff statement. They came in answer to a question read to him by papal spokesman Fr. Federico Lombardi, one of three questions selected as a "synthesis" of the questions to which the press pool had sought answers. As the *National Catholic Reporter* observed, the Pope "was hardly caught off-guard. The Vatican asks reporters traveling with the Pope to submit questions for the plane several days in advance, so Benedict has plenty of time to ponder what he wants to say. If he takes a question on the plane, *it's because he wants to talk about it, and he's chosen his words carefully*."<sup>258</sup>

The significance of the Pope's carefully chosen words cannot be overstated. The Pope went out of his way to bring up the Third Secret of Fatima, ten years after the subject was supposedly laid to rest by Sodano and Bertone; and he did so because *he wished to speak of the Secret* and its relation to the current and *future* state of the Church: "*future realities of the Church which are little by little developing and revealing themselves.*" **Note well:** *Future realities, developing little by little and revealing themselves today, not merely "in the past."* And here the Pope spoke of something *not seen in the vision* of the bishop in white: "attacks on the Pope and the Church... *from within the*

<sup>257</sup> "Oltre questa grande visione della sofferenza del Papa, che possiamo in sostanza riferire a Giovanni Paolo II sono indicate realtà del futuro della chiesa che man mano si sviluppano e si mostrano. Cioè è vero che oltre il momento indicato nella visione, *si parla*, si vede la necessità di una passione della chiesa, che naturalmente si riflette nella persona del Papa, ma il Papa sta nella chiesa e quindi sono sofferenze della chiesa che si annunciano. Il Signore ci ha detto che la chiesa sarà per sempre sofferente, in modi diversi fino alla fine de mondo. L'importante è che il messaggio, la risposta di Fatima, sostanzialmente non va a situazioni particolari, ma la risposta fondamentale cioè conversione permanente, penitenza, preghiera, e le virtù cardinali, fede, speranza carità. Così vediamo qui la vera e fondamentale risposta che la chiesa deve dare, che noi ogni singolo dobbiamo dare in questa situazione. Quanto alle novità che possiamo oggi scoprire in questo messaggio è anche che non solo da fuori vengono attacchi al Papa e alla chiesa, ma le sofferenze della chiesa vengono proprio dall'interno della chiesa, dal peccato che esiste nella chiesa. Anche questo lo vediamo sempre ma oggi lo vediamo in modo realmente terrificante che la più grande persecuzione alla chiesa non viene dai nemici di fuori, ma nasce dal peccato nella chiesa." Transcript by Paolo Rodari, [www.corriere.it/esteri/10\\_maggio\\_11/vecchi-parole-papa\\_fa994a90-5ce9-11df-97c2-00144f02aabe.shtml](http://www.corriere.it/esteri/10_maggio_11/vecchi-parole-papa_fa994a90-5ce9-11df-97c2-00144f02aabe.shtml), confirmed by this author, who watched the video of the Pope's remarks.

<sup>258</sup> "On the crisis, Benedict XVI changes the tone," *National Catholic Reporter*, May 11, 2010.

Church” which show in “*a really terrifying way*” that “the greatest persecution... arises from sin *in the Church*.” This went well beyond even the pedophilia scandal to a generalized assessment of the state of the Church in light of the Secret; it was a frontal attack on Bertone’s and Sodano’s “official” position, which in fact had never been anything but their already widely rejected opinion in the matter.

Now, the vision of the Third Secret (published on June 26, 2000) says nothing at all about a crisis involving attacks upon the Church and persecution of the Church *from within her* on account of the sins of her own members. On the contrary, the vision seems to depict an external persecution of the Church in the midst of a post-apocalyptic scenario where a future Pope is executed outside a half-ruined city by soldiers who are not internal enemies. There is only one way to reconcile the Pope’s remarks with what the vision depicts, and it is the same way both the “Fatimists” and Socci have proposed, and as this book itself proposes: a missing text related to the vision in which the Virgin explains in Her own words how an internal crisis of faith and discipline in the Church is accompanied by a chastisement of the whole world, including the bishops, priests and laity who are killed, “one after another,” by the same soldiers who have already executed the Pope.

The Pope himself appeared to confirm the existence of precisely such a text when he said that “*beyond the moment* indicated in the vision, **it is spoken**, it is seen [*si parla, si vede*] the necessity of a passion of the Church, which naturally is reflected in the person of the Pope, but the Pope is in the Church and therefore what is announced are the sufferings of the Church.”

**Note well: The Pope refers to a prophecy *beyond the moment indicated in the vision*, involving both *spoken words and images* relating to sufferings in the Church caused, not by the soldiers seen in the vision, but rather by the Church’s *internal persecution on account of the sins of her own members*.**

The Vaticanist Paolo Rodari was quick to recognize the significance of the Pope’s words, asking the question: “Was Socci right?” Wrote Rodari:

It is true that the Pope did not speak of a fourth secret explicitly. But to read the response he gave today to the journalists, one cannot but think of Socci, who has always linked the contents of a hypothetical fourth secret to the corruption of the Church and to the sin which is born within the Church and is presently operative. Reading what the Pope said today, it seems that for him Fatima *is not reducible only to the past and*

thus only to the text of 2000.<sup>259</sup>

If there were any doubt of this, the Pope all but extinguished it two days later on May 13 when, during his homily at the Mass to commemorate the anniversary of the first Fatima apparition, the Pope declared: “One would be deceiving himself who thinks that the prophetic mission of Fatima is concluded.” [*“Si illuderebbe chi pensasse che la missione profetica di Fatima sia conclusa.”*] Another direct attack on the “official” version and indeed on Bertone and Sodano themselves for having promoted it as the Party Line: “*he* would be deceiving himself” meant particular individuals, and it was clear that both of these individuals had promoted assiduously and precisely the fiction that the prophetic mission of Fatima had been concluded or “fulfilled” with the failed assassination attempt, and that publication of the Third Secret, as Bertone had so absurdly contended, “brings to an end a period of history marked by tragic human lust for power and evil.”

That the Pope has made this declaration on the most solemn possible occasion—his homily during the Mass at the Fatima Shrine—gave it the force of a teaching of the Church’s universal pastor. *Some 500,000 souls in the Cova alone—not counting the millions who followed him on live television—heard the Roman Pontiff say that whoever thinks the prophetic mission of Fatima is concluded has deceived himself.*

It is only typical of Vatican bureaucratic maneuvering, however, that the English translation of the Italian homily neuters the Pope’s words to read: “We would be mistaken to think that the prophetic mission of Fatima is concluded.” No! It is not “we” would be “mistaken.” The Pope said that *he* who thinks **the prophetic mission** (the foretelling of future events) of Fatima is finished (that there is not still more to unfold) would be *engaged in self-deception*, not merely “mistaken”. There was no doubt who the Pope meant by “he,” nor any doubt about who was deceived—and leading others into his state of deception.

In short, with a few well-chosen words the Pope had utterly destroyed the Sodano-Bertone “interpretation” of the vision as belonging “to the past” and with it the Party Line on Fatima. The Secretary of State’s purported dictates on the meaning of the Fatima

<sup>259</sup> Paolo Rodari, “Fatima. Aveva Ragione Socci?” [“Fatima. Was Socci Right?”], <http://www.ilfoglio.it/palazzoapostolico/2675>. As Rodari wrote in the original Italian: “E’ vero il Papa non ha parlato del quarto segreto esplicitamente. Ma a leggere la risposta che ha dato oggi ai giornalisti non si può non pensare ad Antonio Socci il quale ha sempre legato il contenuto di un ipotetico quarto segreto alla corruzione della chiesa e al peccato che nasce all’interno della chiesa ed agisce nel presente. Leggendo oggi il Papa sembra che anche per lui Fatima non sia riconducibile al solo passato e dunque soltanto al testo del 2000.”

event now join other pseudo-official pronouncements in the discard bin of the post-Vatican II era in the Church. Even more dramatically, the Pope had not only repudiated Bertone's and De Carli's suggestion that *Last Visionary*—and now *Last Secret*—was the “official position” of the Church, but also *his own adherence to the “party line” dictated by the Secretary of State*, which he had followed as the former Cardinal Ratzinger, whose theological commentary on the vision declared that “we must affirm with Cardinal Sodano: ‘... the events to which the third part of the ‘secret’ of Fatima refers now seem part of the past’.”<sup>260</sup>

### ***Socci on Pope Benedict’s “Operation Truth”***

The Pope's momentous declarations during his pilgrimage to Fatima prompted a rapid-fire series of articles from Antonio Socci on the theme of the patent vindication of the “Fatimist” cause, which had become his cause once he considered the evidence.

Writing in *Il Libero* on May 12, 2010, in an article entitled “So there was a Fourth Secret after all...”, Socci exclaimed that the Pope's statements “bring back again into the mainstream news the whole dossier on the Third Secret. His words upset the ‘official version’ given in 2000, *which was never considered official*—neither by Ratzinger nor by Pope John Paul II.” Referring to *Fourth Secret* and the “cheap shots” he had had to endure for writing it, Socci noted that Pope Benedict “reopens the discussion in the direction that I tried to investigate and that the documents themselves suggest.” By declaring that the Third Secret concerns “realities of the *future* of the Church, which unfold and reveal themselves day by day” and which we “now see in a really terrifying way,” the Pope, Socci continued, “reinforces the belief” that what he said about filth and corruption in the Church during his Way of the Cross meditations as Cardinal Ratzinger on March 25, 2005 was “perhaps, indeed, the revelation (even if not declared as such) of *the part of the Third Secret that was not revealed in 2000*. The part which contains *the words of Our Lady Herself*, as a comment on the vision.”

On May 13, also in *Il Libero*, Socci published a searing commentary on the Pope's obvious demolition of Bertone's/Sodano's entire position. It is now a matter of black and white, Socci wrote, that “*The ‘fourth secret’ (that is, a part of the Third Secret which has not been published yet) exists*, and the words of the Pope on the pedophilia scandal are the proof.” The Pope, he continued, is “performing a great truth-telling work, even if this means *contradicting the interpretation given by the Vatican Secretaries of State*.” Sodano's contention that the events depicted in the vision

<sup>260</sup> *The Message of Fatima*, p. 43.

“seem to” belong to the past—from which Bertone had removed the words “seem to,” converting Sodano’s opinion into a pseudo-dogma—had been rejected by Pope Benedict, “who explains to us *the complete opposite*, which is that the Third Secret regards events which came *after* the assassination attempt of 1981... and even events which are still in our future.” In fact, he added, “the assassination attempt of 1981 *is nowhere to be found in Benedict’s words*, therefore it is not pointed out as ‘the’ fulfillment of the Third Secret.”

Socci went on to mention that telltale letter of Lucia’s from 1982, purportedly addressed to the Pope, in which—making no mention of the assassination attempt—she declared that “we have not yet seen the complete fulfillment of the final part of this prophecy [i.e., the Third Secret].” Bertone, Socci reminded us, had “struck out an explosive phrase, which contradicted his version” from that letter, a fraudulent tampering with the documentary evidence, as we have seen, designed to conceal the fact that this letter, only a fragment of which was published, could not have been addressed to the Pope.<sup>261</sup> Socci pronounced this “only one of so many anomalies in this fifty-year-old story that, unfortunately, is filled with *lies* and silences, twisted interpretations and omissions.”

But now, wrote Socci, the Pope has “reopened the Fatima file in such a precise and obvious way that everyone who, in these past years, rushed to give his praise to the Curial version is now caught in a panic when confronted with the Pope’s words...” Even Vittorio Messori expressed embarrassment that “Now, in the vast party of the ‘Fatimites’ [vast!] there will be excitement, to demonstrate that Pope Benedict XVI has betrayed himself...” But, wrote Socci in a conclusion aimed directly at Bertone and his collaborators, the Pope:

wants us to understand... that we must never be afraid of the truth, even when it is embarrassing or painful. *Because we do not serve God with lies*. When we lie with pretense that we are doing it for God, we are actually doing it for ourselves. *God does not need our lies to defend and build His Church*. It is better to do a *mea culpa*, because God is stronger and bigger than any of our sins. Obviously, *this behavior is not understood in the Curia*, not even by the ‘Ratzinger fans.’

In a postscript to the article, Socci noted a remarkable about-face by Vittorio Messori, “who, three years ago, had rushed to praise Bertone’s version,” but on an episode of *Porta a Porta* broadcast on May 12, 2010 had “without even batting an eyelash... said the complete opposite of what he has said so far.” As summarized by Socci, Messori freely admitted that, quite contrary to Bertone, Pope Benedict “does not see the fulfillment of the Third Secret in

<sup>261</sup> Cf. *The Secret Still Hidden*, Chapter 4 and Appendix IV.

the assassination attempt of 1981” and “does not consider it part of the past, but sees it projected into the future, because he is now considering a new fact—the pedophilia scandal—as part of the Secret (and it is obvious that the Pope cannot make all this up: *he must have taken this from the complete text of the Secret...*.)” Yet Messori “did not show even the least sign of recognizing that he had been mistaken all these years, nor did he treat the consequences of what he himself had said. Same for the confident Bertone.”

As Socci put it: “Either Bertone is right (and the prophecy was fulfilled in 1981 and was concluded in the past) or Benedict XVI is right (and therefore the text of the Secret is wider, the prophecy still open and the martyrdom of a Pope and of the Church are still in our future). You cannot pretend that both versions can coexist; it would not be logical. It would be desirable that love for truth would prevail, as well as a loyal recognition of our own mistakes... The call of the Pope for repentance, self-critical examination, and penance should be taken much more seriously.” Almost overnight, Bertone now found himself an *opponent* of the papal view of the Secret, and rightly subject to public rebuke from the very man (Socci) he had tried to portray as a knave for disputing his patently incredible version of the facts! So much for the “official version” Bertone had labored for so long to impose upon the Church.

In yet a third article on these developments, published on his blog on May 15, Socci focused precisely on the *mea culpa* that Bertone owes the Church. The article, entitled “Advice to Bertone: *mea culpa* and penance,” focuses on the Pope’s homily before the universal Church at Fatima, and the Pontiff’s resounding declaration to the whole Church that “He would be deceiving himself who thinks that the prophetic mission of Fatima is concluded.” In light of the papal homily, even *Il Corriere della Sera* had announced in a headline: “The Fatima prophecy is not accomplished; there will be wars and terrors.”

The Pope’s words at Fatima, said Socci, “contain a warning to whoever does not wish to hear and does not wish to understand. Words of Benedict XVI that... are *the exact antithesis of the lies that, sadly, Cardinal Bertone has been spreading about for years* (caught above all by me). Here in fact is what he [Bertone] has said: ‘The prophecy is not open to the future; it is realized in the past.’ Thus he wrote on page 79 of his book [*Last Visionary*], repeating it a thousand times in those pages and also in interviews with journalists and on TV, where he has not hesitated to insult the one who simply spoke the truth and called for love of the truth and of the Holy Virgin, Mother of God.”

“Now,” Socci added, “finally the Pope has spoken and everyone can understand. That Bertone, in the face of the evidence (and the

bad impression he gives of himself), has precipitously reached out to the Vaticanists to attempt a tragicomic reverse march (without a *mea culpa*), only adds to the sadness. Writes Tornielli in *Giornale*: ‘now Bertone has *adapted his words*, stating that the prophecy can also be extended to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.’ In a little while he will say that he has always said this... Any comment is useless.”

And then this withering assessment of Bertone’s tenure: “Except to note the many problems the current Secretary of State has caused the Pope, who deserves to have alongside him collaborators worthy of the task at this historical moment. Collaborators (I speak also of bishops) who will aid him in his mission. Collaborators humble and competent like him, not arrogant and inadequate. Collaborators he evidently has not found. This speaks to the drama of the situation of the Church and the solitude of the Pope.”

Bertone, he concluded, could profit from reaching the age of retirement by “dedicating himself to prayer and meditation on the warnings and maternal solitudes of the Queen of Heaven. In fact, the things of this world soon pass, and forever (including power and, above all, lies). Only the truth remains, which is Jesus Christ. That is, the Truth made flesh. And Who has said: ‘There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. Nothing secret that will not be brought into the light.’”

From the Vatican, there was only silence on the part of Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. There was nothing he could say against Socci’s well-deserved rebukes. For Socci was right to declare that the Pope has “reopened the file” on the Third Secret and that His Holiness is “trying to prepare the Church for this immense trial... entrusting everyone to the hands of the Madonna of Fatima. These are extraordinary hours.” Indeed they are.

### ***The Media Awaken***

If it is reasonable to think that *The Fatima Challenge* conference and De Carli’s appearance there had contributed to the Pope’s inauguration of what Socci calls “Operation Truth” concerning the Third Secret, there is no question that what happened at the conference had prompted the Italian media to begin an Operation Truth of their own. On June 23, 2010 several major figures in the Italian press, including no less than Andrea Tornielli, appeared on the “Top Secret” television show on Rete 4, a channel operated by Mediaset, the largest commercial broadcasting company in Italy. The show discussed recent developments in the Third Secret controversy under the title “Fatima: An Unfinished Business”—*the very title of one of the talks delivered at The Fatima Challenge conference.*

As the show opened, the narrator declared that “the mystery



about the Third Secret does not end with the publication of the Secret. Forty years of silence and reticence have led many people to believe that the Message contains something shocking. There are many questions which still remain open. If the prophecy refers to the failed attempt in 1981, why keep it hidden for 20 years? Those who cast doubts about the interpretation given... think that the message of Our Lady is actually pointing to the future and would describe apocalyptic scenarios related to the crisis of the faith and the end of the Church.”

The narrator went on to recount (as noted here) that “Father Fuentes, a Mexican priest and postulator of the beatification of Jacinta and Francisco, published a summary of an interview he had with the religious, whose content was disturbing. Sister Lucy stated that the Virgin was disappointed by the souls of priests and pastors and that the punishment of Heaven would be imminent.” Further, the narrator continued:

There is also the testimony of Father Alonso, the official archivist of Fatima, who met several times with Sister Lucy. In his work of more than 5000 pages, the religious claims that probably the Third Secret makes concrete references to the crisis of the faith within the Church.... But there is more: ... [a] version of the Third Secret of Fatima, published by *Neues Europa* [the so-called diplomatic version], which described an apocalyptic scenario of death and destruction. *This text has never been officially denied by the Vatican.* Why then is there no trace of these words in the published message? Is it credible that this text was part of a secret, which has been kept hidden because it was too frightening?

Shortly into the broadcast, there occurred this extraordinary exchange between Tornielli and Claudio Brachino, a Mediaset journalist:

**Brachino:** There are interesting elements in what John Paul II said during various interviews and declarations. In Fatima he spoke about the apostasy—we should tell the public what apostasy is.

**Tornielli:** Yes, it’s the “expulsion from the faith,” the loss of faith, the ultimate and most terrible thing, because it means that we no longer believe. It should be noted that in his document *Ecclesia in Europa* John Paul II spoke about the apostasy in Europe, a term that indicates *the precise and heavy secularization of the Church, and the fall of any relationship with the absolute.*

**Brachino:** We will discuss this and the apocalyptic vision,

but I must insist on this important element: Even among the Catholics, all over the world, *there is suspicion about the official revelation; we're not talking about the secular world or protesters who want to challenge or dispute the Church's policy. We're talking about the so-called Fatimites and other parts of the world's clergy, who do not believe the official version.*

And so the tone was set: Disbelief in the “official version” and the conviction that the whole and entire Third Secret relates to apostasy in the Church can no longer be considered unacceptable for Catholics. This was followed by no fewer than three film clips of Father Gruner providing grounds to doubt the “official version,” with the narrator making the obligatory reference to “Fatimites,” but then observing as follows: “However, one can not help but notice some inconsistencies in the text, with regards to the 1981 event of Saint Peter’s Square. In the vision of the Third Secret, the ‘Bishop dressed in White’ falls, killed by a group of soldiers, and after him other men die. Pope Wojtyla, instead, was shot by a single killer, and survived. Is it possible, then, that the official interpretation of the Fatima text is wrong?”

After some typically sceptical comments by the Vaticanist Giovanni Ercole about “extremists,” the narrator returned to the prevailing theme of reasonable doubt of the “official” version: “But there is another testimony that makes Fatima an unfinished business: Father [Don] Luigi Bianchi, the priest of Gera Lario, in the province of Como, who was a friend of Sister Lucy and met her many times, when she was still alive.” In a video clip Bianchi reveals that “The most important thing that I asked Sister Lucy was what she thought we had to expect from this new world, considering that humanity today seems to be so hostile. She said: ‘The world is in serious danger.’” When asked by the narrator what precisely Lucia had told him about the Secret, Father Bianchi replied, “Sister Lucy told me that the Secret of Fatima is something *that is still in God’s plan.*” And that, as we have just seen, is precisely what the Pope said on the plane and during his homily at the Cova da Iria.

The narrator restated yet again the theme of a newly acceptable reasonable doubt: “So is it not yet possible to write the final word on the Fatima Secrets? The debate about the Third Secret of Fatima, which affected almost the entire 20th century, *seems not to be closed*, not even with the death of two of its greatest protagonists, John Paul II and Sister Lucy.” And with that introduction, Brachino and Tornielli conducted a discussion which *presumed the existence of two distinct but related texts* of the Third Secret, one of which, kept in the papal apartment, has never been revealed (precisely as Socci and the

“Fatimists” contend), and has been deemed “inauthentic” by Bertone and company:

**Brachino:** [A]re there two texts of the Third Secret of Fatima? Or are there multiple interpretations of the revealed text? So, are there two—implying that the Church has only revealed one text or just one part of it?

**Tornielli:** *Well, certainly there are inconsistencies, there is evidence that shows the existence of two manuscripts. One that was kept in the apartment of the Pope and another one at the Holy See archives. I don't think that we can call them two different texts of the Secret, because the Secret is what has been revealed, that is the vision; it is possible, however, given what Sister Lucy has sent to the Vatican during the years, that there might be an attachment, or an explanation to it... [I]t is clear that John XXIII and his successors didn't consider it as being fully part of the Third Secret, but just as an interpretation given by Sister Lucy rather than being part of Our Lady's apparition. In this sense it was declassified to a mere, personal interpretation.*

Brachino, stating that “I have to push on this point,” noted that the famous “etc” indicated that something was missing, to which Tornielli frankly replied: “Well, it *certainly gives you the idea of something that continues*. Indeed, in the same booklet published officially by the Vatican *there is no explanation to that sentence, it remains suspended, and it seems to be referring to something else that the published version of the Third Secret actually doesn't contain.*” At this point in the proceedings Brachino introduced the “story told by Socci's book on Fatima: Archbishop Capovilla *admitted to Solideo Paolini in 2006 the existence of two different but complementary texts of the Third Secret*. One was kept at the Holy Office archives, the other one in the apartment of the Pope...”

After showing the same video interview of Capovilla by De Carli, broadcast during “The Cardinal Bertone Show,” which we examined in Chapter 8, Tornielli simply dismissed it as unpersuasive. And, in a massive setback for Bertone and his “official” version, he declared that the existence of a second text of some sort pertaining to the Third Secret is now *well established*:

**Tornielli:** Yes, we have just seen the interview of Capovilla, in which he said that there is no fourth secret. *But we must remember one fact: Capovilla has repeatedly said that a text of the Secret, an “attachment,” has always been kept inside the desk of the Pope, and has stated that it was he who revealed to Pope Paul VI, just a few days after his election, the place where the Secret was located: he told him that the text was kept inside John XXIII's desk called “Barbarigo”.* When John XXIII read the Secret in

1959, he decided not to publish it, and Capovilla wrote a note on the envelope (this is confirmed not only by Capovilla, but also by Paul VI, who found that note on Capovilla's envelope). *Now, when it was shown on television in 2007 [on Porta a Porta], [Cardinal Bertone] showed the envelopes to the cameras, and there was no handwriting by Capovilla on it.... Not all the time when there is an evidence does it have to confirm a certain theory... **But the existence of two texts in two different places seems to me now a well established fact.***

At this point the discussion was joined by Alessandro Banfi, a prominent Vaticanist, who praised "the reasoning that inspired Socci, with courage and great skill," to question the official version, and then asked and answered his own question, with devastating impact to the credibility of Bertone's position: "This is the matter which I think we should talk about: Is the successor of Peter in possession of a more complete version of the vision, with deeper and confidential information? *In my opinion it is quite credible.* But it was also more than possible a few weeks ago that this controversy could have never been solved. And now the Pope, as always, *has reopened the discussion about it!*" To which Brachino replied: "And he did indeed, as I said at the beginning of the transmission, in a very sensational way. Probably it was a decision that is part of Ratzinger's overall project, his new 'Operation Truth' for a different attitude within the Church, even with regards to herself."

These publicly administered hammer-blows to the Vatican Secretary of State's position were followed by discussion of "the dramatic problem of the apostasy" (Banfi), "the abandoning of the faith, but by the members of the Church themselves" (Brachino), "the abandoning of the faith inside the Church. Exactly." (Banfi). Then, following a video segment on Ali Agca and the 1981 assassination attempt, Brachino, Torielli and Banfi took aim at the Sodano/Bertone "interpretation" that events contained in the Third Secret "need to be interpreted as if they were referring to the past, and precisely to the assassination attempt against John Paul II on May 13, 1981, in St. Peter's Square." What Socci calls the "preventative interpretation" was essentially deemed no longer operative, particularly in view of the Pope's statement on the papal plane:

**Brachino:** I want to ask Andrea Torielli the following question: Between what is shown in the vision and what happened in St. Peter's Square, I don't think the two events coincide: in the vision the Pope died, but in 1981 he survived!

**Torielli:** The big difference is that Pope John Paul II didn't die, he fell "as if dead", to use the same expression used by Cardinal

Sodano in 2000. But we must also say, as Ratzinger himself said in the presentation of the official Secret, that these prophecies are not a “film about the future”... *but that inconsistency is there.*

**Brachino:** About this interpretation, Mr. Banfi, there are many things *that are actually leading us away from the true interpretation of the Third Secret that is being given now* [by Pope Benedict]. If not everything has to happen afterwards, *certainly not everything has happened already!*

**Banfi:** True, the plot that leads to the attack against John Paul II has not been clarified yet: Okay, Ali Agca was caught and imprisoned, but it is hard to understand any connection, any link between that event and Providence, its secret designs, as Sodano tried to imply in his interpretation of the Secret. *So there's more than one contradiction that leaves us perplexed.* Moreover, the vision speaks of arrows and shots, so not just a single gunshot, but a collective attack. ***The vision suggests a Vatican which seems to have been bombed and is now just a heap of rubble; the remaining faithful would climb the hill towards the cross, and those soldiers would attack them, and the Pope, with arrows and bullets, killing them all.***

In sum, Brachino concluded, echoing Socci: “The Pope reopens the case, although he doesn’t say the old interpretation is totally wrong, he said it still refers to the suffering of John Paul II and probably of the Popes and *of the Catholic world.*” To this Tornielli added an observation concerning Jacinta’s famous vision of a future Pope under attack: “I remember that one of the seers, Jacinta, speaking once with Sister Lucy, told her of a vision in which she saw the Pope as if he were kneeling before an altar, and people from outside were throwing stones at him... it is a stoning or a moral attack like the one we’re seeing now.” Continuing in the same vein, Brachino alluded to “the words of John Paul II said at Fatima on May 13, 1982 concerning the danger of the apostasy from God, the fight against God and all that is sacred and divine. Are we near the time predicted by St. Paul, the time of the Antichrist, who rises against God and against any sort of religion? It is a time, however, in which the Holy Spirit mobilizes the whole Church, through the Blessed Virgin.” Here Brachino, just before playing a video of Pope Benedict’s stunning remarks on the plane to Portugal, quoted above, returned to the theme sounded by Socci, declaring: “On May 13, 2010, another Pope, Benedict XVI, made some remarkable statements *which reopened the case.* On May 13th, *a date that will remain forever in the history of Catholicism.*”

Brachino punctuated the video with a comment that indicated that the Italian media, joining Catholics all over the world, now

recognized that a new chapter had been opened in the Third Secret controversy in a book that would not be closed until the whole story unfolds, a chapter in which the Secret as a prophecy of apostasy in the Church is foretold: “Here Benedict XVI brings to mind the speeches of Paul VI about the ‘*smoke of Satan within the Church*,’ and it seems also to echo the great writings of Charles Hodge, who spoke about Christianity after Christ and without Christ. What comes to our minds is the dramatic question, in the form of poetry, posed by T.S. Eliot: ‘Is it the Church that has abandoned humanity, or is it humanity that has abandoned the Church?’”

Ten years after the Vatican Secretary of State had ventured to put an end to the Third Secret of Fatima and the Message of Fatima as a whole, the Mediaset broadcast demonstrated a growing awareness among the faithful that the prophecies and warnings of the Virgin Mother of God to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco were more alive, and more urgent, than ever.

### ***An Untimely Passing***

Less than three weeks after the critical dissection of the “official version” on Mediaset, Giuseppe De Carli passed away unexpectedly at the Gemelli Polyclinic in Rome at the age of 58, reportedly while undergoing radiotherapy for a suddenly discovered inoperable throat cancer. Gemelli was the same hospital in which John Paul II had called for the text of the vision in 1981 while recovering from the nearly fatal wounds Ali Agca had inflicted on him.

Did De Carli know about his terminal illness when he appeared at *The Fatima Challenge* conference, stepping from behind the Vatican’s stone wall of silence and evasion to encounter his fellow Catholics on the revealing ground of a free and open discussion in search of the truth? Or did he discover his illness after his appearance at the Ergife Hotel? We do not know. But we do know that, along with the conference as a whole, De Carli’s decision to appear and attempt a defense of Bertone’s indefensible position must have contributed to the impetus for Pope Benedict’s “Operation Truth,” an operation that, one must hope and pray, will lead at last to a full disclosure of the Virgin of Fatima’s message-warning to the Church and all humanity, while there is still time to avert the worst of what it foretells.

Giuseppe De Carli died on July 13, 2010, the very anniversary of the day on which the Mother of God revealed the Third Secret in its entirety to the seers of Fatima. It is impossible to dismiss the connection as a mere coincidence. May the perpetual light shine upon him.