

# Chapter 2

## THE BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN

Within thirty years of the dramatic prophecy of the future Pius XII, inspired by “the Blessed Virgin’s messages to little Lucia of Fatima” concerning “the dangers which menace the Church,” the innovators he saw all around him were unleashed to do their work of destruction. But how exactly did the party of the innovators whose triumph Pius XII foresaw achieve their triumph? Did they suddenly appear out of nowhere and overrun the Church? Or was Pius XII aware of realities indicating, even on a human level, a growing danger that would explain the “persistence of Mary” about dangers to the Church? The question cannot be answered without reference, first of all, to the influence of that worldwide society known as Freemasonry.

### *The Role of Freemasonry*

One need not descend into the fever swamps of conspiracy theory to know that before 1960 the Popes issued more condemnations and warnings about the plotting of the Freemasons against the Church than on any other single subject in Church history. On this point, one cannot fail to consider the specific papal involvement in making known the *Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita*, a Masonic document that mapped out an entire plan for the infiltration and corruption of the Catholic Church by “innovators” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>36</sup>

The *Alta Vendita* was the highest lodge of the Carbonari, an Italian secret society with links to Freemasonry and which, along with Freemasonry, was the subject of papal condemnations.<sup>37</sup> While it has become fashionable since Vatican II to scoff at the existence of conspiracies against the Church, the secret papers of the *Alta Vendita*, including the *Permanent Instruction*, are crucial historical evidence of just that. The renowned Catholic historian Father E. Cahill, S.J., who was hardly a “conspiracy nut,” notes in his work *Freemasonry and the Anti-Christian Movement* that the *Alta Vendita* was “commonly supposed to have been at the time the governing center of European Freemasonry.”<sup>38</sup> In fact, the Carbonari were most active precisely in Italy, the heart of the Church, and France, the “eldest daughter” of the Church.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. John Vennari, *The Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita* (TAN Books and Publishers, 1999).

<sup>37</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, (New York Encyclopedia Press, 1913) pp. 330-331.

<sup>38</sup> Rev. E. Cahill, S.J., *Freemasonry and the Anti-Christian Movement*, (Dublin: Gill, 1959) p. 101.

By what must have been a providential intervention, the *Instruction* fell into the hands of Pope Gregory XVI, that fierce opponent of “modern liberties,” including unlimited “freedom of speech” and “freedom of conscience,” which he called “that delirium.”<sup>39</sup> The *Permanent Instruction* was later published at the request of Blessed Pope Pius IX by Cardinal Cretineau-Joly in his work *The Roman Church and Revolution*.<sup>40</sup> With his brief of approbation of February 25, 1861 (addressed to the author) Pius IX guaranteed the authenticity of the *Instruction* and the other Masonic papers, but he did not allow disclosure of the real names of the *Alta Vendita* members implicated in the documents. Pope Leo XIII had likewise requested publication of the *Instruction*. The full text of the *Instruction* is also contained in Msgr. George E. Dillon’s book, *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*.<sup>41</sup> When Pope Leo XIII was presented with a copy of Msgr. Dillon’s book, he was so impressed that he ordered an Italian version to be completed and published at the Pope’s own expense.<sup>42</sup> Both Popes so acted, no doubt, because they knew that infiltration and corruption of the human element of the Church was far from impossible. And, as we have seen, Pope Pius XII knew this as well and indeed prophesied precisely such a development: “the day will come when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted,” to recall his exact words.

In his book *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time* (1974), Bishop Rudolph Graber, another objective and quite unimpeachable authority writing after the Second Vatican Council, quoted a prominent Freemason who declared that “the goal (of Freemasonry) is no longer the destruction of the Church, but to make use of it by infiltrating it.”<sup>43</sup> Indeed, according to the very promises of Christ, the Church is indefectible—incapable of being destroyed. But this indefectibility did not preclude Freemasonry’s design to use men within the Church’s structure as instruments of “renewal,” “progress” and “enlightenment,” thereby furthering its own vision of the world. That vision would require at least the Church’s practical accommodation to the world as Freemasonry would have it—hence the very “opening to the world” at Vatican II, followed by “a veritable

<sup>39</sup> Gregory XVI, *Mirari vos* (1832), n. 14.

<sup>40</sup> 2nd volume, original edition, 1859, reprinted by Circle of the French Renaissance, Paris 1976; Msgr. Delassus produced these documents again in his work *The Anti-Christian Conspiracy*, DDB, 1910, Tome III, pp. 1035-1092.

<sup>41</sup> Msgr. George E. Dillon, *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*, (Palmdale, California: Christian Book Club) pp. 51-56 (full text of *Alta Vendita*).

<sup>42</sup> Michael Davies, *Pope John’s Council*, (Kansas City, Missouri: Angelus Press, 1992) p. 166.

<sup>43</sup> Bishop Rudolph Graber, *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time*, (Palmdale, California: Christian Book Club, 1974) p. 39.

invasion of the Church by worldly thinking,” as Paul VI observed with dread.

Bishop Graber introduces the Masonic worldview with the concept of *synarchy*:

What we are faced with here is the sum-total of the secret forces of all the ‘orders’ and schools which have joined together to set up an invisible world government. In the political sense, synarchy aims at the integration of all the financial and social forces which the world government, under socialist leadership naturally [following the logic of their false principles], has to support and promote. Catholicism, like all religions, would consequently be absorbed into a universal syncretism. Far from being suppressed, it would be integrated, a course which is already being steered in the principle of fellowship between clerics [of various religions].<sup>43a</sup>

The *Permanent Instruction* is essentially a strategy to enlist the human element of the Church in achieving this *synarchy*—a strategy of amazing audacity and cunning. The document describes a process that will take many decades to complete. Those who drew up the document knew that they would not live to see its fulfillment. They were inaugurating a work that would be carried on by succeeding generations of the initiated. As the *Instruction* declares: “In our ranks the soldier dies and the struggle goes on.”

The strategy laid out in the *Instruction* is simply the dissemination of Masonic-liberal ideas not only throughout society, which was a given, but also within the Catholic Church. In other words, the “invasion of the Church by worldly thinking” that Pope Paul witnessed immediately after the Council. The aim was that laity, seminarians, clerics and prelates would absorb progressive principles and be made ready to accommodate themselves to “the modern world.” In time, a new mentality among Catholic clerics would be sufficiently widespread that priests would be ordained, bishops consecrated, and cardinals created whose thinking was in step with the modern thought rooted in the “Principles of 1789”—i.e., the principles of the French Revolution: pluralism, the equality of all religions, separation of Church and State, unbridled freedom of speech, and so forth. It must be stressed that the clerics involved in this attitudinal transformation *need not themselves be Freemasons*, even if certain of those directing the transformative process—essentially a change of public opinion and practice within the commonwealth of the Church—would indeed be members of “the Craft.”

Eventually, the *Instruction* predicted, even a Pope would be elected who would lead the Church on the path of “enlightenment and renewal” without being himself a Freemason. Such a Pope would

<sup>43a</sup> *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time*, p. 33.

be merely the product of the new intellectual climate in the Church. The end result would be what the *Instruction* calls “a Pope according to our needs” and a hierarchy won over to the ideas of liberal Catholicism, *all the while believing themselves to be faithful Catholics*. These liberalized Catholic leaders would no longer be opponents of the errors of liberalism condemned by Pope after Pope before Vatican II, but rather would seek to “baptize” them into the Church in a great reconciliation with “the modern world.” Catholic clergy and laity would march together under the banner of “enlightenment,” all the while believing that they were marching “under the banner of the Apostolic keys.”

No doubt with the *Permanent Instruction* in mind, Pope Leo XIII, writing in his landmark anti-Masonic encyclical *Humanum Genus* (1884), called upon Catholic leaders to “tear away the mask from Freemasonry, and to let it be seen as it really is”.<sup>44</sup> The publication of the documents of the *Alta Vendita* was an obvious step in “tearing off the mask.” Lest there be any claim that we have mischaracterized the *Permanent Instruction*, we now quote from it at considerable length. What follows is not the entire *Instruction*, but the section which contains the elements we have just summarized. The reader should compare what follows with the predictions of the future Pope Pius XII in view of the Message of Fatima, noted in the previous chapter:

The Pope, whoever he is, will never come to the secret societies; it is up to the secret societies to take the first step toward the Church, with the aim of conquering both of them.

The task that we are going to undertake is not the work of a day, or of a month, or of a year; it may last several years, perhaps a century; but in our ranks the soldier dies and the struggle goes on.

We do not intend to win the Popes to our cause, to make them neophytes of our principles, propagators of our ideas. That would be a ridiculous dream; and if events turn out in some way, if cardinals or prelates, for example, of their own free will or by surprise, should enter into a part of our secrets, this is not at all an incentive for desiring their elevation to the See of Peter. That elevation would ruin us. Ambition alone would have led them to apostasy, the requirements of power would force them to sacrifice us. What we must ask for, what we should look for and wait for, as the Jews wait for the Messiah, is *a Pope according to our needs* ...

With that we shall march more securely towards the assault on the Church than with the pamphlets of our brethren in France and even the gold of England. Do you want to know the reason for this? It is that with this, in order to shatter the high

<sup>44</sup> Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (1884), (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1978) p. 18.

rock on which God has built His Church, we no longer need Hannibalian vinegar, or need gunpowder, or even need our arms. We have the little finger of the successor of Peter engaged in the ploy, and this little finger is as good, for this crusade, as all the Urban II's and all the Saint Bernards in Christendom.

We have no doubt that we will arrive at this supreme end of our efforts. But when? But how? The unknown is not yet revealed. Nevertheless, as nothing should turn us aside from the plan drawn up, and on the contrary everything should tend to this, as if as early as tomorrow success were going to crown the work that is barely sketched, we wish, in this instruction, which will remain secret for the mere initiates, to give the officials in charge of the supreme Vente some advice that they should instill in all the brethren, in the form of instruction or of a memorandum ...

Now then, to assure ourselves a Pope of the required dimensions, it is a question first of shaping him ... for this Pope, a generation worthy of the reign we are dreaming of. Leave old people and those of a mature age aside; go to the youth, and if it is possible, even to the children ... You will contrive for yourselves, at little cost, a reputation as good Catholics and pure patriots.

This reputation will put access to our doctrines into the midst of the young clergy, as well as deeply into the monasteries. In a few years, by the force of things, this young clergy will have overrun all the functions; they will form the sovereign's council, they will be called to choose a Pontiff who should reign. And this Pontiff, like most of his contemporaries, will be necessarily more or less imbued with the Italian and humanitarian principles that we are going to begin to put into circulation. It is a small grain of black mustard that we are entrusting to the ground; but the sunshine of justice will develop it up to the highest power, and you will see one day what a rich harvest this small seed will produce.

In the path that we are laying out for our brethren, there are found great obstacles to conquer, difficulties of more than one kind to master. They will triumph over them by experience and by clear-sightedness; but the goal is so splendid that it is important to put all the sails to the wind in order to reach it.

You want to revolutionize Italy, look for the Pope whose portrait we have just drawn. You wish to establish the reign of the chosen ones on the throne of the prostitute of Babylon, *let the Clergy march under your standard, always believing that they are marching under the banner of the apostolic keys.*

You intend to make the last vestige of tyrants and the oppressors disappear; lay your snares like Simon Bar-Jona; lay them in the sacristies, the seminaries, and the monasteries rather than at the bottom of the sea: and if you do not hurry,

we promise you a catch more miraculous than his. The fisher of fish became the fisher of men; you will bring friends around the apostolic Chair.

You will have *preached a revolution in tiara and in cope*, marching with the cross and the banner, a revolution that will need to be only a little bit urged on to set fire to the four corners of the world.<sup>45</sup>

### ***The Rise of Liberal Catholicism***

As just shown, the goal of Freemasonry was not to destroy the Church, which the Masons knew was impossible, but to neutralize and *instrumentalize* her—that is, to make her human element an instrument for the advance of Freemasonic goals. *Here nothing more would be required than to convert traditional Catholics into liberal Catholics.* A liberalized hierarchy would readily lend itself to the work of establishing the Masonic ideal of a “new world order” (*novus ordo seclorum*)—a pan-religious “brotherhood” in which the Church abandons her claim to be the sole ark of salvation and ceases her opposition to the forces of the world.

Now, whether or not this process of the liberalization of the Catholic can be attributed to the plans of the *Alta Vendita*, there is no question that, just as its *Instruction* predicted, the process has occurred. It began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by which time society had become increasingly permeated with the Masonic liberal principles of the French Revolution. Even in the mid-1800s this program was already causing great damage to the Faith and the Catholic commonwealths of Europe. The notions of pluralism, religious indifferentism, a democracy founded on the idea that all authority comes from the people rather than God, false notions of liberty, separation of Church and State and other novelties were gripping the minds of post-enlightenment Europe, infecting statesmen and churchmen alike. This was not some inevitable historical development, but rather a grave threat to the Church. And the Popes of the time acted accordingly.

### ***Liberal Catholicism Condemned***

The Popes of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries waged war against these dangerous trends. With a presence of mind rooted in the unchanging certitudes of the Faith, these Popes were not deluded by modernity. They knew that false principles—which is to say evil principles—no matter how “reasonable” they are made to appear, cannot bear anything but evil fruits, including heresy and apostasy—indeed, the “silent apostasy” John Paul II would lament in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Like commanding generals who

<sup>45</sup> Msgr. Dillon, *Grand Orient Freemasonry Unmasked*, pp. 51-56.

recognized their duty to hold their ground at all cost, these Popes aimed powerful cannons at the errors of the modern world and fired incessantly. The encyclicals were their cannonballs, and they never missed their target.

The most devastating blast came in the form of Blessed Pope Pius IX's monumental *Syllabus of Errors*, which he appended to his encyclical *Quanta Cura* (1864). When the smoke cleared, all involved in the battle were in no doubt as to where the battle line had been drawn. In the *Syllabus*, Blessed Pius IX condemned the principal errors of the modern world, not because they were modern, but because they were rooted in pantheistic naturalism and, therefore, were incompatible with Catholic doctrine, as well as being destructive to society.

The teachings in the *Syllabus* were counter-liberalism, and the principles of liberalism were counter-syllabus. This was clearly recognized by both the liberal and the Catholic parties. Father Denis Fahey referred to this showdown as “Pius IX vs. the Pantheistic Deification of Man.”<sup>46</sup> Speaking for the other side, the French Freemason Ferdinand Buisson declared likewise, “A school cannot remain neutral between the *Syllabus* and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*.”<sup>47</sup>

Yet the 19th century saw a new breed of Catholic who sought a utopian compromise between the two. These men looked for what they believed to be “good” in the principles of 1789 and tried to introduce them into the Church. Many clergymen, infected by the spirit of the age, were caught up in a net that had been “cast into the sacristies and into the seminaries” by Freemasonry. These men came to be known as Liberal Catholics. Blessed Pope Pius IX regarded them with absolute horror, declaring that they were the “worst enemies of the Church.” In a letter to the French deputation headed by the Bishop of Nevers on June 18, 1871, Pius IX declared:

That which I fear is not the Commune of Paris—no—that which I fear is Liberal Catholicism ... I have said so more than forty times, and I repeat it to you now, through the love that I bear you. The real scourge of France is Liberal Catholicism, which endeavors to unite two principles as repugnant to each other as fire and water.<sup>48</sup>

### ***The Rise of Modernism***

Nevertheless, the numbers of liberal Catholics steadily increased. The crisis reached a peak around the turn of the century

<sup>46</sup> Father Denis Fahey, *Mystical Body of Christ in the Modern World*, (Dublin, Ireland: Regina Publications, 1939) Chapter VII.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>48</sup> In Father Michael Muller, *The Catholic Doctrine* (Benzinger, 1888), p. 282.

when the liberalism of 1789 that had been “blowin’ in the wind” swirled into the tornado of Modernism, which Pope Saint Pius X would condemn as “the synthesis of all heresies.” Father Vincent Miceli described Modernism’s “trinity of parents”: “Its religious ancestor is the Protestant Reformation ... its philosophical parent is the Enlightenment ... its political pedigree comes from the French Revolution.”<sup>49</sup>

What is meant by “Modernism”? Modernism is a synthesis or combination of all the errors of Liberal Catholicism into a comprehensive philosophical and theological system whose effect is to undermine the integrity of the entire Catholic Faith. While a complete examination of the vast Modernist system of thought is far beyond the scope of this book, it suffices for our purposes to say that, by various subtle errors, the Modernist denies or undermines the divinity and divine revelation of Christ, the founding of the one true Church by Him, and the absolute immutability of Catholic doctrine (which the Modernist claims can “evolve” according to changing circumstances). The Modernist also embraces and promotes the liberal notions of “free speech” and “freedom of conscience.” Above all, he promotes the error of religious indifferentism, which holds that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy because they all arise from a so-called “religious sense” in man. This error, of course, implicitly denies the reality of Original Sin by suggesting that all men can find true religion—or at least true enough religion—in the various creeds they have invented and thereby obtain sanctifying grace and salvation without need of Baptism, the Catholic Faith or the sacraments of the Catholic Church.

### ***Modernism Condemned***

Pope St. Pius X, who ascended to the Papal throne in 1903, recognized Modernism as a most deadly plague that must be arrested. St. Pius X waged war on Modernism by systematically isolating, defining and condemning its many erroneous propositions. In particular, St. Pius X issued a monumental encyclical against Modernism (*Pascendi*) and a *Syllabus* of Modernist errors (*Lamentabili*). In his encyclical *Pascendi* this great Pope wrote: “There is no part of Catholic truth which they leave untouched, none that they do not strive to corrupt.” In the same encyclical he called Modernism “the synthesis of all heresies,” declaring that the most important obligation of the Pope is to insure the purity and integrity of Catholic doctrine, and that if he did nothing, then he would have

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<sup>49</sup> Father Vincent Miceli, *The Antichrist*, (Harrison, New York: Roman Catholic Books, 1981) p. 133.

failed in his essential duty.<sup>50</sup>

But St. Pius X did not stop there. A few years after *Pascendi*, recognizing that the Modernists had to be crushed before they rose up and caused havoc in the Church, this sainted Pope issued his letter *Sacrorum antistitum*, which mandated the Anti-Modernist Oath to be sworn by all priests and teachers. He oversaw the purging of Modernists from the seminaries and universities and excommunicated the stubborn and unrepentant. St. Pius X knew that nothing less than the very nature of the Church was under attack by these ecclesial termites, who in their audacity were now acting openly for the overthrow of Catholic dogma and Tradition. Writing of the “Modernist as Reformer” the Pope outlined their entire program for a transformation of the Church:

[I]n all Catholicism *there is absolutely nothing on which it [Modernism] does not fasten.*

Reform of philosophy, especially in the seminaries: the scholastic philosophy is to be relegated to the history of philosophy among obsolete systems, and the young men are to be taught modern philosophy which alone is true and suited to the times in which we live.

Reform of theology; rational theology is to have modern philosophy for its foundation, and positive theology is to be founded on the history of dogma.

As for history, it must be for the future written and taught only according to their modern methods and principles. Dogmas and their evolution are to be harmonised with science and history...

Regarding worship, *the number of external devotions is to be reduced*, or at least steps must be taken to prevent their further increase...

Ecclesiastical government requires to be reformed in all its branches, but especially in its disciplinary and dogmatic parts....

The Roman Congregations, and especially the Index and the Holy Office, are to be reformed....

The ecclesiastical authority *must change its line of conduct in the social and political world*; while keeping outside political and social organization, *it must adapt itself to those which exist in order to penetrate them with its spirit.*<sup>51</sup>

St. Pius X effectively halted the spread of Modernism in his day. It is reported, however, that when he was congratulated for eradicating this grave error, he immediately replied that, despite all

<sup>50</sup> Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis (On the Doctrine of the Modernists)*, September 8, 1907.

<sup>51</sup> *Pascendi*, n. 38 (paragraph breaks added).

his efforts, he had not succeeded in killing the beast but had only driven it underground. He warned that if Church leaders were not vigilant, it would return in the future with a vengeance. And St. Pius X's prediction has indeed come true, like that of Pius XII only thirty years before the Council began.

### ***The Modernist Breakthrough at Vatican II***

A little-known drama that unfolded during the reign of Pope Pius XI demonstrates that the underground current of Modernist thought was alive and well in the immediate post-St. Pius X period. Father Raymond Dulac relates that at the secret consistory of May 23, 1923, Pope Pius XI questioned the thirty Cardinals of the Curia on the timeliness of summoning an ecumenical council. In attendance were illustrious prelates such as Merry del Val, De Lai, Gasparri, Boggiani and Billot. The Cardinals advised against it. Cardinal Billot warned: "The existence of profound differences in the midst of the episcopacy itself cannot be concealed ... [They] run the risk of giving place to discussions that will be prolonged indefinitely." Boggiani recalled the Modernist theories from which, he said, a part of the clergy and of the bishops are not exempt. "This mentality can incline certain Fathers to present motions, to introduce methods incompatible with Catholic traditions." Billot was even more precise. He expressed his fear of seeing the council "maneuvered" by "the worst enemies of the Church, the Modernists, who are already getting ready, as certain indications show, to bring forth the revolution in the Church, a new 1789."<sup>52</sup>

The Cardinals were right. In discouraging the idea of a Council for such reasons, they showed themselves more adept at recognizing the "signs of the times" than all the post-Vatican II theologians combined. Yet their caution may have been rooted in something deeper. They may also have been haunted by the writings of the infamous *illuminé*, the excommunicated Canon Roca (1830-1893), who preached a coming revolution and Church "reform" and predicted in amazingly precise detail the subversion of the Church that would be brought about *precisely by an ecumenical council*.

In *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time*, Bishop Graber quotes Roca's prediction of a "newly illuminated church" that would be influenced by the "socialism of Jesus."<sup>53</sup> In the mid-19th century, Roca predicted that "The new church, which might not be able to retain anything of Scholastic doctrine and the original form of the former Church, will nevertheless receive consecration and canonical

<sup>52</sup> Raymond Dulac, *Episcopal Collegiality at the Second Council of the Vatican*, (Paris: Cedre, 1979) pp. 9-10.

<sup>53</sup> Graber, *Athanasius and the Church of Our Time*, p. 34.

jurisdiction from Rome.” Roca also, amazingly enough, predicted the liturgical “reform” after Vatican II: “[T]he divine cult in the form directed by the liturgy, ceremonial, ritual and regulations of the Roman Church will shortly undergo a transformation *at an ecumenical council*, which will restore to it the venerable simplicity of the golden age of the Apostles in accordance with the dictates of conscience and modern civilization.” Roca foretold that through this council will come “a perfect accord between the ideals of modern civilization and the ideal of Christ and His Gospel. This will be the consecration of the New Social Order and the solemn baptism of modern civilization.”

In short, this future council would usher in the triumph of the Masonic plan for subversion of the Church—a reality reflected in admissions concerning the critical condition of the Church post-Vatican II by Paul VI, John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI, and innumerable other priests, prelates and theologians of the post-conciliar epoch—including, as we shall see, no less than Monsignor Guido Pozzo, appointed Secretary of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* by Benedict XVI precisely in order to facilitate a restoration of the traditional Latin Mass overthrown after the Council.

### ***The Vatican-Moscow Agreement***

The new “orientation” of the Church that emerged after the Council and has been carried out in its name is not limited to a doctrinal or liturgical “updating” whose horrendous results are obvious. The new orientation extends as well to the Church’s relation with the powers of the world according to the new “spirit of dialogue.” Recall here the plank in the program of the “Modernist as Reformer” noted by Saint Pius X in *Pascendi*: “the ecclesiastical authority *must change its line of conduct in the social and political world; it must adapt itself to those which exist* in order to penetrate them with its spirit.” This “opening to the world” would not bring about the penetration of the world by the Catholic spirit, as the Modernists had disingenuously promised, but rather precisely the opposite: the invasion of the Church by worldly thinking that Paul VI bemoaned but did little or nothing to repel.

As part of the “opening to the world,” just before the Council’s commencement there would be an explicit betrayal of the mission Our Lady had launched with Her request for the Consecration and conversion of Russia—a request in keeping with the Church’s staunch opposition to the errors of Communism, which at the time of the Council were indeed spreading throughout the world as She had predicted at Fatima. In the spring of 1962, in Metz, France, Cardinal

Eugene Tisserant had a meeting with none other than Metropolitan Nikodim of the Russian Orthodox Church—a KGB operative, as were the other Orthodox prelates. At this meeting Tisserant and Nikodim negotiated what came to be known as the Metz Pact, or more popularly, the Vatican-Moscow Agreement. The existence of the Vatican-Moscow Agreement is an irrefutable historical fact attested to in all of its details by Monsignor Roche, who was Cardinal Tisserant’s personal secretary.<sup>54</sup>

In substance, the agreement was that Pope John, according to his fond wish, would be “favored” by the attendance of two Russian Orthodox observers at the Council. In return, the Catholic Church would agree that the Council would refrain from any condemnation of Soviet Communism or Soviet Russia. In essence, the Council would compromise the moral liberty of the Church by pretending that the most systematized form of evil in human history did not exist—even though, at the very moment the Council opened, the Soviets were persecuting, imprisoning and murdering millions of Catholics, just as Our Lady of Fatima had warned in 1917.

Its liberty thus constrained in a bargain with Communists, the very Council that proclaimed “the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel”<sup>55</sup> failed even to mention Communism. By this failure the Council departed from the teaching of Popes Leo XIII, Blessed Pius IX, Saint Pius X and Pius XI, who reminded the Church that she could not refrain from condemning this incomparable evil:

This all too imminent danger, venerable brethren, as you have already surmised is Bolshevistic and atheistic Communism which aims at upsetting the social order and undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization. In the face of such a threat the Catholic Church *could not and does not remain silent*. This Apostolic See above all has *not refrained from raising its voice* for it knows that its proper and special mission is to defend truth, justice and all those eternal values which Communism ignores or attacks.<sup>56</sup>

And yet the Council that purported to read “the signs of the times” would say not one word about an evil ideology which, at that very moment in history, was “upsetting the social order and undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization.” On October 12, 1962,

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<sup>54</sup> See Jean Madiran, “The Vatican-Moscow Agreement,” *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 16, September-October, 1984, p. 5. See also articles at pages 4, 7, and 11 in *The Fatima Crusader*, Issue 17, February-April, 1985 and Atila Sinke Guimarães, “The Metz Pact,” *Catholic Family News*, Sept. 2001.

<sup>55</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 4.

<sup>56</sup> Pope Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, Encyclical on Atheistic Communism, March 19, 1937.

two representative priests of the Orthodox church debarked from a plane at Fiumicino Airport to attend the Council. The Council began with Orthodox observers watching over its proceedings in order to verify compliance with the Vatican-Moscow Agreement. The written intervention of 450 Council Fathers against Communism was mysteriously “lost” after being delivered to the Secretariat of the Council, and Council Fathers who stood up to denounce Communism were politely told to sit down and be quiet.<sup>57</sup>

Obviously, given the Vatican-Moscow Agreement, the Consecration of Soviet Russia to the Immaculate Heart to effect its conversion would be absolutely out of the question. On this point alone, the “new orientation” of the Church that emerged after Vatican II was already radically in conflict with the Message of Fatima. And so it has been ever since the meeting in Metz, which marked the beginning of the conciliar and post-conciliar pursuit of *Ostpolitik*, the policy by which the Church has ceased all condemnation and opposition to Communist regimes in favor of “dialogue” and “quiet diplomacy.”

The two most famous architects of *Ostpolitik* were Archbishop Agostino Casaroli, employed by the Vatican Secretariat of State under John XXIII and elevated to the cardinalate and the office of Secretary of State under John Paul II, and Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, a top-ranking Vatican diplomat under Secretary of State Casaroli. Casaroli would be succeeded by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, who would continue the *Ostpolitik* throughout his tenure, as would his successor Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. The policy continues to this day, as we see with the Vatican’s studious avoidance of any condemnation of the vicious persecution of the “underground” Church in Red China. It is no coincidence that both Sodano and Bertone, as we shall see, have pursued a parallel policy of “decommissioning” the Message of Fatima, and in particular its imperative of the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart, which is quite irreconcilable with a “New World Order” of democratic pluralism—the great Masonic dream—whose erection is now facilitated even by Vatican prelates in their diplomatic relations with the United Nations and other worldly powers, including Russia itself.

### *The “Reform” of the Curia*

In 1967-68, by order of Pope Paul VI in his apostolic constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*, the Roman Curia underwent its own “reform” in a dramatic restructuring. The restructuring was actually designed and implemented by the then

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<sup>57</sup> A complete account of this debacle is found in *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber*, Father Ralph Wiltgen, (New York: Hawthorne, 1967; TAN, 1985) pp. 272-278.

Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Jean-Marie Villot. The aim was to eliminate, as much as possible, what the party of the innovators would call “the old monarchical model of the Church” in favor of the “new model of collegiality.”

Before the Second Vatican Council, the Curia was indeed plainly structured as a monarchy. The Pope was the Prefect of the Holy Office, while the Cardinal in charge of the day-to-day business of the Holy Office was the Pro-Prefect (second-in-command), reporting directly to the Pope. The other dicasteries were of lower rank and, while having their own authority and jurisdiction,<sup>58</sup> were subordinate to the Holy Office, with the Holy Office directly under the Pope. This arrangement was entirely in keeping with the Divine Constitution of the Church. The Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, was at the head of the chain of command over which he wielded his authority either directly or through the Holy Office.

Long before Gorbachev announced his program of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union, the Church underwent its own *perestroika* in the Vatican. Under the “reform” engineered and carried out by Villot, the Holy Office was renamed, becoming the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)—the name “Holy Office” being far too old-fashioned for the party of the innovators. Far more significant, however, the renamed Holy Office lost its supreme position in the Curia. The Cardinal Secretary of State was placed above all the other Vatican dicasteries [departments], including the CDF. Worse, *the Pope was no longer Prefect of the CDF*, which would now be under a Cardinal Prefect organizationally subordinated to the Secretary of State. In sum, with the approval of Paul VI—one of the many imprudent decisions that would leave him weeping over the state of the Church during his last days—Villot “enhanced the powers of the Secretary [of State], *placing him over all the other departments of the Roman Curia.*” For good measure, Paul approved “abolishing the ancient office of Chancellor of the Holy Roman Church and merging its functions into those of the Secretary.”<sup>59</sup> The party of the innovators could hardly allow the continued existence of anything so “archaic” as a Chancellor of the *Holy Roman Church*.

The net result of this sweeping administrative “reform” was to sever in practice, but not spiritually, the Pope’s direct control over the daily governance of the Church. Under this bureaucratic rearrangement, Vatican ecclesiastical decisions would tend

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<sup>58</sup> The principle which requires that authority be exercised at the lowest possible level to avoid tyranny through excessive centralization of government. For example, the budget of a town should be determined by the town Fathers, not by the state or federal government.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. “Cardinal Secretary of State,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardinal\\_Secretary\\_of\\_State](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardinal_Secretary_of_State).

inevitably toward the pragmatic and the self-serving, rather than the requirements of truth and justice. St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that the first fruit of error is injustice, as error is the lack of a truth that should be there. The “reform” of the Curia provided a perfect framework for the isolation of Vatican decision-making from the objective norms of truth and justice that were inherent in the “old monarchical model” with its direct governance by the Vicar of Christ. Thus, now no longer under the Pope’s “oppressive” monarchical hand, Vatican policies would no longer necessarily be determined by those norms, but rather by what the Vatican department in question deemed politically expedient. The immense implications of this development for the Fatima event, the Church, and the world as a whole will be drawn out on the following pages.

### *The “Reform” of the Liturgy*

In the name of the Council’s document on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Paul VI—the same Pope who wondered how the smoke of Satan had “entered into the temple of God”—authorized something totally without precedent in the 2000-year history of the Church: the creation of a new rite of Mass that would be presented entirely in the vernacular and would be stripped and “simplified” in comparison with the traditional rite.

Pope Paul himself openly admitted that his new rite was a novelty that represented a startling and bewildering break with the past. As he declared in his audience address of November 19, 1969:

We wish to draw your attention to an event about to occur in the Latin Catholic Church: the introduction into the liturgy of the *new rite* of the Mass.... This change has something astonishing about it, something extraordinary. This is because the Mass is regarded as *the traditional and untouchable expression of our religious worship and the authenticity of our faith*. We ask ourselves, *how could such a change be made?* What effect will it have on those who attend Holy Mass? Answers will be given to these questions, and to others like them, arising from this *innovation*.

In his audience address of November 26, 1969, only a week later, Pope Paul could not have been more explicit in his intention to depart from the Church’s ancient liturgical tradition:

We ask you to turn your minds once more to the *liturgical innovation* of the new rite of the Mass.... A new rite of the Mass: *a change in a venerable tradition that has gone on for centuries*. This is something that affects our hereditary religious patrimony, *which seemed to enjoy the privilege of being untouchable and settled*.... We must prepare for this many-sided inconvenience.

It is the kind of upset caused by every *novelty* that breaks in on our habits.... So what is to be done on this special and historical occasion? First of all, we must prepare ourselves. This *novelty* is no small thing. We should not let ourselves be surprised by the nature, or even the *nuisance*, of its exterior forms. As intelligent persons and conscientious faithful we should find out as much as we can about *this innovation*.

Pope Paul's description of what he had decided to do regarding the traditional Latin liturgy would be impossible to believe if he had not said it publicly and for the historical record:

It is here that the greatest newness is going to be noticed, the newness of language. No longer Latin, but the spoken language will be the principal language of the Mass. The introduction of the vernacular will certainly be a *great sacrifice* for those who know the beauty, the power and the expressive sacrality of Latin. *We are parting with the speech of the Christian centuries; we are becoming like profane intruders in the literary preserve of sacred utterance.* We will lose a great part of that stupendous and incomparable artistic and spiritual thing, the Gregorian chant. We have *reason indeed for regret, reason almost for bewilderment.* What can we put in the place of that language of the angels? *We are giving up something of priceless worth.* But why? What is more precious than *these loftiest of our Church's values*?<sup>60</sup>

Pope Paul's answer to his own question—"But why?"—is even more astonishing:

The answer will seem banal, prosaic. Yet it is a good answer, because it is human, because it is apostolic. Understanding of prayer is worth more than the silken garments in which it is royally dressed. Participation by the people is worth more—particularly participation by modern people, so fond of plain language which is easily understood and converted into everyday speech.

As purely factual matter, there was no evidence whatever to support Pope Paul's claim that his liturgical innovations were necessary to accommodate a supposed need of "modern people" for "plain language." As Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci observed in their famous Short Critical Study of the new rite in 1969 (which later came to be known as *The Ottaviani Intervention*), the people themselves had never asked for and did not want this change: "If the Christian people expressed anything at all, it was the desire (thanks to the great

<sup>60</sup> The authors of *The Pope, the Council and the Mass* actually cite this text in an appendix in support of their claim that the new Mass is not novel. Comment would be superfluous.

St. Pius X) to discover the true and immortal treasures of the liturgy. They never, *absolutely never*, asked that the liturgy be changed or mutilated to make it easier to understand. What the faithful did want was a better understanding of a unique and *unchangeable* liturgy—a liturgy *they had no desire to see changed*.”<sup>61</sup> In fact, when the liberal German bishop William Duschak of Calapan proposed in a speech during Vatican II that there be a new rite of Mass in the vernacular, he was asked whether his proposal had originated with the people he served. Duschak replied: “No, *I think they would oppose it*. But if it could be put into practice, I think they would accept it.”<sup>62</sup>

And Bishop Duschak, it must be noted, was only suggesting that a new vernacular rite be implemented on an experimental basis *alongside* the traditional Latin rite, not in place of it. The *de facto* abolition of the traditional Mass would have been unthinkable to the vast majority of Council Fathers. In fact, when Cardinal Browne expressed to his fellow Council Fathers the fear that if the Council allowed the vernacular into the liturgy the Latin Mass would disappear within ten years, he was greeted with incredulous laughter. But as Fr. John Parsons notes: “The pessimistic reactionary proved to be more in touch with the flow of events than the optimistic progressives.”<sup>63</sup>

The creation of the New Mass was placed under the direction of Monsignor Annibale Bugnini, who had been Secretary of the Pontifical Preparatory Commission on the Liturgy, which drafted *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. After the Council, Pope Paul appointed Bugnini as Secretary of the Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy. The result was the imposition of a new Missal and the purported “ban” of the old, which Pope Benedict has declared non-existing in restoring the old Missal to universal use. As Benedict admitted when he was Cardinal Ratzinger: “The prohibition of the missal that was now decreed, a missal that had known continuous growth over the centuries, starting with the sacramentaries of the ancient Church, introduced a *breach of the liturgy whose consequences could only be tragic*.”<sup>64</sup> In a further devastating admission, he wrote this by way of introduction to Msgr. Klaus Gamber’s withering critique of the New Mass: “In the place of liturgy as the fruit of development came fabricated liturgy. We abandoned the organic, living process of growth and development over centuries, and replaced it—as in a manufacturing process—

<sup>61</sup> Ottaviani and Bacci, *The Ottaviani Intervention*, p. 32.

<sup>62</sup> Wiltgen, *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber*, p. 39.

<sup>63</sup> Fr. John Parsons, “Reform of the Reform? [Part II],” *Christian Order*, December 2001. Fr. Parsons is a diocesan priest in Australia and a renowned Catholic scholar. His bishop has not, to our knowledge, accused him of “private judgment.”

<sup>64</sup> Cardinal Ratzinger, *Milestones – Memoirs 1927–1977* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1998), p. 146.

with a fabrication, a banal on-the-spot product.”<sup>65</sup> As Gamber himself explained in the work the future Pope Benedict XVI endorsed:

there has never actually been an actual break with Church tradition, as has happened now, and in such a frightening way, where *almost everything the Church represents is being questioned.....* At this critical juncture, the traditional Roman rite, more than one thousand years old and until now the heart of the Church, was destroyed... We can only pray and hope that the Roman Church will return to Tradition and allow once more the celebration of that liturgy of the Mass which is well over 1,000 years old.<sup>66</sup>

Today, Pope Benedict can hardly deny what he admitted as Cardinal Ratzinger: “I am convinced that the ecclesial crisis in which we find ourselves today depends in great part on the *collapse of the liturgy*, which sometimes comes to be conceived ‘as if God does not exist’: as if it no longer matters whether God is there and is seen and heard in it. But if in the liturgy there no longer appears the communion of the faith, the universal unity of the Church and of her history, where does the Church appear in her spiritual substance?”<sup>67</sup>

In July of 1975, with liturgical collapse already spreading everywhere, Paul VI suddenly removed Bugnini, now an Archbishop, from office, disbanded the Congregation for Divine Worship over which he had presided, and packed him off to Iran to serve out his days as a Papal Nuncio. Stunned by the suddenness of his fall from a position of total command over the Roman liturgy, Bugnini mused in his autobiography about what could have caused it. Here he freely admits that a cardinal advised him of the “existence of a ‘dossier’ which he had seen on (or brought to?) the Pope’s desk which proved that Bugnini was a Freemason.”<sup>68</sup> While Bugnini denied he was a Mason—as a member of a secret society could he have admitted it?—he noted that “the silence of the official organs of the Holy See was interpreted as proof that the ‘rumors’ were well founded.”<sup>69</sup>

Was Bugnini in fact a Mason? Evidently, Paul VI was sufficiently convinced of it, for why else would he have removed Bugnini and disbanded his Congregation within days of receiving the evidence? In any case, the “liturgical reform” and the vast upheaval it has caused in the Church—the tragic consequences Cardinal Ratzinger admitted—has more than fulfilled the platform of the Masons

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<sup>65</sup> Gamber, *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy*. Excerpts from Cardinal Ratzinger’s preface to the French-language edition appear on the back cover.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99, 109, 113-114.

<sup>67</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *My Life*, p. 115.

<sup>68</sup> Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy: 1948-1975* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1990), p. 91.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

(already they had published internally to their Masonic brethren what they wanted the Catholic Church to have in its new Mass, which comes very close to the *Novus Ordo*) and the program of the Masons and of the Modernists, of “the Modernist as Reformer” noted by Saint Pius X: “Regarding worship, the number of external devotions is to be reduced, or at least steps must be taken to prevent their further increase...”

### ***The “Reform” of the Index***

The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (“List of Prohibited Books”) was first created in 1559 and later administered by the Holy Office, with the most recent edition being issued in 1948, only fourteen years before the Council. For the centuries of its existence, the Index was a warning to the faithful against heresy and immorality in the rapidly expanding world of the printed word. More than that, it was the basis for proceedings aimed at compelling Catholic authors to defend their works and, if they failed to maintain a defense, to conform what they had written to faith and morals or withdraw it from publication.

In keeping with the Curial reform and its abolition of the Holy Office, however, Paul VI did away with the Index. In his *Motu Proprio Integrae Servandae*, which authorized the conversion of the Holy Office into the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, there was no reference to the Index. In response to queries about whether the Index was still in existence, the Congregation, on June 14, 1966, announced that while the Index maintained its “moral force” as a warning against heresy and immorality, it would no longer have any legal force as the grounds for penalties or proceedings, nor would it ever be updated. The Index had thus ceased to exist as part of the Church’s ecclesiastical law.

Thus, yet another plank in the program of “the Modernist as Reformer”, condemned by Saint Pius X in *Pascendi*, had been implemented: “The Roman Congregations, and especially the Index and the Holy Office, are to be reformed....”

### ***Vatican Admission of a Modernist Resurgence***

Today, no less than Msgr. Guido Pozzo, Secretary of the Pontifical Commission “*Ecclesia Dei*,” which is in charge of restoring the traditional Latin Mass to its rightful place in the Church, is constrained to admit that the ecclesial catastrophe Paul VI bewailed after the Council continues, and that its occurrence is related specifically to Modernism as condemned by Saint Pius X: “Unfortunately, the effects as enumerated by Paul VI have not disappeared. A *foreign way of thinking has entered into the Catholic world*, stirring up confusion, seducing many souls, and disorienting the faithful. There is a ‘spirit

of self-demolition’ that pervades modernism...” The post-conciliar crisis in the Church, he observed, involves a “para-Conciliar ideology” that “proposes once more *the idea of Modernism, condemned at the beginning of the 20th century by St. Pius X.*”

Msgr. Pozzo’s reference to a “para-Conciliar ideology” traces the crisis to where it first erupted anew: at the Second Vatican Council. Pozzo exonerates the Council documents themselves, but he admits that the Council provided the occasion for the emergence of the “para-Conciliar ideology” that “proposes once more the idea of Modernism” and “a ‘spirit of self-demolition’ that pervades modernism...” thus necessitating the unprecedented “hermeneutic of continuity” Pope Benedict XVI has called for. Of course, no other Council in the history of the Church has been accompanied by such a development. And that development was predicted by none other than the Freemasons, as we have seen.

Yet not only Msgr. Pozzo, but the entire Vatican apparatus seems impotent to address the very disaster whose occurrence is admitted. This mysterious incapacity, this “diabolical disorientation” in the Church, as Sister Lucy called it, is clearly bound up with what the Third Secret must predict with its yet-to-be-revealed references to what Pope Benedict described in 2010 as “future realities of the Church,” and “attacks on the Pope and the Church... precisely from *within* the Church...”

### ***The Two Parties and Their Relation to Fatima***

Around the developments we have just sketched coalesced the two parties we mentioned in the Introduction: the party of Tradition and the party of the innovators. That Pius XII foresaw their conflict in light of the Message of Fatima—likely the Third Secret in particular—would explain what that very Message would stand in the way of the program of innovation itself. And this in turn would explain why the conciliar Popes—John XXIII and Paul VI—suppressed the Third Secret despite the world’s expectation that it was to be revealed in 1960 in keeping with the Virgin’s order. This is not to say that these Popes were themselves intent on destructive innovation, but rather that they were intent on allowing the Council to proceed—not seeing, or refusing to see, that the Council would unleash exactly what Pius XII feared in view of Fatima: “dangers which menace the Church” and “the suicide of altering the faith in her liturgy, her theology, and her soul.”

The Italian intellectual Antonio Socci, at first a skeptic of “Fatimist” claims regarding the Third Secret but then a confirmed believer, has been quite unsparing in his criticism of the refusal of Pope John and Pope Paul to reveal the Secret. Speaking of John XXIII, he writes of Sister Lucy’s astonishing request for permission

to speak to the world about the Message of Fatima, followed by Pope John's silencing and isolation of the visionary:

We are in the first days of January 1959. It is not yet clear today how and why Sister Lucia, usually very reserved and submissive, would immediately after the election of John XXIII (on October 28, 1958) think of an initiative as sensational as a radio message to the world. The year 1960 had not yet arrived. What was she afraid of? What did she know? What urgency did she feel? It would never be known. Because in the first days of January 1959 an alarmed summit met in the Vatican and, faced with the prospect that the visionary of Fatima would reveal to the world something the Madonna had said, by the will of the Pope there issued the prohibition on the sister, and her substantial isolation from the entire world.<sup>70</sup>

Socci further recounts that when it was suggested to Pope John that he read the Third Secret, his attitude was “‘No, wait.’ First he wanted to announce the convocation of Vatican Council II, almost as if to place before Heaven a *fait accompli*.” The Council, Socci notes, could have been a great event for the good of the Church “if precisely that solemn assembly had made the consecration requested at Fatima, as sought by a petition of 510 bishops, and if the Third Secret had been revealed.” But it was not to be. John XXIII “was worried and had stubbornly wished to postpone the reading of the Secret in case it contained something that advised against that announcement [of the Council]. Evidently, Roncalli wanted to take that enormous decision for the Church without being ‘influenced’ by the Mother of Good Counsel, without being illuminated by the Queen of the Apostles, without being assisted by the Mother of God, by the Mother of Divine Grace, by the Help of Christians.”<sup>71</sup>

The Secret, Socci continues, was to be revealed to the world in 1960. But “the message of the Queen of Prophets not being to his liking,” Pope John “decided to do exactly the opposite: He decided to bury the message and not to give any explanation, either to the Church or to the world.”<sup>72</sup> Specifically, as recounted by his still-living personal secretary, Archbishop Loris F. Capovilla: “The Pope hesitated, then decided: ‘I have seen it, I have read it, we will reveal it.’ He dictated to me a text to write on the envelope: I give no judgment. He deferred to others: to a commission, to a congregation, or to his successor.” That envelope has never been revealed to the world by the Vatican, and its non-production is key evidence for the existence of

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<sup>70</sup> Antonio Socci, *The Fourth Secret of Fatima* (Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire: Loreto Publications, 2006), p. 195, citing Marco Tosati, *Il Segreto Non Svelato* [“The Secret Not Revealed”], pp. 45-49.

<sup>71</sup> Socci, *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, p. 195.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

a missing text of the Secret. After Pope John's decision to reseal and bury the text he read, we encounter the infamous Vatican-initiated press release of February 8, 1960, filled with hints of a text in which *spoken words of the Virgin* in the form of a letter—never revealed—would explain the ambiguous vision of the “Bishop dressed in White” published in 2000:

According to Vatican sources (February 8, 1960), the Secret of Fatima will never be disclosed.

It has just been stated, in very reliable circles of the Vatican, to the representatives of United Press International, that it is most likely that *the letter* will never be opened, in which Sister Lucia 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 Lucia, *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 Lucia's letter, and to continue keeping it *rigorously sealed*.

The decision of the Vatican authorities is based on various reasons: 1. Sister Lucia 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.<sup>73</sup>

In these circumstances, it is most probable that the Secret of Fatima will remain, forever, under absolute seal. (A.N.I.)<sup>74</sup>

Socci's commentary continues with the observation that John XXIII inaugurated the Council in October 1962 “with a discourse that remains celebrated for its infelicitous irony concerning the children of Fatima: ‘To us it seems necessary to disagree with these prophets of doom who are forever forecasting calamity, almost as if the world end were imminent.’” That is, the Fatima seers themselves had been rejected as “prophets of doom,” although Pius XII had certainly taken them quite seriously. “Evidently,” writes Socci, “Roncalli felt that his ‘prophetic spirit’ was much more acute than that of the ‘Queen of Prophets.’ In fact, he announced a splendid springtime for the Church, and we have seen that a dark and freezing winter arrived.”<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Francisco heard Our Lady's words indirectly from Lucia, who had been given permission by Our Lady to tell him, as revealed in the Fourth Memoir: “Yes, you may tell Francisco.”

<sup>74</sup> *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Vol. III, pp. 578-579.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197, quoting Allocution at the opening of Vatican Council II, *Gaudet Mater*

Indeed we have.

Respecting the Vatican-Moscow Agreement, Socci observes what will be thematic here: that “The message of Fatima evidently was felt to be profoundly embarrassing by one who was preparing to agree to what he thought to be a masterpiece of diplomacy and ecumenism: a pact with the Kremlin to have two Russian Orthodox observers at the Council, guaranteeing to that regime, in exchange, that the Council would not formulate any condemnation of Communism or the Soviet system..” And no one has been more acute than Socci in his assessment of this fundamental prudential blunder in favor of the party of the innovators:

Beyond the judgment (the worst possible) that one must give to this compromise of the “moral liberty” of the Catholic Church and of the Council itself, and moreover in return for a mess of pottage (two orthodox observers well-chosen and controlled by the KGB), one remains horrified in the face of a Council—what is more, a “pastoral” council, and thus one occupied with the historical reality of the Church—that pronounces itself on everything, but does not proffer a single word on the ideology of a regime that since 1917 had realized (and was still realizing in those years) on a planetary scale the most immense and bloody work of eradication, extermination, and persecution of the Church in its bimillennial history. Pius XII was attacked furiously for years because, according to his critics, he did not formulate clear and public condemnations of Nazism during the war (which is, however, untrue). But John XXIII has received only applause for having contracted this “silence” with the Kremlin. How is this explained?<sup>76</sup>

How indeed is this explained? There is no explanation beyond that “diabolical disorientation” of which Sister Lucy would speak again and again in her private correspondence after the Council.<sup>77</sup>

As for Paul VI, whose astounding public lamentations over the Council’s results we have already noted, he read the Third Secret in 1963, within days of his election as Pope in the midst of the Council, only to reseal the envelope and bury it as his predecessor had done.<sup>78</sup> And history records his refusal even to meet with Lucia,

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*Ecclesia* (October 11, 1962).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

<sup>77</sup> 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 themselves be dominated by the diabolical wave invading the world....” Quoted in excerpts from letters, *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Vol. III, pp. 758-760.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Christopher A. Ferrara, *The Secret Still Hidden* (Pound Ridge, New York: Good

now the last surviving Fatima visionary, during his visit to Fatima in 1967: “Address yourself to your bishop,” he insisted before the television camera as she begged to speak with him. Pope Paul, revealed his confidant Jean Guitton, “had a sort of generic aversion for visionaries. He maintained that, since revelation is complete, the Church has no need of these things, to which one must not give an exaggerated importance.”<sup>79</sup>

Having buried the Third Secret as his predecessor had done, Pope Paul failed to foresee that triumph of the party of the innovators, both doctrinal and liturgical—the same triumph Pius XII had predicted with the aid of the Message of Fatima, and which Paul unleashed with his approval of the “reforms” whose effects he lived to regret. Writes Socci:

It was precisely Montini—the Pope according to whom “the Church does not have need” of the extraordinary assistance of the Madonna and can do without Her maternal aid—who shortly thereafter had to recognize dramatically that, within a few years of the Council’s conclusion, the Church was in the process of “auto-demolition.” Paul VI even shouted out desperately his apocalyptic feeling that “from somewhere or other, the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God.” Then he added bitterly: “It was believed that after the Council there would come a day of sunshine in the history of the Church. Instead there came a day of clouds, tempests, of darkness....

However, it was seen quite clearly who had opened the door to the world and to the “smoke of Satan.” In fact, he persisted in error: The most devastating of the errors was the traumatic “coup d’etat” by a “minority revolution” that imposed the liturgical reform (with its thousand abuses), hailed by Paul VI but clearly not blessed by God. The prohibition of the millennial Latin liturgy of the Church was effectuated by a decision that contravened even the documents of the Council.<sup>80</sup>

Socci points to testimony from a most unexpected source: the Modernist theologian Henri de Lubac who, notes Socci, “even took part in the [Modernist] cause” after the Council. De Lubac freely admitted that:

The drama of Vatican II consists in the fact that instead of having been conducted by saints, as was the Council of Trent, it was monopolized by intellectuals. Above all it was monopolized

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Counsel Publications, 2008), p. 190: “‘I will also do as much,’ responded Pope Montini. The envelope was resealed and I don’t know if it was spoken of further.” Quoting transcript of video interview of Capovilla, broadcast on the Telepace network, September 21, 2007.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Stefano Maria Paci in *30 Giorni* [“30 Days”], March 1990.

<sup>80</sup> Socci, *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, p. 200.

by certain theologians, whose theology started off with the preconception of updating the faith according to the demands of the world and to emancipate it from a presupposed condition of inferiority with respect to modern civilization. The place of theology ceased to be the Christian community; that is, the Church became the interpretation of individuals. In this sense the post-conciliar period represented *the victory of Protestantism within Catholicism*.<sup>81</sup>

Socci asks, as we ask: “The victory of Protestantism within Roman Catholicism? Is this not already an apocalyptic event?” And Socci concludes as we do respecting the results of that search by the Council and the conciliar Popes for the “signs of the times” without the aid of Our Lady of Fatima, who provided the greatest sign of all. Noting the pious exhortations to Marian piety in certain pronouncements by both Pope John and Pope Paul, Socci writes:

In fact the true sign of the times, although misunderstood and unheeded, was Mary at Fatima. That Roncalli and Montini in particular indicated entirely different signs of the times to the Church, trying to “bury” the true sign of the Message of Mary and to elude its assistance, leads one to think that these teachings of the Popes are the judge of their own historical deeds. Fatima, therefore, *is a great sign of contradiction that makes evident a kind of blinding of the pastors*.<sup>82</sup>

Fatima, as a sign of contradiction, points the way back to a safe harbor following the “apocalyptic event” of “the victory of Protestantism within Catholicism” so astonishingly admitted by one of the most prominent Modernists of the post-conciliar epoch (evidently in a mode of regret). Hence, whatever the subjective intentions of particular bishops in attendance, many of whom did not anticipate its calamitous results (while others indeed planned them), it is clear that the Second Vatican Council is the event that divided the true from the false friends of Fatima and all that Fatima represents for the course of the Church and the fate of humanity. Thus oriented as to the plot lines of the drama that is Fatima, we are now in a position to assess the role of some of its major antagonists.

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<sup>81</sup> “The true Council and who has betrayed it,” *Il Sabato*, July 12-18, 1980.

<sup>82</sup> Socci, *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, p. 204.