

## The Curious Article in the Vatican Official Newspaper

I quote the following from Brother Michael, TWTAf, Vol III, pg 657. I show his remarks in yellow background.

On October 15, 1978, *L'Osservatore della Domenica*, the Sunday supplement to the *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican Newspaper, contained an article signed by a Vatican prelate, Msgr. Corrado Balducci, a member of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Coming from a member of the Curia, and published in an official Vatican journal, this article gave considerable credence to the fact of an Apocalyptic Third Secret. Following are excerpts from it, quoted by *Documentation Catholique* of January 7, 1979.

We do not want to get lost in the many texts and so-called prophetic messages, due often to sick people, who more easily find an echo in times of discouragement and skepticism. There is, however, a text which causes us to reflect and whose authenticity seems acceptable: it is the one called "the third Secret of Fatima" (1917). The rumors had been that it would be made public in 1960; then it was thought it would be for the Holy Year of 1975. If it had been a question of good news, consoling things, there would have been no reason not to divulge it. Unfortunately, it seems to contain painful and very tragic predictions. Some indiscretions on this subject appeared in the press about 1963, at a moment when, it was said, this text had been brought to the knowledge of the President of the United States and the leader of the Soviet Union. It is also found in Renzo Basehera's book *Le Profezie*, from which it was reprinted by *Neues Europa* at Stuttgart on October 15, 1963.

True or not, I quote a few sentences from it:

**"A great punishment shall come to all mankind . . . in the second half of the 20th Century . . .**

**There is no order in anything, even in the highest positions, it is Satan who governs . . .**

**He will succeed in sowing confusion in the minds of the great scientists who invent arms, with which half of humanity can be destroyed in a few minutes (in 1917, atomic energy was still unknown). He will have in his power the mighty who govern peoples, and he will push them to produce these weapons in great quantities,"**

**"There will also come a time of the hardest trials for the Church."**

**The greatest World War will happen in the second half of the 20th Century . . . Millions and millions of men will envy those who are dead".**

Leaving it thus "to the reader what judgment to make on Fatima", the author concludes on a note of optimism after the death of John Paul I who, "by his smile gave hope and optimism to life."

This article, which tended to give credence to the "false secret" of *Neues Europa*, in fact had no other authority than the Vatican clerk, who moreover had made sure his article appeared during the interregnum between the death of John Paul I and the election of John Paul II.

First, we must keep in mind that Brother Michael is thrown into paroxysms of denial. His conservative mind cannot admit that man may destroy himself. He has faith in God, but it is a faith that demands God to preserve the current godless social order. His religious philosophies are contrary to the Will of God.

Second, he does not give us a sense of the article as published in *L'Osservatore della Domenica*, nor the philosophical intent of the author, who, although mildly, tells us to expect dire events in our immediate future, based on a realistic assessment of the world political environment. Michael has severely limited this context.

Third, he denigrates the Monsignor by calling him a "clerk."

Fourth, the quotations from Balducci seem from memory, not literal repetition from a known text. Balducci may not have had the original text in his hand, but had read it from some Vatican source, and was recalling from that text.

Fifth, we cannot believe the editorial staff of the *L'Osservatore Romano* had lost its grips merely because John Paul I had died. Certainly, the Editor would not have printed it if he did not believe in its authenticity. Brother Michael's comments are clearly based on his contempt for apocalyptic material. The authority came from more than Balducci's imagination.

Sixth, we can deduce that the longer text of the Third Secret saw considerably circulation in the Vatican, although it may have been under administrative constraint.

I shall now offer the full text of the article, in English translation, in order to help the reader evaluate for himself the value of the *L'Osservatore della Domenica* piece.

In the following paper I shall offer the full text as published in *Neues Europa*.

## **PROPHECY AND REALITY**

**The admonishing cry of the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah would find an echo in similar prophetic messages being examined today for their authenticity. In any case, these messages are worth studying as well as comparing and contrasting against the realities of current times.**

For several years now, people have been speaking and writing volumes regarding various prophetic messages warning mankind of impending calamities. The topic has become even more fashionable following humanity's recent witnessing of the rare occurrence of two funerals of two different Popes occurring within weeks of each other -funerals having unique particularities predicted in detail centuries ago, as with many other predecessors, and described in the so-called Malachi prophecies.

Pope John Paul I was referenced by Malachi as, "*De medietate lunae*" (Half-moon). Where does one find this reference to a half-moon? The most obvious and simple way is to look at John Paul's surname, *Luciani*, whose first syllable constitutes half of the noun, "*luna*" (moon). Thus, it is in his last name that we find such a reference to a half-moon.

Moreover, in the 108 maxims used by Malachi to designate John Paul I's predecessors, beginning with Celestine II who was elected in 1143, a good 19 of them can be explained (at least partially) by examining the first or last name.

Born in Armagh, Ireland in 1094, Malachi became a priest at the age of 25. At thirty years of age, he was elected bishop of Connor and subsequently went on to succeed Archbishop Celso in the diocese of Armagh. During his first trip to Rome, he stopped over in Clairvaux, France where he met and befriended St. Bernard. He died on November 2, 1148, attended to by St. Bernard who after Malachi's death, wrote his biography. On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1190, he was canonized by Clement III.

The so-called prophecies of Malachi were published for the first time in 1595 by the Benedictine monk Arnold Wion who included them in his "*Lignum Vitae*" (Tree of Life) edited that same year in Venice. In his treatise, Wion listed Malachi's 111 maxims that described various characteristics of future popes in the Catholic Church leading up to and ending with the last Pope, named Peter of Rome.

The prevailing opinion among scholars denies the authenticity of these prophecies. According to some, they were invented in 1590 during the period of the conclave held upon the death of Urban VIII, and aimed to influence in some way the election of his successor – an attempt that failed in any case. There are some experts, however, who believe the prophecies are authentic or at the very least, like Jesuit priest René Thibaut, uphold their prophetic nature while nevertheless ascribing them to an anonymous author who supposedly wrote them in the year 1571.

Aside from this issue, one remains perplexed and speculative after noticing the number of coincidences and apparent realization of Malachi's prophecies in Popes even after the year 1590. Moreover, it is true that the prophecies have historically been treated with respect as Carlo Marcora pointed out in his book published in 1963 entitled, "*Storia dei Papi*" (History of the Popes). Some of the maxims, in fact, are still in use to designate certain pontificates: "*Peregrinus Apostolicus*" (Apostolic Pilgrim) for Pius VI, "*Lumen de Coelo*" (Light of Heaven) for Leo XIII, "*Pastor Angelicus*" (Angelic Shepherd) for Pius XII (a documentary about his life is thus entitled).

It isn't necessary to spend time searching for far-off clues as to the origin of the maxims. Short as they may be, one could easily conjure up a variety of vague and unrelated interpretations. For the most part, however, they have a very simple, clear and sometimes insignificant explanation. Some examples would be a coat of arms (as in the case of Paul VI), the composition of the person's name (Julius III), the person's place of origin (Pius V), the main tasks and responsibilities carried out previously (Pius II), or even other purely accidental circumstances (such as Innocent X with regard to the feast day on which he was elected or Clement IX with regard to the room in which the conclave was held).

Only in a very few cases, are these maxims actually fulfilled through one or more characteristics of the Pontificate in question. Concrete instances would be, "*Fides intrepida*" (Fearless faith) for Pius XI, "*Pastor et Nauta*" (Shepherd and Beacon) for John XXIII or through some particularly sad and painful event (i.e., "*Peregrinus Apostolicus*" (Apostolic Pilgrim) for Pius VI, who died in exile, and "*Religio Depopulata*" (Demise of Religion) for Benedict XV, under whose Pontificate World War I erupted).

For these reasons, the maxims for two future Pontiffs - namely, "*De Labore Solis*" (Toil Beneath the Sun) and "*Gloria Olivae*" (Glory of the Olive) could perhaps be attributed to their specific coat of arms or upon some other negligible matter.

There are those, however, who would see in these last two maxims a much deeper significance pertaining to the times and era in which we will soon be living. Along this line of thinking, the next Pontificate would seemingly witness an enormous calamity, very likely a sort of World War III, following which would reign an era of peace and tranquility under a new Pontificate.

On the other hand, numerous other prophecies also predict the occurrence of such a catastrophic event. One must not forget that the conclusion of the second millennium, just like the end of the first, is a propitious time for visions of the sort to arise. There are some 'doomsayers' who warn of the end of the world in the year 2000. Yet, people were saying the very same thing the last time humanity prepared to enter into a new millennium one thousand years ago.

It isn't necessary to get caught up in the myriad assortment of so-called prophetic texts and messages, (often emanating from overexcited or even disturbed mental states), that societies seem more ready to embrace during prolonged periods of discouragement and skepticism.

There is however a text that does give cause for reflection and whose authenticity seems acceptable – that of the so-called "*Segreto di Fatima*" (The Secret of Fatima) of 1917. Rumors flew that the secret would be made public in 1960. When that didn't happen, people thought it would come out in 1975 during the Holy Year. Obviously, if the secret contained positive news and a message of consolation, there would be no reason to hide it. On the contrary, it seems rather to contain horrible predictions of tragic events. Indiscriminate leaks into the press have occurred for some time now regarding the secret, and as reports indicate, the text was brought to the awareness of both the President of the United States and the Head of the Soviet Union around 1963. We can also read this same assertion in the short volume entitled, "*Le profezie*" (Prophecies) by Renzo Baschera, picked up later on by the "New Europe" who published it in Stuttgart on October 15, 1963.

True or not, here are some excerpts taken from the prophecy: "A great punishment will fall upon the human race...in the second half of the twentieth century". "There will be no semblance of order in any part of the world and Satan will reign in the highest positions...He will succeed in seducing the minds of great thinkers and scientists who will invent weapons capable of destroying within minutes a great segment of humanity (in 1917 the idea of atomic energy wasn't even yet conceivable!). The powerful will govern the masses and will incite them to construct enormous quantities of destructive arms." "Even the Church will undergo huge trials". "A world war will break out in the second half of the twentieth century... Millions and millions of people will die".

At this point, leaving aside the topic of prophecies and predictions, (their credibility or lack thereof), and leaving it up to the reader to judge the plausibility of the message of Fatima, I would like now to focus on today's reality. To this end, it may be necessary to interrupt the somewhat dreamy state in which we humans often live as well as forgo our tendency towards nonchalance and indifference in the face of future unpleasant events that could possibly await us.

Let's ask ourselves a first question. Is it really that impossible that a World War couldn't erupt once more in history? And another question of equal importance: Is it that implausible that the next war would not be fought using nuclear weapons? In this unheard of and deplorable eventuality, everything leads one to believe that the most up to date and technologically advanced weapons would in fact be employed. Humanity would witness a cataclysmic event without precedent, a tremendous destruction upon the human race and its resources. One may recall Einstein's response to the question of whether or not there might occur a Third World War, "I don't know, but I am certain of one thing. After it, people would revert to fighting with bows and arrows!"

It is precisely this aspect of enormous and total destruction that impels leaders of nations today to heighten their efforts of diplomacy, and to strive ever harder to maintain positive relations and an attitude of goodwill towards other countries. Within this dark and menacing threat, there is only one consoling certainty of sacred truth. If the next war weren't so potentially destructive, it would have already occurred.

God can not permit such a disproportionate catastrophe to befall mankind if not merited. And it is exactly within this simple and paradoxical truth that one must examine the manner in which the human race has lived in the past, in the present and in the future.

Haven't we witnessed in fact over time a consistent degradation in society of human morality, as well as of social and religious value systems? For years now, we have been experiencing the consequences of unparalleled increases in crime and criminal acts and of rising insecurity in all aspects of life. Could this be perhaps a form of preparation or a laying out of those conditions that might indeed merit us (the human race) such a tremendous and unprecedented scourge?

Nevertheless, if the punishment hasn't yet been inflicted, it is an indication that humanity doesn't fully merit it. All the more when we consider God's nature, which in addition to being totally just is also ever merciful and forgiving in His judgement of human beings living out our earthly existence.

Recently, we were blessed by a Pope who was able to "infect" all of humanity with his dose of optimism concerning better times ahead and a brighter future. Unfortunately, that ray of hope lasted only 33 days. The Good Lord wanted to show us once again in a very profound manner that He continues to use the humble to confound the wise. He wanted to demonstrate to leaders of nations and to those who instigate and provoke national and international crises how much humans are still sensitive to and desiring of goodness, of truth and of peace. We had visible proof of this seeing the enthusiasm and interest people manifested upon the election of Pope Paul I and during his few days of Papacy. Moreover, the demonstration of faith and solidarity displayed upon his death as men and women willingly waited in unending lines just to catch a glimpse of and show respect to the Pope's earthly remains is a lasting testament of his positive impact and legacy.

This short-lived papacy wasn't in vain. On the contrary, a face that shown with goodness, simplicity and sincerity, and a smile that radiated hope and optimism in life had a specific purpose and accomplished a divine mission. It was a sign for all of humanity to turn away from designs of war and conflict, to perceive through the opacity of this world a higher realm of light illuminating a path for us to follow – a path of mutual understanding and goodwill among people.

END -- Written by Corrado Balducci -- Translated by Patrice Van Hyle -- March 6, 2004

