



Above: Archbishop Sheen with two brothers who witnessed the "miracle of the doves" during the 1950 October Vigil at Fatima and asked the Archbishop to receive them into the Church! The one at left became a priest after working full time for the Blue Army for a year.

When Archbishop Sheen made his remarkable prophecy in October of 1951, the Blue Army of Our Lady was almost exclusively an American, U.S. movement. It had begun in a single parish in New Jersey. Aided by SOUL Magazine, it began to spread in the United States only in 1950. (The first issue of the magazine was published the same month in which the Pilgrim Virgin went to Moscow.)

The first Bishop of Fatima encouraged the "internationalization" of the movement by saying that the Blue Army Pledge could be promulgated as coming from him. He encouraged the building of an international center at Fatima, and he himself became the first "international" spiritual director.

From Rome, via France!

Shortly after this came a most remarkable intervention from Rome, via France!

Inspired by Our Lady's promise to convert Russia, the founder of the *Movement for Unity* in France (Abbe Andre Richard) decided in 1952 to support the Blue Army and to promote it through the Movement's publication: *l'Homme Nouveau*.

Dissension arose in the Movement (then one of the earliest and

ARCHBISHOP SHEEN'S PROPHECY and THE BLUE ARMY

by JOHN M. HAFFERT

most powerful ecumenical movements in France) because of this "intrusion" of the Blue Army into the Movement for Unity. Abbe Richard decided to discuss the problem with Cardinal Tisserant, Dean of the College of Cardinals.

Came as a Surprise

To his surprise, this highest Cardinal of the Church not only agreed that the *Movement for Unity* could only be strengthened by the movement of Fatima but offered to give his support in writing.

A more than eight hundred word letter from the Cardinal soon followed which was then published in the prestigious Paris paper *l'Homme Nouveau*.

"A Response... to Fatima"

The Cardinal, who was not only head of the College of Cardinals but also Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Church, said: "*I am forced without ceasing to think of those vast regions where many Christians suffer for their faith, where one is forced cruelly to feel the effects of lack of union with the See of Peter, even though there is no lack of that desire for unity willed by the Savior.*"

His Eminence congratulated the French *Movement for Unity* for recognizing the importance of the Blue Army and the Message of Fatima, with its promise of the conversion of Russia. "*The Blue Army is a response to the demands of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima,*" the Car-

dinal said. He added: "*The Blue Army enters into the spirit of the Church in working to bring about a personal living... by men and women... of the consecration which the Sovereign Pontiff has willed to make of the entire world, and most particularly of the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*"

Lucia Gives Hope

On October 18, 1952, this writer had a personal interview (his second) with Lucia, sole survivor of the three children to whom Our Lady appeared at Fatima. It was in the Carmelite Convent in Coimbra, Portugal, just one year (almost to the day!) after Bishop Sheen had written his "prophecy." He told Lucia about the spread of the Blue Army throughout the world. She listened with what might be described as joy, and then said quietly:

"The conversion of Russia may be sooner than is expected."

At that time we were all concerned about the 1960 Secret... and Sr. Lucia may have made this statement because people were speculating (perhaps wrongly) about the Secret.

"Sooner" than most people expect could mean quite simply that it will come before we expect. It may come while we think that Communism is just going to keep expanding its power indefinitely to the point of putting our backs against the wall of nuclear blackmail.

By 1985!

Bishop Sheen concluded his 1951 article containing his prophecy that

Our Lady would be reviewing HER troops in Moscow by 1985 with words we should all take very, very much to heart. He wrote:

"If penance is done by Portugal alone, then some kind of catastrophe may have to come briefly before peace will follow. A few All-Night Vigils might do much for America and the peace of the world. The future is known only to God, but what the future brings depends on how we spend our days and our nights."

Spoke of Vigils...

When Archbishop Sheen wrote this... no All-Night Vigils had yet been inaugurated outside of Fatima. They really began in England only four years later, and in the United States more than twelve

years later! Yet Archbishop Sheen spoke of All-Night Vigils...!

These Vigils are now one of the major efforts of the Blue Army throughout the world on every First Friday - First Saturday. Last June 13-14, tens of thousands participated in a Vigil for the Collegial Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

"Dramatic"

When that collegial consecration is made, Russia will be converted. And that "conversion" will undoubtedly be *something immediate, dramatic, perceptible...* because Our Lord told Lucia that He required the consecration of Russia to be made by the Holy Father together with all the Bishops of the

world: "So that My ENTIRE CHURCH WILL KNOW that it is through the Immaculate Heart of My Mother that this favor (the conversion of Russia) is obtained."

Depends on Us...

It is indeed likely... thanks to the continued growth of Our Lady's Blue Army throughout the world and to the increase of its cell Holy Hours and All-Night Vigils... the collegial consecration might be expected to take place within the next few years and that the extraordinary prophecy made by Archbishop Sheen in 1951 will be realized.

However, Archbishop Sheen said: "What the future brings depends on how WE spend our days and our nights."



Below, a Parish Vigil conducted by Msgr. Ulpiano Catungal. Picture was taken at 7:30 a.m. after a night of prayer.

The Blue Army in the Philippines, which organized the nationwide Vigil, also sent a spiritual bouquet to John Haffert on his 65th birthday consisting of almost ten thousand Masses and Communion, over nine thousand visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and many thousands of Stations, Ejaculations and Sacrifices, with 9,843 Rosaries. Their dedicated leader in the Philippines, where the predictions and promises of Our Lady of Fatima are so well understood, is Mrs. Filomena de Guzman.

It would have taken TEN TIMES the size of an issue of SOUL to have reported the wave of worldwide response to the All-Night Vigil of last June 13-14 on the Feasts of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary for the Collegial Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and for world peace.

Throughout the Philippines, for example, the Vigil was held in parishes, chapels, even many private homes in rural areas. Above is a group in the rural area of Mangaldan, in a home vigil at eight a.m. in the morning after the entire night in prayer.

