

WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT

The SECRET of 1960?

by John M. Haffert

When Pope John XXIII opened the third secret of Fatima in 1960 he felt it should not be made public and asked the advice of several of his most intimate advisors including Cardinal Ottaviani and Archbishop Capovilla (then Pope John's Secretary and now Archbishop of Loreto).

All agreed with Pope John *that the secret should not be made public.*

Cardinal Tells Story

During the subsequent seven years there was a great deal of speculation (and many rumors arose) concerning the secret. Some said the Pope had shared it with President Kennedy and some other heads of state. A magazine in Germany claimed to have received a copy of the secret and published excerpts from it. Father Fuentes, who was Postulator for the Cause of Francis and Jacinta, was lecturing in Mexico on the spread of Communism throughout the world as predicted at Fatima and was misunderstood to have revealed parts of the secret. (Statements of Father Fuentes attributed to Lucia were later categorically denied by her.)

The fact is: *The secret has remained a secret.* Cardinal Ottaviani, in a press conference in Rome on February 11, 1967, said:

"The Pope opened the envelope and read its contents. Though the text is written in Portuguese, he told me that he had understood it thoroughly. Then he himself put it in another envelope, sealed it for the archives. *What matters is the public message of Fatima.* The secret was for the Holy Father, to whom it was addressed. And if the

person to whom it was addressed decided to declare 'Now is not the moment to make it known to the world', we must be content with his wisdom *and the decision that it remain a secret.*"

Cardinal Ottaviani went on to stress at greater length *the tremendous importance of the public message of Fatima.*

Some now speculate that the secret was so terrible that it would have frightened the world if the Pope made it public. One rumor had it that the Pope read the secret and fainted, which of course is not true.

Pope Paul VI requested the secret when he was crowned Pope after the death of Pope John XXIII. He, too, read it and *also decided that it should remain a secret.* But shortly afterwards the Pope mentioned Fatima before all the Bishops of the world in the Second Vatican Council and named Our Lady MOTHER OF THE CHURCH. Then the Pope himself went to Fatima "to pray for peace in the Church and in the world."

MESSAGE Is Important

So Pope Paul VI, like Pope John XXIII before him, has underlined that while the secret of Fatima excites our curiosity, it must also make us aware that the public message of Fatima is *a continuing message*, for our day and for the immediate future, and that *it is of grave importance* that we all listen to that part of the message which Our Lady intended all of us to know and by which She promises the triumph of Her Heart in the world.

Jeanne Dixon, and some other visionaries or seers, claim to have had a revelation of the secret of

Fatima. But is this likely? Is it likely that God would permit them to make known the secret which the Church decided not to make known?

Many forget that this secret played a very important role in the history of Fatima.

Atheists were ruling Portugal at the time of the apparitions and they tried to get the children to deny the visions. *The secret became the focal point of the atheists' effort.*

Atheists Sought to Know It

The children had steadfastly refused to deny that they had seen Our Lady during two days of alternate bribery and threats. So finally the atheists in charge commanded that the children be put in a common jail and that vats of boiling oil be prepared in which *they would be burned alive if they did not reveal the secret.*

There was an almost diabolical cleverness behind this.

The atheists reasoned that they could not dissuade the children to deny the visions, but the children were now so frightened after the two days of imprisonment and interrogation that they might now tell the secret. And if they did so the atheists could then announce to the world:

Children Preferred to Die

"You see, one or two things must be true: First, either these children did not have a vision from heaven: or second, if they did, they are not worthy of it because by their own admission they have made known to us something which they said heaven had forbidden them to make known!"

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Thus by means of persuading the children to tell the secret they expected to destroy credibility in the visions of Fatima.

However, to their amazement, the children preferred actually to be boiled alive in oil than to reveal the secret! One by one the children were dragged out from the jail and taken to be burned (although the threat was not carried out). I myself, interviewing Lucia in 1946, asked her how she had felt when Francis and Jacinta had been taken out to be burned alive and she was to be next. Lucia told me:

"When they took me, I thought Francis and Jacinta were already dead and that perhaps I had misunderstood Our Lady about my remaining on earth because I

thought that I, too, was about to die."

Is there any other precedent in history of such heroic fidelity not just to God Himself, and to God's law, but to a command given by a "private vision", these same "private revelations" in which so many say we don't have to believe?!

One of the only other precedents on record is of the three children of the Old Testament who refused to worship a golden idol and were cast into a furnace "heated seven times more" (Daniel 3:19). An angel of God joined them in the furnace where, unharmed, they praised God. They were released and the pagan king himself was converted (Daniel 3:98).

Lucia is still living, and like the Pope she still guards the secret which was entrusted to her to be

given to the Holy Father. She prays daily for The Blue Army. She knows, as Father Pio has said, that Russia will be converted and the triumph of Mary's heart will take place *when there is a Blue Army member for every one of the atheists and for those who spread the errors of atheism throughout the entire world as Our Lady predicted.*

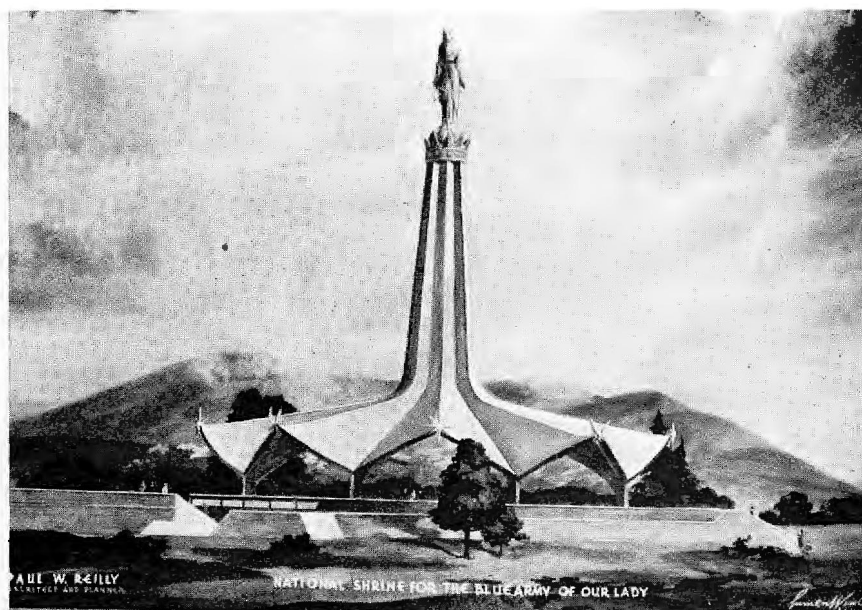
This is the *real* secret for us to know.

The Pope has his secret, perhaps to help bear the tremendous burden of these times. And we have our secret to help us bear the burden of the evil that continues to rise in intensity all about us.

Let us stop being concerned about the secret given to the Pope and be concerned about the secret for the triumph of Mary's Heart in the world *now*.

At the time of the Protestant Reformation, devotion to Mary was placed aside. In the four centuries which have followed, millions upon millions of Christians after rejecting Mary, also rejected the Blessed Sacrament. And now Our Lord cannot be expected to restore Himself to this vast segment of Christianity until reparation is made for the rejection of His Mother. That is why He has insisted at Fatima on reparation to Her—with Five Saturdays to repair for the denial of Her Divine Maternity, denial of Her Immaculate Conception, denial of Her Perpetual Virginity, irreverence to Her images, and for denying Her devotion to children. So far, certainly not enough of us have made these Five Saturdays of reparation. How can we expect the great era of the triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart, promised at Fatima, until we do? In a sense, is it not an offense to Jesus and Mary if we who believe refuse this necessary reparation?

Begin the Five First Saturdays now! Get them established in your parish, no matter how great the cost, no matter how difficult the effort.



An Ursuline nun from Great Falls, Mont. recently wrote to Msgr. Murphy:

"I pray that the wonderful Shrine to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart will be the means of drawing untold souls through Her to Jesus.

"The enclosed \$10.00 I know is very small. I am an old sister and do not have the opportunity... But my prayers are yours and I hope that

soon large donations will come to swell your building fund."

Msgr. Murphy was so touched by this letter that he suggested it be published in SOUL. "If only enough people had a spirit like this elderly Sister," Msgr. Murphy exclaimed, "how soon we would have not only a Shrine worthy of Mary's Immaculate Heart but enough reparation to that same Immaculate Heart to bring graces down upon all our nation." (See back cover)