



**THIS
APOCALYPTIC
AGE**

A commentary on
prophecies relating
to our times
and their portents

ROBERT BERGIN

This Apocalyptic Age

FIRST AUSTRALIAN EDITION

Revised and Enlarged

The School of Theology, University of New South Wales

Wolfeboro, New Hampshire

1983

THIS APOCALYPTIC AGE

A commentary on prophecies
relating to these times . . .
AND THEIR PORTENTS

By ROBERT BERGIN

Published by

Fatima International

Australia: Box 1579 G.P.O. Brisbane
U.S.A.: P.O. Box 8947 Richmond, Va. 23225
England: P.O. Box 5 Cheadle, Staffs.
Rep. Sth. Africa: P.O. Box 3354 Johannesburg

Copyright © Voice of Fatima International

First Edition November 1970, 30,000
copies

Second Impression April 1971, Calcutta,
India, 5,000 copies

Revised Edition July 1971, 30,000 copies

Revised Edition June 1972, 20,000 copies

Revised Edition June 1973, 35,000 copies

2nd Impression Rev. Edition 50,000 copies

This Apocalyptic Age now available in
Spanish, Portuguese and French.

Printed in Australia at

The Griffin Press, Netley, S.A. 5037.

DEDICATED

with great affection
to the youth of the world
in the hope
that they will find herein
the solution to the riddle of existence
and unlock for themselves
the secrets of the last ends of man

The Author

**'Greater than the tread of mighty armies
is an idea whose time has come.'**

Victor Hugo

CONTENTS

1. Preface	9
2. Death of a Civilisation	10
3. "Despise Not Prophecies"	14
4. The Beast Unchained?	18
5. Persecution	22
6. The Significance of Error	26
7. The Uncertain Future	29
8. The Basis in Scripture	33
9. A Great Red Dragon	39
10. An Elite Corps	41
11. Recent History	45
12. The Meaning of Creation	48
13. The Search for Happiness	54
14. The Apostasy in Politics	57
15. Problems on Campus	61
16. The Great Ideal	65
17. The Existence of God	69
18. Miracles	72
19. Learning from the Past	74
20. The New Crusade	78
21. The Quest for Peace	84
22. Can War be Justified?	87
23. Ecumenism	91
24. The Psychopaths	95
25. "Certain Fashions . . ."	98
26. The Only Tragedy	102
27. The World Religions	105
28. The Doctrine of Love	108
29. A Challenge	111
30. The Permissive Society	114
31. A Call to Youth	118
32. Authority in the Church	121
33. Fatima's Doctrinal Importance	126
34. Salute to Portugal	129
35. The Story of Fatima	132
36. The Secrets of Fatima	139
37. The Church and Fatima	144
38. Documentation	147
39. Conclusion	152

PREFACE

Nothing is so irresistible, it is said, as an idea whose time has come. It could be said that Marx, Engels and their fellow-conspirators *seemed* relatively powerless a century ago. But they were promoting an "idea whose time had come"—the dialectical materialism which was to blend with an age of apostasy. Its success was inevitable, given the spiritual condition of the people. Today there is, on the contrary, a widespread hunger for religion. The Prodigal Son is thinking of his Father's house. His stomach revolts against the materialistic husks that are fit only for swine. He suffers a hunger of the soul, seeks a new inspiration, a new gospel, a new light to lead him to happiness and peace. The Prodigal Son looks back for the embrace of his Father. *And that embrace is offered to him.*

The "idea" outlined in these pages is a precious spiritual antibiotic which can rapidly and efficiently eliminate the massive world infection of today.

It is truly the light that can dissipate the darkness of war and hatred threatening the modern world. It is the way that can lead to peace, to the peace that surpasses understanding.

At this stage, we would ask all who read to lift up their hearts to the Supreme Being with words such as these:

"Lord God, open my mind and my heart so that I may understand these things."

DEATH OF A CIVILISATION

As we move to the later stages of the 20th century there looms a clear crisis in human relations characterised by constant friction, constant wars, riots, rising crime, vandalism, racial disorders, serious sociological convulsions of all kinds. There is also, hospitals report, a neurological breakdown, indicating that nervous tensions have reached an all-time high in recorded history.

We appear to be moving towards a climactic hour. Without question the Judeo-Christian civilisation of our forefathers is *in extremis*. A world is dying; a world is being born.

It was the 13th century, according to the historians, which saw our Christian civilisation at its zenith. The Church had passed through the Dark Ages, and the spiritual genius of Dominic and Francis, the brilliant scholarship of Albert and Aquinas were illuminating Europe, giving that continent an intellectual eminence and a refinement in "ethics and aesthetics" that became the glory of the world.

The civilization was necessarily relative. Europeans still had their free will. As always, men could choose the refinement of divine grace; or they could reject it. What distinguished the 13th century was that so many chose to ratify the vows their sponsors had made for them in baptism; so many chose to accept Christ, to reject the devil "and all his works and pomps". It was a mass movement towards the Light in Europe, and it was to influence, greatly, the whole world.

Almost as it reached its pinnacle, Christian civilisation began to decline. The Renaissance, with its magnificent art and

architecture, was the acknowledged product of a Christian ethos. Some of its early poets, rejoicing in the new culture but failing to see the Divine benevolence behind it, began to rhapsodise in terms of man's inevitable progress. The seeds of the secular humanism of today were being sown. God was being told, in mild terms suited to the times, that He was not indispensable.

The 14th century, with its rising tempo of wars between Christian States, the exile of the Popes at Avignon and the scandal of two—and later three—claimants to the throne of St. Peter confirmed the decline.

The 15th century saw the appearance of serious and widespread corruption in the clergy and a loss of spirit in the great Religious Orders. Occam, Wycliffe and others were sounding a warning of a widespread revolt that was to come.

And, in the 16th century, the storm burst in all its fury. Luther, Calvin, Knox, Henry VIII, all struck violent blows at the seamless robe of Christian unity. Thenceforward, there would no longer be one flock and one shepherd.

The catastrophic plunge downward continued with the religious wars of the 17th century, with subtle attacks on the magisterium by heresies like Jansenism and Gallicanism—*immanent* heresies as they are called today—heresies that stay within.

The lights of Europe's Christian civilisation were going out. The darkness grew worse in the 18th century when forces truly diabolical were unleashed to attack the greatly enfeebled "Institutional Church".

Christian civilisation has never really recovered from the deadly blows delivered against it in the 18th century by Voltaire and the other forces of "enlightenment". The successful plottings of the secret societies and the penetration of Europe's most Catholic States by the new scepticism led to the suppression of the Jesuits, shock troops of the Church and its most ardent defenders of doctrinal orthodoxy. Christian princes in all the major states of Europe connived with the secret societies to ruin the Church.

When the revolutionaries led France to officially apostatise in the last decade of the 18th century, there was clear evidence of a diabolic presence of considerable power in Christian civilisation. It was a devil, we were to be told later, that could be cast out only by prayer and penance.

The 19th century was to see the rise of Karl Marx, prophet

of Antichrist, acclaimed by his followers as "*the man who will drag down this God from His heaven.*" There was a widespread collapse of faith and morals, a cancer of the spirit in the form of secular humanism and moral relativism spreading across the face of Christian Europe. In the gathering darkness there were flashes of light, augurs of a great illumination to come. In 1830 Our Lady appeared to St. Catherine Laboure at Rue du Bac in Paris; again in 1846 She appeared at La Salette, and again in 1858, to St. Bernadette at Lourdes. Again she appeared at Pontmain in 1871. Curiously, all four apparitions took place in France where the infernal enemy had thrown down the gauntlet in the dying years of the preceding century. The gauntlet was clearly accepted on behalf of the forces of Light by the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was a sign of a direct confrontation of enormous significance between Heaven and Hell, a battle of apocalyptic proportions between the Woman of Prophecy (Gen. 3:15) and the infernal serpent. It was to rise to a crescendo that would shake the pillars of Christendom and throw all creation into turmoil; it presaged a struggle unique in human history as good and evil came to wrestle, in a single, global, titanic contest for the soul of modern man.

The dawn of the 20th century was a red dawn, red with the promise of blood and violence on a scale unparalleled in history.

The full significance of the work of Luther, of Voltaire, of Karl Marx began to show itself. The darkness became profound. Men were no longer able to perceive what was for their good, no longer knew why they were created, lacked the faith to rejoice at the good news of Redemption.

The richest soil, wrote the philosopher Plutarch, uncultivated, produces the rankest weeds. This Christian civilisation was rich soil indeed, uncultivated now by the Divine grace of former days. It would soon produce the rank weeds of Nazism and Communism, the gas chamber and the concentration camp, cruelty and atrocities on a scale that would defy description.

As decade followed decade the darkness would become more profound; wars were to follow one another with monotonous regularity, and, as weapons became more "sophisticated", with increasing devastation.

Into the gathering darkness came a brilliant ray of light, a special grace to "waken the slumbering ages" to recall this

Christian civilisation to its past greatness. The light came, cutting a brilliant path across the darkened world. There was a celestial vision, a heavenly voice, a staggering solar phenomenon . . . and silence.

A series of prophecies had been made, telling mankind what its future was to be. It was the year 1917.

And the announcement told us of the last agonising hours of the collapse of a Christian civilisation.

But it gave us also the sensational news that mankind was moving into a new Christian social order, into a time of major triumph for the Cross. It was to be a victory that would reach to the uttermost ends of the earth and see fulfilled the visions and dreams of saints and mystics.

The voice spoke of a new era of peace, of the fulfillment of prophecies uttered by God Himself in the earthly paradise.

It was to be the climax of history.

Please Note

Readers who are unacquainted with the story of Fatima are advised to turn at this stage to Chapter 33 for the outline of the events that happened here.

3

“DESPISE NOT PROPHECIES”

(1 Thess. 5.20)

It might be expected that so great a confrontation between good and evil as that which we are witnessing today would

have been referred to by the prophets and mystics of the Church.

In fact the coming of some great worldwide spiritual convulsion is noted in very many prophecies and private revelations. And there looms in some of these prophecies, the ominous figure of the Antichrist.

We will try to co-relate here three remarkable prophecies which may well bear on these extraordinary times in which we are living. Each of these complements and supports the others, and each is unmistakably an authentic prophecy. They are (a) the prophecies of St. Paul in the second chapter of II Thessalonians (b) the prophecies of St. Louis de Montfort and (c) the prophecies of Fatima made in our own century.

St. Paul, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, makes a prophetic allusion to a significant age to come. It is the age of Antichrist, as he makes clear. And the prophecy is of exceptional importance because it is Scriptural. St. Paul tells us in II Thessalonians that the "*man of sin, the son of perdition*" will "*oppose and (be) lifted up against all that is called God or that is worshipped.*" St. Paul tells us that his coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and signs and lying wonders and in all the seduction of iniquity to them that perish. This "seduction of iniquity" is glaringly obvious in the modern world's obsessive preoccupation with sex and carnal pleasures, a preoccupation that carries with it an abandonment of and even contempt for God. St. Paul gives us one more important clue as to the times of the Antichrist. He tells us that God will punish men by sending them "*the operation of error to believe lying*" and he says this is in punishment for their "*not having received into their hearts a love of the truth.*"

The incredible success of Communist propaganda throughout the world could be explained in this way for it is against all reason.

The record of Communism's murders and brutality since 1917 is unparalleled in history. Yet men are still deceived by it and millions give it their allegiance.

Clearly St. Paul's prophecy is being fulfilled to the letter. Our Lord is sending men "the operation of error to believe lying" because they have not received into their hearts a love of the truth.

In regard to this extraordinary age, St. Paul gives us the following chronology of events: (a) a widespread revolt

against the Cross; (b) the appearance of the Antichrist who opposes and is "lifted up above all that is called God or that is worshipped so that he sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself as if he were God." (II Thess. 2.4.); (c) the Lord Jesus shall slay him with the breath of His Spirit and destroy him with the brightness of His coming. (II Thess. 2.8).

Because this prophecy is Scriptural, directly inspired by the Holy Spirit and part of public Revelation, it is more important than any other.

Nevertheless the prophecies of saints and Ecclesiastically approved private revelations are of tremendous importance, particularly as they throw a clear light on this prophecy of St. Paul and are in harmony with it. As will be seen, the prophecies of St. Louis de Montfort seem to bear clearly on this age and give us exceptional illumination as to its significance. They were probably written around 1711. St. Louis, in his Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin lays down the following sequence of events: (a) Persecution of the Church, widespread in his own time would continue and develop until it became general and universal under the Antichrist; (b) At the height of the reign of Antichrist, the "power of Mary" would break out against the devils. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary would crush the head of the serpent. This, according to St. Louis, would be the actual fulfillment of the ancient prophecy in the third chapter of Genesis; (c) There will be a mass return to the Catholic Church; (d) Christ will reign in the hearts of men by grace in a period of major triumph for the Church. St. Louis emphasises that, just as Christ came to us personally through Mary, so also will He come by grace through Mary in this period of His triumph on earth. St. Louis constantly refers to these events as happening at or towards the "end of the world" or in "the latter times". He uses these terms repeatedly so as to indicate that these world-shaking events are to be the climax of human history.

The prophecies of St. Louis are of exceptional importance because he claimed to be writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in his famous Treatise in which the prophecies are made. His subsequent canonisation and the fulfillment already of the main outline of his prophecies indicate that the Holy Spirit did indeed speak through him.

It should be emphasized that St. Louis' prophecies have a distinctive importance in that (a) they tell us of continually

increasing attacks by the devil culminating in the reign of Antichrist; (b) they add a new and significant dimension to the whole drama by telling us that the subsequent triumph of Our Lady is to be the fulfilment of the most ancient of all prophecies made by God the Father to the serpent rejoicing in the downfall of our First Parents. *"I shall put enmities between thee and the Woman and thy seed and Her seed. She shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for Her heel"*. (Gen. 3.15).

We find Our Lady's prophecies at Fatima in complete harmony with those of St. Paul and St. Louis. They have a special importance because they relate to this century and clearly and unmistakably speak of our times.

Several of the Fatima prophecies have already been fulfilled. Some are yet to be fulfilled.

In the second apparition, Our Lady told the children that the two younger seers would "die soon" whilst Lucia, the eldest, would live on to help spread, in the Church, the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. At the Jubilee celebrations, in May 1967, Lucia stood in a place of honour beside the Pope as Sister Mary of the Immaculate Heart O.D.C. The two younger seers had died within two and a half years of the final apparition.

But the major prophecies of Fatima were given in the July 13 apparition. There, after asking for the daily recitation of the rosary and for a heartfelt conversion and consecration by Christians to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Vision uttered the following prophetic words.

"If my wishes are fulfilled, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, then Russia will spread her errors throughout the whole world causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, certain nations will be annihilated . . . but in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph, Russia will be converted and an era of peace will be conceded to the world."

There is an obvious similarity in this chronology of events to those outlined by St. Paul and St. Louis. Our Lady does not refer to the Antichrist whereas St. Paul and St. Louis do. But then the full message of Fatima has not been made known for the famous "third secret" is still hidden in the Vatican archives

and has not been made known. It is at least possible that it could refer to the Antichrist.

The revelations of Fatima indicate very clearly that these tremendous events are with us today, that the great climax could well occur in our own lifetime—that it may even be imminent.

There are dozens, possibly even hundreds, of other prophecies which support the outline of events recorded in the three major revelations given above.

According to some reports Our Lady referred to the Antichrist in the secret of La Salette (1846) and announced that his reign would occur in the twentieth century.

The Blessed Anna Maria Taigi, the Roman mystic of the early 19th century, saw a time of great peril and darkness for the Church followed by an unprecedented Christian triumph. Her biographers indicate that this would occur in the second half of the 20th century. Pere Lamy, a mystic of this century, who was favoured, it is believed, with many visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, also spoke of a great disaster which would overwhelm the world, followed by a great Christian renewal.

Catherine Emmerich (died 1824) wrote that Lucifer, chained by the merits of Christ's passion, would be let loose for a time about 50 or 60 years before the year 2000.

There is an extensive bibliography of prophetic writings relating to some age of mass apostasy and mass destruction as a result of sin. It is not practicable to refer to them at length here, and in any case, it is probably better to restrict ourselves to the study of those prophecies which have considerable weight and authority and are of undoubted authenticity.

The study of these revelations, both public and private, which may relate to this unique age in which we live, helps to give us perspective, to nerve us for what may be ahead however calamitous, and also to make us understand that God's hand is on the helm at all times, that we should seek our happiness not in the fleeting and perishable things of earth, but in Heaven.

THE BEAST UNCHAINED?

It is in the prophecy of Malachias four hundred years before Christ that a reference is made to the adorable sacrifice of the Mass to be offered in the distant future by the Gentiles, by those multitudes that would come from the East and the West to sit down in the kingdom of Heaven with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

The prophet, speaking in the name of God, said: "*For, from the rising of the sun even to the going down My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to My name a clean oblation. . .*" (Mal. 1.11).

The continual sacrifice of the Mass, offered in various climes and longitudinal regions across the globe by hundreds of thousands of priests each day, bears out exactly the prophecy of Malachias.

An earlier prophet, Daniel, who lived in the seventh century B.C. had referred to the cessation of the "continual sacrifice" several times in his prophecy. In the context he seems to be writing about the times of the Antichrist and this is the conclusion of nearly all exegetes.

During the times of the Antichrist, the continual sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world will cease.

This does not necessarily mean that no Masses will be offered up throughout the world. It simply means that the Holy Sacrifice will not be offered up continuously as heretofore. It seems to mean that entire regions of the world will be

physically devastated or under the control of the Antichrist, so that the celebration of Mass is impossible.

Four times each second, throughout the whole twenty-four hours of each day, has the Sacred Host been raised by the hands of a priest, to plead for blessings on sinful man, to atone by this Divine sacrifice, for his sins.

This is to cease at the time of the Antichrist.

The word **Antichrist** is, according to Donald Attwater's Catholic Dictionary, "*a designation for Christ's chief antagonist who will precede His second coming and the end of the world, and whose activity will be directly connected with a widespread apostasy from the Christian faith. He will be an individual human personality marked by utter lawlessness, self-deification, hatred of Christian truth and rivalry with Christ through mock miracles.*"

In addition to the Apocalyptic references, the Antichrist appears to be referred to by the prophet Daniel in the following: **When iniquities shall be grown up, there shall arise a king of a shameless face and understanding dark sentences.**

And his power shall be strengthened, but not by his own force; and he shall lay all things waste and shall prosper and do more than can be believed. And he shall destroy the mighty and the people of the saints, according to his will; and craft shall be successful in his hand; and his heart shall be puffed up, and in the abundance of all things he shall kill many; and he shall rise up against the Prince of Princes and shall be broken without hand. (Dan. 8.23-25).

This is very similar to St. Paul's references to the Antichrist in the second epistle to the Thessalonians.

The cessation of the "continual sacrifice" is referred to four times in the book of Daniel, chapters 8.12, 9.27, 11.31, and 12.11.

The terrible "beast" of the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel is clearly the kingdom of Antichrist.

The prophet Daniel saw in his vision, four great beasts, three of them being identified by the Scriptural experts as tyrants of those early days. The fourth beast is generally accepted to be the Antichrist and, in fact, so terrible and frightening was his appearance that Daniel himself asked that he be identified. (Dan. 7.19). The prophet goes on to tell us: "*his teeth and claws were of iron; he devoured and broke in pieces, and the rest he stamped upon with his feet.*"

"And he made war against the saints and prevailed over

them." (Dan. 7.21). The prophet tells us that a Divine intervention puts an end to the power of the fourth beast but not before he has wrought immense havoc and great destruction. His power, we are told, will be greater than that of all preceding tyrants, and he shall devour the whole earth and shall tread it down and break it in pieces. (Dan. 7.23). This clearly relates to the Antichrist. It could be none other. The general outline is in perfect harmony with the various authentic and reliable prophecies quoted in the preceding chapter.

A careful student of the times of the Antichrist, the late Father R. G. Culleton, had this to report in his book *The Prophets and Our Times*, published in 1943:

An important sign of the latter days is the prevalence of false teachings with the natural consequences: defections from religion, lack of faith even among Catholics and great moral degeneration.

Some such rebellion against God and His Christ is to extend itself throughout the world shortly before the reign of Antichrist, with even Catholics in great numbers abandoning the true faith. Coincidental with this general indifference toward religion, in fact even actual hatred of it, there is to be the complete degeneration of the morals of the people, a degeneration similar to that which existed among the pagans before the dawn of Christianity and civilization as we have known it.

These signs of the approaching end have, of course, been true in varying degrees in earlier ages. The essential difference, however, between former defections and those which presage the end, is to be found in the universality and sinister character of the latter apostasy.

Several years before this general apostasy there were to be false teachers who would cause great confusion and darkness in the minds of the people, resulting in the loss of entire nations to the true faith. This would very effectually prepare the way for Antichrist. Some say that this has already been fairly well accomplished by the so-called Reformation with its consequent evils. Much more and far worse evils were to befall.

After the birth of Antichrist and shortly before the rise of the Great Monarch, the false doctrines were to multiply and spread to such an extent that even Catholics would doubt many of the articles of faith, resulting in their perversion, this to apply not only to the laity but even to many priests and

some of the hierarchy. The zeal of these latter will be greatly affected by this lack of faith.

Because of these defections Catholics will be severely punished, for only by chastisements can God bring back to the minds of His people, a realization of their dependence upon Him. As a consequence, widespread persecutions of priests and people will come upon the Church in order that faith and love of God may be revived, for as surely as night follows day, so will civilization crumble and the world become steeped in the darkness of ignorance, hatred, misery and war when God, who is the Light of the World, will no longer rule in the hearts of His people.

Father Culleton, writing in 1943, four years before Israel was set up as an independent nation, cited the return of the Jews to Palestine as a "sign of the times", a sure indication that the fulfillment of these significant prophecies is at hand.

To give us some idea of the opponent we may face today, let us glance at the brief sketch of him drawn by St. Thomas Aquinas, the 'Angelic Doctor' who died in 1274.

"Antichrist will pervert some in his day by exterior persuasion . . . He is the head of all the wicked because in him wickedness is perfect. . . . As in Christ dwells the fullness of the Godhead so in Antichrist the fullness of all wickedness. Not indeed in the sense that his humanity is to be assumed by the devil into unity of person . . . but that the devil by suggestion infuses his wickedness more copiously into him than into all others. In this way all the wicked that have gone before are signs of Antichrist." (Summa 111:8:8).

In his commentary on the Apocalypse, the noted Scripture scholar Dr. Bernard J. Le Frois, S.V.D., reminds us that the Marian Church of the Consummation has nothing to fear from the Antichrist. Those truly consecrated to the Virgin Mother are invulnerable against the attacks of the fierce dragon. (Rev. 12.1-18).

(Bernard J. Le Frois: "Eschatological Interpretation of the Apocalypse" in The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. XIII, pp. 17.20).

It is significant that the whole tenor of the Fatima message and of certain other modern revelations is that those who are consecrated to the Blessed Virgin in these perilous times will be safe whilst those who reject this protection will be lost. All reliable Scriptural commentators agree that this will be a time of immense danger for souls. Catholics should

surely take pains to consecrate themselves devoutly to Mary, to say her rosary, to wear her scapular. This point was particularly emphasised in the third apparition at Fatima when Our Lady, after showing the vision of hell to the three children, said: "*You have seen hell where the souls of sinners go. It is to save them that God wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart*". Here Our Lady implies that souls truly consecrated to her are safe from any attacks of the evil one as the saints and sacred writers have always maintained. It is a deep woe and tragedy for the world, therefore, that the great wisdom and enlightenment of Fatima have not been embraced by the generality of Catholics. How many immortal souls may have been lost forever because of this! What physical tragedies in the form of war and violence lie ahead of us because of this!

5

PERSECUTION

'I send you forth as lambs amongst wolves' (Luke 10.3)

It is not an accident that the history of the Church is largely one of relentless persecution, not surprising that the preaching of the Gospel attracts bitter hostility and the fiercest opposition. The Church must endure this intense harassment from the external forces which we call the world and from internal enemies just as implacable which seek to paralyse Her by introducing error from within.

According to the prophecies already alluded to, there is a persecution coming which is to make all former persecutions

pale into insignificance. It is the persecution of the Antichrist during which reparation must be made for the great apostasy of this age, for the increasing millions of abortions each year, for widespread and unprecedented sexual permissiveness and perversion, for blasphemies and sacrilege that cry out to Heaven for the Divine retribution.

Our Lady referred to the great persecution at Fatima and as the prophecies She made there unfold and are fulfilled, it seems we may be on the threshold of this worldwide onslaught on all that is of God. She indicated that the Holy Father himself is to suffer in this persecution, twice referring to this according to the authoritative work by Father de Marchi.

The reference in second Thessalonians to the Antichrist as showing himself in the temple of God as if he were God has been interpreted by some as indicating that the Antichrist will seize St. Peter's and establish his throne there as a type of 'Vicar of Satan' upon the earth. The Cistercian abbot Joachim held that the Antichrist would overthrow the Pope and usurp his see.

Throughout Christian history a tremendous bibliography has built up around the great persecution of the Church in the time of the Antichrist. It has already begun of course for the Church has been ferociously persecuted in many countries by the Communists and their satellites for decades. Some writers say that the martyrs of the Iron and Bamboo Curtain countries in this century are collectively greater than the martyrs of all other centuries together.

But it is to develop still further as the great drama reaches its climax. Perhaps we could summarise the writings concerning this age of devastation for the Church in the words of Cardinal Manning taken from his book *The Present Crisis of the Holy See* published in 1861.

The distinguished English Cardinal saw very clearly the worldwide persecution that was coming having read carefully the writings of the Fathers on this subject from the earliest times. He gives us the following guidelines:

The Holy Fathers who have written upon the subject of Antichrist, and of the prophecies of Daniel, without a single exception, as far as I know,—and they are the Fathers both of the East and of the West, the Greek and the Latin Church—all of them unanimously,—say that in the latter end of the world, during the reign of Antichrist, the holy sacrifice of the altar will cease. In the work on the end of the world, ascribed

to St. Hippolytus, after a long description of the afflictions of the last days, we read as follows: "The Churches shall lament with a great lamentation, for there shall be offered no more oblation, nor incense, nor worship acceptable to God. The sacred buildings of the churches shall be as hovels; and the precious body and blood of Christ shall not be manifest in those days; the Liturgy shall be extinct; the chanting of psalms shall cease; the reading of Holy Scripture shall be heard no more. But there shall be upon men darkness, and mourning upon mourning, and woe upon woe." Then, the Church shall be scattered, driven into the wilderness, and shall be for a time, as it was in the beginning, invisible, hidden in catacombs, in dens, in mountains, in lurking-places; for a time it shall be swept, as it were, from the face of the earth. Such is the universal testimony of the Fathers of the early centuries.

"It shall be a persecution in which no man shall spare his neighbour, in which the powers of the world shall wreak upon the Church of God such a revenge as the world before has never known. The Word of God tells us that towards the end of time the power of this world will become so irresistible and so triumphant that the Church of God will sink underneath its hand—that the Church of God will receive no more help from Emperors or kings or princes or legislatures or nations or peoples to make resistance against the power and might of its antagonist. It will be deprived of protection. It will be weakened, baffled and prostrate and will lie bleeding at the feet of the powers of this world . . ."

It is clear that the persecution referred to by Cardinal Manning would make that of the Spanish Civil War, when 13 bishops and seven thousand priests and religious were martyred, seem insignificant by comparison. The prophets Isaias, Jeremias and Daniel all refer to this great persecution at the end of the world, the latter prophet referring four times to the cessation of the continual sacrifice. But Jeremias refers specifically to the devastation wrought amongst the shepherds of the flock who are always the first to be destroyed by the Satanic enemy:

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Behold evil shall go forth from nation to nation: and a great whirlwind shall go forth from the ends of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other end thereof: they shall not be lamented, and they shall not be gathered up, nor buried: they shall lie as dung upon the face

of the earth. Howl, ye shepherds, and cry: and sprinkle yourselves with ashes, ye leaders of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and your dispersion are accomplished, and you shall fall like precious vessels. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the leaders of the flock to save themselves. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a howling of the principal of the flock: because the Lord hath wasted their pastures. And the fields of peace have been silent because of the fierce anger of the Lord." (Jer. 25:32-38).

Jeremias refers clearly to a *worldwide* persecution. The prophet was clearly looking ahead to the latter ages of history when all the world would be devastated by the concentrated global power of militant atheism disguised as Communism.

Let us hasten to add that, if this is unduly depressing for some of our readers, Our Lady has intervened to soften this fearful blow directed against the Church by promising that She will protect all who consecrate themselves to Her, that She will give them the grace to remain faithful unto death. She has made it a thrilling age in which to live for it is plain that a Divine intervention will crush the power of the dragon and give us a victory unprecedented in history.

If we are to die, then that is of little account if a martyr's crown awaits us.

We should rejoice really for the long night of Communist tyranny is coming to an end. All good men are weary of living in a world half enslaved, where atheistic tyranny prevents innocent children from raising their eyes to God in prayer, where violent hatred is taught as a philosophy, and bloody revolution, the destroyer of peace and love, is fomented throughout the world. For long enough have we endured this reign of Satan over the world; the light of the Cova da Iria is to dissipate this fearful darkness, to bring to the world the greatest age in its history.

The darkness is all around us now and the light is a distant vision. But it draws ever closer and must sustain us in the night that is at hand. We must prepare by fervent prayer and self-sacrifice for these important events of our times. The terse words of Our Lady at Fatima about war, famine and persecution should be understood in the context of the worldwide Communist successes; for this is Satan's army, the force with which we must contend. As good soldiers of the Queen of Heaven we must arm now with the weapons of the spirit, with

the sturdy faith, the ardent hope, the burning charity which is to renew the world.

Those who fight under Our Lady's banner are surely chosen souls, for they struggle with Her for the victory of the Cross, for the reign of Christ on earth, for the crushing of the serpent's head, for a triumph that is to crown all the achievements of mankind throughout the ages.

It is to give us this inspiration in a dark hour that Heaven has sent us the light, the wisdom, the consoling prophecies of Fatima. It is to nerve us for this most crucial spiritual conflict in all history that our Lady obtains for us the copious graces of this Divine intervention so that we may know who the real enemy is, how to defeat him, how to bring about the rise of a Christian civilisation without precedent in history.

6

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ERROR

'Love the light of wisdom all ye that bear rule over peoples'
(Wis. 6.23)

The word 'error' is mentioned, as we have seen, in two of the three prophecies quoted in chapter 3. St. Paul tells us that, in the fullness of time, Antichrist will come "*in all power and signs and lying wonders*" (2 Thess. 2:9). Obviously, the Antichrist will be a master of deceit. But his task will be made easier because men manifest an aversion to obvious truths, such as the existence of a Supreme Being (and the evidence of this is everywhere) and the countless miracles being performed in every age, miracles of healing at Lourdes and

Fatima, miracles connected with the various stigmatics, cases of diabolical possession which are well authenticated, the inexplicable preservation of the bodies of saints and so on.

It may be said that modern man has, in a general sense, relentlessly turned his face away from these phenomena and refused to draw correct conclusions from them, so that on all sides one hears the obvious absurdity "there is no God", or the equivalent absurdity "God is dead".

St. Paul tells us that, because of this utter obstinacy and perversity, God punishes men by blinding them to the most obvious errors.

Error is also mentioned at Fatima by Our Lady. Error was to spread from Russia throughout the *whole world*, causing wars and persecutions of the Church.

Error has spread throughout the world in two ways. First it seeped, drop by drop, like some insidious poison, into the intellectual bloodstream of Western nations from Soviet Russia, exactly as had been foretold. Virtually every modern writer on these subjects has paid tribute to the brilliance of Communist propaganda.

Secondly, in an even more insidious attack on Western civilisation, Communism has managed to infiltrate the Church itself with its deadly errors.

Communism, guided as it surely is by an angel of darkness, essays to conquer the world. It can, in fact, conquer the world only through sin. For sin blinds and enfeebles men, makes them easy victims to the wiles of the atheists.

Sin follows error as night follows the day.

It was to destroy this empire of sin that Christ died on the Cross. It is the Cross, and the light that comes from the Cross, that enlightens and liberates mankind. "*I am the Light of the world*" Christ said, "*He that followeth me walketh not in darkness.*" (Jn. 8.12).

It has been the principal responsibility of the Church throughout the ages to preserve this Light, to preserve it serene and undimmed by error.

Christ also told us that He is the "*Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (Jn. 14.6). This light then is the Light of Truth. It is opposed by the darkness of error.

Thus the real enemy of the human race is error, for the truth liberates man whilst error enslaves him. Inasmuch as Christ is Truth itself, so also is the devil error itself.

"*Know the truth*" Christ said to the Pharisees "*and the truth*

shall make you free" (John 8.32). The Redeemer is not merely speaking of political freedom but of the much more important freedom of the spirit, the liberty of the sons of God. For He warned the Pharisees that all sinners are slaves, the slaves of their sins.

In telling us these things Christ was marking out for us the highest possible standard of living, both in this life and the next. For our personal happiness is intimately connected with this vital freedom of the spirit which He gave us by His sacrifice on Calvary.

It is for the reasons cited above that the Church has always regarded error or heresy in the Church as the ultimate disaster. She has regarded it as a far greater affliction even than savage external persecution.

Error, which, as we have noted, is a form of darkness, paralyses the magisterium and prevents Christians from proceeding with facility along that path of union with Christ which is their sublime destiny. As we move towards Christ we move towards the Light of Eternal Wisdom. As we embrace error we become entangled in the subtleties and illusions of the devil and place our souls, consequently, in mortal peril.

The horror of heresy in the Church has come down to us from earliest times for we find St. Irenaeus telling us of the incident when St. John the Apostle left the baths with his disciple St. Polycarp when he found that the heretic Cerinthus was there. "Let us flee hence," St. John said "lest the baths fall upon us seeing that Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is here". It may be observed that St. John, the beloved Disciple, was quite content to keep company with pagans; but not heretics. It is necessary here to make a careful distinction between heretics (those who, being Catholic, willfully embrace error) and those born in heresy, such as Methodists, Baptists, etc., many of whom are sincere and devout according to their lights and are regarded with respect and affection by Catholics as living according to their consciences.

In the Sixth Ecumenical Council held at Constantinople in 680-1 Pope Honorius was "anathematised" by name for "going along" with the heresy of Monothelism during his reign about forty years earlier.

The then reigning Pope, Leo II, would not confirm the harsh "anathematisation" but substituted a simple condemnation of Honorius for neglecting to denounce heresy outright when he ought to have done so.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton observed in one of his essays: "*An error is more menacing than a crime, for an error begets crimes. . . .*" (The Diabolist).

This is what Our Lady had already said at Fatima: "*error would cause wars and persecutions . . . the annihilation of nations.*"

In the forties, the world paid in blood and violence for the sins of the thirties. It is estimated now that 54,000,000 died in World War II.

Before the world can be delivered from the havoc being wrought by the most grotesque of all errors, militant atheism, the Church itself must be strengthened by the light of the most sublime truths, by a new formula for a rapid and streamlined renewal in grace.

Such a formula was given to the Church at Fatima.

7

THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Recent decisions of the United Nations Organisation to expel the Nationalist Chiang kai Shek regime as the legal government of China and to admit the Mao tse Tung regime constitute a clear victory for the forces of evil.

As is well known the United Nations is constantly betraying its charter by the admission of Communist nations. For Communist states, in suppressing the basic freedoms of their peoples, cannot hold to the principles set out in the United Nations Charter as follows:

To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect

for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

The politicians tell us however that we must discard principles and face "realities"; the Communists have atom bombs so we must negotiate with them as though they were reliable and trustworthy people.

This policy has given the Communist nations of the world immense influence and power. They may now claim that the world is theirs, that free nations no longer dare to resist them, that it is only a matter of time before the slow relentless pressure that they know so well how to use on the free world will cause a general collapse.

There has been much evidence from reliable sources that Soviet Russia is working to a certain plan which we might call Plan A. Should Plan A break down she will instantly put into operation Plan B. Plan A calls for taking over the whole world without large scale war by deceit, intrigue, blackmail, threats, etc. Should there be any sign of real resistance to this Plan B will be put into operation. And Plan B calls for a first strike by the Communists in what will be an all-out nuclear war. There is ample evidence of this provided by high-ranking Soviet defectors like Artomonov, Penkowsky and others. In fact it has been pointed out often enough that the Soviet missile programme is developing alarmingly and is aimed clearly at America.

It is often held by observers who are considered balanced and intelligent that Soviet Russia will keep the peace because it is in her interests to do so. This reasoning may be comforting, but it is not realistic in the light of history. It was Germany's interests in 1939 to keep the peace, but Hitler led her into war. It is in the interests of the Communist guerrillas in Indo-China to go back to their paddy-fields and keep the peace. But this they do not do.

In the light of Fatima, we know well that the third World War, if and when it comes, will have been caused by the sins of this age. That is the stark compelling deduction that must be made from the message of Our Lady, that every deliberate sin, every rejection of God's commandments and of the natural law written in our hearts takes us nearer to war, infallibly imperils the peace and well-being of the human race.

Of course the Church has always taught this. But today, when mankind is losing its sense of sin, when corruption and

moral degradation are becoming "normal" Our Lady has dramatically re-emphasised it.

Communism exists primarily as a threat against our immortal souls. Satan is not interested in the destruction of cities as such for that is no gain to him. He is interested in the destruction of immortal souls, and Communism, to be understood, must be seen in this light. And it is difficult for political leaders to do this. So that, if the Communists could take over political control of the world without a third World War, they would be glad to do so.

The missile systems of Soviet Russia exist primarily for the purposes of blackmail.

Much more devious than Nero and Diocletian, the Soviet leaders strive for the goal where they are in a position to offer us our lives in exchange for our souls.

The fact that a materialistic world cannot comprehend this does not lessen its validity and its truth.

To all these subtle Soviet manoeuvres, the American leaders react predictably by trying to develop new anti-missile systems or by some other military or political device.

And this in spite of the fact that the morale of the U.S.A. is collapsing before their eyes. The recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court to legalise 'abortion on demand' has brought the nation to the crossroads of history. This represents a formal apostasy from America's Christian traditions by a majority vote of the people apparently. Concurrent with this of course there is a general moral decline, unprecedented sexual permissiveness, rising crime, widespread drug addiction.

Of what use to build up purely military defences against a Communist thrust that is so surely ideological, aimed at America's morale?

In any case, what would be the use of destroying Soviet cities in retaliation for a successful first strike by them? We would only be destroying the Russian people, ninety per cent of whom are anti-Communist according to reliable reports, and who are therefore, our allies in spirit.

The Communist threat is obviously and unquestionably on an ideological level which politicians or even statesmen as such cannot counter.

For that reason Mr Nixon, talented as he is, must fail just as President Johnson, who was a consummate politician, also failed. The political and military power these leaders have at

their command are inadequate. Another, a higher form of power, is indispensable.

Humanly speaking, there would be no hope for the world in its present condition. The simple unvarnished facts are that men who are mass murderers and psychopaths are in possession of an arsenal of weapons which could virtually destroy the civilised world.

The somewhat naive reaction of the average citizen is, "But they wouldn't do that."

Wouldn't they?

The Communists are working to a masterplan of a totally Marxist world. They have told us that often and it runs like a constantly recurring refrain through all their propaganda. What it really means is that they are out to destroy utterly and completely all belief in God, all organised religion upon the earth.

If they can achieve this end without a third world war they will withhold their terror weapons. But if war is necessary for this objective they will use their missiles in a devastating "first strike".

But they cannot achieve the destruction of the Church for Christ promised that it would endure to the end of time. Thus a collision of spiritual forces is inevitable and this is precisely what has been foreshadowed in all the prophecies.

What form will this collision take? That, it must be admitted, is a mystery. Assuredly, in a moment of crisis a Divine hand will reveal itself.

The burning issue for us who follow the Fatima message is the convincing of our fellow-Catholics that the spiritual renewal of all of us is the urgent answer in this critical hour. Even the secular world senses that we may be facing an awesome confrontation with world Communism.

But the world can never understand this problem as Catholics understand it. The Catholic Church alone can lead the world out of this morass. No other institution can. We hold the key to the situation, we know exactly what is wrong, we know exactly what to do to give the nations victory over their ancient enemy, to give the world the greatest civilisation it has known.

All the ingredients for victory over the forces of Satan are present, and the blueprint for the new social order lies spread out before us.

What then is holding up that blessed hour for which the agonised world is waiting?

That scarcely needs an answer. The blueprint for peace, involving the spiritual renewal of Catholics, was given to us at Fatima in 1917. It has been blessed by the Church, approved by several Popes, and proved authentic by the evolution of events and the fulfilment of its prophecies.

This formula is the instrument which is to crush the serpent's head, and bring about the coming triumph of Jesus Christ.

Inevitably it must be opposed by all the concentrated power of hell, by the deceits and the wiles of the devil who fears this Fatima formula as he fears nothing else. Consequently it has been hidden, treated with contempt, rejected by God's chosen people—as was the Messiah Himself.

But Our Lady herself has foreshadowed its appearance and its success. It will be embraced by the generality of Catholics—and many non-Catholics—at some point in history. And it will bring about the triumph of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart and the era of the true peace that is to come.

8

THE BASIS IN SCRIPTURE

All history has re-echoed with the lamentations and ululations of the great Jewish prophet Jeremias and the word "jeremiad" in a familiar one in English literature today, recalling the mournful dirges of the prophet as he sat amongst the ruins of Jerusalem whilst his kinsfolk were carried into the Babylonian captivity.

That great tragedy that befell the Chosen People of old

surely has a message for us today for there are many striking analogies between the appearances of the great Prophets who came to warn the Jews and the appearance of the Queen of Prophets who came at Fatima with a warning to the "Chosen People" of today.

It is Jeremias who appears as tragedy is about to strike, with a final warning which, like all the others, was to be utterly ignored by the People of God. God Himself directs Jeremias precisely in this solemn final warning to be given to the Jews.

"Take thee a roll of a book, and thou shalt write in it all the words that I have spoken to thee against Israel and Juda, and against all the nations from the day that I spoke to thee, from the days of Josias even to this day, if so be, when the house of Juda shall hear all the evils that I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his wicked way, and I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin."

It is a terrible thing to ignore the warnings of the Lord, sent by His Messengers and confirmed with miracles.

"I will persecute them with the sword" He told Jeremias, "and with famine and with pestilence and I will give them up unto affliction . . . because they have not hearkened to My Words which I sent to them by My servants the prophets."

What happened to this solemn warning, dictated word for word by the Lord to Jeremias, and written down by his secretary Baruch who then presented it to the Princes of the people?

Holy Scripture tells us that the Princes heard this warning of Jeremias with astonishment (Jer. 36.16) and they said, *"We must tell the king all these words."*

It was winter and the king has a hearth before him full of burning coals. He listened to the first three or four pages of the prophecy, whereupon he seized it from the hand of the scribe, hacked it to pieces with a knife and cast it into the fire.

And Holy Scripture goes on to tell us that the Princes and servants who stood about the king did not rend their garments at this, nor were they afraid, indicating plainly that they concurred with the contemptuous action of the king.

After this final, formal warning, the fate of the Chosen People was sealed. Jeremias told the king explicitly that the king of Babylon would come speedily to destroy both him and his people.

Attacked by the ferocious Nabuchodonosor the people of Jerusalem shut themselves in behind their walls and defended

their city for eighteen months. Then the plague broke out and wrought terrible havoc.

Finally the Babylonians broke in, pillaging, burning, destroying at random. With his own hands Nabuchodonosor put out the eyes of the king, whilst his soldiers burnt the wonderful Temple of Solomon and destroyed the Ark of the Covenant. He carried all the rich and better-educated Hebrews back to Babylon as hostages.

This terrible disaster, the extent of which we can only faintly comprehend, took place in 586 B.C. To seek a parallel today we could perhaps imagine the capture and burning of the Vatican and St. Peter's by the Communists and the deportation of the Pope and all the Cardinals to Siberia.

The destruction of Solomon's temple and the Ark of the Covenant seemed to the Jews to be the final disaster, as though God were abandoning them utterly.

But it was not so.

It is when the Jews are suffering acute misfortune, when they are being driven along like animals under the burning Syrian sun, lashed by the savage whips of Nabuchodonosor's soldiers that their spiritual renewal begins. Their princes are treated with great cruelty. A ring is fixed to their lips, much as we fix a ring to a bull's nose, and they are dragged along by ropes fixed to the saddles of the Babylonian horsemen.

Now they see clearly their guilt in turning from God to material things, in ignoring the warnings of the great Prophets who were sent to them.

A spirit of compunction, of sorrow for sin returns to them and they find sublime words to express their repentance.

"It is to this day," writes Daniel Rops, "that we sing the magnificent hymn of grief and hope which expresses the agony and hope of Israel on her way to exile."

"Out of the depths I have cried to thee O Lord; Lord hear my voice."

Israel remembers the great promises made to her and turns with hope in this dark hour to the True God.

"My soul hath relied on his word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy: and with him plenteous redemption."

And the Lord, a true Father, hears the cries of His errant children.

He sends His prophet Ezechiel to tell the Chosen People that if they repented of their sins, God would forgive them,

would allow them to return to Palestine, and would restore the former glory of Israel.

In the sorrows and sufferings of their exile, the people listened with obedience. Seventy years were they in exile before God permitted them to return to their Promised Land, a liberated people.

In the light of what happened to the Jews we must see clearly that materialism, contempt for God, immorality, pride and unreadiness to forgive are not only sins against God but are serious social disasters that are dragging us to the abyss of Communist enslavement.

God has sent the most highly honoured of all His messengers, the Queen of Prophets herself, to warn us of the danger, and He will surely not suffer His words to be despised.

Nothing is so offensive to God as the contempt of His chosen ones, His rejection by those on whom He has lavished His special graces.

"The Lord hath cast off His altar," lamented Jeremias. "He hath cursed His sanctuary." (Lam. 2.7).

A tremendous warning indeed to Christians who alone can be guilty today of this special sin of treating with indifference and contempt the extraordinary graces of God.

This story of Jeremias outlines the traditional method of God, in dealing with His chosen people; He has been accustomed to rebuke them through the mouths of prophets and chosen representatives for their sins, to warn them that these sins would bring upon them all manner of disasters if they failed to repent.

Looking through the old Testament, reading again the warnings of Noah, of Abraham, of Moses, of Daniel, of Jonas, and so many of the other prophets and patriarchs we find that the story of Fatima is truly in line with God's dealings with His chosen people throughout the ages.

The words of the prophet Samuel to the people of Israel are almost a paraphrase of those words that Our Lord spoke to His chosen people through His Blessed Mother at Fatima.

When Samuel had assembled the people, after the Philistines had crushed and defeated them in battle, he addressed them as follows:

"If you turn to the Lord with all your hearts, and put away the strange gods from among you and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only, He will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines." (1 Kings 7.3).

It was the same old proposition put to the children of Israel from the earliest times. Give up their sins, turn to God with a humble and contrite heart and all would be well. Continue their idolatry of created things, their lusts, their stiff-necked perversity and great would be the misfortunes that the Lord would send them. *“Woe to the sinful nation,”* cried out Isaias, *“they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel. If you be willing and hearken to me, you shall eat the good things of the land. But if you will not . . . the sword shall devour you. Because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”* (Isaias 1.4.19.20).

Is not the Lord using Communism today to purify and refine His Church with suffering? He has sent not a prophet but the Queen of Prophets to repeat the age-old message. *Return to God and be saved; refuse God the homage due to Him and suffer the disasters that will come infallibly.*

That Fatima is, therefore a true and authentic development of God’s methods as cited in Holy Scripture cannot be doubted. It is modernised, of course, with a request for the rosary and a penance rather different from the sackcloth and ashes of ancient times.

Moreover Fatima was accompanied by the miracles that have been God’s normal method in the scriptures of convincing His creature man.

In dealing with the disputatious Jews, Our Lord delivered this crushing reply to their rejection of His just claim to be the Son of God.

“If I do not the works of my Father believe me not; but if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I in the Father” (Jn. X.37).

There were two also who gave testimony at Fatima, Our Lady herself and God who, by His divine power wrought the unprecedented miracle of the sun to confirm her words.

There is a parallel of this also in the Scriptures.

It is related in Chapter 9 of the Gospel of St. John how the man born blind and cured by Our Lord, had to face the harsh and sceptical enquiry of the Pharisees. In a sneering endeavour to brush aside the miracle as of no importance the Pharisees declared, *“We know that God spoke to Moses; but, as to this man we know not whence he is.”*

And the man who had been blind cried out his famous

rebuke, a rebuke that might echo in the minds of many who ignore Our Lady's message at Fatima today.

"Why herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes . . . from the beginning of the world it hath not been heard that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind." (Jn. IX.30).

An unprecedented miracle failed to convince the Jews, and an unprecedented miracle at Fatima has failed to make any impression on many Catholics in this age of crisis.

The Message of Fatima is surely a reliable and authentic development of the Scriptures.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem," lamented Our Saviour, *"thou who killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children even as a hen gathereth her little ones under her wings, and thou wouldst not."* (Matt. XXIII.37).

This sorrowful lamentation was repeated by Christ's mother at Fatima when She sought to save the human race from the ravages of Communism, and of war, and was rejected.

For all the vaunted dreams and plans that world leaders pursue in the name of liberty, liberty they never can have until they turn to God, until they hear the Heavenly message, delivered with signs and wonders, and with the irrevocable commitment of the Mother of Christ who cannot belie Herself.

If they do these things, *liberty and peace.*

If they do not, *persecution, war, disaster upon disaster, unending tyranny.*

One simple condition, a general return to God, for the conquest of Communism and the greatest and brightest social order in history.

"Now the Lord," wrote St. Paul, *"is a spirit; and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."* (2 Cor. 3.17).

A GREAT RED DRAGON

"And a great sign appeared in heaven," wrote St. John in the twelfth chapter of his Apocalypse. *"A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, having on her head a crown of twelve stars . . . and I heard a voice in heaven saying, 'Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ'."*

Most commentators agree that this sign in heaven has a double symbolism. It refers to Mary, Mother of God, and to the Church.

The appearance in splendour then of Mary Immaculate is a sign of Christ's triumph, the coming of His kingdom.

This passage is interesting in view of the pronouncements by some of the saints and mystics that a development and increase in devotion to Mary will precede and announce the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth.

Christ is to reign on earth in a great age of triumph. St. Louis de Montfort assures us positively of this in his inspired Treatise on True Devotion. It is, of course, foreshadowed at Fatima in the coming triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart.

In view of all this it can only be imagined what a tragic and calamitous step it would be to arrest the development of devotion to Mary on the pretext that it is hindering the development of Christian unity. It is the increase in devotion to Mary which is to bring about Christian unity.

The full development of Marian doctrine is the indispensable pre-requisite for the re-union of Christendom.

The miracles of Lourdes and Fatima in this age point unerringly in the direction which theology is to take.

"But they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal and confirming the word with signs that followed." (Mark XVI.20).

Miracles were called signs in the Scriptures and they were plainly used to confirm doctrine.

The miracles of Lourdes confirm the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, defined only three years previously by Pius IX in Rome.

For the Vision, when asked by Bernadette to identify Herself at Lourdes uttered the significant words:

"I am the Immaculate Conception."

The great public miracle at Fatima, the sign in the Heavens, was meant to confirm the message and we can well ponder upon the importance of that message when a public miracle unprecedented in the annals of religious history was worked "that all may believe".

The excerpt from St. John's Apocalypse quoted above is taken from the Mass of Our Lady of Lourdes on February 11.

Those who take the trouble to look up the Scriptures at this point will notice that the liturgists have left out those verses dealing with the persecution of the woman and her child by the great red dragon. The dragon is overcome "by the blood of the Lamb" and it is then that the voice from heaven cries "*now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ.*"

A great sign certainly appeared in the heavens at Fatima. In the majestic tableau in the skies on October 13th the children saw Our Lady and St. Joseph carrying the Divine Child with the sun between them. The infant Jesus was blessing the world and the tableau, Lucia noted, was more brilliant than the sun.

This tableau announced the beginning of the last and final round of the struggle with the demon. It was October 13th, 1917. Lenin and Trotsky were then making final preparations for their great coup d'etat on November 7, a day which began a new and terrible epoch in the history of the modern world.

St. John's mystical allusion to the encounter between the Woman and her Child and the great red dragon seems to

possess real meaning in this tremendous struggle that rages about us today.

"And that great dragon was cast down," wrote St. John, *"the ancient serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, who leads astray the whole world."* (Apoc. XII.9).

The Woman clothed with the sun had triumphed and the Woman who stood beside the sun in the heavens at Fatima giving a great sign to the world at the very moment of Communism's first success in Russia, had already foretold her own victory over the twentieth century Red Dragon, "In the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph . . . Russia will be converted and there will be peace."

10

AN ELITE CORPS

The major problem in the Church today is to find an élite corps of men who will take the Gospel literally, who will follow the counsels of perfection.

Throughout the Christian centuries the great Religious Orders have fulfilled this role. Their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, faithfully observed, made them the true "salt of the earth" and from their ranks came the spiritual geniuses who enlightened Europe.

It was the late Archbishop Downey of Liverpool who, in one of his witty, after-dinner speeches, suggested that every religious Order should go into voluntary liquidation fifty years after the death of its Founder. By that time, he said, it would assuredly have lost its spirit.

The Archbishop was jesting, of course, for there are many instances in history where Orders have done truly magnificent

work centuries after the death of their Founder. But the remark was thought-provoking nevertheless. It reminded us all that the great Orders find it far from easy to retain a spirit of intense dedication. It made us reflect on how greatly the Church depends on these "shock troops" of Christ, the devoted men and women who sacrifice all for Him!

But if the salt loses its savour! *It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out and trodden on by men.* (Matt. 5.13).

Unseen but terrible things happen in the soul of the religious who has abandoned Christ—under whatever pretext. In the Gospels the Saviour gives us the example of the house from which the devil has been expelled. The devil returns and finds it "ready for occupation"; he takes with him seven other devils, more wicked than himself "*and the last state of that man*", Our Lord tells us, "*is worse than the first.*"

Corruptio optimi pessima. The old Latin proverb tells us that the best, when corrupted, become the worst.

What causes Religious to lose their spirit?

There would be a virtually unanimous answer to this from the saints and spiritual writers. Religious lose their spirit and their vocation *because of their failure to strive for perfection.*

The Religious state is often referred to by theologians as a "state of perfection". The Religious is a spiritual athlete who has a special responsibility to strive for perfection. According to Dr. Adolf Tanquerey "all theologians agree that Religious are *bound to tend to perfection* in virtue of their state". (No. 367). This obligation is so grave, continues Tanquerey, that St. Alphonsus does not hesitate to say: "*If a Religious takes the firm resolution of not tending towards perfection or of giving no thought whatever to it, he commits a mortal sin.*" What happens in practice, as we know today, is that such a Religious often loses his or her vocation.

Pope Paul VI referred to these things in an address to Religious in Rome on August 23rd, 1964. "Therefore, it has seemed good to us to recall here the priceless importance and necessary function of religious life; for this stable way of life, which receives its proper character from profession of the evangelical vows, is a *perfect way of living according to the example and teaching of Jesus Christ. It is a state of life which keeps in view the constant growth of charity leading to its final perfection.*"

On July 10th, 1955, the Sacred Congregation of Religious issued a MONITUM concerning members of Religious Insti-

tutes in Europe who are forced to live outside their houses. In it the Sacred Congregation gave these Religious certain instructions and encouragement in their own particular problems.

The Monitum concluded, exhorting the Religious:

“to be faithful in keeping their religious vows and to continue constantly to offer themselves as victims to God. This consecration of life is the principal element of the religious state, never to be hindered by any temporal vicissitudes; and it wins for the universal Church immense treasures of heavenly gifts.”

At the end of Vatican II Pope Paul VI summed up the entire four years deliberations in one word: “renewal”. Later he made it clear that he was not speaking of externals when he used the Greek word *metanoia*, meaning, loosely, a personality change. St. Paul called this “putting on Christ” (Rom. 13.14), suppressing the rebellious demands of our carnal nature in order to yield to reason and accept thereby the life of grace.

Now, it is certain that the entire Fatima revelation can be summed up in one word “renewal”. The Mother of Christ appealed many times for this “change of heart”, for this rejection of Satan and all his pomps and works in order to serve Christ, which is expressed for Christians in the vow they make at baptism.

It has always been assumed that the message of Fatima was addressed positively and absolutely to Catholic Christians, and to Orthodox and Protestants only relatively.

It is true that the Protestants and Orthodox will suffer equally with Catholics in a third World War, for atom bombs are no respecters of persons. But the message was addressed primarily to Catholics because the three children were Catholics and the requirements of Mass and Holy Communion, coupled with references to the “Holy Father”, excluded in a primary sense any other denomination. This does not imply that God would not want Protestants or Orthodox to say the rosary and consecrate themselves to Mary’s Immaculate Heart.

Now, if the message was addressed primarily and specifically to Catholics, we must assume that it was addressed in a supereminent degree to our bishops and to our consecrated

Religious and clergy. At the Cova da Iria, our Religious were reminded of their duty to strive for perfection and Heaven itself appealed for the new élite corps of spiritual shock troops which the Church so urgently needs. Thus it must be particularly agonising to Mary's Immaculate Heart to see Her fateful message rejected without even a cursory study by the vast majority of the Religious of today. For it is from the ranks of the consecrated souls that the ten just men must come who save the city. (Gen. 18.32).

Our Lady appealed to us all to enter into this deep union with Christ which is painful to slothful human nature but the most glorious privilege, nevertheless, which it is possible for man to be given.

Christians bring the Light of Christ to all the world. There is no doubt of this. And without this Light the world is in darkness.

How beautifully this is expressed in the *Letter to Diognetus*, which Daniel-Rops designates as the earliest Christian masterpiece we possess, apart from the Scriptures.

It was written at the beginning of the Second Century and contains these wonderfully clear-sighted sentences:

"The Christians are to the world what the soul is to the body. Just as the flesh hates the soul and is continually waging war upon it, so the Christians are in permanent conflict with the world. And just as the captive soul preserves the body which keeps it prisoner, so the Christians preserve the world."

RECENT HISTORY

The main thesis of this book is the assertion that peace is the reward of fraternal love; wars, on the other hand, are the fruits of hatred and injustice.

It is well worth touching on recent history to see how this theory works out in practice. It is a pragmatic age and people are not likely to accept our Christian theories for the betterment of mankind unless we can give some solid evidence that they work.

Perhaps we may begin with the great Peace Conference in 1919 in order to unravel the tangled skein of trouble that has enveloped the world in this century.

Most modern historians seem to agree that it was the Treaty of Versailles and, in particular the brutal enforcement of its provisions by troops occupying Germany that gave Hitler his golden opportunity to capitalise on a wave of German hatred of the oppressors.

Clemenceau, the French Premier, an atheist, was determined to crush Germany without mercy. His stern call of *vae victis*—woe to the conquered—was whispered through the famous Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

During World War I, China, backward, feudalistic, but desperately anxious to reach out into the twentieth century, fought with the West against the Kaiser's Germany. She had been promised freedom from the unequal treaties forced upon her by the various European powers in consideration of her help in defeating Germany and Austria.

The war ended, the promises were forgotten, callously and cold-bloodedly. China was betrayed by the West.

Her distinguished Foreign Minister, Lou Tseng-tsiang, a devout Catholic, refused to append his signature to the Treaty of Versailles in protest against this betrayal. Later, he was to abandon the world to become a priest, subsequently becoming the first Chinese Abbott in the Benedictine Order.

The University students of China, the inevitable leaders of backward China, did not forget the betrayal and it was in their passionate hatred of the West that Mao-tse-tung found the spark he needed to promote the revolution.

The Student Movement of the Fourth of May, 1919 was formed to commemorate China's betrayal at Versailles.

It was a comparatively simple matter for the Communists to exploit this situation. Emissaries from Russia came to explore the possibilities of Communism and in 1920 seven persons calling themselves Communists grouped around Professor Ch'en Tuhsiu and started a proletarian newspaper which urged the formation of trade unions. It is difficult to believe that the Red China colossus which so threatens the peace of the world today grew from this tiny but dynamic nucleus of seven men. It is a consolation to know that the small group of Fatima crusaders in the world now can also grow—if *their members are dedicated enough.*

Just over one year later the First Congress of Chinese Marxists was held. It was July, 1921. Mao-tse-tung joined the Party in the following October.

What was Mao like then? According to Fr. Raymond de Jaeger, well-known expert in Far Eastern affairs, his professor at National Peking University, the distinguished Chinese intellectual Dr. Hu Shih, remembered him as a vital, keen-witted and aggressive young man who seemed to be dedicated to progress and burning with the fires of purest patriotism.

It was in the harsh and unjust treatment by the European States of the Chinese people that Communism gained its first impetus in that unhappy country.

As in Germany, so in China the seeds of hatred and injustice brought their wild harvest of war and bloodshed, of tyranny, of tragedy.

And the seeds of hatred, of injustice are the first cause of all the riots, the disorders, the bloodshed that figure so largely in the pages of our daily newspapers today.

Consider, on the other hand, the humane and generous

policy of the Americans in Japan after World War II. They poured more than three billion dollars into the shattered Japanese economy, an unheard-of gesture from a victor to the vanquished in war. This "Christian" policy of General MacArthur paid handsome dividends, for the Japanese today are strong and dependable allies of America and an important force for peace and stability in Asia.

When General Douglas MacArthur died a thought-provoking speech made by him aboard the U.S. battleship Missouri at the time of the Japanese surrender was not reported in most of the biographies. Part of it is given hereunder:

"Men," the General said, "since the beginning of time have sought peace. Various methods through the ages have been attempted to devise an international process to prevent or settle disputes between nations. From the very start, workable methods were found insofar as individual citizens were concerned, but the mechanics of an instrumentality of larger international scope have never been successful. Military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war. The utter destructiveness of war now blots out this alternative. We have had our last chance. If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature, and all material and cultural developments of the past 2,000 years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh."

And on another occasion this is the manner in which he described our present crisis and prayed for our preservation:

"There are those who seek to convert us to a form of socialistic endeavor leading directly to the path of Communist slavery. As a counterbalance to those forces is the deep spiritual urge in the hearts of our people—a spiritual urge capable of arousing and directing a decisive and impelling public opinion. This, indeed, is the great safeguard and resource of America. So long as it exists we are secure, for it holds us to the path of reason. It is an infallible reminder that our greatest hope and faith rests upon two mighty symbols—the cross and the flag; the one based upon those immutable teachings which provide the spiritual strength to persevere along the course which is just and right—the other

based upon the invincible will that human freedom shall not perish from the earth. These are the mighty bulwarks against the advance of those atheistic predatory forces which seek to destroy the spirituality of the human mind and to enslave the human body. Let us pray for the spiritual strength and innate wisdom to keep the Nation to the course of freedom charted by our fathers; to preserve it as the mighty instrument on earth to bring universal order out of existing chaos; to restore liberty where liberty has perished; and to reestablish human dignity where dignity has been suppressed.”

The strength of General MacArthur’s moral fiber was especially indicated when in 1942, while accepting an award as outstanding father of the year, he said: “My hope is that my son, when I am gone, will remember me not from the battle but from the home repeating with him our simple daily prayer, ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’”

“By their fruits you shall know them,” Our Lord said. “Do men gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles? Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit”, (Matt. 7.16).

The fruits of the doctrine of Christian love are peace.

The fruits of the doctrine of atheistic hatred are wars, and yet more wars.

THE MEANING OF CREATION

God created man in order to communicate to him a participation in the divine nature.

The first man and woman, whose creation is recounted in Genesis 1–3, were created in grace, i.e. in the friendship of

God. Nevertheless, they had freewill and it was fitting, in God's divine justice, that they should be "tested" so that they might be able to make a free choice of the service of God, or the rejection of Him.

This set the stage for the mightiest drama in all human history, for it was to have, as a direct result, the Incarnation and death of God-made-man on Calvary.

It is a simple historical fact that our First Parents rebelled against God with utterly catastrophic results.

This initial revolt of Adam and Eve carried with it a chain reaction of subsidiary revolts. Divine love being immediately extinguished in man, his sensitive nature began to rebel against his reason. And creation itself began to rebel against man, hitherto its overlord. Divine love had been the bond which united all creation. It had preserved order in man's own being. It bound him to his fellow-men; it linked all with God.

When this Divine love disappeared, harmony had fled. Man was now *naturally* a rebel prone to defy all authority. Creation itself broke up into a welter of warring elements. The orders of reason were now resisted by man and then flouted. Each sensitive appetite pursued its own reckless course of gratification regardless of the welfare of the person.

In the state of justice, a stream of delights had overflowed from the higher faculties to the lower. This ended abruptly with sin. The senses were now to clamour in vain to the higher faculties for these delights.

Dark clouds of ignorance began to gather in the hitherto serene heaven of man's mind, as the senses openly rebelled against reason. Man began to find it unpleasant and difficult to contemplate truths which conflicted with his own perverse inclinations. He developed an affinity, a sympathy for error. The stage was set for the bloodshed and violence, the cruelty and oppression of which the history of the human race is so melancholy a record.

There were several direct punishments meted out to man because of the Fall. The first was death. Man, taken from the dust of the earth, was to return to his parent dust at death. The second was labour. "*In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.*" (Gen. 3.19). Eve was told that she would bring forth her children in pain, that she would be under her husband's dominion all the days of her life. (Gen. 3.16).

The Church teaches that the entire human race fell into

disgrace with Adam its head. The Mother of Christ is excepted of course.

As we know, the transmission of the evil effects of Adam's sin, the loss of the preternatural gifts of immortality, infused science, integrity, etc., which our first father originally enjoyed, is regarded by some as unjust.

Why, asks modern man, should I suffer the evil effects of a sin I did not commit?

But, in fact, God has anticipated the question and has more than recompensed man for this seeming injustice.

Adam's sin was serious, constituting an *infinite* transgression by reason of the *infinite* dignity of the offended Majesty of God.

No human sacrifice could make reparation, and this is where we must remember that God is bound by His own divine attribute of justice.

So inexorable is the follow-through of this justice that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity must become man and sacrifice Himself to make the *infinite* reparation that is required.

THE WONDROUS INCARNATION

This theology of redemption accords perfectly with reason, as theologians from Justin, Irenaeus and Tertullian onwards have pointed out.

Just as Adam communicates his sin to corrupt and disgrace human nature, Christ the Redeemer communicates His divine merits to restore human nature, and raise it to a far higher condition than its original state of natural happiness in Eden. First the *person* of fallen man is restored by the infusion of the life of Christ at baptism. Then the *nature* is gradually restored by the discipline of a Christian life and the gradual increase of sanctifying grace in the soul. This is an individual effort of man's own free will, an effort made possible by the help of God's grace. But the attainment of complete moral integrity is impossible. And the death sentence remains, as also the laborious acquisition of knowledge.

It is significant that we all participate in the evil effects of *Adam's* sin but we are not affected—in *our nature that is*—by the sins of other members of the human race.

Similarly we are all, if we choose to be, partakers in the Divine merits of Christ, but the merits (sanctifying grace)

of all other members of the human race are *not* communicable. (Although the satisfactory and impetratory value of their good works *is* communicable.)

Christ became the New Adam, the new head of the human race in place of Adam.

Mary, as the Patristic writers were quick to notice, became the New Eve.

Eve co-operated substantially with Adam in the ruin of the human race. Mary co-operated substantially with Christ in its restoration to the friendship of God. Mary's obedience repairs Eve's disobedience. Christ's obedience blots out Adam's disobedience.

But, just as Mary's *obedience* could never have saved the human race without Christ's, so Eve's *disobedience* could never have harmed the human race without Adam's. For Adam's sin, not Eve's, is the cause of humanity's loss of original justice.

CHRIST OUR BROTHER

The entire theological structure is based on the assumption that Christ saves us because He can represent us as our true Brother, a genuine representative of the human family before the throne of God to plead for us there. This He does because of the human nature which Mary gave Him by her free assent to the proposal of the Archangel. It was necessary for Him to be a human being in order that His divine merits could be communicated to men, His blood brothers.

We appear before the throne of God clothed in the merits of Christ, and that is the essence of redemption.

The symmetry is perfect. Christ appears vis-a-vis Adam. Mary appears vis-a-vis Eve. Adam's sin runs like a dark stain through all the human family and explains why we are born with inclinations that are selfish, proud, perverse.

Christ's merits run, potentially at least, through all the human family, like a brilliant eraser of that stain, uplifting all humanity and enfolding it with the glory of a Divine presence.

The French saint, Louis de Montfort, goes even further with that beautiful analogy.

He acknowledges that Christ's merits, like Adam's demerits, are communicable, so that the human race is lost in Adam, restored in Christ.

But what of Eve's demerits? She was the prime mover in

the tragedy of the Fall. In some mysterious way her demerits, absorbed in those of Adam, are communicated to the human race. For her sex all through history is to bear the stigma of her sin. (Gen. 3.16).

And this is where St. Louis surpasses himself. He tells us that Mary communicates to her children her own merits and virtues, that she bequeathed these to her children by her testament when she died. Thus, the consecrated servants of Mary appear before the Eternal Father, he tells us, clothed in "double clothing" (Prov. 31.21) in the merits of Jesus and Mary. The analogy with the demerits of Adam and Eve is complete. The statement of St. Louis is perfectly fitting.

All Mary's gifts and prerogatives come from God and no praise of Her can be derogatory of the Divine dignity.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Without question, all men are true brothers and all men must be treated by the true Christian with reverence and respect as sons of God.

Jesus Christ is the true Brother of all men, and it is in the logic of this that He suffers with mankind, uplifts and redeems it.

This unity, this powerful reason for loving men, is supremely important in today's world of racial tensions, of hatreds, of disrespect for the dignity of the person and of the individual.

Christ emphasised this very point in St. Matthew's gospel when He warned of how He would judge the world on the last day.

"But I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me." (Matt. 25:40).

Please Note

Some readers may object to the term *creation* of man, as described in Genesis, holding rather to the theory that man evolved.

No reputable scientist would hold that evolution is anything more than a theory. And it is becoming more and more widely regarded as a pseudo-scientific theory.

It is now 115 years since Charles Darwin published "*The Origin of Species*", the work that was hailed as providing a "mechanistic" solution to the problem of how man came to

be. In that time there has been a frantic search by biologists and palaeontologists to find what they call the intermediary fossils or missing links. The search has been a total failure. *Not one valid missing link has been discovered.* The Piltdown Man, Java Man and Peking Man fossils have all turned out to be hoaxes.

Many theories of how evolution works have been put forward, by Lamarck, Darwin, De Vries and others. All, without exception, have been abandoned as impracticable. Prominent former evolutionists like Bounoure and Rostand have referred to it as a "fairy tale for adults".

Another French scientist, Dr. Maurice Vernet, the author of *La Vie dans l'Energie Universelle* (Paris, 1966), says flatly that biology no longer makes sense without the assumption of a Prime Mover to explain life. Dr. William Tinkle (a geneticist listed in *American Men of Science*), says in his recently published book, *Heredity: A Study in Science and the Bible* that he can name more than 300 men with advanced scientific degrees who do not believe in "evolution."

Researches made by Rev. Patrick O'Connell and outlined in his books, *Science of Today and The Problems of Genesis* and others, indicate that the solid scientific evidence that has come to light in this century *supports* the traditional teaching of the Church on the origin of man, on the specific creation of Adam and Eve by God, and on the consequent unity of the human race as brothers, as sons of the same Father.

If it is a scientific "hoax", how is it that evolution has been widely propagated as "fact" and not merely as the hypothesis that all reputable scientists know it to be?

In general, it may be said that there has been a massive plot on the part of the powers of darkness to discredit Christianity and the Bible through the use of this unscientific and unproved theory. But the truth is great and it will prevail. The long night is coming to an end.

Addendum

Those interested in the current scientific exposure of the evolution hoax are advised to subscribe to the writings of Henry M. Morris, Ph. D., Director of Creation Science Research Center of Christian Heritage College, 2716 Madison Ave., San Diego, Cal. 92116.

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

The first reaction of many who read the foregoing chapters may be an aversion to the idea of prayer and penance. They may come to the conclusion, somewhat superficially, that if they embrace a life of prayer and self-sacrifice, they will surely be unhappy.

But, in fact, the very reverse is true. Nothing assures a deep and enduring happiness so much as simple obedience to God's commandments; and it is written in the Gospels that those who sacrifice themselves for the kingdom of God will receive an hundredfold *even in this life*, and in eternity, life everlasting. (Mark 10.30).

The consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady, asked for at Fatima, will lead us to the greatest happiness possible to us in this vale of tears. The experience and wisdom of the saints amply demonstrate this.

Possibly the greatest good that can come from the practice of a perfect consecration to the Blessed Virgin is the fact that it enables a Christian to live his life to the full, to attain what philosophers have called the *summum bonum*. The Greeks indeed referred to this as the peak of natural happiness. But for the Christian it has a far deeper meaning than the attainment of a merely natural happiness.

If the following of Christ gives us an hundredfold in terms of human happiness even in this life, then a perfect formula

of consecration to the Blessed Virgin, being in itself a perfect form of consecration to Christ, must be the crowning achievement of philosophy and theology down through the ages.

Natural and supernatural happiness go together, of course, a fact that is not always realised. "*It is only by striving to live a supernatural life,*" writes Fr. Edward Leen, "*that man will succeed in living a truly natural life. Grace, in perfecting nature, keeps nature true to itself . . .*"

Another writer, Mgr. Bolo, tells us that a soul in possession of the Holy Spirit has "*the very quintessence of happiness, for the inspiration applies its action to the centre of the soul and touches the mainspring of all felicity.*"

There are two fundamental errors by which men are confused in this matter of seeking happiness. The first is well known—the belief that happiness consists in an opposite condition to some trial or viscissitude through which we may happen to be passing. For example, the sick imagine they would be perfectly happy if they regained their health, or the poor sometimes believe that they would find happiness in riches. The ageing, with their bald heads or grey hair, sigh for their lost youth, and like Faust, feel that they could trade their very souls to regain it.

That these are illusions is amply demonstrated by a glance at the daily newspapers, for the rich, the physically well and the youthful are all listed among the frustrated and the bitterly unhappy, and amongst the suicides.

The other fundamental error of men is the belief that, by depriving themselves of some pleasure, they will necessarily make themselves unhappy.

The erroneous belief that penance is synonymous with unhappiness is the fatal illusion of our times. It prevents, at one stroke, the entry of millions on this golden path by which men may reach union with God and all happiness. But the pleasure-seeker, the *bon vivant*—even when his pleasures are lawful in themselves—finds ultimately that his attachment to these things has provided only an escape from reality, that it has not led him one single step towards the "good life" towards that elevation of the soul which can only come from detachment from created things. The ultimate fate of the pleasure-seeker is inevitably boredom, frustration, ennui.

In the pagan world we find Cleanthes, one of the greatest sages of antiquity, abandoning an easy and luxurious life to serve the field-labourers of Athens. And one wonders what

the modern Sunday golfer would think of Seneca's assertion that happiness is the result of virtue and that pleasure is "a low, servile, weak, perishable and shameful thing." (*De Beata Vita*).

The second error and illusion referred to above is the chief obstacle to the common practice of St. Louis de Montfort's consecration to Jesus through Mary, for St. Louis makes it clear that we cannot attach ourselves sincerely to Jesus through Mary without surrendering—gradually perhaps but inevitably—our natural attachment to creatures.

The first essential of St. Louis' consecration formula is the renunciation of our own wills for the will of God—and we must remember that God wills our greatest happiness, *here and hereafter*.

As man's will impels him to seek pleasures, luxuries, sensual attachments of all kinds we find that an almost immediate crisis arises for the newly arrived client of Our Lady. St. Louis himself says that the greatest number will stop at what is exterior in this devotion, and will go no further.

How then can we give this powerful "secret of grace" to all the world? The path thereto is penitential, but modern man, standing on the edge of the howling wasteland to which his lusts and his materialism have brought him, may well listen to the wisdom of the ages that he has long since abandoned.

This is the "radical" new theory which must capture his attention, that penance brings happiness not only to individuals but, in its pervasive influence, to families and societies, to communities and nations, and to all the world. This is the message given us throughout the ages by prophets and patriarchs, in the lives of Christ and His Mother, in the apparitions of Lourdes and Fatima, in the constant teaching and practice of saints and evangelists.

Its acceptance by the modern world throws wide the gates leading to widespread knowledge and practice of St. Louis de Montfort's luminous theological masterpiece and consequently to the greatest age of faith in the history of the world.

THE APOSTASY IN POLITICS

If the blind lead the blind they both fall into the ditch
(Matt. 15.14)

If the world is in darkness today, threatened with a breakdown of civilised society on one hand, and atomic annihilation on the other, it is imperative that we seek a diagnosis of the trouble. A correct diagnosis must precede a cure; until the present world situation is intelligently analysed there can be no hope of improvement. We have already diagnosed a serious and widespread spiritual atrophy as the root cause of the crisis. Let us study now its effect on political life.

The blindness of the secular state in the political arena has been the indirect cause of the deaths of millions of human beings innocent of any crime. As stated above, this blindness in political life has its roots in the spiritual aridity of the souls of the people.

The Popes have given us Divinely inspired guidance in matters which appear to be political, but which are, in fact, of deep spiritual import. The failure of the leaders of Christian nations to listen to Papal advice has drenched Europe in blood and made our century the most violent in history.

It is known and recognized that Marxist Communism has been trenchantly condemned by the Popes from Pius IX to the present day.

Against the most pressing advice of the Popes, the leaders of Christian States recognised Communist "governments",

giving them a dignity to which they were not entitled, a legal authority they did not possess, and prerogatives which would enable them to destroy civilised living in the whole world.

Even the Communists have admitted that Stalin was a tyrant and an oppressor, an enemy of the people of Russia. Yet he was recognised as the legal ruler of the Soviet Union by Christian Europe even though it was the avowed purpose of the conspiracy which he headed to destroy the Christian faith and all belief in God in Russia and throughout the world.

By 1924 most European powers had recognised the Communist government as legal, mostly for trade reasons. At the time Stalin was recognised as legal ruler of Russia, in 1933, by America and Australia, he was in the very act of ordering the wholesale starvation of the Kulaks, the peasant farmers who were resisting his harsh "collectivisation". Kravchenko, a reliable witness of these events, reported that 20,000,000 perished, that their slaughter was deliberate, well-planned and cold-blooded.

This "legal recognition" was all-important for Stalin. It elevated a criminal conspiracy to the status of a government, gave him enormous help through "diplomatic privilege", and enabled the Marxist virus to infiltrate and infect all the nations of the world. Above all, it was a betrayal of God and *that constituted its essential malice.*

It can be demonstrated that the great political problems and confusions of the modern world began with this act of betrayal which was in some sense the first step in the great political apostasy of today.

The world has suffered greatly because of it, uncounted millions have died as a result of it. But the blindness still persists and will persist until men pray again.

The secular states were told in many great encyclicals and allocutions of the Popes how to deal wisely with Communism. The new ideology was condemned severely by Leo XIII in *Allegiance to the Republic* and *Christian Constitution of States*, and it was Pius XI who told us in 1937 that "Communism is intrinsically evil and no-one who has any concern for Christian society may collaborate with it in any enterprise whatever." (Encyclical on Atheistic Communism).

The encyclical *Allegiance to the Republic* was issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1892.

This great Pope was already aware of the attempt by God-

less men to seize political power in order to suppress religion.

What lawful authority would such rulers have? What lawful authority do the rulers of Communist nations have today?

Pope Leo led off with a definition of law. *A law*, he said, *is a precept ordained according to reason and promulgated for the good of the community.*

He made it clear immediately that laws which are hostile to God and to religion should never be approved. On the contrary, he said, it is a duty to disapprove them.

As soon as the State refuses, he continued, to give to God what belongs to God, then by a necessary consequence it refuses to give to citizens that to which, as men, they have a right.

The great Pope clearly foresaw the dangers threatening the twentieth century, for he goes on:

"Whence it follows that the State, by missing the principal object of its institution, finally becomes false to itself by denying that which is the reason for its own existence, namely God . . . All citizens are bound, therefore, to unite in maintaining in the nation true religious sentiment, and to defend it, in case of need, if ever, despite the protestations of nature and of history, an atheistical school should set about banishing God from society and annihilating the moral sense even in the depths of the human conscience."

Later, in his *Christian Constitution of States*, Pope Leo was to proclaim:

"It is a public crime to act as though there were no God."

"Nature and reason," the Pontiff went on, *"which command the individual devoutly to worship God in holiness, because we belong to Him and must return to Him, bind also the civil community by a like law."*

This question of the inalienable rights of man is crucially important. An inalienable right is one that cannot be justly taken away by any power on earth, a right that is inherent in human nature itself, a right that is given to man by God.

As we know, the American Declaration of Independence issued on July 4th 1776 opened with these noble words:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of

government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it."

By recognising the Communist conspiracy in Russia as a legal government America helped to take away this right of self-determination from the Russian people, helped to consolidate the criminal conspirators in power.

The Soviet rulers never even pretended to recognise these inalienable rights of man and they do not do so now. In fact it can be truthfully said that Communism has no reason for its existence other than to take away the inalienable rights of man, the principal of which is the right to worship God in holiness, in justice, and in truth.

As is well known their system of internal espionage, with its ubiquitous secret police makes it impossible for the unfortunate Russian people to rebel.

In recognising such a conspiracy as a government, and giving it indispensable help by means of diplomatic privilege and immunity, have we not become, in some sense, accomplices in their crimes against the Russian people?

It is clear that, when the American and European governments recognised the militantly atheistic dictatorship of Joseph Stalin as the legal government of Russia in the twenties and thirties they perpetrated a grave injustice against the Russian people.

How grave the injustice is shown by the rivers of blood that have flowed in the Soviet Union in the ensuing decades. For it is clear that diplomatic recognition and help from the West established the murderer Stalin in power.

The Communist conspiracy channeled its deadly poison through many of the countries of the world by means of the precious diplomatic immunity granted it by blind politicians in the free world.

We have only to read Anatol Kuznetsov's articles, released in the *Daily Telegraph*, August 1969, to realize whom the various Soviet Embassies represent. They don't represent the Russian people, that is certain.

"Democracy will be safe," wrote the great Greek sage Solon six hundred years before Christ, *"when he who is not injured is just as indignant as he who is."*

There is little indignation today for the millions of innocent people who have been murdered under Communism in Russia, in China, in Vietnam. The victims are quietly buried, unwept, unhonoured and unsung. But we shall meet them again on

the Last Day, when all these accounts will be settled by a just God.

These matters are being brought up in a rather agonising hour in history, an hour in which the oppressors of the Russian people have at their disposal enough terror weapons to destroy the civilised world, and the Russian people as well.

Who has the answer for such a fearful dilemma?

A challenge to the Soviet Communists in a global war may well be an act of madness; we can turn only to God.

It is absolutely clear from reliable internal reports on Soviet Russia that the Communist regime could be destroyed from within by an internal upheaval, and it is for this we should work and pray.

All things are possible to God who can easily preserve us from the dangers of Soviet Russia's hydrogen bombs—if only we pray.

But let us remember well that it is the politicians who have let us down, not the Popes.

It is the blindness, the lack of insight in the political leaders we have elected which has created the Frankenstein monster that threatens us today.

It is the wisdom of the Popes that would have saved us, the sagacity of the great Leo XIII—*Lumen in coelo* he was called—which would, had his advice been followed, have spared the world from much of the sorrows and bloodshed of this age.

PROBLEMS ON CAMPUS

It is inevitable that a new generation of youth, better educated in a technical or technological sense, literate, sophisti-

cated and somewhat spoiled by an unprecedented affluence, should be disturbed and agitated in today's world.

They face an uncertain future with a constant, and to them inexplicable, succession of wars threatening their happiness and their lives.

They have, in Western civilisation at least, little or no moral and spiritual patrimony handed down to them from their faithless ancestry. In the important department of philosophy they are orphans—and they know it. Bewildered, they have become the prey of slick demagogues, unscrupulous agitators, hypocritical politicians. Frenzied dictators and political pied pipers have shouted attractive slogans and ideologies at them, only to lead them into the ditch to which the blind invariably lead the blind.

The frustration of youth today is understandable, and to a very large extent, excusable. The university students, as the intellectual élite of today's youth and its articulate leaders, capture the headlines with riots on campus, vandalism, mob violence.

Now that the draft for the war in Vietnam has ended the riots have subsided, but the frustration remains and will remain until the vacuum is filled in the souls of our modern youth. Many of our most talented students realise the intrinsic worthlessness of the education they are receiving. In despair they turn to the reckless pursuit of sensual pleasures, to drugs, and sometimes to suicide.

Who is responsible for this failure in education?

It is a fact that most universities today care little about the moral or philosophical background of faculty staff. It is held to be illiberal to refuse a man an appointment if he is a Communist or an atheist. But a professor or lecturer at a university should be required to have, as a condition *sine qua non* to his appointment, a dedication to truth. The Greeks held that those who taught the youth of the nation held the most honoured and responsible positions in the nation. But, if a university professor is confused and is in error on the really great questions of essence and existence, questions relating to the meaning of life, to higher metaphysics, etc., then it is surely unwise to place him in control of the nation's youth, no matter what other qualifications he may have. As Christians know very well, such a man may become an instrument of the powers of darkness.

Of course it will be considered naive to raise such a ques-

tion in a pluralist society which sees no harm in atheism, or in moral corruption and unnatural vice.

The question is raised to underline the fact that in agreeing to such appointments we are doing something our ancestors would never have considered wise, something which is proving to be unwise if we are to judge from its fruits.

The Greeks were right. High moral qualifications should be expected from the man who essays to teach the youth of the nation.

The university has been traditionally a centre for giving a *comprehensive* education to its students. As a first essential a university must decide if God exists, for all education must take its character and its orientation from the question of God's existence. In other words, theology has to be the first and most indispensable of the academic disciplines if the university is to gain the respect of its students.

The entire meaning of life revolves around creation, for, if we have been created, we simply must know who created us and why. And of course we must know if there is life after death. Even the most primitive of human minds should be able to see the relative unimportance of technology in comparison to this.

Christian parents in recent years have been bitterly disappointed with the results of university training for their sons and daughters. Only too often, the university milieu has been infected with agnosticism and secular humanism. In such a spiritual climate faith is eroded, morals are corrupted, lives are ruined, and souls may be lost forever.

We have, it seems, reached a crisis in higher education. Expensive buildings there may be but it is useless to provide magnificent buildings and appointments if there are no enlightened professors and lecturers to go with them.

Buildings and appointments say nothing to the soul of man. Modern technocrats or technicians are not necessarily educated in the old sense of the word. They would have little affinity for example, with the philosophers of Attica who walked in the "groves of Academe", much less with the inspired writers and brilliant thinkers who have interpreted Christ's gospel for us and given to the world the greatest civilization it has known.

The word educate meant, in the old sense, to lead forth *e—ducere*—and, in the days of Charlemagne and Alcuin it surely meant to lead forth from the darkness of paganism to

the light of the Gospel. How then can an atheist professor truly *educate* his pupils? He may train them in various exact sciences, give them the ability to take out \$20,000 per year from some Corporation. But none of the wise men of the past, not Plato or Aristotle, Seneca or Confucius or Buddha—none of them would have confused this with education, which is, primarily, a search for one's identity and a search for happiness.

Men have asked fundamental questions from the beginning of time: Who am I? How did I come to be? What am I doing here? Is there a life beyond the grave? How can I attain peace of soul, happiness, true love?

The achievements of the astronauts rivet our attention to the fact that we are fellow travellers on this space ship called earth, that we are constantly orbiting the sun in the trackless wastes of space.

How utterly extraordinary it is! What human mind is there which can fail to marvel at this journey of man through space! What unseen power has flung this planet Earth into the cosmos, enriching it with all that man needs for his sustenance, guiding it constantly into the narrow elliptical orbit from which it must not deviate if we are to live?

Whence did we come? Where are we going?

Modern man needs to know the answers with desperate urgency, for there is an atomic "sword of Damocles" suspended above his head.

What will the historians of the future say of this age? What will they say of its youth?

It is not possible to answer these questions at this stage for the great drama has not reached the *dénouement*, the climax which will fill the soul with awe; in the full apocalyptic grandeur of the spiritual crisis shall we see what our youth are made of.

Their discontent, their anger and frustration are laudable insofar as they imply a rejection of the materialistic values of their fathers and mothers. But this is praiseworthy only if they have the character to rise to a challenge, to seize that "*tide in the affairs of men*" which God will present to them eventually. For our youth are not to be left permanently without leadership, without a light to guide them into a better world order. Have our youth the courage, the resolution, the idealism to follow the light, even unto great sacrifice, into the

valley of death itself? *There are many indications that they have.*

16

THE GREAT IDEAL

It is no exaggeration to say that Christianity, fully lived by the generality of men, would enable mankind to reach the maximum happiness possible to it in this vale of tears.

It is, in fact, a common assumption of spiritual writers that Heaven begins here on earth when sanctifying grace enters the soul at baptism. This Divine life which, as St. John tells us, is love itself, communicates itself like a light to other people and gives some faint promise of the paradise to come. For grace, as we have noted, is called *glory in exile*.

It is curious that the existentialist Jean Paul Sartre, when asked if he believed in hell, is said to have replied, "*hell is other people*".

Sartre, alas, does not have the gift of faith. For the Christian, it can be said that *Heaven is other people*. For the Christian is bound by the express teaching of the Church and of St. Paul in particular, to see and reverence Christ in his fellowman.

The history of the human race is, it must be confessed, a melancholy record of cruelty and oppression. "Man's inhumanity to man," wrote Robert Burns, "makes countless thousands mourn." Could man ever be persuaded to believe that, in meeting his fellow-man, he was, in some sense, having an encounter with the Infinite God?

We know from any number of private revelations that angels, when they appear to men, are superhumanly beauti-

ful. We know that their angelic intellect is such that the most gifted of men is, compared to the least of the angels, unutterably and abysmally stupid. We have it on the word of Our Lord Himself that the just who die in grace are as the angels of Heaven endowed with an eternal happiness and bliss that no human tongue could describe. (Matt. 22.30).

Each man or woman we meet must be seen then as having a Divine image, as a soul on its journey to eternity. For this reason, we owe each other reverence and love, and this applies to all nations and all classes, for, in order to have this incomprehensible dignity, it is simply necessary to be a man, redeemed by the Precious Blood of our Brother Jesus Christ, called by God to occupy the princely thrones from which the fallen angels fell by pride. (Apoc. 12.4). This is the premise from which we draw our ideal of Christian love.

This is the greatest ideal which can possibly be put before the wavering, uncertain mind of man. If he seizes on this ideal, perceives its sterling worth, its truth, its validity and acts on it, then he reigns as a prince, both in this life and the next. For the trials and vicissitudes he may have to endure here on earth, far from harming the inner peace and happiness of his soul, actually enrich these spiritual qualities. That is why God permits His chosen ones to suffer in this life.

It is not intended for one moment to ignore the difficulties of living a spiritual life. Every mature person knows the challenge that Christ offers us in asking us to take up our Cross daily and follow Him. The pain to our sensual nature, disordered and disoriented by Original Sin is there. But it must be insisted that Christ the Redeemer is strictly faithful to His solemn promise that His followers would be one hundred times happier, even in this life, than those who sought gratification in their sensual appetites. This can even be proved statistically, for countries which have degenerated morally usually have a higher incidence of suicide and nervous disorders than others. The one single simple constituent in the natural order that unites the human race is that we all seek happiness. Even the bank robber robs a bank in the pathetic belief that the proceeds of his robbery will enable him to be happier. The bank robber, like all criminals, is tragically deficient in philosophy.

It can be said that no nation can be greater than its philosophy for wisdom is the quality that most elevates man above the animals. Wisdom is the proper use of knowledge

and it is wisdom to see God's signature in the universe, to adore Him and to obey His commandments. Jesus Christ is called by the saints the *Incarnate Wisdom* and He is identified with the beauty of nature in that inspired verse of the Irish poet Plunkett, "*I see His blood upon the rose, and in the stars, the glory of His eyes . . .*"

Christ, then, represents the ideal *par excellence* for the human race, the indispensable Sun of Justice whose rays illumine all men, the glowing Furnace of love, in which we are all united, in love.

The least thing done for Christ brings rewards, in the natural and supernatural orders, beyond all measure. Truly he could say of His divine mission, "*I am come that they may have life, that they may have it more abundantly.*"

Is history itself against us in believing or hoping that so sublime an ideal could really motivate men, colour their thinking, raise them above the selfishness and corruption of the past? Cynics may indeed laugh at the idea that human nature as portrayed in the pages of history, could change so radically.

Nevertheless, the age of Christian triumph foreshadowed in the prophecies at the beginning of this book does indicate some great and unprecedented acceptance of the Christian ideal by men. This was clearly referred to by Our Lady in those memorable words, "*In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph, Russia will be converted, and an era of peace will be conceded to the world.*"

What will this new Christian social order, referred to in so many prophecies, be like?

There will be, without doubt, a vast refinement of manners, motivated by a sincere fraternal love between men.

In this glorious age, men will see Christ in their neighbour, no matter how poor, how illiterate, or of what race or nation he may be, lest they merit the rebuke given to Saul, "*I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.*" (Acts 9.5).

It will be an age of mass conversions, as St. Louis predicted, with vast numbers of the non-Christian races embracing Christianity.

It is unnecessary to say that, in such an age, extreme poverty and starvation will be banished, although, in the Church, there will be a great love of evangelical poverty. Money will simply be considered to be "*filthy lucre*"—as St. Peter and St. Paul both referred to it—unworthy of the notice

of the Christian sincerely striving for the glories of eternal life.

The sudden removal of the great armaments programmes, the immediate decrease in the incidence of crime, the greatly increased output in production as a result of a Christian industrial and social conscience—all these things will lower taxes to a small fraction of what they now are.

Science will truly serve man, in this great age, as God intended it to do. Freed from concentration upon weapons of destruction, this will surely be an age of almost incredible technological and scientific advancement. Deserts will bloom and crops will double and treble under the force of man's God-given genius.

Reason also tells us that it must necessarily be the greatest age of all time in art, in literature, in architecture, in music, in all that enobles and inspires the soul of man.

Does all this mean that the cross will be eliminated from man's life, that the new Christian social order will be something of a "paradise on earth"?

This can never be, for the very purpose of existence is to try man, as gold is tried in the furnace.

The corruption of man's human nature will still subsist, and he will still be subject to serious temptation. The proper will of man will still struggle against the Divine will, and the self-denial which faith and reason command will still be painful to him.

The important thing is that man, in this golden Age of Mary, will carry these crosses with far more ease, with far more merit and far more glory.

Enlightened as to the shortest, easiest, most perfect and secure path to Jesus, modern man will travel this *via immaculata* with *giant* strides, without retracing his steps, with lights and graces unknown to those who try to reach perfection in other ways.

This then, is the new City of Man which lies just over the horizon, beyond, perhaps, the dark clouds of Satan's final triumph. This is the great age which is brought so much nearer with ever consecration of a soul to Mary's Immaculate Heart, with every resolution of a soul to pray and do penance as Our Lady so urgently begged us to do at Fatima.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

For centuries men have quoted St. Thomas' five proofs of the existence of God; they have cited the miracles which abound in every age to support Christian revelation—and which are present in abundance in our own age. The heavens have consistently shown forth the glory of God, the firmament declaring the work of His hands.

And still we hear the ultimate absurdity, "there is no God".

Objectively speaking, it can be said that the most obvious thing in all the world is that a Supreme Being, a Creator, exists. In spite of all this there are some who are considered learned and intelligent who tell us "there is no God".

Curiously enough this is still another proof of the existence of God. For it is true to say that, in general, those who believe are those who pray. And those who do not believe are those who do not pray.

Hence it is obvious that God punishes the proud and the perverse souls who refuse to pray, by withholding His divine presence from them. They are left by the most just God, in darkness. They cannot see what any child can see, that there is a God.

But the man who prays perseveringly is not left in doubt. For God reveals Himself to such souls, and consoles them with His graces, so that all the mysteries of life are revealed and the sufferings and trials of this life are seen in the most noble context of the sufferings of Calvary.

The marvellous plan of creation and redemption is un-

ravelled before the mental gaze of the man who prays to God through Jesus Christ.

But no light can pierce the thick cloud of darkness that envelops the mind of the atheist, the man who refuses to pray.

He will deny the most sure evidence of his reasonings, will be unimpressed by the most staggering miracles worked to prove the existence of God.

The intricate design of the universe, found in the cosmos as well as in the marvellous plant and animal world, cry out to us, affirming the presence of a Supreme Designer.

The laws which govern the Heavenly bodies, the tides, the seasons, presuppose a Divine Lawgiver.

The countless effects we see around us have causes. In biology we trace life forms back to a necessary First Cause. For at some point *in time* life began on this planet.

Who created that life?

There is a tremendous motion in the universe, the earth alone, as we know, orbiting the sun at a constant 66,600 miles an hour. If it were to slacken its pace it would plunge into the 36,000,000 degrees Centigrade heat of the sun and all life would end.

But who sustains this motion, who keeps the earth rotating at a precision speed around the Sun?

Matter is inert and cannot move itself.

The consensus of all humanity, until this proud, blind, atheistic age, is that there is a Prime Mover, an Omnipotent Being, who is God.

It is true that educated men are to be found who are atheists, just as there are educated men who are believers.

And this is how it should be, for the significant division in the human race is between the good and the evil, not between the educated and the uneducated.

If in fact Heaven could be entered by the talented and the educated whilst Hell was the lot of the stupid and the illiterate then the injustice of the Divine plan would be manifest.

Our Lord Himself warned us that the children of this world, the materialists, are wiser *in their generation* than the children of light.

As businessmen, as executives, as administrators, atheists or agnostics are often more efficient than Christians.

In terrenis fortes, in coelestibus debiles.

In earthly things they are strong, in heavenly things they are weak.

But this business ability, this worldly success, may well be, in reality, a curse.

For what does it profit them if they gain the whole world and lose their souls?

No matter how smart they are, no matter how subtle and quick-witted in their business dealings, they cannot "scheme" their way into God's presence. Holy Scripture refers to such men as fools.

The Beatific Vision, the eternal happiness of Heaven, is the reward of the good, not the clever.

THE PASS IS CHARITY

The entry pass is charity, in the form of sanctifying grace. Without this, the most brilliant intellect who ever lived cannot reach the eternal reward, the paradise for which every fibre of his being subconsciously yearns.

And the stupid, the backward, need not fear that they will miss the Beatific Vision on this account.

Only a deliberate choice of evil will draw down this judgment upon them, a failure to thank God in prayer for His blessings, a failure to adore, to bend the knee in the just homage which we owe to the Deity.

What then of the shrewd business man, the brilliant executive who neglects God and finds himself in Hell forever and ever?

How smart is he? How brilliant is he then?

With what unimaginable remorse does he contemplate then the brilliant intellect that was his in life, the intellect that he used merely to gather the useless baubles of earth!

He is accursed, ruined, *bankrupt*—not in the useless transient wealth of earth, but in the infinitely precious wealth of God's love, the eternal ecstasy which was purchased for him on Calvary. He is ruined, utterly and forever, this smart businessman who refused to pray, and no tongue or pen could describe the extent of his ruin.

No greater act of charity for our neighbour can we perform than to save his soul from Hell. Prayers of reparation to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart are supremely efficacious in saving these souls from the abyss.

The prayers and the penances of Christians can set in mo-

tion the conversion of the atheist and the agnostic, and bring the warmth of God's love even to those "*who do not believe, do not adore, do not trust, and do not love.*"

18

MIRACLES

Many sceptics who doubt the truths of the spiritual life are wont to say that they are only prepared to believe what they see, meaning that if they saw a miracle they would believe.

We know from the Scriptures themselves that miracles do not necessarily bring faith. There must be goodwill before this peace can enter the soul. St. Luke tells how, when Our Lord healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath, the Pharisees, watching Him, were "filled with madness" and immediately began to plot His death. They were similarly incensed when He raised Lazarus from death after four days and even considered killing Lazarus himself because many of the Jews believed in Christ through this miracle.

This attitude is still common, as we know from the disinterest with which the majority of people receive authentic accounts of the miracles of Lourdes and Fatima.

There was once a famous French novelist named Emile Zola, whose fame was at its peak at the turn of the century. He was an atheist.

Zola popularized the theory that the cures at Lourdes were due to "religious suggestion". Being an intelligent man he must have known that organic diseases could not possibly be cured in this way, but to Zola any solution was preferable to the true solution, that the cures were worked by Divine power.

Zola went to Lourdes with a fanfare of publicity in 1892 declaring, "*If I can only see a cut finger healed I will believe.*"

Because of his fame as a writer every door was thrown open to him and he was given all the privileges of a visiting doctor. And Heaven accepted his challenge in a remarkable way.

A woman named Marie Lemarchand had been suffering from lupus of the mouth and nose, the cartilages of the latter being almost eaten away while blood and pus oozed from the shapeless and repulsive wound. In addition her left arm and leg were partly paralyzed.

During Zola's train journey from Paris, Marie Lemarchand shared the same carriage with him, so that he was familiar with her case. He was present also at the baths when Marie Lemarchand, with others, was immersed. The moment she touched the water she felt a violent pain. She screamed loudly, attracting the attention of all, and then came up, completely cured.

There was a shout of triumph from Dr. Boissarie, President of the Medical Bureau. "*Behold, Monsieur Zola,*" he said excitedly, "*the case of your dreams.*"

There was a moment of silence as Zola faced this bitter fact, so hurtful to his pride and self-esteem.

Refusing to bend even before this unassailable evidence he muttered, "*Take her away—she is not pretty enough yet.*" Later he was reported as saying that if he saw all the sick in Lourdes cured he still would not believe. In fact he refused to change in any way his theory of auto-suggestion and, in his writings on his journey to Lourdes he made it appear that Marie Lemarchand was cured gradually as a result of repeated bathings and the atmosphere of what he called "religious suggestion".

If there is one thing clear from the Scriptures it is this: *Miracles were worked by Christ in order to prove His authority to teach in the name of God, and He clearly expected His hearers to believe His doctrine because of those miracles.*

There is evidence in the Scriptures that Our Lord was moved to anger when His miracles were rejected and ascribed to Beelzebub.

"*The men of Ninive,*" He declared, "*shall rise in judgement with this generation and shall condemn it, because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas here.*" (Luke VI:32).

In sending His seventy-two disciples to teach and work miracles in His name, He condemned in advance those who would reject them, telling the disciples to wipe off the dust of their cities for a testimony against them.

"I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom . . . than for that city." (Luke X:12).

"Woe to thee Corozain, woe to thee Bethsaida," the Saviour continued, "for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the mighty works that have been wrought in you, they would have done penance long ago sitting in sackcloth and ashes."

Such is the awesome responsibility of people who reject miracles, who tell us that our dogmas must have a Scriptural basis. *It is the Scriptures themselves that cry out to us, and warn us of the necessity of believing in Lourdes and Fatima, and the doctrine and messages given to the world there, because those doctrines and messages are confirmed by the spectacular miracles worked at those famous Shrines.*

19

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

There may be sceptical readers of this book who will say, "If the message of prayer and penance is so powerful, if its implementation will solve all the problems of the world, the wars, the crime, the colour question, poverty, etc., why did it not do these things in the ages of faith when all Europe was Christian?"

There are several considerations to be taken here. In the Ages of Faith there was great confusion in regard to the proper role of a Christian king or emperor vis-a-vis the Church. Also, communications were poor, restricted to de-

livering messages by horseback, and the opportunities did not exist, as they do today, for dissemination of a really powerful theological ideal to great masses of people in many countries at one time. The Fatima revelation is such an ideal today.

And it must be noted that the message given by Our Lady to the world is not just prayer and penance; it has much more theological depth than that. Our Lady's prophecies concerning the conversion of Russia and the coming of the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart indicate that the world is poised for new and marvellous spiritual adventures, even if, as seems inevitable, we must pass through some terrible Gethsemane to reach this blessed Resurrection of the spirit.

There is a Providential opportunity now for soul-searching, for looking back into history to discover the mistakes of the past, for examining the record of the "Institutional Church" to discover why She has not fully carried out the injunction of Her Divine Founder to "*go, make disciples of all nations . . .*"

All mature persons, well aware of the weakness of our fallen human nature, will examine the pages of history with some compassion for the tragic failure of Church leaders in the past. If the apostles themselves had serious weaknesses, how can we expect every Pope and bishop to behave like a saint?

Nevertheless, all will agree that the Institutional Church can and should be organised to encourage sanctity rather than laxity, to promote the Christian virtues, to give to mankind the inspiration of the Gospel, to send out impulses of light and love to all the world. In the past it has not been organised on these lines at all times, and it is the most sacred mission of all Christians to help the Church fulfil this sublime destiny in the future.

In April 1969, Pope Paul ordered leading ecclesiastics in Rome to cut back on expensive clothing and other extras, and to give an example of the poverty and simplicity of the Gospel to the world.

Some saintly writers, examining the comparatively poor performance of the Church throughout the ages, have advanced the theory that the Church became far too involved with the secular power in the Constantine and subsequent eras, so that high Ecclesiastics came to be looked upon, all too often, as secular lords and princes, rather than as spiritual shepherds of the flock of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is a historical fact that in many countries bishoprics were richly endowed with property and temporal benefices, so that, all too often, unscrupulous and ambitious men cast covetous eyes upon them when they were vacant.

As the kings and emperors had the right, for many centuries, to nominate their own bishops, the harm done to the Church was enormous.

Many Popes were acutely conscious of this great harm being done by bad Episcopal appointments and there was an intermittent struggle from the time of Gregory Hildebrand onwards for the right of investiture of bishops. But few Popes had the courage and resolution of Gregory, and most of them submitted tamely to the ruthless demands of the secular powers.

It is important to remember that the kings and emperors claimed the right to nominate the bishops primarily because the bishop was often the equivalent of a baron or a duke in those days, and, as such, subject in a special way to the king.

The Pope himself was often the equivalent of a secular king, particularly after Charlemagne when the district around Rome and the provinces of Romagna and the Pentapolis were ceded to the Papacy.

The Pope's temporal power reached its height at the beginning of the 16th century when he had control of seven duchies and three provinces.

Victor Emmanuel merely had to send an army of occupation to take the Papal States in 1870, after French troops protecting the Pope's rights were withdrawn. Vatican 1, which was then in session, was hastily terminated.

It was the end of the temporal power of the Popes. Regarded as a tragedy at the time, it has since come to be considered a great blessing. For the Pope's prestige rose immensely in the ensuing years, and he came to be regarded for what he was, a great spiritual leader, above politics and the ambitions of princes and prime ministers.

At Vatican 11, some bishops from Latin America sponsored a move to return the Church to stark poverty and simplicity. They held that this was the Church that Jesus Christ set up as outlined in the Gospels. They succeeded in having several strong recommendations to poverty written into the Council documents.

Without doubt Christ wants a Church which will bring rich spiritual gifts to the poor and the suffering, a Church which

will see in every man a soul on its journey to eternity, a Church whose members truly love one another, and who love and serve their neighbour in all mankind.

St. Ignatius tells us that the devil usually tempts holy men, first with a desire for money, second with a desire for position, and finally with pride. The failure of the Church in history is all too understandable in the light of this.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit," said the Saviour.

Poverty or detachment from worldly goods engenders humility.

"The poor will speak with supplications and the rich will speak roughly." (Prov. XVIII.23).

Our Lord tells us also that we can serve either God or Mammon—and not both.

It is fitting therefore that the Church which is the Bride of Christ be decked out in that poverty and simplicity which are the striking characteristics of the life of the Bridegroom here on earth.

"Be not solicitous," He tenderly counselled His anxious followers. *"Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them."*

"Seek therefore the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6-25.33).

If all the agony of this century of blood and tears, if all the suffering of the persecuted in the lands of atheist darkness can purify the Church so that She is easily recognizable by Her likeness to Her divine Founder, then the current crisis will indeed be worthwhile and we may hope for the greatest Christian era in all history.

This is an enlightened, articulate, and perceptive generation. It has a golden opportunity to learn from all the errors of history.

It has an outstanding opportunity also to learn how to re-fashion the Church in the manner and according to the image designed by God Himself. For the Most High has condescended to reveal these guidelines to us at Fatima.

THE NEW CRUSADE

The Mother of Christ launched a new crusade at Fatima but its tremendous significance has been little understood by the world at large.

As is well-known She foreshadowed the ultimate success of this crusade, indicating, nevertheless, that much bloodshed and suffering would precede that success.

Like an efficient surgeon dealing with a cancerous growth of the spiritual order Our Lady tells us in concise, almost laconic, terms how the operation is to be carried out.

We should not be surprised if we discover that the most brilliant theology is hidden in those few sentences She uttered at the Cova da Iria. It could hardly be otherwise.

The Church has traditionally taught that the prayers and good works of Christians—and we refer here pre-eminently to the reception of the Sacraments—have certain powerful hidden effects, in addition to those which may be visible or sentimental.

The first and most important of these is an increase in sanctifying grace—which is the life of Christ—in our souls. No treasure on earth can compare with this treasure of sanctifying grace which is sometimes called *glory in exile*—for it is transmuted into glory at our deaths.

Not only does this increase in sanctifying grace carry with it an increase in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, it brings with it also the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and a strengthening in the cardinal and moral virtues. In other words it moves us powerfully away from error and

into the light of true wisdom, which is the principal gift of the Holy Spirit.

There is one important proviso—it is necessary that our prayer be reverent and humble, as is fitting when we address the Deity. For Holy Scripture tells us that God rejects the proud and gives his grace to the humble. And this humility must carry with it the disposition to do God's will, for Christ said, "*Not everyone that cries Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven but he that doth the will of my Father he it is that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*" (Matt. 7.21).

There are two other effects of a prayer well said, not so important but they should be mentioned. The first is that the prayer makes satisfaction for sins we may have committed and procures for us some remission of that sentence that we might otherwise have to spend in Purgatory. The second is what theologians call an "impetratory effect" or the power to help a friend or relative by some actual grace.

But easily the most important effect is the increase in sanctifying grace for it is a step, however small, along the path towards that union with Christ in which the perfection of a Christian consists.

With the foregoing in mind, let us examine what Our Lady asked us to do at Fatima.

Let us place the requests in this order:

- (a) *consecration to Her Immaculate Heart*
- (b) *daily recitation of the rosary*
- (c) *penance in the form, principally, of a special care to do well the duties of our state in life.*

CONSECRATION

By asking us to consecrate ourselves to Her Immaculate Heart, Our Lady has, at one stroke, increased dramatically the flow of sanctifying grace into our souls as a result of our good works and prayers. She has done this by guaranteeing that our dispositions will be humble and reverent when we approach the Almighty. Great saints from earliest times (e.g. St. Augustine and St. Ephrem) have counselled souls to approach God through Mary because, as they insist, we thereby act more humbly and glorify God more highly. Fallen man, they tell us, is too blind to perceive the depths of

degradation to which he has been reduced by the triple concupiscence inherent in us all. The saints, with greater insights, perceive this degradation and warn us that it is not fitting to approach Jesus Christ who is God and as worthy of respect as His Father, without a mediator to help us. Whence St. Bernard's well-known advice, "*If you have anything to offer to God, take care to offer it by the most agreeable hands of Mary, unless you wish to have it rejected.*"

Some have quoted St. Paul's words to try to disprove this: "*There is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ*". (1 Tim. 2:5). This is a reference to Christ's unique role as *Mediator of redemption*. However, in Holy Scripture itself we find Abraham, Moses and the prophets acting as mediators between God and the people, *mediators of intercession*, that is. St. Paul himself in asking God for graces and blessings for his people in acting as a mediator in *this* sense and at least on one occasion (1 Thess. 5:25) he asks his people to *pray for him*.

As our true Mother in Heaven, Our Lady certainly intercedes for us as a most powerful mediator of intercession with Her Son; and the most striking modern proof of this is Her coming at Fatima, an event which was confirmed by a public miracle reported even in the daily press of those times.

It has commonly been taught by approved doctors and theologians in the Church (Saints Bernard, Bonaventure, Alphonsus and others) that it is more efficacious to approach Jesus through Mary than to try to reach Him by any other means. It is impossible to reproduce all the persuasive reasonings they use here but those who are specially interested in this subject will find some of them in the famous Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary by St. Louis de Montfort.

A true act of consecration is not just a passing prayer. It is a deep and determined commitment to Mary, a kind of loyalty oath that a soldier takes to die for king and country, a promise to serve the Son of Mary through Her, to serve without counting the cost, the sacrifices, the wounds. We all make this kind of vow at baptism really, when, through our sponsors we renounce Satan and his pomps and works, and vow to serve Jesus Christ and Him alone. Most of us forget about the vow we take at baptism—the greatest of vows according to the canonists—and live as though we had never taken it.

The consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is called the 'perfect' renewal of the baptismal vow because it ensures that all our actions are done for the greatest glory of God. It is, if faithfully observed, a perfect service of Christ. This is because we enter by participation into the sublimity of Mary's intentions, and as She did everything for the greatest glory of God, our good works, passing through her hands, acquire an unspeakable increase in merit and in satisfactory and intercessory value.

But there is another reason for making this all important consecration to Mary. In this dangerous age, when the devil has enormous power, a true consecration of ourselves to Mary will form an impassable shield to protect us against the fearful assaults of hell. Traditionally in the Church, a love of Mary and a true and tender devotion to Her has been regarded as a certain sign of predestination. But we have to make sure that it is a *true* devotion. St. Louis de Montfort lists seven *false* devotions to Mary in his treatise.

This is the Age of Mary and a Marian Church is to emerge from this crisis. In this Marian Church our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be worshipped and adored on a scale hitherto inconceivable. Mary is the short, easy, secure and perfect path to Jesus, but men have never trod this path before in great numbers. Because of the enormous increase in glory which this devotion gives to God, it is urgently necessary that it be made known so that Satan may be thrust down to hell, and a true fraternal love and peace be restored to humanity.

This consecration to Mary has also marvellous 'fringe' benefits—if we may call them that. St. Louis tells us that those who practise it faithfully will be personally escorted into eternity by the Queen of Heaven and will thus have nothing to fear from their judgment. *On our death beds we will appreciate what that means.* Also the Saint tells us that our relatives and friends will be especially protected by Our Lady through our embrace of this devotion. We will also, he says, carry our crosses with more merit, with more facility, with more glory, without becoming irritable or depressed, scrupulous or timid.

You cannot sincerely consecrate yourself to Mary in this way without becoming a great benefactor of the human race. Souls consecrated to Mary are the favorites of Heaven, St. Louis tells us, and it is they whom the angels will assist to reestablish the human race in grace and love.

This army of souls devoted to Mary will crush the head of Satan as is promised in the third chapter of Genesis. Many of the saints have written about the thrilling contest when all the world is in uproar, stirred by this violent global clash between good and evil; when Mary enters the lists against the enemy he is hurled back like a thunderbolt to hell and all the world is inspired and uplifted by the graces of a new Christian social order.

The magnitude of the victory is dependent on what we do now. Our Lady needs our help, our perfect consecration to her Immaculate Heart, and our loyal service of her cause.

Let us recall then that we are Christians, followers of Christ and His most loyal soldiers in the battle against the dragon prince and his hosts! Let us serve Him through Mary whom He has made Commander-in-chief of His armies, conqueror of His enemies! Let us promise, as an earnest of this commitment, the recital of at least five decades of the rosary devoutly each day, together with the careful carrying out of the duties of our state in life and sacrifices according to our devotion and capacity.

THE ROSARY

What is the most perfect method of ensuring that we are truly faithful to the important consecration of ourselves which we have made to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Our Lady indicates clearly that it is the devout recitation of the rosary each day.

For centuries the rosary has been recognised as the prayer of predestinate souls; St. Louis de Montfort goes so far as to say that he could determine how much a person was "for God" by the love which that soul had for the rosary.

The rosary is a series of meditations on the life of Christ made at the feet of Mary. For the meditations are made as the lips address the age-old "Angelic Salutation" to Mary, together with the greeting of Elizabeth, "*Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*" (Luke 1.42).

In the recitation of the rosary, the inspired prophecy Mary Herself made in reply to Elizabeth's greeting is thus marvelously fulfilled: "*Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*" (Luke 1.48).

In the sorrowful mysteries the mind is riveted in reverent

attention on those sufferings by which we were redeemed, the crucifixion and death of the Son of God.

We do not have space here to enlarge on the beauty and fruitfulness of the rosary. Our Lady urged us all to recite it daily, speaking of it in every one of the six apparitions of Fatima. And, at the sixth apparition on 13th October 1917, She identified Herself as "*the Lady of the rosary*".

DAILY DUTIES

The request of Our Lady that we do penance by accepting with resignation the daily duties which fall to our lot seems at first sight easy enough. This is, the saints tell us, what Christ meant when He said that we must take up our cross daily and follow Him.

Closer examination reveals that this request of Our Lady is really a counsel of perfection. There is an old saying that if we are constantly doing what we should be doing we are ready to be canonised. Or, as the novice-masters of old used to say to the new novices, "*If you wish to be a saint all you have to do is obey the rule.*"

What surer sign that the Fatima message is indeed from Heaven than the theological depths contained in this simple request to accept with patience and resignation the cross of our daily toil, to see God's benign hand in all the contradictions and vicissitudes of life! How utterly contrary to the advice of the Communists who love to foment unrest and disorder, strikes, rebellions, hatred of authority!

Clearly the widespread acceptance of this penance for which Our Lady has asked would produce devout and conscientious fathers and mothers, happy, morally-healthy children, stable and law-abiding nations, and peace in the world. "*In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.*" (Gen. 3.19). In accepting the "curse" of labour out of love for God we find that that very labour has been mysteriously sweetened and made light by the tremendous Sacrifice of the Son of God. "*My yoke is sweet and My burden light.*" (Matt. 11.30).

Thus the formula for peace outlined by Our Lady at Fatima can not only save the world from war, revolution and anarchy, it is a superbly easy, streamlined—as we say today—method of accomplishing this. For this reason it is destined, ultimately, to conquer the spirit of darkness which so troubles

the world today, to convert Russia and bring into existence a new Christian civilisation, the greatest age in history.

21

THE QUEST FOR PEACE

"Only the dead have seen the end of war" Plato

The world seeks today, more than anything else, an assurance of peace. The world itself has a highly superficial meaning in the minds of most people who think of peace as an absence of war.

For the Christian, the word peace has a far deeper meaning than the mere absence of war. Peace is a spiritual quality of the soul, indicating harmony and filial union with our Father in heaven. *"My peace I leave you. My peace I give you,"* Christ said (John 14.27). In the world we would have distress, the Saviour warned us, but in Him we would find peace. (John 16.33).

Communists and their allies have been noted for conducting "peace congresses" throughout the world in recent decades. Many talented and prominent people are asked to take part in these conventions, sometimes even ministers of religion. Can such "peace congresses" do anything to promote real peace in the world?

In the light of traditional Christian teaching, as accepted by all major Christian denominations, they cannot. In the light of what was revealed to the world at Fatima, peace conferences in which Communists are associated are obviously bogus.

Why is this so?

As far as Christians are concerned, genuine peace is incontrovertibly based on spiritual foundations.

Peace cannot come, in any degree whatsoever, from the actions of those who are at war with God, as the Communists openly profess themselves to be.

Peace comes infallibly to the individual soul as a result of its turning to God. And what is true of the individual is true of the collectivity of families, communities, nations.

It would be virtually impossible, at Communist peace congresses, to conduct the debate on terms reasonable to Christians. The basic assumption that peace is from God, that it is promoted only by a return to God, would not be tenable in such company.

On the other hand, if this is not assumed, if it is taken for granted that peace can be striven for effectively without God, then Christians present are betraying a great principle.

For, as Christians, they should seek first the kingdom of God so that all other things may follow. Christians were hardly surprised when Stalin gave Hitler the green light to start World War II by signing a pact with him, or when Soviet tanks brutally suppressed a popular uprising in Hungary, or when Red Chinese armies ruthlessly slaughtered tens of thousands of defenceless Tibetans and expropriated their land.

These shocking atrocities, the murders at the Berlin Wall, the Katyn Forest massacre, the countless other acts of war and violence committed by the Communists are not surprising to Christians. It would be in fact surprising if the sworn enemies of God behaved in any other way than with violence and injustice.

Should Christians collaborate with Communists because of the laudable nature of the *objective*, which is peace?

Collaboration with Communists in a Peace Movement compromises the doctrine that true peace comes from Christ the Prince of Peace. It indicates extremely confused thinking on the part of Christians involved as to how peace is really to be brought into the world.

In the book of Ecclesiasticus we read that "*the worship of God is an abomination to a sinner*" (Eccu. 1.32) and this is certainly to the militant atheists. "*Receive not a sinner*" Holy Scripture goes on to say and gives the reason "*He that*

toucheth pitch shall be defiled by it, and he that hath fellowship with the proud shall put on pride" (Eccu. 13.1).

Jehu the prophet, as we see, rebuked Josaphat the king for this. "*Thou helpest the ungodly*" he accused him "*and art joined in friendship with them that hate the Lord. Therefore thou didst deserve indeed the wrath of the Lord*" (2 Pa. 19.2).

It is obvious that Holy Scripture is referring here to public, obstinate and unrepentant sinners. Communists publicly proclaim their hatred of the very idea of God, so that they fall into this category.

Christ was full of mercy to Mary Magdalene, and to the woman taken in adultery, and to the dying thief only because they repented. The Pharisees, proud and stiff-necked, He rebuked in the harshest terms. Before Herod, another public and obstinate sinner, He did not condescend to utter a word.

Clearly we cannot dignify the diabolical ideology of Communism by a public inference that it can help us to attain peace. The world has made many errors in its efforts to find peace. it cannot afford the luxury of more errors at this late hour.

In 1917, our Lady told the world, in the apparitions at Fatima, that World War I would end soon, that another and worse war would break out in the reign of the next Pope if men did not return to God.

Nine million lives were lost in World War I, fifty-four millions lost their lives in World War II.

We must have peace it is true. But if we do not use our God-given intelligence to discover how wars arise, how they can be averted, then a large section of the human race is doomed, and, as General MacArthur observed, "*Armageddon is upon us.*"

CAN WAR BE JUSTIFIED?

It must be admitted that the question of justifying war in the atomic age greatly preoccupies modern man.

Peace is an ideal dear to the human heart. Of course we all want peace and only a madman, a psychopath, could want war.

Yet there have been wars, terrible wars, in every age in history. And this is an enduring and bitter rebuke to rational men, a triumph of passion over reason, of nature over grace.

"Jus belli est odiosum" wrote the great theologian Suarez, "the right to war is hateful". It is a horrible thing to have to take up arms to kill a fellow human being.

Yet the Church has always believed that there are just wars. For it has been held to be inconceivable and insufferable that men like Hitler should be allowed to take over the whole world unopposed.

Recently the noted American columnist Joseph Alsop recalled the incident of the "Oxford Oath" the vow taken by the University of Oxford undergraduates in 1933 that they would never again take up arms "for King and country". These sentiments tied in with the wave of pacifism which was sweeping England at the time. Hitler, referring to this oath, told his Generals that England obviously was "rotten to the core" and that there was therefore no danger of her declaring war on Germany. At Munich he seemed to be proved right, and his Generals must have fallen silent before this spectacular victory. But, in 1939, England did declare war on

Germany, and those Oxford undergraduates, now a little more mature, did go to war against the Nazi armies.

Many people, fearing that wars of the Vietnam type may flare up into the unthinkable disaster of an all-out atomic war, react hysterically and condemn all war as intrinsically immoral—something that has never been held by Christian theologians. We know with certainty that God not only approved of just wars in Old Testament history, but, on occasions He commanded them as when He told Saul to make war against the Amalecites. And in New Testament times we find a constant tradition of a just war upheld by Popes and Saints.

“Every war of aggression” in the words of Pope Pius XII *“is a sin, a crime, an outrage against the majesty of God, the Creator and Governor of the world.”*

Yet the same Pope insisted that a defensive war was, at times not only legitimate but necessary. And it must be remembered that Pope Pius spoke in the atomic age.

“A people threatened with unjust aggression” stated Pius XII, *“or already its victim, may not remain passively indifferent if it would think and act in a Christian way. And the solidarity of nations does not permit other nations to behave as mere spectators in an attitude of apathetic neutrality.”*

On another occasion the Pope said: *“What St. Paul says of the body applies also to the international political body: if one member suffers all others suffer with it. Gross injustice cannot be inflicted on one nation without the rights of other nations being placed in jeopardy. If one people is crushed to death by force, who will promise the rest of the world security in lasting peace?”* (Quoted in *The Liguorian March* 1966).

The Council Fathers at Vatican II also commented on the matter as follows:

“War has not been rooted out of human affairs. As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense, once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. Therefore, government authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care and to conduct such grave matters soberly.” (The Constitution on the Church in the World).

There are many warriors in the calendar of Saints as we know. St. Sebastian, St. Louis IX of France, St. Joan of

Arc—to name but a few. The Theban Legion were all Roman soldiers, as were the Forty Martyrs who died for their faith under the persecution of the Emperor Licinius in 320.

The various wars against Communism are unquestionably wars in defence of liberty against tyranny. It is reasonable to believe that Communism is the greatest menace and the most total threat to liberty that history has ever seen. Anybody who has read the books of Kravchenko, Eugene Lyons, Dr. Dooley, Wurmbrand and various others would concede this.

If then, there is such a thing as a just war, this surely is it.

But the point remains: *is it lawful to resist Communism if, thereby, some risks are entailed of a third World War?*

In other words does the gain, which is the preservation of Christian civilisation, of the vital and inalienable rights of man, outweigh the colossal physical destruction which a nuclear war would certainly bring?

First of all it is necessary to point out that a threat by the enemy to launch a third World War is only a threat. We cannot surrender all that makes life worth living, our principles, our self-respect, our honour under duress of blackmail of this type.

We are perfectly entitled to resist Communist aggression—as we should—and trust in God to prevent a third World War. For war will not come unless God permits it to come.

Secondly, our immortal souls are gravely endangered by the spread of Communism. It is a moment of truth for us all. If we really believe in Hell, in eternal damnation, we will prefer to die in defence of Christian liberty rather than die spiritually under the pressure of Communist enslavement and secret police torture.

St. Ambrose tells us that we must help a victim of aggression. In his book *Must War Come?* John Eppstein quotes him as follows:

“He who does not ward off an injury which is being done to his neighbour when he is able is as much at fault as he who perpetrates the injury”.

Eppstein states that this dictum of St. Ambrose was incorporated in the Decretals of Gratian and was widely accepted by theologians of the Middle Ages.

According to this it was the simple duty of America to prevent the terrible injury and injustice of Communist enslavement of the Vietnamese people if it could. The American

people don't have to apologise to anyone for their noble actions there.

It is true that the ideal method of solving the problem of war is to prevent it. This can be done, as Our Lady told us, by prayer and penance. But how many of our "pacifist theologians" preach prayer and penance as a solution to war? How many of them organise religious devotions, holy hours, all-night vigils etc. for peace?

An unprincipled and irrational pacifism always leads to war. It did so at Munich and it is still doing so today.

It is not in the line of Christian tradition to cravenly capitulate to the diabolical enemy today.

The blunt fact is that in Communism we deal with a threat not only to the liberty and security of the whole human race, but a threat to the freedom which mankind needs to serve God and work out the destiny for which men were created. Communism is a calculated threat to the most precious, the most fundamental of all liberties; and how is the threat to be met?

It is no solution to tell us to surrender, to permit the extinction of liberty in South-East Asia and the destruction of a flourishing Catholic Church there.

The only solution is that given by Our Lady—the solution which reaches out with love to the Communists and converts them, the solution that rescues these enemies of God from the danger of eternal damnation.

For, when a Communist is converted, the rifle or grenade he carries falls from his hands and he becomes a man of peace.

ECUMENISM

'Other sheep I have that are not of this fold . . .' (Jn. 10.16)

Since Vatican Council 11 there has been something of an ecumenical groundswell amongst the innumerable communions scattered throughout the world which claim to be following Christ.

For the first time in centuries, these denominations appear to be willing to stand face to face with an honest truth. That truth is this:

The division amongst Christians is clearly contrary to God's will.

And this thought is immediately followed by another:

Who is responsible for this division?

In the earlier chapters of this book it is pointed out that reliable prophecies foreshadow a vast division of the human race into good and evil at some future time and a fearful global conflict between them.

It is to be that great struggle between the forces of Christ on the one hand, and the followers of Antichrist on the other, which has been commonly referred to as Armageddon. It seems from the prophecies that all men of goodwill will flock to the standard of the Cross no matter to what religion they have hitherto been attached. It will be a general, universal war between those who love and those who hate. It will be won by those who fight under the standard of the Cross and

the conquerors will set up a new Christian civilisation which will be the greatest in the history of the world.

In the light of the above the Ecumenical movement is of the greatest importance. We are clearly to be in a position to welcome with great love the millions of people, good people of other faiths, who will join forces with us against the Satanists, against the armies of the Prince of Darkness who spreads diabolical hatred and error over the world.

Because of the great harm done by that section of the so-called 'ecumenical' movement which is prepared to water down doctrine and even join with Marxist influenced groups like the World Council of Churches and its affiliates, many Catholics are confused and distrustful of anything savouring of ecumenism. But we cannot dismiss this all-important movement because of the aberrations associated with it.

Nothing can alter the fact that the Catholic Church is the one true Church of Christ, the community of the faithful who are led by the Vicar of Christ in Rome, who holds in his hands the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, according to the promise of Christ. (Matt. 16.19)

Many Catholics today, shocked by the open violations of the traditional '*communicatio in sacris*' laws carried on in the name of ecumenism, react with outrage and refuse to have anything to do with even reasonable forms of ecumenism.

The matter has to be put in some perspective.

First let us consider the objections of that rigorist school which quotes the '*outside the Church there is no salvation*' bulls of Popes Boniface VIII and Eugenius IV, and which incredibly, follows them literally. These were explained, on Dec. 9th 1854, by Pope Pius IX as follows:

'It is to be held as of faith that none can be saved outside the Apostolic Roman Church . . . but nevertheless it is equally certain that those who are ignorant of the true religion, if that ignorance is invincible, will not be held guilty in the matter in the eyes of the Lord'; invincible ignorance is defined as that which cannot be dispelled by the use of ordinary diligence. (Donald Attwater's Catholic Dictionary)

The Church distinguishes carefully between heretics, who are automatically excommunicated, and those born in heresy who are following their consciences and are not guilty of sin.

In the Old Testament we find God showing pity on the ignorance of men when He refused to satisfy Jonah's wounded *amour propre* by condemning the people of Ninive.

'Shall I not spare Ninive' He said *'that great city in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons that know not how to distinguish between their right hand and their left?'* The people of Ninive were not of the Chosen Race. They were pagans.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was to refer to the Ninivites during the time of His Incarnation. In a stern rebuke to the Pharisees and their followers He said:

'The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas and behold a greater than Jonas here' (Matt. 12.41)

The Lord showed condescension also to the Samaritans who were the 'protestants' of His own time. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews as heretics, deviates from the law of Moses. But the Saviour delivered a stinging rebuke to the Scribes and Pharisees by making a Samaritan the hero of what is probably His most famous parable. The stern warning was there; *of what use was all their vaunted doctrine if they had not love?*

The Lord recognises none but those who love as His disciples. *'By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another'* *'Many sins are forgiven her'* He says of Mary Magdalen *'because she has loved much'*; His two greatest commandments are commandments of love; *'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind'* and *'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'* (Matt. 22.37).

The Lord tells us He will make this profession of love the supreme test by which we will be judged on the Last Day: *'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom . . . for I was hungry and you gave Me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in . . . sick and you visited Me, in prison and you came to Me. . . . I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren you did it to Me.'* (Matt. 25.34-40)

'I say to you: love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you . . .' (Matt. 5.44.)

The same theme is repeated in the epistles of St. Paul. *'He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law'* (Rom. 13.8)

"If I should have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not charity I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13.2).

Charity, he tells us, is patient, kind, not perverse or puffed up. Charity is love.

'Have a constant mutual charity amongst yourselves' urges St. Peter, *'for charity covereth a multitude of sins'* (1 P. 4-8)

But the human mind seems to be so constituted that it must rush from one extreme to the other. And so we have the "social gospel" being preached since Vatican II, giving the utterly erroneous impression that doctrine is not important so long as we 'love one another.'

But there can be no real love without union with Christ who is love itself and who is also truth itself.

If sound doctrine is important—and of course it is vitally important—it is because it develops the necessary union with Christ—who is love itself—in the soul of the Christian. It is reported in the life of St. Francis de Sales that, in his long wearisome journeys made on foot through the cantons of Switzerland, caring for his flock in the diocese of Geneva, he converted 70,000 Calvinists. They could not resist the ardour of his love for them, and the sacrifices that he made to reach them. St. Francis de Sales is listed by St. Louis de Montfort as being one of the few saints who practised the 'true devotion' to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He had perfect doctrine and that is why he had such great love.

Christ is love itself as we know, and he who hates Christ cannot love. St. Paul is unequivocal in this regard: *'If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema'* (1 Cor. 16.22).

There is an apparent dichotomy in the Scriptures in regard to this matter of doctrine and love. In the texts cited above it would seem that love alone is the fulfilling of the law and is the certain path to salvation. But there are, nevertheless, many other texts which go hand in hand with these, and which insist on a love of the truth, on the rejection of error and the following of sound doctrine. For we must remember that, if Christ is love itself, He is also truth itself. A man develops in the richness of sanctifying grace according to the soundness of his doctrine and the purity of his motives. Those who are consecrated to Mary can be confident of the purity of their motives, for, if it is a true consecration, then they share in her sublime motives. They can also be sure of the soundness of their doctrine for the saints tell us that nobody who truly loves Mary will err formally and fall from the faith.

'He that believeth not shall be condemned' Christ tells us. (Mark 16.16) And again: *'he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth in him'* (Jn. 3.36) If thou wilt enter into life, the Saviour tells us, keep the commandments (Matt. 19.17)

The intervention by Heaven at the Cova da Iria in 1917 makes it clear that the coming reunion of Christendom is to be brought about by the clear doctrine that was taught at Fatima, the necessity of the approach to Jesus through Mary, the sovereign importance of the Mass and the Eucharist, the certainty of original sin through the references to Mary's immaculate conception, the existence of Heaven, hell and purgatory and so on. The Fatima movement is clearly the light that is to attract the attention of the masses of uncommitted people of goodwill in the world.

No opportunity should be lost by us therefore to offer great love and affection to Protestants, to Jews, to all who are outside the Church and who seek the truth. Let us then reflect the beauty of the ideal given us by Our Lady which is surely a thrilling twentieth century repetition of the Song of the angels at Bethlehem: *'Glory be to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of goodwill.'*

THE PSYCHOPATHS

'Keep me O Lord from the hand of the wicked' (Ps. 139)

Some years ago a newspaper in Sydney, Australia, published the autobiography of a convicted murderer. He had killed

five men, most of them underworld figures with whom he had fallen out. He mentioned in passing the sadistic pleasure he experienced as he carried out these killings, the thrill and the exhilaration of the blood spurts as his bullets tore through the bone and tissue of his victims.

Psychiatrists call such men psychopaths, men who are diseased in mind and spirit.

The term has been applied in recent years to the sadistic, the cruel, to those who love to inflict injury, torture and death upon others. It is not applied to those who are simply insane, or are suffering from various forms of paranoia.

As religion declines the number of psychopaths in the community must rise. In a country completely dominated by the irreligious, like Nazi Germany or the Communist countries, we have concentration camps with pitiless cruelty rampant, unchecked, disposing as it pleases with the lives and property of the citizens.

The first step in becoming a psychopath is a resolute turning away from God, the deliberate refusal to accept the just sovereignty of the Almighty. This leads inevitably to a sickness of the soul, for the soul was created to love and adore God. If this serious sickness persists, eternal death supervenes and the person is lost forever, body and soul, in hell.

The Nazi and Communist philosophies might be summarised, from a Christian point of view, as '*death to the innocent, long life and prosperity to the criminal element in the community*'; the constant pressure on the people to surrender their allegiance to God is a criminal act according to the Popes, for the people were created to know, love and serve God and they have an inalienable right to freedom to do so.

This anti-God philosophy increased and developed as a result of World War II, and yet America and England which had fought, in the main, for the principles of Christian civilisation were naive enough to believe they had won the war. From the vantage point of 1973 we see that there are more psychopaths around us than ever before. Never have the innocent been in such danger as today, never have criminals been so brazen, so contemptuous of justice as in our modern society.

The virus that is causing this is irreligion as we know. Irreligion has brought about the destruction of millions of innocent babies in recent years. Soon it will be the aged and

the mentally ill, the crippled and the blind who will be threatened. For if a doctor will destroy a living baby because it is inconvenient to someone, why not an aged person or a cripple who are also inconvenient at times to other people? The principle is the same. If we turn our doctors into murderers can we be surprised if they finish up murdering *us*?

Our Lord sent His apostles into the world to leaven the corrupt mass of human society. He instituted the sacraments to refine men, to civilise them, to elevate them above the coarseness, the cruelty, the brutality of the pre-Christian era. Fallen man was to be re-made in the Divine Image.

It was in fact held by the elder Huxley and his fellow agnostics at the turn of the century that society could retain the Christian ethic after the Christian gospel had disappeared. How wrong they were!

The Christian Gospel has, it seems, been by-passed by modern man. And the barbarism of pre-Christian days has *automatically* returned.

In order to re-develop the Christian civilisation of former days, what are we to do? There has been, as we know very well, a spiritual formula, a recall to holiness and virtue given us by a direct intervention of Heaven in 1917.

It can be seen now that this spiritual formula is so important that we cannot survive without it. It is to be the basis of a renewal of Western civilisation.

We must realise that we are facing primarily and essentially a crisis of the spirit, and, consequently, a moral crisis.

The concentration camp, the gas chamber, the unprecedented world wars, the mass abortions all speak eloquently to us of a fearful decline in morals. These things are casting long shadows on the future. For if sin is the cause of wars, as we have been authoritatively told, then the permissive society speaks eloquently to us of war on a scale hitherto unknown.

The abortionist may simply shrug his shoulders if we tell him he is murdering human beings.

But abortion is certainly a grave sin, and the abortionist may be impressed if someone were to tell him convincingly and with real authority, that there is a hell of fire into which unrepentant sinners will be cast on the Last Day.

The soul, it is said, at the moment of death, awakes from darkness into a brilliant light, in the same place where the dead body lies. Like a dark theatre when the curtains are

suddenly swept aside to reveal a crowded stage, the deceased beholds the scene of his life.

His sins are seen, horribly illuminated, in their true perspective; every crime, every rejection of God's grace exposed in all its foulness carries its own eternal and terrible significance.

As Cain fled from the dead body of Abel, so does the sinner long to flee from the scene of this overwhelming tragedy. The voice of the invisible Judge says "*Away from Me . . .*"

And the never ending torments of Hell open to receive the soul, made in the image of God, created to adore and praise Him forever in the Beatific Vision.

"CERTAIN FASHIONS . . . "

Perhaps no prophecy connected with the Fatima message has been more widely circulated than the well-known "certain fashions will be introduced which will gravely offend Our Lord".

This prophecy is attributed to Jacinta. It was confided to Mother Godinho, a nun who was caring for the youngest seer during her dying months in a convalescent home in Lisbon.

It is believed that Our Lady appeared to Jacinta during this last illness and it has always been assumed that the child spoke as a result of a communication from Our Lady.

The observation of Jacinta was translated into English as outlined above. However the translation is subject to misinterpretation as the Portuguese word used was *modas*, corresponding somewhat to modes, habits or trends. All the aberrations of modern society, divorce, contraception, abor-

tion would be embraced in this term, as well, of course, as the immodest dress which is so conspicuous a feature of this day and age.

Objectively, a divorce or an abortion is a far greater evil than the wearing of a mini-skirt. The immodest dress worn by Christian girls in this age is, nevertheless, peculiarly saddening in that it represents a complete break with the Christian morals of past ages.

It may be held that any Christian girl or woman who has an abortion *must* know that she has committed a grave sin. For this is murder in the eyes of the Church and a crime against the natural law, the law written in the heart of man.

It is commonplace to see girls in brief mini-skirts going to confession. Obviously they are not conscious of any sin in this matter. It seems that strong rebukes, condemnations, even, in some parts of the world, refusal of the sacraments, all these things are not able to make any significant impression on this problem. It must be admitted that, in many parts of the world, the women dress modestly. The problem of immodest dress relates particularly to America, England, Australia and some other countries of an Anglo-Saxon ethnic background.

Curiously enough, if you speak to some of these girls, many of whom lead otherwise blameless lives and even engage in apostolic action, they will tell you they are "sure" there is no harm in wearing a short or even a very short dress.

We don't need sociologists and students of the behavioural sciences to tell us that all boys and girls, at puberty, experience a "mating urge" which some, at least, find difficult to control. This is merely nature itself, in God's providence, ensuring the continuity of the human race.

Reason itself rules out the promiscuity proper to the animal kingdom for experience has taught man that the family, as the basic unit of society, must be preserved and made stable in the interests of the State.

There is an innate modesty in man, as Holy Scripture suggests, for we find in the first chapter of Genesis that Adam and his wife, Eve, were both naked and, prior to the fall, "were not ashamed" (Gen. 2.25). However, after the fall, when the lower faculties were no longer subordinate to the higher, we find a significant change has taken place. "*They perceived themselves to be naked,*" the Genesis narrative goes on, "*and they sewed together fig leaves and made themselves aprons.*" (Gen. 3.7). This is interesting, for it shows that

Adam and Eve were not then morally depraved, for the sin they had committed was one of pride, not of sensuality.

In addition to this innate modesty, Christian tradition and Christian moral training have strictly restrained girls from arousing deliberately a boy's sexual instincts. Girls who did such things have been considered common, or, as the nineteenth century novelists used to put it, "wanton".

All civilisations, whether Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, Hindu, have developed moral codes to restrain these basic urges. As historians clearly show, it is impossible to have a civilisation without the mores which civilise it. Without these codes, always accepted by the community as tribal or State laws, community life cannot endure.

It was not out of love for Christ that Napoleon restored the Christian religion to France after the Terror. He could see no other way of restoring order. Bonaparte well knew the power of a subversive ideology. He proscribed the writings of the "Enlightenment" with the terse comment, "I am not strong enough to rule a nation that reads Voltaire and Rousseau".

Strict Christian sexual codes do not mean that sex is evil in itself. Canonists have always referred to the vow of chastity as a surrender of the "goods" of the body, a free offering of something good, i.e. the right to a husband or wife and the conjugal life, to God.

The gravitational pull of a corrupt world and indecent fashions has caused a collapse in these Christian moral codes and our girls are finding it difficult to adjust to the new situation. A girl wearing a modest dress of perhaps an inch or two below the knees would stand out in a group of girls in brief dresses. She would feel uncomfortable and embarrassed, afraid that she would be considered odd. Our Christian girls are simply not courageous enough, generally speaking, to challenge in this way the codes of their group. Perhaps it may require a species of heroic virtue, something that takes time to develop, and which, after all, has never been common.

Caught in this dilemma, there is the usual attempt to "rationalise"; "*girls have always tempted boys and vice versa. That's just nature asserting itself.*" And they will tell you they are sure that there is nothing really wrong with their micro mini-skirts.

But the sexual instincts of a man are aroused by images, by things he sees or things which he has seen and which play

on his imagination. It is in the very nature of things that he is aroused sensually by female nudity or near-nudity.

Our Lord Himself has told us that, if a man look on a woman to lust after her, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Does this make the woman an adulteress?

If by flagrantly immodest dress—and a micro mini-skirt is just that—she has deliberately incited lust then, according to traditional Christian morality, there is a degree of guilt attaching to her.

This matter has to be brought up in a book on Fatima because the current widespread collapse in sexual morality has surely begun with immodest dress, and the tide will be reversed when our youth show that they have sufficient integrity and intelligence to willingly and generously accept the Christian moral codes of old in order to restore sanity and peace to the world.

It is useless for our youth to proclaim that they want peace and immorality as well. The two are mutually exclusive as we have learned. In opting for sexual licence, we opt also for the vivid orange flashes that preceded the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki! Those are the realities of the situation.

Christian modesty demands, and reason itself suggests that a girl puts her claims to a boy's affection on a higher plane than mere sex. Sex, after all, is the lowest common denominator of a girl's appeal, for it is found in all the daughters of Eve. An undue emphasis on it is, therefore, vulgar, i.e. *of the crowd*.

Reason suggests that girls should superimpose on this very basic natural appeal higher qualities of mind and soul which will attract a better class of husband, and will help to ensure a stable and happy marriage.

It is absolutely true to say that the practice of the Christian virtues greatly enhances and enriches the personality. By this process, a girl becomes *refined*, for grace acts on the soul to refine our carnal nature. For this reason, *true* beauty, which is beauty of soul, is at the disposal of any girl who seeks it.

The normal young man, seeking a lifelong companion, the future mother of his children, needs a person of character, a girl with high standards, lovable, unselfish, capable of being faithful to him and assisting him to establish a happy and enduring home life. The virtuous girl is the most beautiful

girl of all, no matter how homely her features may be. And any girl may be virtuous if she wills, for the sanctifying grace which develops these marvellous qualities of soul is available in abundance for us all as a result of the death of the Saviour on Calvary.

For these serious reasons, our Christian youth must be called on to make an intelligent and informed re-appraisal of the whole situation. There is an urgent need, if the world is to change for the better, that the immodest dress syndrome be broken, that our youth discuss these things among themselves and arrive at a balanced, mature and carefully thought out appreciation of what their moral behaviour really signifies.

Moral behaviour is *all-important*. If God is our true Father, if He feeds and clothes us, even becomes Man and suffers for us, then He has a sacred right to our filial love. And that is where moral behaviour comes in, and that is why it is so important.

We can never begin to turn back the tide of evil, of sensuality, of vulgarity, until we enlist in our ranks our idealistic youth. It is our duty to persuade them that Christian morality pays off in higher living standards, in deeper happiness, in peace of mind, that it leads to international peace, brotherly love, and the new world social order of their dreams.

THE ONLY TRAGEDY

The significance of the Fatima message lies in its power to renew the life of grace in souls, to rekindle the light which dissipates the darkness of error, to strengthen the charity of Christ which overcomes men by love.

Prayer and self-denial, the two pillars of the interior life, are also the two major requests of Our Lady at Fatima, the blessed formula for renewing the face of the earth.

But even more, the Fatima message brings to us the very latest in theological devices for reaching that union with Christ in which the perfection of a Christian consists.

That "theological device" is, of course, a true devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, described by St. Louis de Montfort as the *short, easy, secure and perfect* path to Christ.

By this devotion, the Saint assures us, we give more glory to God in a month than by years of service following lesser devotions.

It is as though the Holy Spirit has introduced "automation" into theology, an accelerated process by which modern man can sanctify and enrich himself in a way little known to our forefathers. For that reason St. Louis calls it a *secret of grace* and he tells us that it is reserved for an age of great peril in the Church. (He wrote about the year 1711).

"Unless the grain of wheat, falling into the ground, die, it remains alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit."

So says the Saviour as quoted by St. John. And Our Lord goes on to say immediately, *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world keepeth it unto life everlasting."* (Jn. 12.25).

This is regarded by ascetical writers as Our Lord's most urgent and compelling call to the interior life, a warning that nothing is achieved by the Christian apostle unless he renounces his own will by prayer and penance to embrace the higher life, the life of the spirit. For it must be confessed that our own wills do not lead us to prayer and penance.

In this age of confusion, when false teachers play down the necessity for this interior life of the spirit it is well to recall that *all* of the great saints and masters of the spiritual life counselled this path.

How then can we listen to men who so plainly speak against the spirit of the Gospels, and against the solid traditions of the Church?

In His sermon on the mount the Master calls His apostles *"the salt of the earth, the light of the world."*

"We are the salt of the earth," comments Dom Chautard, "in the measure that we are holy."

As true salt, the holy abbot goes on to say, "the pious

apostle will be a real agent of preservation in the midst of that sea of corruption, human society.”

But the salt must retain its flavour. The treasure of sanctifying grace must be there to radiate its divine effulgence into the darkness of sin, to sweeten with its own peculiar ecstasy, the tepidity of human love.

How does one acquire this sanctifying grace?

One must go to the masters of the spiritual life, not to the quacks who abound in the turmoil and confusion of today.

Sanctifying grace, the life and the light of Christ is, of course, communicated to us by baptism, by which Sacrament we are incorporated into the Mystical Body. It is lost by mortal sin, regained by perfect contrition and the Sacrament of Penance.

It is increased in the soul by every prayer and good work done with the right intention of the love of God and the salvation of souls. It is increased eminently of course, by the devout reception of the Blessed Eucharist and the offering of the Holy Sacrifice.

The smallest increase in sanctifying grace constitutes a treasure more sublime than all the wealth of earth.

With it the world is saved. Without it the world is lost in blood and tears and war.

It is the central purpose of this book to increase the life of grace in the souls of its readers. That is, in fact, the obvious intent of Our Lady Herself in communicating to us the precious message.

Hence we have no greater ambition than to increase the holiness of our readers, to arouse in them a sense of urgency in regard to the fleeting moments of time in which they must gather this treasure.

For the months and the years pass and there comes a day on which we must render an account of our stewardship. Then shall we be stricken with remorse for our miserable reaction to God's glorious gifts. What marvellous opportunities have passed us by, what supreme and lasting wealth is constituted in the graces we have rejected!

And as the silence of death begins to overwhelm us, when the sights and sounds of this world recede forever, we may well sigh and echo—and re-echo—the final poignant words of Leon Bloy: *“The only tragedy is not to have been a saint.”*

THE WORLD RELIGIONS

'The heavens show forth the glory of God

And the firmament declares the work of His hands' (Ps. 18.2)

It will occur to the reader that, if Fatima is a plan for giving to mankind a new fraternal unity, a new all-pervasive civilisation blessed with peace and tranquillity, then its prospects of influencing other great world faiths should at least be examined.

It is clear that traditional religious structures are tottering and collapsing under the ferocious impact of militant atheism. It is said by reliable observers that the ancient religions of China have been virtually destroyed amongst that large section of the human race which must live under the despotism of the Communist regime.

Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Muslimism, Christianity, all have wilted under the blast of hatred and intolerance that comes from the dialectical materialists who permit none but their own sterile creed in areas that they control.

All the world reels under the impact of Marxism in its various forms as man's intellectual ability sinks to an all-time low in his inability to discern even the elementary fact that there is a God.

We are facing a "scorched earth" of the spiritual order as country after country apostatises in the age of materialism, from its traditional faiths, to lie fallow awaiting the sower of the good seed of a modern Gospel.

The mind of man cannot for long suffer the utter barrenness of materialism, dialectical or otherwise.

Surely the good seed to come is the revelation that Our Lady gave to the world at the Cova da Iria.

She prophesied there its ultimate success on a global basis. All the world must feel the impact of the Fatima message ultimately, for it is this revelation and this light which is to dissipate the darkness of Marxist atheism. The great world religions, influential for centuries over much of the globe, may well have perished then, as they have perished in Red China today.

A tremendous earthquake rocks the spiritual foundations of the universe, and from the ruins a new light is to shine, and a new civilisation is to arise, when Russia is converted and all the world feels the spiritual exhilaration of the Age of Mary, and the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart.

Already She has claimed the love and affection of countless millions not of the Christian faith.

The Pilgrim Statues that have traversed the world have been received with reverence and honour amongst Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists and other non-Christian faiths.

Entire Buddhist villages asked to be allowed to venerate the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima taken to Vietnam in 1965. Their own bonzes led them in these demonstrations of love for Mary.

The Buddha himself taught the impermanence of created things, that this earth is not our true and lasting home, but a place where we must be diligent in working out our salvation, where we are on a sort of probationary pilgrimage.

Thus Buddhism prepares the soul for the reception of Christianity, for the first principle of Buddhism is that man should seek enlightenment. In the Diamond Sutra the Buddha is said to have prophesied in this wise: *"500 years after my death there will appear One who will fulfill all righteousness, One who has the root in him not only of one, two, three, five, ten, or a thousand Buddhas, but that of ten thousand Buddhas. Therefore, when he comes hear him."*

Five hundred and forty four years after Buddha's parinirvana or passing away, the Prince of Peace was born in Bethlehem. No wonder, writes Lim Cheow Kam, Buddhists who are acquainted with the Gospel says Buddha's prophecy has come to pass in the appearance of Jesus—the Buddha of

Boundless Love, the One who has the good root in Him of ten thousand Buddhas.

Islam also has shown great love and veneration for the Pilgrim Statues that have toured the world; there have been spontaneous demonstrations of Muslim affection both in Asia and Africa.

It is often pointed out that Moslems are particularly attracted to this devotion because Mohammed had a daughter named Fatima whom he designated first in Paradise after Maryam as Moslems call Our Lady.

It is well recognised that the best meeting ground for Christians and Moslems is the common affection they have for Mary. An eminent Franciscan scholar and convert from Mohammedanism Fr. John Avd-El-Jalil O.F.M. states that Muslim devotion to Mary is deep and dogmatic, that there is, in Islam a "a rudimentary form of Mariology".

There is, in the Koran, at least a hint of the Immaculate Conception in the lines:

"O Mary, God has chosen you
and purified you
He has chosen you above
all the women of the world".

It is interesting that Moslems believe in the Virgin Birth, something that is, sad to say, rejected in certain "Catholic" circles today.

Hindus, Parsees, Sikhs, and India's other major faiths came in tens of thousands to welcome the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima which passed through that country in 1950.

There is a mysterious attraction in these cases which it is difficult to explain. The potential is there for a universal attraction to the Cross and to the Crucified through an affinity with the sinless Virgin who gave Him his human nature, whose fiat ensured redemption for us all.

Mary is loved in the East, and She is called in Christian literature the Eastern Gate by which the Orient from on high enters the world.

She is the Mother of the human race not merely in a biological or juridical sense, but in what theologians call an ontological sense, a far higher and more effective form of motherhood than our human concept of the term could ever allow.

She will reach out to claim the affection and love of the Moslems, the Buddhists, the Hindus and all the others. They are Her most dear sons, and in the age of the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart, She will open wide to them the mysteries of life, redemption, of the last ends of man.

Then, when the East is touched by the sublime idealism of Christianity, we will see holiness and mysticism on a scale unknown in history.

28

THE DOCTRINE OF LOVE

'Bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not' (Rom. 12.24)

Holy Scripture tells us that God is love (I Jn. 4.16). It is the insistent lesson of the Christian Gospel that we must love our neighbour for Christ's sake.

We must expect our neighbour to have faults and weaknesses. He is sure to be selfish, the saints tell us, if only for the melancholy reason that we are all selfish. But it is Christ's strict command that we forgive our neighbour his weaknesses, his selfishness, in imitation of the Divine Master Himself who forgives all of us our sins.

It is possible that some who read this book may feel that it deals in rather harsh polemical terms with Communism and Communists, that we have little love for those unfortunates who wander in the dark mists of atheism and often die estranged and at enmity with God.

Now we can make the bold statement—and it contradicts nothing that has already been written—that Fatima crusaders

manifest by their lives, a very special and genuine love for Communists.

Our Lady is the Mother of the entire human race, Communists included. She made it clear in the August 19 apparition that souls at enmity with God are still very dear to Her, and She pleaded with us all to pray and make sacrifices so that these souls would receive the grace to see the light, to repent of their sins, so that they would not be lost forever in hell.

The Fatima crusades throughout the world make a special effort to answer this call from Our Lady. They are constantly organising processions, all-night vigils, seminars, holy hours for the conversion of sinners. And it must be confessed that militant atheists are, in the objective sense, sinners.

Let us put ourselves in imagination in that fearful situation where we are at open enmity with God. The Gospels tell us plainly that those who die in grave sin are lost forever. The unrelenting atheist, the man who rejects God, is then, of all men, the most tragic figure. He stands on the brink of the most terrible precipice, about to plunge into an inferno from which there is no return. Many such people are externally likeable people, and if we could see with the eyes of a vivid faith, the dreadful danger they are in, we should rush forward to save them at all costs.

Alas, no action of ours can help the tragic figure of the militant atheist other than prayer and penance. The Mother of Christ, who loves them so much, who is in anguish over the danger they place themselves in, could not give us any other method of helping than to say the rosary and to make sacrifices for them.

Christians of necessity must hate the diabolical creed of Communism which springs like a poisonous weed from the evil root of militant atheism. We must hate it because it takes away from the glory of God, because it causes wars and discord, because it leads souls to eternal damnation. No Christian need ever feel ashamed of hating evil. That is the simple duty of all good men.

It is different however with the Communist himself. Him, we are bound to love, not in the sentimental sense, but in the sense of wishing him well, of praying and making sacrifices for him.

Christ warned us of a day of General Judgement that is coming, of a "day of wrath"—as it has been traditionally

called—on which all the world will appear before God's tribunal to be judged on our choice of good or evil during life.

What a drama it will be! No human mind could conceive so dramatic an event, not Sophocles or Dante, Shakespeare or De Mille, none of them could possibly visualise the entire human race, from Adam down to the last man, arraigned before the Judgement Seat of God, there to be rewarded or punished according to their deeds.

"Come, you blessed . . ."

"Depart, you accursed . . ."

What a vast unbridgeable chasm there exists between the two groups! Mysteriously, with the unimaginable powers of the angelic intellect which will be ours then, we will be conscious of the judgement passed on all other members of the human race. There will be no mercy, only justice on that terrible day.

Pride, hatred, moral perversion will be seen for the loathsome and hideous leprosy of the soul that they are. The virtuous will be possessed of such angelic beauty as to ravish the soul with delight; they are adjudged worthy to enter the courts of Heaven, into the Beatific Vision, the infinite beauty of the Godhead, which no man on this earth can see and live.

It is then that the Communists will know who their true friends have been. And the Fatima crusaders, who have prayed through the long night at vigils for Communists, who have laboured assiduously to extend the influence of the Christian Gospel, they will see the fruits of their labours on the last day, in souls converted and saved forever to praise and glorify God.

It is then that all the world, the just and the damned, will turn to that hill of Calvary on which Jesus Christ died, to see for the first time, the full significance of this Divine sacrifice.

Let us love our neighbour then for Christ's sake, and because He has first loved us and delivered us from death. Let us pray fervently for Communists; for the greatest, the best of all solutions to the problem of Communism, the solution that God wants most of all, is the conversion of Communists.

A CHALLENGE

*Lives of great men all remind us
We must make our lives sublime
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time.*
(Longfellow)

Without question, the revelations that came to mankind in 1917 at the Cova da Iria constitute a challenge to every believer. It is incumbent upon us all to decide for ourselves personally whether they are true, or whether they are not.

If they are true, then there is a serious responsibility upon us all to take action. Like a searchlight these revelations probe into the inmost depths of our being to see if we really love God, and our fellow-man for the sake of God. For, if the revelations are true, then the future of the human race is bound up with their implementation.

Our Lady waits patiently for a sign of apostolic action from us, having given us the clearest indication of the urgency and importance of such action. Our first indispensable requirement is an increase in faith. We need a lively faith, "animated by charity, which will enable us to perform all our actions for the love of God . . . a faith firm and immovable as a rock through which we shall remain tranquil and steadfast amidst the crosses, toils and disappointments of life . . ."

We cannot hope to walk along this way of Christ, this *via crucis*, unless we believe deeply.

A man engages in apostolic work primarily because he believes. The more he acts on his beliefs the more intense they become and the deeper becomes his faith. As his faith deepens, his love of God develops and he desires to impart this love to others.

The lives of the saints give us admirable illustrations of this. Of all men they had perspective. They looked at time

and at eternity through the perfectly adjusted telescopic sights of a vivid faith in God. They were gifted with "supernatural" eyesight. For the saints Heaven, the City of God, lay just over the horizon beckoning them onward to its mysterious grandeurs and unparalleled delights.

As their faith deepened, the reality of this vision became more vivid and they burned with a desire to share this Kingdom of love with their fellowmen even at the cost of great personal sacrifice, just as Christ Himself burned with such a desire during His life on earth.

How do I develop a faith like that?

Would it change my life?

A vivid faith changes more than the life of an individual, it changes the lives of multitudes and affects the very destinies of nations.

Before developing one's faith to the point where it becomes a positive supernatural vision unlocking for us the great secrets of Creation and of the last ends of man, one must begin by believing in God.

The Marxist, in embracing dialectical materialism, turns his back on the mighty panorama which belief inevitably brings and places his hopes in the earth and in earth only. He thus becomes utterly faithless, a modern infidel, and the more he follows Communism, the further he advances into an abysmal spiritual darkness.

Utterly out of harmony with the plan of Creation, his voice becomes discord and his works sabotage. He has by-passed Heaven and walks upon the broad highway that leads to the abyss.

As I see so many of my fellowmen stumbling blindly along the road to eternal perdition, what must I do?

Certainly, I must increase my faith, for faith must be the foundation of a daring apostolate, a powerful and recklessly self-sacrificing spirituality which will urge me on, even into the cannon's mouth, in a bold endeavour to break the spell which Satan has cast upon so many in this age.

Faith will enable me to see clearly that Christianity is the great positive and re-integrating force in an anarchic and chaotic world.

Faith in Christ means union with Christ, and union with Christ means that I share in some measure in the power of Christ, or rather that Christ will invest His power in me to the extent that I become His instrument.

Becoming His instrument necessarily involves some sacrifice, for I must allow His will to triumph over my will. But the stakes are high, and I must not allow my body to stampepe my soul. I CAN DO PENANCE, I MUST do penance if the liberty of my country is to be preserved.

Thus will I develop my faith, thus I shall fight for my country more truly than if I directed the fire of a thousand machine guns into the enemy's ranks.

What must be my first step in building up an heroic faith in God which will enable me to face calmly even the savage persecution of atheistic tyranny—if that were God's will?

Certainly it is necessary to have a holy, tender, interior, constant and disinterested devotion to Mary, to be entirely and truly consecrated to Her, to be willing to suffer the trials, the contradictions, the humiliations, the crosses that She will send.

It is indispensable to have a solid routine of prayer if one is genuinely seeking perfection.

Daily Mass, if possible, and the fifteen decades of the rosary, recited daily with care and devotion, are powerful means of advancing in the spiritual life.

Even if Our Lady had not asked for the rosary at Lourdes and Fatima the saints have made plain the great value of that devotion in developing the life of grace in the soul.

This indeed is the great challenge of our age. In its acceptance by devout Catholics, in a spirit of *noblesse oblige*, rests the hopes of all humanity.

THE PERMISSIVE SOCIETY

'They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences' (Gal. 5.24)

The point has already been made that the so-called "permissive society" cannot produce fruits in terms of human happiness for the people. Its fruits, so far, are rising crime, broken homes, drugs and delinquency.

Thus is history repeating itself, for history has plainly taught us these lessons. Most people who interest themselves in these things are familiar with the conclusions of the historian Arnold Toynbee, that nearly all of the great civilisations of the past have perished from within by internal corruption.

Another great historian, Dr. J. D. Unwin tells us: "*Every civilisation is established and consolidated by observing a strict sexual moral code, is maintained while this strict code is kept, and decays when sexual licence is allowed.*" (Sexual Relations and Human Behaviour).

Unwin reports that the collapse usually comes within a generation where there is serious moral decay. For his exhaustive analysis in "Sex and Culture" he closely examined every known society—over eighty in all.

It cannot be denied that, as society grows more and more "permissive"—particularly in countries like Sweden, America and England—crime has risen steeply. Some refuse to see a nexus between the two, holding that the prevailing permissiveness does not influence the crime rise.

Yet they can hardly deny that a climate of sexual permissiveness increases the divorce rate. For infidelity in marriage is a leading cause of divorce. And, as the divorce rate rises, juvenile delinquency must rise, for all informed observers agree that broken homes are a major cause of juvenile delinquency.

Nevertheless there is a move throughout the Western world, the civilisation that once was Christian, to abolish all forms of censorship, to push through to the last stage in the fully permissive society.

In this historic hour of instant global communications an idea spreads rapidly—like a contagion. All the world it seems, is being swept by the craze for an open season on sex. The wisdom of the past is ignored, the verdict of history set aside. The shadow of the atomic bomb is disregarded as twentieth century man prepares to return to the morals of his stone-age ancestors.

Toynbee, Sorokin and the other historians have not been giving us their own views, but the sober conclusions of history. If we behave in this way, we are betraying our country, and the generations to come.

In one of his recent books, Toynbee tells us that "*religion not only helps to create civilisations but acts as a stabilising factor in times of decline.*" (*Experiences*).

This is because the various religions are, above all, disciplinary systems, imposing restraint on man's wilful indulgence of his lusts. Remove these safeguards of civilisation and what have you got? A return to barbarism, a return to the mores of the Vandals, the Huns, and the Visigoths who were rescued by the light of the Cross in the Dark Ages.

Here we are arguing against the permissive society on purely sociological grounds. What we all have to realise is that the real case against immorality rests on a much more serious basis, the fact that it is grossly offensive to God who created us, and seriously contrary to His law.

Immorality is always a personal disaster for the adulterer or the fornicator for, if he dies unrepentant, he will surely lose his soul for all eternity.

But, as Our Lady indicated plainly at Fatima, it helps to cause wars and other national disasters and thus must be seen from a sociological aspect.

The Greeks and the Romans understood that moral corruption threatened the stability of the state. Caesar Augustus

banished Ovid for writing a pornographic book and salacious literature was banned in some of the Greek states.

The youth of today, in the sophisticated countries, are often said to be blasé, saturated with sensuality. If this is true then they have tasted of the Dead Sea fruits of immorality, and must know through experience, that it cannot bring happiness. In fact it produces nervous breakdowns, depression, despair and often suicide. It greatly increases the work of the police force.

Thus society is gradually being forced by the disintegration and decay of its constituent parts to realise that a moral code is necessary. Noting that all societies have a moral code Brisbane writer Mr. George Cook quotes the following from the article on Comparative Ethics in the Encyclopaedia Britannica:

“Everywhere in stable society there is a code which bids men do this and not do that. If exceptions are to be found at all they are not in what appear as the most primitive societies, but in cases of decadence, where the long-established code of one culture is broken and not replaced by the irruption of another. If we run the gamut of culture from the highest to the lowest, we shall find that the codes cover the principal relations of social life. They deal with persons and property and specifically with sex, imposing restraints on behaviour which, from our point of view, may be just or unjust, but which are certainly working rules. These rules rest on, and in turn support, a certain community of life, extending beyond the simple family of parents and young children, where natural feeling might be a sufficient guide.”

“The actual institutions of a society are the results of an adjustment of human relations to the needs of life, and a solution, good or bad, of the problem of living together under given conditions.” (Reference, Ency. Brit. Vol 6. Page 154 and following pages.)

Mr. Cook makes the following very pertinent comment:

As every stable society has a code which “bids men do this and not do that,” it follows that you cannot have a “*permissive society*”. The two words “*permissive*” and “*society*” are contradictory. The Oxford Dictionary defines “*permissive*” as “each individual free to do what he likes.” “*Society*” is defined as “the customs and organisation of a civilised

nation." Obviously, we cannot have "customs and organisation" if each individual "does what he likes."

What is being sought today is not a permissive society, as Mr. Cook points out, but permissive decadence, decadence being permissive itself and the end result of permissiveness. And he goes on to make the following comments:

"All are concerned when the society in which they live is threatened with destruction.

"The unchecked permission of sexually licentious living not only threatens, but means the certain destruction of that Society.

"Everyone is therefore concerned that the Government ensures that sexual aberrations like homosexuality are declared illegal and monogamous marriage is defended.

"Civil authorities have as their prime duty to promote the common welfare of their subjects.

"They must, according to their ability, avert all harm from their country both internal and external.

"As sexual licentiousness means certain destruction of the country, the civil authority concerned must combat this internal threat just as it must combat an external threat by an enemy country.

"Legislation is the only means open to a civil authority against this internal threat. This is because of the separation of Church and State. The State cannot check sexual licentiousness by exhorting its subjects by moral homilies.

"By definition, moral homilies are not the State's sphere. All the civil authority can do is identify sexual licentiousness as an internal threat and legislate against it, prescribing penalties against it just as it prescribes penalties against theft and murder.

"The State laws against theft and murder do not contain moral homilies on these subjects: they just prohibit these things as crimes against the State and fix penalties.

"In exactly the same way the civil authority legislates against sexual licentiousness, and fixes penalties for breaches of this legislation.

"The Civil Authorities thereby are NOT 'legislating against sin'. They are legislating for survival of the country they govern. The extent of this legislation is open to discussion, once the right of legislation in this field is accepted.

"The Rule is that such legislation must be sufficient to

prevent internal decadence in the country but the State should avoid legislating against moral lapses not serious enough to threaten the survival of society."

Perhaps Divine Providence has permitted the unprecedented permissiveness in almost every department of Western society to convince us that it cannot bring happiness, that its fruits are drugs and degradation, misery and despair.

Experience is a hard school but we have obstinately refused to learn at any other.

A COMMENT FROM SIGMUND FREUD

"We believe that civilisation has been built up by sacrifices in gratification of the primitive impulses, and that it is to a great extent for ever being re-created as each individual repeats the sacrifice of his instinctive pleasures for the common good. The sexual are amongst the most important of the instinctive forces thus utilised; they are in this way sublimated, that is to say their energy is turned aside from its sexual goals and diverted towards other ends, no longer sexual and socially more valuable."

Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis.

31

A CALL TO YOUTH

'But flee thou youthful desires and pursue justice, faith, charity and peace' (2 Tim. 2.22)

How is it possible to penetrate and influence with this crusade the thinking of society in a short time?

An enormous effort is involved here, nothing less than a world revolution in ideas, the building of a new civilisation from the ruins of the old.

Only our youth would have the relentless energy, the idealism, the resolution, the tremendous generosity required for such a Herculean endeavour.

Because of this it is hoped that the contents of this book will be absorbed above all by leaders of our youth, that it will be used as a textbook for study in universities, colleges and high schools, as well as in youth circles generally.

In the past, it has been the more mature, the middle-aged and elderly who have carried the burden of propagating the Fatima message. But the hour has now arrived when massive help from our youthful echelons is indispensable.

The most rapid means of infiltrating our universities with the powerful idealism latent in the Fatima message is unquestionably the use of the dedicated few, the completely convinced cadres who will spend themselves in Our Lady's service and count it an honour to do so.

A cadre, in military parlance, is a highly trained, self-reliant, specialist soldier, with commando training and the initiative and imagination to become a guerrilla leader.

A cadre will organise meetings, write letters to newspapers, distribute printed propaganda and engage in any activity which will penetrate his own particular milieu with a deep realisation of the potential of the 1917 message of peace.

Obviously a cadre must first of all be convinced—intensely convinced—of the vital importance of giving the profound wisdom of Fatima to the confused modern world. He is a true soldier of the Queen of Heaven, a commando in the best sense of the word, intelligent—through the wisdom of Fatima—disciplined and dedicated.

Students who would like to undertake such special responsibilities for disseminating the knowledge of Fatima and all that it means to others should begin by consecrating themselves sincerely to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, promising Her at least five decades of the rosary each day as an earnest of their good intentions.

"It is possible by means of shrewd and unremitting propaganda to make people believe that heaven is hell and hell heaven."

So wrote Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf* in 1926.

Nobody who has seen the spread of atheistic communism throughout the world would doubt that today.

All the evidence we have of communism indicates that it creates a veritable hell on earth in countries which it controls.

Liberty is extinguished, the citizens are arbitrarily arrested and killed, nobody is allowed to leave unless they risk a bullet in the back as they scramble over barbed-wire barricades or Berlin Walls.

So great is the power of the atheist propaganda machine, nevertheless, that it enables world Communism to make continued progress despite the incredible handicap of these atrocities and the miserably low standard of living—as is evidenced by comparing East with West.

Communism advances solely on propaganda. Its space programme, its training of athletes for the Olympic games, its cultural exchanges with Western countries—all are designed for propaganda, designed to distract people's attention and hide the grisly reality that is Communism.

Catholics, on the other hand, seem disinterested in propagating the magnificent idealism of their faith, the only antidote to Communism. Charged with a solemn responsibility for which we must surely answer on the last day, we hide this resplendent Light under the bushel of our sloth and our apathy, allowing murderers and robbers to take over political control of the world.

The Fatima message is a treasure from Heaven given with great love to the Church by the Mother of the Church in 1917. It is not the property of any little group within the Church. It is a true *aggiornamento* of the Gospel and has been certified by the Church as in perfect harmony with the Gospel. The movement to crush Communism and all its ancillaries must come from the bosom of the Church and it must be led by Our Lady who is appointed by God to crush the power of the demon. The Fatima crusade is to be then a conquering army which will inspire our youth and lead them on to the most thrilling and total victory in history. But the Church must marshal all its resources for this tremendous struggle.

It is necessary to state that we need urgently the help of *all* age groups, and above all that of priests and Religious. Our Lady intended the urgent appeal to be addressed to all Catholics without exception and, as observed elsewhere, She also is looking with great motherly love, on Her sons and

daughters in other religious denominations to help according to their consciences.

All who read this book are asked to make a serious examination of their lives to see if they can help the cause of peace, to serve humanity, to work, in a spirit of *brotherly love* for the countless millions who sit in utter darkness, in poverty, in tyranny, in the shadow of spiritual death.

Stir up your generosity, obey the impulse to do something noble, something worthwhile with this fleeting life. For soon, we shall all be dead, absorbed in an eternity made glorious with love and self-sacrifice in this life, or cursed and made bitter with remorse and agonised despair, by a life on earth of selfishness and degradation.

Those who would like to help are asked to write to Fatima International, P.O. Box 8947 Richmond Va. 23225.

AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

Deep harm to disobey, seeing that obedience is the bond of rule.
(Tennyson)

We read in Matthew's 23rd chapter that Our Lord severely castigated the Scribes and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, whited sepulchres, serpents, generation of vipers, etc.

But just prior to this, He addressed these sobering words to His disciples: "*The Scribes and Pharisees have sat on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do.*"

He also angered the Jews by telling them to obey the hated

Roman conqueror: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's . . ." The Jews knew He had power to deliver them from Caesar. But this He refused to do.

Of what sovereign importance must be the principle of obedience if Our Lord ordered the Chosen People to obey His arch-enemies, the very ones who were soon to be responsible for His crucifixion, simply because they sat on the chair of Moses!

Obedience, the outward sign of humility, is, by general agreement, the most indispensable of the virtues. It is by continual acts of obedience to lawful authority that one increases in sanctifying grace and in all the virtues. The clearest thing we know about the devil is that he was a rebel from the beginning.

In the Religious life, this virtue of obedience is of particular importance because it produces that order in the community which is the *sine qua non* of coordinated and successful action. The great generals of history, Julius Caesar, Napoleon and the others knew well the cardinal importance of an instinctive and generous obedience on the part of their soldiers.

In the Religious life, there is a well-known principle that the Superior is to be obeyed in all things, except sin. It is certain that nothing is better for us spiritually than to obey, providing the authority is lawful and there is no sin.

There are two well-known cases in religious history of apparent disobedience to lawful authority which have aroused considerable comment from theologians and sacred writers.

The first is in the Scriptures, the famous case where St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, tells of his "confrontation" with St. Peter the first Pope. St. Paul describes how he "withstood Cephas (Peter) to his face and rebuked him". St. Peter was not, needless to say, guilty of error in doctrine. It was simply a moral lapse, a weakness of character which had shown itself conspicuously on that sad night before the Crucifixion. St. Peter, with great humility, bowed to the rebuke of St. Paul, even though it was public and a severe test of his humility.

Arnaldo Vidigal Xavier da Silveira of Brazil quoted a number of interesting comments from famous theologians on this case.

"In several of his works," he writes, "St. Thomas Aquinas says that in extreme cases it is right to publicly oppose a ruling

of the Pope, as Saint Paul did face Saint Peter: “. . . if the Faith be in imminent peril, prelates ought to be accused by their subjects, even in public. Thus, Saint Paul, who was the subject of Saint Peter, (he) called him to task in public, because of impending danger of a scandal concerning a point of Faith. As the Glossary to Saint Augustine has it: ‘*Saint Peter himself set an example for those who rule, to the effect that if they ever stray from the straight path they are not to feel that anyone is unworthy of correcting them, even if such a person be one of their subjects*’. (ad Gal. 2, 14) (Saint Thomas, Summa Theol., II-II, 33, 4, 2).

“The chastening was both just and useful and there was no little cause; the truth of the Gospels was at stake. . . .”

“The reprimand took place aptly, for it occurred publicly and openly. St. Paul writes: “I spoke with Cephas”, that is, Peter, “before all”, for Saint Peter’s pretence represented danger for everyone. In 1 Tim. 5, 20, we read the following: “those who sin ye shall chasten before all men”. By this is meant manifest sins and not hidden ones, for in the case of the latter one should act according to the appropriate rule for brotherly reprimands”. (Saint Thomas, ad Gal. 2, 11–14, lect. III, nn. 83–84).

“Saint Thomas goes on to remark that the aforesaid passage from the Scriptures is a lesson not only for prelates but also for subjects: “for the prelates it was one (an example) of humility, so that they might not shun the reprimands of their inferiors and subjects; and for the subjects it was one (an example) of zeal and freedom, so that they might not be afraid to correct their prelates, above all when the crime be public and place many in peril”. (idem, ibidem, n. 77).

“*Cornelius a Lapide*—This illustrious exegete points out that, according to Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, Saint Bede, Saint Anselm and many other Fathers, Saint Paul opposed Saint Peter publicly “so that thus the public scandal brought about by Saint Peter might be remedied through a reprimand, also public”. (ad Gal. 2, 11).

“After having looked into the various theological and exegetical questions incurred because of Saint Paul’s attitude, Cornelius a Lapide writes as follows: “that superiors may be humbly and charitably reprimanded by their inferiors, so that the truth might be safeguarded, is what has been affirmed, based upon this passage, (namely Gal. 3, 11), by Saint Augustine (Epist. 19), Saint Cyprian, Saint Gregory, Saint

Thomas, and others referred to above. They clearly state that Saint Peter, though superior, was reprimanded by Saint Paul. . . . Therefore was Saint Gregory right when he said (Homil. 18 in Ezech.): "Peter fell silent so that inasmuch as he was the first in the apostolic hierarchy he might also be the first in humility". And Saint Augustine wrote (Epist. 19 ad Hyeronimum): "By teaching that superiors should not refuse to let themselves be reprimanded by their inferiors, Saint Peter set an example for posterity, an example more uncommon and more saintly than that set by Saint Paul when he taught that in the safeguarding of the truth and if done charitably, the lesser may dare to fearlessly resist the greater". (ad Gal. 2, 11)."

The other celebrated instance in history where apparent disobedience has been praised by saints and historians is that of Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, whose flock, it is said, fled from the Church when he preached to them the heresy that Mary could not be truly called *Mother of God*.

Here we have the flock instinctively and violently repudiating the teaching of their Bishop; and Nestorius was no ordinary Bishop. He was second in rank to the Pope himself at the time.

Nestorius was preaching *formal* heresy, as distinct from *material* heresy which is not culpable and comes from lack of erudition.

Some theologians, according to the eighteenth century authority Spedalieri, hold that a Bishop who preaches formal heresy, deliberately polluting the deposit of truth with error, is automatically divested of his episcopal dignity. The Abbot of Solesmes, Dom Guéranger O. S. B., puts it in even more trenchant terms. In his book, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, he tells us that such a bishop (or priest) is a shepherd transformed into a wolf. And he goes on to say, "*it is his erstwhile flock which must make all haste to defend itself against him*". (p. 340).

It may be held from the foregoing that the distinction between when to obey and when to disobey is so fine that only a subtle intellect could grasp it. On the one hand we have Our Lord counselling the Jews to obey even the Scribes and Pharisees and on the other hand we have St. Paul's stern rebuke to St. Peter and the Nestorius incident.

Is there a contradiction?

Our Lord, in the eyes of the Jewish people, was the son of

a carpenter and a "layman". As such He would have been considered the spiritual subject of the Scribes and Pharisees. Nevertheless, He strongly condemned their moral lapses, their hypocrisy, etc., but He upheld their position as dispensers of the law of Moses, even though He pointed out that they were obeying the letter of the law and not its spirit.

But the falsifying of doctrine is apparently quite another matter. The Nestorius incident, the opinions of Spedalieri, Guéranger and others—quoting necessary authorities—seem to make it clear that, when a priest or bishop preaches formal open contumacious heresy on serious points of doctrine, he has, in effect, left the Church and is to be rejected forthwith by the People of God.

St. Paul makes this clear in his serious warning to the Galatians against those who would "pervert the gospel of Christ".

If anyone preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema. (Gal. 1.9).

Here there is a serious responsibility placed directly upon the People of God not to accept heresy, a responsibility that was fully discharged by the Faithful at Constantinople when they refused to listen to the heresy of Nestorius their Bishop.

It may be pointed out that the power of jurisdiction granted to such a Bishop by the Pope has not been formally revoked and therefore the Bishop should continue to rule the diocese until the Pope takes such action.

But, if the people of Constantinople were right in rejecting their Bishop when he preached to them an obvious heresy—and the Church through her theologians and doctors seems to have ruled that they were—then a Bishop or priest preaching *obvious* heresy seems to be *ipso facto* divested of his office and is to be refused the obedience and reverence due to his office. However, it seems clear that the power of Sacred Orders still remains in accordance with the principle, once a bishop always a bishop.

The Fatima crusade throughout the world has been noted for its unquestioning obedience to *lawful* authority and its profound reverence and affection for its priests and bishops. Its entire programme of prayer and penance is aimed at uplifting the Church, eliminating the darkness of error, enriching the People of God by an unquestioning obedience to Christ and to His lawful representatives on earth.

FATIMA'S DOCTRINAL IMPORTANCE

'There shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine'
(2 Tim. 4.3)

Sometimes one hears the revelations of the Cova da Iria referred to as "merely a repetition of the requests for prayer and penance in the Gospels".

But Fatima is immensely more significant than that. Let us consider for a moment the new light it throws on biblical interpretation.

It has been held by many modern exegetes that the Bible has been wrongly interpreted by our forefathers, that modern science has thrown new light upon it, that its imagery and idiom were suitable for an ancient primitive people but not for us, that the Scriptures were not meant to be taken literally, and so on. Some of these moderns, starting from this premise, then go on to place new and unsafe interpretations on Holy Scripture without waiting to get a clearance from Rome.

It is in helping to clear up this confusion that Fatima is immensely important. For the revelations at the Cova give us, in addition to the vital message, a compendium of the major doctrines of the Church.

In an age when so many writers have cast doubts on the Real Presence in the Blessed Eucharist, we find the Angel who appeared to the three children leaving a Host and Chalice suspended in the air whilst he prostrates himself and recites the well-known prayer,

“Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I adore You profoundly! I offer You the most precious Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for all the outrages committed against Him; and by the infinite merits of His Sacred Heart, through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg for the conversion of poor sinners”.

Not only does the vision of the angel adoring the Host and Chalice reassure us in our belief in the beautiful doctrine of the Real Presence, but the drops of the Precious Blood falling from the Host into the Chalice confirm what the Church has always taught, that Christ is present, whole and entire, *in either species*.

How many so-called theologians, in this sad age, have taken it upon themselves to dismiss the doctrine of a hell of eternal fire as “not suitable for the mentality of modern man”? At Fatima, as we know well, the children were given a terrifying vision of that same hell of fire, proving that the magisterium has not erred. And modern science, so often quoted in efforts to discredit the Bible, tells us that the earth’s centre or core is a sea of raging fire with a temperature of at least 4,000° centigrade. This is not without significance when one remembers that the Bible itself (Num. 16.33) as well as many saints and mystics have indicated that hell is in the centre of the earth.

The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady was clearly implied in the references to her Immaculate Heart. And thus, by inference, the doctrine of Original Sin, so often challenged today, is confirmed. If Our Lady is immaculate, then the rest of us are conceived in sin as the Church has always taught. And the ancient scripture, *“I will put enmities between thee and the Woman”* (Gen. 3.15) is made comprehensible.

The doctrines of heaven, hell and purgatory, of the existence of angels and devils, of the need for prayer and penance to attain salvation are all brought to the notice of the modern world at Fatima, and, of course, are confirmed by the solar phenomenon. Our Lady urged the necessity of compassion for our neighbours when She said, with a look of great sadness, in the August apparition at Valinhos, *“Many souls go to hell because there is no-one to pray and make sacrifices for them.”* By this She tells us that we are all, in some sense, mediators of intercession for souls, many of whom we can save if we pray and do penance for them.

The requests for the rosary are not without their significance. The rosary is very largely made up of meditations on various incidents such as the birth, death and resurrection of Our Lord as related in the Scriptures, and as interpreted by the Fathers of the Church. There seems to be some degree of support for traditional Scriptural exegesis here.

And significantly, Our Lady, at Fatima, at least hinted at the doctrine of Papal supremacy, for Her references to the "Holy Father" left no doubt as to his prestige, his importance and the great spiritual power of his office.

The fearful malignancy of sin, its power to scourge and devastate the human race by wars, crimes of all kinds, by disorders like divorce, alcoholism, broken homes, murders, thefts etc., these things are beginning to make even our present day materialists realise that their standard of living is collapsing.

Our Lady warned that the course of sin which the world was following so recklessly would carry it over the brink of peace into the chaos beyond. It did this in 1939 and it is to do it again with catastrophic results if men continue to refuse God the filial love to which He is entitled. The damage to society wrought by sin is underlined by Our Lady who is so anxious to save us from the bloodshed and tragedy of war and civil strife.

At Fatima also, Our Lady taught explicitly the ancient doctrine of reparation, a doctrine so powerful that it brought the Son of God down from Heaven to die on a Cross to repair the sin of Adam. In this instance, at the Cova da Iria, the Mother of Christ warned that the same Divine justice required that reparation be made for the blasphemies and abominations that were disgracing the erstwhile Christian nations in this century. If just men were not found who would make this reparation the fire and brimstone would come—in the form of atomic bombs, as we know now. The atomic bomb had not been invented when She spoke in 1917 but Her words "*various nations will be annihilated*" can have only one meaning in the present nuclear confrontation.

Thus our ancient faith has been ratified and brought "up-to-date" by the Divine signature in the skies of Fatima in the form of the solar miracle. If one admits, with the Church, that this message is authentic, if one admits that the solar phenomenon did take place, then what folly it is to follow the lead of the so-called theologians who are denying the

doctrines referred to above, who say on their own authority that there is no Real Presence, there is no hell of fire, etc.

It is appointed unto men once to die, Holy Scripture tells us, and after that the judgment (Heb. 9.27). There is really only one thing we should fear, and that is to be separated from God forever, in the abyss of fire and in the torments that have no end. The Mother of Christ has sent us the clearest and most urgent of warnings. What madness on our part to reject it!

SALUTE TO PORTUGAL

The drama that took place at the Cova da Iria in 1917 was destined to alter radically the history of Portugal.

At the time of the apparitions the country was ruled by an anti-clerical oligarchy and religion was being attacked on all sides as "outmoded superstition".

But Portugal has long been known as the "*Terra de Santa Maria*"—the land of holy Mary, and Our Lady was not to surrender lightly the country that had been Her own fief and special possession. For the kings and queens of Portugal, from the time of Blessed Nuno on, had refused to wear their crowns in deference to the overlordship of Jesus and Mary, who were held to be the true rulers of this blessed land.

In the third apparition at Fatima, on July 13, two countries were mentioned by name by Our Lady. Russia was referred to three times, in the special warning of the grave events happening there; and finally Portugal was mentioned with this special promise, significant in these times of danger for us all:

"In Portugal, the doctrine of the faith will always be preserved."

This is recorded in the authoritative work by Father John de Marchi I.M.C. It is interesting because the third seer, Lucia, interviewed by a panel of journalists in 1946, was asked "at what stage are we in the evolution of the Fatima prophecies?" She replied that Communism was about to spread its errors throughout the whole world. Lucia was then a nun in the Dorothean Sisters. She has since transferred to the Discalced Carmelites, an enclosed order.

When she was further asked: *"Does this mean that Communism will succeed in overcoming every country in the world,"* Lucia replied "yes". William Thomas Walsh, a journalist who was present was so shocked by this reply that he repeated the question. He received the same answer. It may be pointed out that the fulfilment of the Fatima requests could stop this.

It may be asked why Lucia did not exempt Portugal in view of the special promise of Our Lady that "the doctrine of the Faith would always be preserved there".

Here we must touch on a prophecy of Jacinta, made by the youngest seer not long before she died. It is based on the hearsay evidence of Mother Godinho, her nurse, and therefore does not possess the same validity as Our Lady's statement. But it is worth recording.

It refers to a statement by Jacinta that "a terrible social cataclysm threatened Portugal, particularly the city of Lisbon". There would, she said, be sacking and violence and devastation of all kinds.

This is not necessarily contradictory to Our Lady's statement. It may mean that Communist successes in Portugal will be only partial, whilst in other countries they may be able to take over the entire reins of Government. In fact, they have done that in the Iron Curtain countries of middle Europe, in China, North Korea, North Vietnam and Cuba, since Lucia spoke in 1946.

It cannot be denied that the revelations of 1917 constitute a great honour for Portugal. Almost certainly the events in the Cova represent the most important and significant private revelations in the history of the Church. They do presage a new and brighter age for all the world. And Portugal must share in this.

A typical example of the latent power of the Cova da Iria

was given in 1965 when a Pilgrim Virgin statue of Our Lady of Fatima was taken to Vietnam at the special request of the Fatima crusade there. It was a desperate hour for South Vietnam. It was recalled in a special despatch to the *Daily American*, Rome 23.6.70 by its Saigon correspondent, Colonel R. D. Heinl.

"It seems unbelievable today," wrote Col. Heinl, *"to look back on 1965 when the Vietcong were in the act of sawing South Vietnam in two from Duc To, Pleiku, and Am Khe to the sea; when every bridge in the Delta was out and every village was solid VC; when Buddhist monks were immolating themselves and the government being clawed to pieces by internal factions at each other's throats."*

It was precisely at this time, in October 1965, that the Pilgrim Virgin arrived. It was received by the Apostolic Delegate and other high-ranking clergy, carried with great pomp and ceremony by an honour guard of senior army officers, including a general, and placed on a decorated float for the veneration of the great crowd that lined the three mile route to the city and filled the piazza in front of the Cathedral. All fifteen dioceses were consecrated to the Immaculate Heart, each in the presence of the Pilgrim statue. The brave Bishops of South Vietnam led by an outstanding Apostolic Delegate, strongly supported the entire programme.

Within a few months the Buddhist riots subsided, the threat to the government ceased. Elections were held soon after, and, except for the Tet offensive there has since been no serious threat to the government.

Of course South Vietnam is facing the greatest crisis of all with the withdrawal of U. S. troops and America's new policy of detente with Red China. South Vietnam must rely completely on Our Lady now and we can be sure the Blessed Mother will not forget her suffering children there.

Certainly the intervention of the Fatima crusade in the war made an indelible impression in South Vietnam. Communism was challenged on its own spiritual plane by the force destined ultimately to crush it. The Fatima crusade has much more power than the U. S. Armed Forces although it does not seem so to the confused world.

The people of Portugal are proud of this great honour paid by Heaven itself to their country. They flock in hundreds of thousands to the Shrine to pray there, to meditate on the profound wisdom that was given to all the world there, and to

reform their lives. Some walk for days to make a pilgrimage, and return the same way. They sleep out in the open in all kinds of weather. Sometimes as many as 30,000 children visit the Shrine to pray at the tombs of Jacinta and Francisco, who are, we hope, soon to be beatified and honoured as the modern heroes of the youth of Portugal.

A striking example of how Communism can be overcome by the superior spiritual power of the Christian faith has been given in Portugal itself. It shows how Our Lady can change the destinies of nations by changing the hearts of the people of those nations.

35

THE STORY OF FATIMA

The great conflict which has passed into history as World War I, was tearing apart the very fabric of Western Civilisation, when a light appeared in the Heavens over the bare Serra da Aire in Portugal near a small village called Fatima. Amazingly, it represented a mystic contact between Heaven and Earth—it was the dawn of an event which was to play a profound part in shaping the history of the twentieth-century world.

On May 13, 1917, three small children, Jacinta and Francisco Marto, and Lucia dos Santos, aged 7, 9, and 10 respectively, were grazing their sheep in a field a short distance from their home, at Aljustrel, a tiny hamlet one mile from Fatima. After they had found a good grazing patch for the sheep they began to play. In the midst of their games a sudden flash of light in a cloudless sky halted them. Believing it to

be the first sign of an approaching storm, they raced towards the sheep in order to find shelter for them against the elements.

THE BEAUTIFUL LADY

On reaching the foot of a small slope, opposite the site of the present basilica, their eyes were dazzled by a Heavenly apparition. A lady, so beautiful that She could not possibly be of this earth, looked at them with motherly kindness and affection. "Fear not," She reassured them, "I shall do you no harm." The children were enthralled by the Heavenly glory of this apparition; She appeared to be about eighteen years of age. Her dress, all of light, and the colour of snow, was tied by a gold cord. A white veil laced with gold covered Her head and shoulders and fell to Her feet like the dress. From Her fingers, which were joined at the breast in an attitude of prayer, hung a brilliant rosary, to which was attached a silver cross.

After a while Lucia gained confidence and asked, "Where do you come from?"

"I come from Heaven," replied the Lady.

"From Heaven! And why have You come here?"

"I have come to ask you to come here for six months in succession on the thirteenth of each month, at this same hour. In the month of October I shall tell you who I am and what I want."

"ARE YOU READY TO SUFFER?"

Then the Lady asked an important question: "Would you like to offer yourself to God to make sacrifices, and to accept willingly all the sufferings it may please Him to send you in order to make reparation for so many sins, which offend the Divine Majesty, to obtain the conversion of sinners, and to make amends for all the blasphemies and offenses against the Immaculate Heart of Mary?"

"Yes, we would like that very much."

This pleased the Lady and She replied, "You will soon have much to suffer but the grace of God will help you and give the strength you need." Then, telling the children to recite the rosary devoutly every day in order to obtain peace, the Lady

glided rapidly towards the East, and was soon lost in the light of the sun.

JUNE 13th

One month later, the children were followed to this mysterious tryst by about 60 curious persons. After they had recited the rosary the Lady appeared again. She again asked for the daily recitation of the rosary, and told them to return on July 13th. She also said that Our Lord wished to establish in the world the devotion to her Immaculate Heart. And She showed the three children a vision of her Immaculate Heart surrounded by thorns—which represent the sins of men.

JULY 13th

On July 13th, after encountering much opposition, and suffering much through the contempt and derision of the townspeople, the children again returned to the scene of the Apparitions. The Heavenly visitor again asked for the daily recitation of the rosary. Oppressed by the trials she had undergone, Lucia asked Her to say who She was and to work a miracle to convince the scoffers and the unbelievers. The Lady made a promise which was soon to re-echo throughout the whole of Portugal, and bring a great multitude to the scene of the Apparitions. "Continue to come here on the thirteenth of each month, and on October 13th I shall say who I am, and what I want, and I shall work a great miracle in order that all may believe."

THE VISION OF HELL

On this occasion the Vision opened Her hands from which projected a beam of light which penetrated the depths of the earth. "*We saw a vast sea of fire,*" writes Lucia, "*in which were plunged, all blackened and burnt, demons and souls in human form like transparent brands. Raised into the air by the flames they fell back in all directions, like sparks in a huge fire, without weight or poise, amidst loud cries and horrible groans of pain and despair, which caused us to shudder and tremble with fear. (It is probably at this scene that I cried 'Oh!' which those present say they heard.) The demons were distinguished by the horrible and repellent forms of terrible*

unknown animals, like brands of fire, black, yet transparent.

“This scene lasted an instant, and we must thank Our Heavenly Mother who had prepared us beforehand by promising to take us to heaven with Her, otherwise I believe that we should have died of fear and terror.”

After this terrifying vision of the loss of souls, the Vision said, “You have just seen hell, where poor sinners go. To save them, the Lord wishes to establish in the world the devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If people do what I shall tell you, many souls will be saved, and there will be peace.”

CONSECRATION AND REPARATION

She added, “I shall ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, as well as communion of reparation on the first Saturday of the month. If my requests are granted, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. Otherwise Russia will spread her errors through the world, raising up wars and persecutions against the Church. Many will be martyred, the Holy Father will have to suffer much, several nations will be wiped out. The outlook is therefore gloomy. *But My Immaculate Heart will finally triumph; the Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me; she will be converted and an era of peace will be conceded to the world. In Portugal the faith will always be preserved.*”

The children were prevented from keeping the appointment with the Heavenly visitor on August 13th, having been kidnapped by the anti-clerical Mayor of Ourem, in whose district the village of Fatima lay.

Our Lady did compensate for this by appearing to them on August 19th at a place called Valinhos where they were pasturing their sheep. Here She repeated Her promise to perform a miracle in October “*so that all might believe.*”

She also made a heartrending appeal for sinners. “*Many souls go to hell*” She said, “*because nobody is willing to pray and make sacrifices for them.*”

SEPTEMBER 13th

On September 13th, about 30,000 people accompanied the children to the site of the Apparitions. Again the Lady renewed Her promise to work a miracle on October 13th.

This was soon noised abroad, and the whole of Portugal

waited impatiently for the fateful day which would determine for all time the authenticity of the much-talked-of events. Newspapers sent their correspondents and photographers to record the event. Believers and scoffers alike were thrilled by the bold prediction of a public miracle to take place at a set time in a set place.

THE GREAT DAY—OCTOBER 13th

When the children, surrounded this time by a huge crowd, variously estimated at from 70,000 to 100,000 were once more comforted by the beautiful Lady, Lucia asked the direct question, the answer to which had already been promised.

“Madam, who are you, and what do you want of me?”

The Lady answered immediately. “I am Our Lady of the Rosary; I want a chapel built in My honour. The Rosary must be recited every day.”

“Men must amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins.” Then with a look of intense sadness She added, “*Men must no longer offend Our Lord, Who is already offended too much.*”

At the moment of Her departure She opened Her hands again and threw a beam of light towards the sun. Then commenced the solar prodigy which is described hereunder.

But the children see another drama enacted in three scenes beside the sun.

First they see the three members of the Holy Family, Our Lady of the Rosary in a white dress and a blue mantle, and at left, dressed in red is St. Joseph with the Infant Jesus blessing the world.

Next Our Lord appears as a full-grown man, lovingly blessing the world, and at the left Our Lady as the Sorrowful Mother.

Finally, the Mother of God appears as Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, the scapular in Her hand.

THE GREAT SOLAR PRODIGY

October 13th was cold and dismal, rain was falling steadily while the vast concourse of pilgrims gathered on the site of this rendezvous with the Heavenly Visitor.

The following account of the great solar prodigy is written by a free-thinking journalist Avelino d’Almeida, Director of

the Lisbon daily O Seculo. Only the previous day he had written an ironical article on the so-called apparitions in which he saw only superstition and fraud.

This is what he wrote in the morning edition on Monday, October 15th, 1917, photostats of which are available to interested students of Fatima.

"Then we witness a spectacle unique and incredible for one who was not present . . . The sun resembles a dull silver plate . . . It does not warm, it does not dazzle. One would say that an eclipse had occurred. But now a loud shout is heard:

'Miracle, Miracle!'

"Before the astonished eyes of this crowd, whose attitude takes us back to Biblical times, and who, pale with fear and with heads bare, look at the azure sky, the sun trembles, the sun makes abrupt movements, never seen before, and outside all cosmic laws, the sun 'begans to dance' as the peasants say . . . Only one thing remains now to be done, namely, for the scientists to explain from the height of their learning, the fantastic dance of the sun, which today at Fatima, has drawn 'Hosanna' from the hearts of the faithful; and which, as trustworthy people assure me, had impressed even Free-thinkers, as well as others of no religious convictions, who had come to this spot, henceforth celebrated."

For the first time in recorded history, a miracle announced months in advance for a set time and place was worked by God.

This fact alone should alert us as to the tremendous importance of the message which this miracle was worked to confirm.

The prodigy in the skies points directly to the message. There was no other reason for the miracle than to confirm this vital communication from Heaven.

In the Gospels, we find Christ working miracles only to confirm the vital doctrine that He taught. In this sense, the events of the Cova da Iria are a repetition of the Gospel method of communicating important truths to the sluggish, unreceptive mind of man.

There are many descriptions of the solar miracle available on research.

We will give here another description of a journalist who was present. Journalists are, or should be, trained in objec-

tivity, trained to report facts and not let their imagination run away with them. The journalists who came to Fatima were professional observers of an openly anti-clerical daily press who came above all to report facts, not only on behalf of their own papers, but for the news media of the world.

The reporter from the Lisbon daily *O Dia* sent in the following despatch. It appeared on October 17, 1917.

“At one o’clock in the afternoon, midday by the sun, the rain stopped. The sky, pearly gray in color, illuminated the vast arid landscape with a strange light. The sun had a transparent gauzy veil so that the eyes could easily be fixed upon it. The gray mother-of-pearl tone turned into a sheet of silver which broke up as the clouds were torn apart and the silver sun, enveloped in the same gauzy gray light, was seen to whirl and turn in the circle of broken clouds. A cry went up from every mouth and people fell on their knees on the muddy ground. . . .

The light turned a beautiful blue, as if it had come through the stained-glass windows of a cathedral, and spread itself over the people who knelt with outstretched hands. The blue faded slowly, and then the light seemed to pass through yellow glass. Yellow stains fell against white handkerchiefs, against the dark skirts of the women. They were repeated on the trees, on the stones and on the serra. People wept and prayed with uncovered heads, in the presence of a miracle they had awaited. The seconds seemed like hours, so vivid were they.”

This story of Fatima has of course been reduced to a brief summary. Fatima is a vast subject with a considerable bibliography. Those who wish to learn more about it are advised to enquire from the various religious bookstores for the story in greater detail.

THE SECRETS OF FATIMA

It will be recalled by the reader that the three little seers of Fatima were kidnapped by the sub-prefect of Fatima, Arturo dos Santos, and taken to his house in order to prevent them from being present at the August 13th rendezvous with the heavenly Lady.

Under interrogation at the sub-prefect's office, they were threatened with death—in a cauldron of boiling oil—if they did not reveal a certain secret which the Vision had revealed to them, the knowledge of which was then agitating the local community—as secrets always do agitate people.

The sub-prefect may have suspected that the secret, if revealed, would expose the whole story as a hoax. In the event, he was quite unable to shake the determination of the three little seers each of whom was prepared to die rather than betray Our Lady's confidences. As Francisco and Jacinta had, only two months previously, been told by the Lady that they would die soon, the threat of the sub-prefect must have been particularly terrifying for them.

Even Lucia, the eldest and much more mature than the others, believed that the sub-prefect's threat was genuine.

The secret which the children guarded so jealously was divided up into three parts. The first two were revealed in documents released privately by Lucia in 1929. The third secret is the well-known document which, it was widely believed, was to be revealed in 1960.

The first secret was the vision of hell, which, for some Providential reason, was not meant for release in 1917. Possibly, there were so many marvels associated with the revela-

tions that God did not wish to put too great a strain upon our earthbound minds, which find supernatural truths difficult to assimilate. Possibly God was reserving the knowledge of the vision of hell for a time when the dread doctrine of eternal damnation would be little thought of and discounted in the preaching of the Gospel. For although the words of Our Lord are absolutely unequivocal and unambiguous on this subject of an eternal hell of fire, the modern world closes its ears, turns away its eyes from the dreadful reality. By refusing to think of hell, the modern world imagines it has abolished hell—a pathetically unreasonable attitude to take in a matter so serious. The doctrine was of course guaranteed by the solar miracle: none of us will be able to complain, at our judgment, that we didn't know that hell existed.

The second secret related to that remarkable series of future events which Our Lady spoke of in the July apparitions but which were not, as far as the world is concerned, prophecies strictly speaking. For they were only published widely after some of the events had happened. This allocution of Our Lady was as follows:

“You have seen hell, where the souls of sinners go. It is to save them that God wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If you do what I tell you, many souls will be saved, and there will be peace. This war will end, but if men do not refrain from offending God, another and more terrible war will begin. And when you see a night that is lit by a strange and unknown light, you will know it is the sign God gives you that He is about to punish the world with war and with hunger, and by the persecution of the Church and the Holy Father. To prevent this, I shall come to ask that Russia be consecrated to my Immaculate Heart, and I shall ask that on the First Saturday of every month Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world. If my requests are granted, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, then Russia will spread her errors throughout the world causing wars and persecutions of the Church; the good will be martyred, the Holy Father will suffer much, certain nations will be annihilated. But in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she will be converted, and the world will enjoy an era of peace.”

There was a warning added that this was not to be communicated to anyone but Francisco. Francisco was able to see Our Lady but was never able to hear what She said.

It will be noticed immediately that the first part of this warning by Our Lady has been fulfilled. Error did spread and is still spreading from Soviet Russia. The second world war has taken place. The Church has been persecuted as never before in history, and the good have been martyred in millions.

The final series of the prophecies has still to be fulfilled, namely the suffering of the Holy Father, the annihilation of various nations, the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the conversion of Russia to Christianity and the promised age of peace.

Lucia stated later that Our Lady appeared to her several times subsequent to the events in the Cova da Iria. It was in 1929, in the chapel of the Dorothean Sisters at Tuy in Spain that Our Lady came to ask for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. It was to be made by the Pope in union with all the bishops of the world. If this was made then Lucia understood that the Second World War would have been averted and the power of the Communist conspiracy destroyed. Lucia passed this message on to two of her confessors, according to the account by Father De Marchi; one of the confessors informed the Bishop of Leiria, and arranged that the matter should be brought to the notice of Pope Pius XI, then occupying the throne of Peter.

The priest later informed Lucia that the message had been graciously received by the Holy Father, and that it would be taken into consideration. However, Pius XI did not act on it in any way.

When Pius XII succeeded Pius XI in 1938 the world was on the verge of the second World War. As is known, the new Pope energetically promoted the message of Fatima in many ways and he was affectionately known as "the Pope of Fatima" in some circles. He consecrated the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1942 with a special mention of Russia.

A great effort was made by world Fatima crusaders to have Russia consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pope Paul in union with all the bishops at Vatican Council II. Pope Paul did renew this consecration during the Council in the presence of a considerable number of the bishops. However

this was not an explicit fulfilment of the request in the terms outlined by Our Lady.

The third secret, the most widely publicised of all, was written down in Lucia's own hand, placed in a sealed envelope, and marked "to be opened in 1960".

'This was generally interpreted "to be *revealed* in 1960" and there was a flood of speculation in both the secular and religious press as to the nature of the contents of the envelope.

Photos of the Bishop of Leiria, Dom Jose Correia da Silva, holding the "secret envelope" appeared in some large circulation secular magazines, as well as innumerable religious organs. Many thought that 1960 might be the year of the third World War.

In 1957 the Vatican itself intervened by asking for the secret letter. The Bishop of Fatima, Dom Jose da Silva, asked his Auxiliary, Dom Joao Venancio, to take it to the Papal Nuncio in Lisbon. It may be presumed that Pope Pius XII who was then alive, read the Secret. But there is definite news that it was opened in 1960.

John XXIII was on the Papal throne at that time and he, according to the report by Cardinal Ottaviani who was present, opened the letter, read its contents and ordered that the communication be consigned to "top secret" Vatican archives.

There are various versions of the Fatima secret current but it seems that its contents have been well hidden. There has been a vast amount of speculation, but nobody can say with certainty what the contents of the secret letter are.

Conjecture centred, naturally enough, on Pope John's motives for not revealing the secret. Some students of the subject concluded that the contents must be gloomy, alarming, or perhaps embarrassing for the Church.

In fact, interest in the subject had developed to such an extent that, had Rome released the secret, the authority and prestige of the Vatican would necessarily have been involved, seeming to be guaranteeing its authenticity. That, at least, is how the world at large would have reacted. Irrespective of what was in the letter, Papal authorities would not have liked to be compromised in this way. Tens of thousands of devotees of Our Lady of Fatima reacted understandably but unreasonably in drifting away from the crusade in disillusionment over the failure to reveal the secret.

For some years after 1960 it was fashionable in certain

circles to denounce Fatima as a "fraud" although, in fact, nothing whatever had happened to invalidate the revelations. Rather to the contrary, for the Fatima outline of future events was coming true exactly as stated.

In 1967 the visit of Pope Paul VI to Fatima for the Golden Jubilee celebrations established once more, for Catholics, the solid authenticity of the revelations, which had been taken for granted under Pope Pius XII.

According to Father J. Da Cruz in his book *More About Fatima*, the third secret appears to have been interpolated between the words "various nations will be annihilated . . . in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph."

If this is so the secret would deal with the great climax in the modern collision of spiritual forces, throwing light on the tremendous events immediately preceding the triumph of the Cross over the enemies of Christ.

As to the third part of the secret, wrote Fr. John de Marchi in his authoritative book *The True Story of Fatima* "**only in 1960 shall we know what the Blessed Virgin told the children of Aljustrel. It is in the possession of the bishop of Leiria, written by Lucia, and placed in a sealed envelope.**"

It will be noted that Fr. de Marchi expected the third secret to be revealed in 1960. It may be inferred that Lucia expected this also for she carefully studied Fr. de Marchi's manuscript and passed it as authentic.

THE CHURCH AND FATIMA

The revelations of Fatima are presented to Catholics by the Church itself, acting through Her responsible officials as "worthy of credence".

They are part of private, not public revelation and do not have to be believed under pain of sin. Nevertheless, many reputable theologians hold that it is rash (temerarious) to refuse to believe what the Church has declared worthy of credence, particularly if the revelations are supported by miracles. On earth, Christ cursed those who rejected His miracles (Luke 10.13) and, in looking around us today, we find that those who have openly rejected Fatima have not fared well in the attack on the Church in our own times.

These revelations have the best of credentials as far as the Church is concerned. A bulletin issued by the Consolata Fathers in 1967 gives the following series of Ecclesiastical approvals.

As early as April 29, 1918, Pope Benedict XV, in a letter to the Portuguese Bishops, referred to the occurrences at Fatima as "an extraordinary aid from the Mother of God".

Ever since the opening of the "canonical process" or official ecclesiastical enquiry into the events of Fatima on May 3rd, 1922, by the Bishop of Leiria, *Dom Jose A. Carreira da Silva* down to the present day the Church has not ceased to give its attention to Fatima and approve it.

FIRST OFFICIAL APPROVAL

On October 13th, 1930, the Bishop of Leiria passed judgement on a 31-chapter report after studying it for six months. It was precisely at the Cova and in the presence of 100,000 expectant pilgrims that he read his pastoral letter which ended with this declaration: "*We deem well: (1) to declare worthy of belief the vision of the shepherds at the Cova da Iria, in the Parish of Fatima, of this Diocese, on the thirteenth day of the months from May to October, 1917; (2) to give official permission for the cult of Our Lady of Fatima.*"

Rome went along with the findings of the Bishop, for in recommending Catholic Action to the Portuguese Bishops, *Pope Pius XI*, on November 10, 1933, wrote: "In your country so flourishing with the Christian spirit . . . which quite recently the *Virgin Mother of God* has deigned to favour with extraordinary benefits, it will not be difficult . . ."

Although Rome has followed her usual procedure and left the formal declaration of authenticity of the Fatima apparitions to the Bishop of the locality where they occurred, she

clearly indicated her warm approval of these events through a long and impressive series of public documents and acts.

1942, the year of the Fatima Silver Jubilee celebrations, *Pope Pius XII* prescribed for the Universal Church a feast intimately connected with the Fatima apparitions, *the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*, to be celebrated each year on August 22.

The link between this feast and the Cova apparitions is still more obvious especially since this same year, 1942, saw the Pope consecrating *the world and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*.

THE CROWNING

Then on May 13th, 1946, His Eminence Card. A. Masella, who acted as personal Legate of Pope Pius XII, *crowned Our Lady of Fatima as "Queen of the World."* The impressive ceremony took place in the presence of the entire Portuguese Episcopate, several members of the Portuguese government and over 600,000 pilgrims. And on June 13th of the same year, the Pope issued an encyclical which explicitly refers to the message of Fatima.

Then, in 1951, the Pope sent Cardinal Tedeschini to Fatima as his Legate for the closing of the Holy Year. In revealing to the crowds that Pope Pius XII had himself seen repeated in Rome, the Miracle of the Sun which accompanied the last appearance of Our Lady of Fatima in October 1917, he had the occasion to make a connection between Rome and Fatima. Asked he: *"May not that have been a reward? May not that have been a sign of the sovereign pleasure on the part of God, at the Definition of the Dogma of the Assumption? Was it perhaps an authentic sign of the connection between the Wonders of Fatima and the Centre, on earth, of Truth and the Head of the Catholic Church? Perhaps all these three are joined together!"*

Then on July 7, 1952, Pope Pius XII consecrated Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. On October 11th, 1954, he issued the encyclical on the Queenship of Mary in which he referred to her miraculous image at Fatima. That same year, November 12th, the Pope elevated the Fatima Church to the rank of a minor basilica.

JOHN AND PAUL VI

It was while still Cardinal Patriarch of Venice that Pope John officially visited Fatima. As Pope John XXIII, he sent a *telegram of approval* to Fatima, blessing not only those who had gathered there for October 12th, 1960, but all in the world who were observing this great night of universal exercise of prayer which was sponsored by the Bishop of Leiria, Dom Joao P. Venancio and in which some 300 dioceses throughout the world took part.

Pope John also issued a *proclamation designating Our Lady of Fatima Patroness of the Diocese* in which She had appeared, with all liturgical right—an “official” recognition of utmost significance. Pope John willed his pectoral cross to the Shrine of Fatima.

Pope Paul has ever shown a favourable attitude toward Fatima. His first major gesture in this line seems to have been *the renewal of the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary* during the II Vatican Council on November 21st, 1964, and the sending of the *Golden Rose* to the Shrine on May 13, 1965.

Then on May 3rd, 1967, at a general audience, the Pope announced his plan to visit Fatima and gave reasons for doing so. “. . . and we go to Her who for the preservation of our present world has once again shown Her sweet and resplendent maternal face to the children, to the poor. She recommended prayer and penance as the sovereign remedies. This is the reason for Our pilgrimage.” Through his pilgrimage to Fatima, the Pope preached more by example than by word. He showed the way to peace; he placed his hope in Our Lady; and he showed that there cannot be unity or peace without Mary and the fulfilment of her message.

His Apostolic Exhortation, “*A Great Sign*”, of May 13th, 1967, is precisely a defence of Mary as the way to Christ and an invitation to the integral fulfilment of the message of Fatima, including the idea of personal consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Thus the Church itself endorses Fatima insofar as it can and looks forward to the triumph that was foreshadowed at Fatima.

It is a triumph of the Church, and it is a triumph of the revelations and of the theology of Fatima. The two are in-

dissolubly linked. This Heavenly revelation represents then the "*light on the hill*" for the weary Christian pilgrim of today.

38

DOCUMENTATION

For the benefit of readers who are not of the Catholic faith, it may be as well to point out that the Church adopts a policy of great reserve and caution in dealing with private revelations.

"Divine revelation in general is a supernatural manifestation by God of a hidden truth," according to Tanqueray. He continues: "When such a manifestation is made directly, on behalf of the whole Church, it is called *public* revelation; when it is made to private individuals for their own welfare or that of others, it is called *private* revelation."

It may be said with certainty that there have been authentic private revelations in every age of Christian history. These revelations do not form part of the deposit of faith, but the Church puts them before the Faithful, after careful and painstaking examination, as worthy of credence and suitable for uplifting and edifying the People of God.

The revelations of Fatima were treated no differently, in spite of the great solar phenomenon which appeared to confirm them.

An official Theological Commission was set up by the Bishop, Dom Jose Carreira da Silva, and it was only after nine years of intense study of the entire question that this Commission made a favourable report.

The Bishop himself made the final decision after six months

of careful and prayerful perusal of the documents of the Commission

Dom Jose gave his reasons in the following simple and moving document which launched the great Fatima crusade upon the modern world:

“Our Holy Mother the Church having entrusted to our care the Bishopric of Leiria, and it being our duty as Bishop to care for the faithful entrusted to us, and following the example of the venerable Prelates in such cases, after having attentively studied the events for ten years, we now pronounce our decision, while humbly declaring that we submit our judgment to the Holy See.

“Referring to the smaller number of the wise, the powerful and the noble among the Christians of the primitive Church, St. Paul adds: ‘But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; And the weak things of the world and the things that are not, that He might destroy the things that are: that no flesh should glory in His sight . . .’

“History upholds these observations with facts. The Apostles chosen by Our Lord to preach the Christian doctrine to the whole world were fishermen: St. Gregory VIII, the champion of the liberty of the Church, belonged to a poor peasant family; St. Joan of Arc, who liberated France, and St. Bernadette de Soubirous, the happy seer of Lourdes, were poor shepherdesses.

“At Fatima it is the same. The place chosen for the apparitions is stony, without any attractions whatsoever. The child seers were humble creatures from our mountain lands, modestly dressed, without instruction, not being able to read, and with a rudimentary religious knowledge.

“They were not nervous, but affable and loving in the midst of their rusticity, fond of the family, obedient to their parents, happy! . . .

“One could not discern in them any self-interest or spirit of vanity. They would not accept alms or presents which people wished to give them. And when we decided to take upon ourselves the direction of the works and the religious movement, they honourably handed over to us, in their original form, the money and the objects of value which the people used to leave on the site of the Apparitions.

“Their parents possessed a little property, and today con-

tinue to support themselves as before. They worked for their living, and continue to do so today. In nothing is their life altered after the lapse of thirteen years.

“The children, when questioned jointly or separately, answered with the same precision, without noticeable contradictions . . .

“They were imprisoned by the representative of the administrative authority, and threatened that they would be roasted, but not even then would they deny what they had declared.

“They said nothing against faith or morals, according to the word of the Apostle: ‘No man speaking by the Spirit of God saith anathema to Jesus.’

“Finally, the two younger children, brother and sister, fell ill with the pneumonic influenza, which carried away so many in the whole world, and both died edifying deaths, while Lucia, the only surviving seer, freely and voluntarily, without any coercion or persuasion, after obtaining her mother’s consent, embraced the religious life.

THE VISIONS

“It is likewise necessary to consider the circumstances which accompanied the visions.

“The favoured children, being small, illiterate and lowly, we must have proofs in order to believe their statements. According to these children, Our Lady would appear to them on a small holm-oak, stunted as the trees generally are in these stony places, and hundreds, nay thousands of persons, whose truthfulness we cannot doubt, saw a column of mist, which used to envelop the tree during the apparitions. This phenomenon, which cannot be humanly explained, was repeated several times.

“The solar phenomenon of October 13, 1917, described in the papers at the time, was something marvellous and caused a great impression upon those who had the happiness to witness it. The children had previously announced the day and the hour when it would occur. The news spread rapidly over the whole of Portugal, and despite the day being a tempestuous one, with copious rain, the thousands who had assembled at the hour of the final Apparition (October 13, 1917), witnessed all the manifestations of the

sun, paying, as it were, homage to the Queen of Heaven and earth.

“This phenomenon, which no observatory had registered and which was therefore not a natural one, was observed by persons of all social ranks and classes, believers and unbelievers, journalists of the principal Portuguese dailies and even by persons kilometres away, all of which destroys the idea that it was a collective illusion.

“The argument of persecutions, which are a sign that the works are of God, was not wanting either in Fatima.

“No one was persecuted more than Jesus, and the Church has suffered contradictions in all ages.

“A countless multitude of Saints suffered martyrdom in the midst of terrible torments.

“St. Peter of Alcantara used to say to St. Theresa, that one of the greatest punishments in the world was the one she had suffered; that is, the contradictions of well-intentioned people.

“The holy Prophet Jeremias says: ‘I became a laughing-stock all the day; all scoff at me.’

“The seers of Fatima were imprisoned by the authorities, and threatened with being cast into a cauldron of boiling oil.

“It is common knowledge that the authorities did all they could to prohibit the pilgrimages, creating difficulties in the passage of the people, while certain publicists ridiculed and scoffed at the ardent faith of the good Portuguese people.

“Belief in the apparitions resisted all violence, which, after all, but served to increase fervour and to propagate the graces and favours which Our Lady showers on those who invoke her.

“Devotion to Our Lady of Fatima spread rapidly, as we have said, in this diocese and in the whole of Portugal and today it is extending to all parts of the world, not only among Catholic nations, but among Protestant and even pagan ones.

“The multitudes, composed of persons belonging to all classes, coming from all corners of the country, without advertisement of any kind, without any attractions, hasten to Fatima after long journeys beset with the greatest difficulties and discomforts.

“Where has one seen such multitudes meet in the best of order and profound respect as at Fatima? And it is not once in a way—the movement is continuous, constant, increasing year after year.

“The voice of the people answers the Voice of God.

“The sick come here at the cost of so many sacrifices, so much trouble!

“How many marvellous cures have not been wrought there through the intervention of the Virgin most holy? And what a spirit of resignation do the sick not manifest even when they have not obtained the cure of their physical ills!

“And while the infirm of body come to Fatima in thousands, greater still is the number of the morally afflicted. Our Lady is the health of the sick and the refuge of sinners. How many wayward hearts have not found pardon there! How many of those who had abandoned the faith of their fathers, or were indifferent to it, found it again there!

“Oh! if the confessionals of Fatima were not rigorously sealed with the sacramental seal—ever inviolable—what marvels of grace would they not be able to reveal to us!

“Blessed and praised be the Mother of Mercy!

“In virtue of the considerations explained, and others which we omit for brevity’s sake, humbly invoking the Divine Spirit and placing our confidence in Mary most holy, after taking the opinion of the Rev. Consultors of our Diocese, we have the pleasure:

“First, to declare as worthy of credence the visions of the children in Cova da Iria, parish of Fatima, of this Diocese on the days of 13th May to October, 1917;

“Secondly, to permit officially the devotion of Our Lady of Fatima.

“It now remains for us, beloved children in Our Lord, to warn you that if the favour which the Virgin most holy has bestowed upon us is a great motive of joy and consolation to us, greater still is our duty to correspond with her goodness.

“In a special manner do we recommend to our beloved Diocesans the love of Our Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist, devotion to the most Holy Virgin, to St. Joseph, to the holy souls in Purgatory, the daily recital of at least five decades of the Rosary, flight from the sins of the flesh, from immodest fashions and immoral reading, the practice of penance on which Jesus so much insisted, and which the Virgin, Our Lady, recommended so much, charity towards all our brethren and especially towards the sick and the poor.

“If we do this, the words of the Prophet may well be applied to our country: *‘For if you will order well your ways,*

I will dwell with you in this place in the land which I gave to your fathers from the beginning and for ever more.'

"This Pastoral Letter of ours shall be sent to all the Rev. Parish Priests that they may read and explain it to the faithful in the customary way.

José, Bishop of Leiria."

Leiria, 13 October, 1930.

39

CONCLUSION

*"Macushla, macushla, your red lips are saying
that death is a dream . . . that love is for aye . . ."*

Poetic licence, perhaps, in the traditional manner of song-writers. But these words of the old Irish song express the profoundest truths of Christianity and tell us that the Christian gospel, inspiring, gloriously true and in perfect accord with reason, promises to man the joys of a paradise of love that will never end. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the bliss, the ecstasy which God has laid up for His servants on this earth, who merely are asked to manifest by a simple life of goodness, of virtue, of love offered to a loving Father, that they desire this unspeakable boon, this tremendous harvest of eternal happiness. Thus are the deepest yearnings of the human heart satisfied by the Creator.

It is this above all which the revelations of Fatima prove, for they constitute a twentieth century affirmation of the great

traditions, the lights, the wisdom, the insights of our Christian ancestors. *

What thoughtful person is there who has not had his brightest hopes of success in this life, in merely natural ambitions, dashed by the inevitability of death? How is it possible to be unimpressed by this, as we see our friends, our relatives, taken in sombre procession to the grave? How is it possible for an intelligent man to spend himself in purely earthly pursuits when he must face the bitter fact that he is destined to die, that he knows not when, or how, or where? Is he then going to build bigger barns, as the millionaires on Wall Street do, to leave behind to a generally ungrateful and thoughtless posterity? Is he going to exhaust himself acquiring money he can never hope to spend whilst entering eternity with empty hands as did the servant that buried the talent?

Christ cursed the barren fig-tree, and the Scriptural exegetes tell us that this was to warn us that He expects from us the fruit of our good works, that if we enter eternity without these fruits, we also may expect to be cursed. For this is justice.

The Spirit of love is ours during this life, the Spirit that sanctifies. The Holy Spirit is sent to us as a direct fruit of the sacrifice of Calvary, and Paradise is opened to us all.

*“O Thou of comforters the best
O Thou the soul's delightful Guest
The pilgrim's sweet relief
Rest art Thou in our toil, most sweet
Refreshment in the noon-day heat
And solace in our grief”.*

The Holy Spirit is balm to man's bleeding spirit, a precious unguent for the soul, removing all the really deep sorrows and bitternesses of life.

We Christians have achieved a conquest of death and the fear of the unknown which haunted the Greek and Oriental philosophers. They indeed sought such wisdom for it was commonly said amongst them that the best philosophy was that which taught a man to die well.

The Christian religion removes the bitterness, the dread of death, makes it rather the sweet embrace of a Divine Lover.

“O grave, where is thy victory?” writes St. Paul. “O death where is thy sting?” (Cor. 15. 55).

For centuries men have feared and hated this philosophy of Christianity, moved often by some satanic force which they scarcely comprehended—as were the Scribes and Pharisees. And the triple concupiscence spoken of by St. John (I Jn. 2.16) has greatly enfeebled man's appreciation of this gift, infinitely worthwhile, from the Divinity.

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ promised that the immense fruits of His sacrifice would apply to every generation of the human race, and He entrusted the deposit of these sublime truths by which we are saved to a Church which was to subsist until the end of time, which was, in spite of the tireless efforts of its enemies, to be indestructible.

Christ sent His Mother to Fatima at a moment of supreme crisis for the Church in fulfilment of this promise. The great threat posed by worldwide Marxism was explicitly referred to there, and a solution offered to us, the revelations being confirmed by the solar miracle as we have seen.

In this extraordinary way did Heaven protect the Church in the twentieth century, in this way was the attention of modern man drawn to this age-old, indestructible and venerable Institution that we call the Church.

Everybody has a preconceived image of the Church, formed largely from members of the Church met in the course of one's life. Some hate it because it is authoritarian, and there is enough of the rebel in all of us to make this temptation a powerful one at times. Some hate the Church because they have read of the worldly and sinful lives of some Churchmen. And some hate the Church by blind instinct, for they are living in sin, and have a natural revulsion for the Institution set up by God to promote virtue and denounce sin.

But, whether we know it or not, and irrespective of the vices or virtues of Churchmen, the Church itself is our true Mother and true friend in this life, the one Institution that can help us, not only in this life, but for all eternity.

That sign of the Cross which we see atop our Church buildings is the true sign of civilisation, and where it is, even in the modern world, there is, not only liberty of the spirit, but almost always, political liberty as well.

Our Lady Herself directed modern man's attention to the Church at Fatima.

It is in the Church, She tells us, that harsh human nature is transformed by grace, and grace is transmuted into glory.

It is the Church which can solve every problem that troubles humanity in this age.

It is before the power of the Church, with its fountain-sources of grace, that all the devils tremble, that the forces of evil retreat.

It is this great, sublime, supernatural institution which the agonised, despairing masses of humanity subconsciously seek as they face the gathering storm.

It is our golden vocation and solemn responsibility to convince men that the Christian Church, revitalised and renewed in spirit, is the answer to their dreams, their hopes, their aspirations.

It is the noble mission of the Church to save the world, to give faith and hope to modern man, to save him from the sorrow and desolation of his apostasy.

It is in the Church, wrote Belloc, that the human spirit finds roof and hearth. Outside, it is the night.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

O Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, and tender Mother of men, in accordance with thy ardent wish made known at Fatima, I consecrate to thee myself, my brethren, my country, and the whole human race.

Reign over us and teach us how to make the Heart of Jesus reign and triumph in us, and around us, as It has reigned and triumphed in thee.

Reign over us, dearest Mother, that we may be thine in prosperity and adversity, in joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness, in life and in death.

O most compassionate Heart of Mary, Queen of Virgins, watch over our minds and hearts and preserve them from the deluge of impurity which thou didst lament so sorrowfully at Fatima. We want to be pure like thee. We want to atone for the many crimes committed against Jesus and thee. We want to call down upon our country and the whole world the peace of God in justice and charity.

Therefore, we now promise to imitate thy virtues by the practice of a Christian life without regard to human respect.

We resolve to receive Holy Communion regularly and to offer thee five decades of the Rosary each day, together with our sacrifices, in the spirit of reparation and penance. Amen.

THE MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin, that never was it known in any age that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence I fly unto thee O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand sinful and sorrowful. Do not, O Mother of the Word incarnate, despise my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.

IT IS CERTAIN

that
Fulfilment of the Fatima Requests
can

Destroy Communism

Bring Liberty
and Brotherly Love to the World

Build the New Social Order
in Peace, Justice and Charity.

IT IS CERTAIN

that

NOTHING ELSE CAN

*He cannot thrive,
Unless Her prayers, whom Heaven delights to hear,
And loves to grant, reprieve him from the wrath
Of greatest justice.—(Shakespeare: "All's Well That Ends
Well").*

THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary! full of grace the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus!

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

THE ISSUE IS SURVIVAL

Give

This Apocalyptic Age . . .

to friends and neighbors, both Catholic and non-Catholic, to men and women of influence such as priests and ministers, teachers and religious, legislators and public figures, journalists and radio and television commentators. Ask your local newsstands, bookstores and libraries to carry it.

The survival of Christian civilisation depends upon the rapid dissemination of the ideas contained in this book.

All profits from sales will be used to propagate Our Lady's inspiring message throughout the world.

We are at the eleventh hour in the battle of ideas, and this book enshrines the greatest *idea* of all.

REMEMBER!

GOD HAS PROMISED US THE VICTORY

Quantity prices in the U.S.A.

1 copy: \$1.00	25 copies: 50 cents ea.
5 copies; 70c. ea.	100 " : 35 " ea.
10 " 60c. ea.	500 " : 30 " ea.

Cost in U.K. is 35 pence

Cost in Australia is 85 cents

Cost in South Africa is 60 cents

There are reductions comparable to those in America in the U.K., Australia, and South Africa. Postage must be added in all cases. Please note the various addresses on page 160.

Prayer To St. Joseph

(St. Joseph is the only saint, besides Our Lady, who appeared at Fatima, Portugal, in 1917 when the world was warned that "Russia will spread her errors throughout the world . . ." unless mankind fulfilled certain requests for prayer and penance.

At Fatima, St. Joseph appeared holding the Child Jesus in his arms and he blessed three times the more than 70,000 people gathered there. It is of him that it has been said: "The sound of victory will be heard when the faithful recognise the sanctity of St. Joseph.")

Tender-hearted Father, faithful guardian of Jesus, chaste spouse of the Mother of God, model of all who labor, lover of poverty, glory of family life, solace of the afflicted, hope of the sick, patron of the dying, terror of demons, protector of the Holy Church.

To thee, O Blessed Joseph, we have recourse in our tribulations, and while imploring the aid of thy most holy Spouse, we also confidently invoke thy patronage.

Appease the Divine anger so justly inflamed by our crimes; beg of Jesus mercy for thy children. Amid the splendors of eternity, forget not the sorrows of those who suffer, those who pray, those who weep; stay the Almighty Arm which smites us, that by thy prayers and those of thy most Holy Spouse, the Heart of Jesus may be moved to pity and to pardon.

As thou did once rescue the Child Jesus from imminent peril to His life, so now defend the Holy Church of God from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity. Shield each one of us with thy unceasing patronage, that imitating thy example, and supported by thy aid, we may be enabled to live a good life, die a holy death, and secure everlasting happiness in heaven. Amen.