



Oblates of St. Benedict

Oblate Program at Belmont Abbey, NC

September, 2015

THE FATIMA SECRET: THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH



Recently we have all been stunned by the increasing persecutions of the Church throughout the world: thousands of Christians either killed or made homeless, the legalistic attacks on Judeo-Christian beliefs including marriage, and the appalling revelations about Planned Parenthood.

One of the subjects I spent a great deal of time studying over the years has been the visitation of Our Blessed Mother at Fatima. There were three great Secrets but with all the speculation over the Third Secret most have forgotten the Second Secret. Two parts of that secret should keep coming to mind: that God the Father was going to punish the world for its crimes and that Russia will “. . . spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.”

“To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.”

Saint John Paul II fulfilled the first part with the consecration of Russia to Mary’s Immaculate Heart in 1984. But with the fall of the Soviet Union the rest of the message was forgotten. History teaches us that the Soviet Union was a contributing factor to many of the upheavals we see today. There is also indisputable evidence of unusual and long-lasting famines and major persecutions of the Christian Church. There is also no doubt that if we are suffering, at least mentally from what we see about us, there can be no doubt that the Holy Father is also suffering.

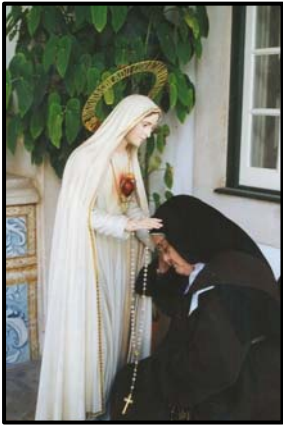
So why the turmoil we see today? The answer is in the second half of Our Lady’s request: “I shall come to ask for . . . *the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays.*” On December 10, 1925, Our Lady, holding the child Jesus, returned to Lucia, the oldest of the three Fatima seers, and said:

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SECOND SECRET OF FATIMA

“To save them [poor sinners who are on the road to hell], God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace. The war is going to end; but if people do not cease offending God, a worse war will break out during the reign of Pius XI. When you see a night illumined by an unknown light, know that this is the great sign given you by God that He is about to punish the world for its crimes, by means of war, famine, and persecutions against the Church and against the Holy Father.

To prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays. If My requests are heeded, Russia will be converted and there will be peace; if not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, various nations will be annihilated.”



Sr. Maria Lucia (de Santos), last surviving seer at Fatima, bowing before a statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

“Look My daughter, at My Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console Me, and announce in My Name that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturdays of five consecutive months, confess, receive Holy Communion, recite the Rosary and keep Me company for fifteen minutes meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary with the intention of making reparation to Me.”

At one time many of us have made the first five Saturdays. But how long ago and did we with the intention of making reparation? It really was not supposed to be a one time deal, it should be something we all do on a regular basis. As stated by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima:

“The promise associated with the practice of the devotion on five consecutive First Saturdays has been mistakenly construed by many to mean that, once one has completed a series of five in succession, they have accomplished the practice of the devotion – that they are finished. This was not Our Lady’s intention in making the promise, and has resulted in a far fewer people practicing the devotion’s than are necessary to fulfill her request. *This is one reason why wars, famines and persecutions of the Church and of the Holy Father have increased rather than abated.*” (emphasis added)

The answer to the reason for the turmoil in the world is that we the faithful have not satisfied Our Lord or Our Lady in making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is a very simple request and not hard to do. For many of us it is simply setting aside the time on the First Saturday of each month with the intention of making reparation for offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

- ◆ Go to Confession;
- ◆ Receive Holy Communion worthily;
- ◆ Pray five decades of the Rosary;
- ◆ Keep Our Lady company for 15 minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.



St. John Paul II and Sr. Maria Lucia (de Santos).

You may download a free copy of a devotional guides at the Blue Army website: <http://wafusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/1st-Sat-CoR-12pg-Booklet-Color-21415-Item-26737.pdf>

We look for something we can do. We feel helpless before secular powers that seem to have everything on their side. We are troubled as we see the norms of society tuned upside down. We see the plight of the persecuted and the martyred. We wonder what we, as Christians, should do in response to what is going on in the world. It seems our Lady has already told us what Our Lord requires. Our Lady, Help of Christians, helped the Christian world defeat the Muslim invaders at the Battle of Lepanto. Today, perhaps no fleet of ships are needed, just a simple act of reparation.



On November 1, 1927, Sister Lucy wrote to her godmother, Dona Maria de Miranda:

“(…) I don’t know if you already know about the reparatory devotion of the five Saturdays to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As it is still recent, I would like to inspire you to practice it, because it is requested by Our Dear Heavenly Mother and Jesus has manifested a desire that it be practiced.

The three children of Fatima: Lucia and her Cousins St. Francisco and his sister St. Jacinta .



MARY'S PART IN THE LATTER TIMES

49. The salvation of the world began through Mary and through her it must be accomplished. Mary scarcely appeared in the first coming of Jesus Christ so that men, as yet insufficiently instructed and enlightened concerning the person of her Son, might not wander from the truth by becoming too strongly attached to her. This would apparently have happened if she had been known, on account of the wondrous charms with which Almighty God had endowed even her outward appearance. So true is this that St. Denis the Areopagite tells us in his writings that when he saw her he would have taken her for a goddess, because of her incomparable beauty, had not his well-grounded faith taught him otherwise. But in the second coming of Jesus Christ, Mary must be known and openly revealed by the Holy Spirit so that Jesus may be known, loved and served through her. The reasons which moved the Holy Spirit to hide his spouse during her life and to reveal but very little of her since the first preaching of the gospel exist no longer.

St. Louis de Montfort
True Devotion to Mary

WHY THE PSALMS



. . . the simplicity and universality of the Psalms as poetry makes them accessible to every mind, in every age and in any tongue and I believe that one's poetic sense must be unusually deadened if one has never at any time understood the Psalms without being in some way moved by their deep and universal religious quality. . . .

The Psalms are at the same time the simplest and the greatest of all religious poems.

Thomas Merton, OCSO
Breadcrumbs in the Wilderness, pp.54 & 55.

NECROLOGY



SEPTEMBER

- 1 Br. Aloysius Foerenbach(1914)
- 2 Fr. Bernard Rosswog(1999)
- 5 Br. Leonard Metzger(1941)
- 6 Fr. Julius Pohl(1924)
- 7 Br. Obl. John Morton(1952)
- 20 Fr. Gerard Pilz(1891)
- 24 Br. Francis Zwiesler(1929)
- 24 Fr. Cornelius Selhuber(1962)
- 25 Fr. Dominic Vollmar(1942)
- 25 Br. Stephen Schockling(1974)
- 25 Fr. Gregory Eichenlaub(1975)
- 27 Fr. Jerome Finn(1958)
- 30 Fr. Gregory Windschiegel(1912)

ORDO

SEPTEMBER

- 3 Gregory the Great, Pope, Religious, Doctor of the Church. Feast
- 6 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week III)
- 8 Nativity of the Virgin Mary. Feast
- 13 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week IV)
- 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Feast.
- 15 Our Lady of Sorrows. Memorial
- 16 Cornelius, Pope, Martyr, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyr. Memorial
- 20 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week I)
- 21 Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, Feast
- 23 Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest. Memorial
- 27 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Week II)
- 29 Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, Archangels. Feast
- 30 Jerome, Doctor of the Church. Memorial

SEPTEMBER 3: ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

St. Gregory the Great, a central figure of the medieval western Church and one of the most admired Popes in history, is commemorated in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Catholic liturgy September 3.

Born near the middle of the sixth century into a noble Roman family, Gregory received a classical education in liberal arts and the law. He also had strong religious formation from his devout family, particularly from his mother, Silvia, also a canonized saint. By around age 30, Gregory had advanced to high political office in Rome, during what was nevertheless a period of marked decline for the city.

Some time after becoming the prefect of the former imperial capital, Gregory chose to leave the civil administration to become a monk during the rise of the Benedictine order. In reality, however, the new monk's great career in public life was yet to come.

After three years of strict monastic life, he was called personally by the Pope to assume the office of a deacon in Rome. From Rome, he was dispatched to Constantinople, to seek aid from the emperor for Rome's civic troubles, and to aid in resolving the Eastern church's theological controversies. He returned to Rome in 586, after six years of service as the Papal representative to the eastern Church and empire.

Rome faced a series of disasters caused by flooding in 589, followed by the death of Pope Pelagius II

the next year. Gregory, then serving as abbot in a monastery, reluctantly accepted his election to replace him as the Bishop of Rome.

Despite this initial reluctance, however, Pope Gregory began working tirelessly to reform and solidify the Roman liturgy, the disciplines of the Church, the military and economic security of Rome, and the Church's spreading influence in western Europe.



As Pope, Gregory brought his political experience at Rome and Constantinople to bear, in the task of preventing the Catholic Church from becoming subservient to any of the various groups struggling for control of the former imperial capital. As the former abbot of a monastery, he strongly supported the Benedictine movement as a bedrock of the western Church. He sent missionaries to England, and is given much of the credit for the nation's conversion.

In undertaking these works, Pope Gregory saw himself as the “servant of the servants of God.” He was the first of the Bishops of Rome to popularize the now-traditional Papal title, which referred to Christ's command that those in the highest position of leadership should be “the last of all and the servant of all.”

Even as he undertook to consolidate Papal power and shore up the crumbling Roman west, St. Gregory the Great maintained a humble sense of his mission as a servant and pastor of souls, from the time of his election until his death in 604.

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The September meeting of the Oblates will be on the 20th at 3:30 in the Gallagher Room. We will continue with the reading of Fr. Michael Casey, OCSO, *Strangers to the City* Chapter 12: Holiness.