

Book Review:

The Devil's Final Battle

by Edwin Faust

The demise or, as some would have it, the reform of Catholic institutions that followed the Second Vatican Council has let loose a flood of books purporting to analyze the causes of this rapid and extraordinary transformation.

There are books which look upon the post-Vatican II years as the consummation of an unequalled and unforeseen tragedy, and others which see this era as a mere bump on a bright road leading us to ever greener pastures in which to repose with a renewed faith. The arguments for these varying positions are numerous and complex, but there is one book which presents us with a unified vision that accounts for facts past, present and, possibly, to come: *The Devil's Final Battle* (DFB).

First published in 2002, this updated edition is virtually a new book. It enlarges the original volume by more than 100 pages with detailed accounts of the major developments in the Church during

the past seven years. DFB is concerned with the Message of Fatima and the Church's failure to obey the requests made in 1917 by the Blessed Mother, who appeared six times in six successive months to three shepherd children in the mountains of Portugal.

Crucial questions, astounding answers

The burden of the book is to answer the questions: why have powerful Vatican prelates turned away from the Fatima Message or attempted to distort it; and what effect has this refusal to accede to Our Lady of Fatima's requests had on the Church and the world?

The book is a compilation from authoritative sources and official documents under the editorship of Father Paul Kramer and the editorial team of the Missionary Association. In answer to the first question, the history of Fatima is detailed, from the time of the first apparition in 1917 until the present day. What emerges is that the

New Edition

Updated & Expanded by more than 100 pages



Written by
7 Fatima Experts
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Mankind is being misled about matters of life and death, and salvation by very powerful people both inside and outside the Church!

• "In the Third Secret it is foretold, among other things, that the Great Apostasy in the Church will begin at the top."
... Cardinal Luigi Ciampi

• "The authors of the articles revised and compiled here contend that we are in the midst of the Great Apostasy: that final conflict for our souls.

The evidence in this book shows that this is taking place NOW and that it is the substance of the Third Secret of Fatima.

Required reading, for those who fail to see the direct connection of the Third Secret with the darkened intellects and moral indifference of clergy, politicians and numerous faithful in the face of the super-human evil unleashed among us by God's adversary, the killer of souls."

... Father Charles Flore, Professor Invitational of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome (The Angelicum)

• This book offers a clear but alarming vision of where we are, how we got there, and where we are going!
... David Allen White, Ph.D.

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Vatican, which assured the faithful that the apparitions were worthy of belief and encouraged devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, suffered what can only be described as a sea change in its attitude towards this extraordinary event and the value assigned to it.

DFB documents how, over the course of many years, the Vatican's emphasis on the importance of Fatima and the meaning of its message have altered drastically. The book demonstrates how this change towards Fatima has kept pace with a radical shift in the theology, liturgy and the orientation of the Church to the world. Fatima becomes the gauge by which one can measure the deterioration of orthodoxy as manifested by certain members of the hierarchy and transmitted to the man in the pew. The book shows how Fatima is the Rosetta stone that allows us to understand what has occurred over most of the past century, both in the Church and in the world.

The Vatican's attitude towards Fatima falls into two historical periods, with 1960 as the great divide. The Fatima apparitions involved prophecies, promises and

requests from the Blessed Mother conveyed to the shepherd children, of whom Lucia dos Santos was the oldest and the only one destined to live a long life. She died in 2005, but lived to witness the beatification of the other two seers, Francisco and Jacinta Marto, in 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

These communications from Heaven to the Fatima seers were given a unique warrant in the form of a public miracle, predicted months in advance and witnessed by 70,000 people on October 13, 1917.

This was the Miracle of the Sun, recounted in secular newspapers of the time and by thousands of eyewitnesses. In brief: the sun appeared to detach itself from the heavens and to move in a zigzag fashion, which was described by some as "dancing"; people were able to look directly at the sun without hurting their eyes; the sun then began to plunge towards the earth; the crowd was terrified; but the sun then returned to its place in the heavens and the people found their clothing, which had been soaked by a heavy rain, completely dry; the ground that had been mud was also dried up and

firm. Even unbelievers agree with this account, which can be read in the Lisbon newspapers of the day, which were virulently anti-Catholic.

The Anticlimax of 1960

The Fatima Message was thus given a Divine stamp of authenticity, which the Church recognized. The seers also received communications from Our Lady. Part of the Fatima Message was to be kept secret until later. The first two secrets consisted of a vision of hell and the promise that the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary would bring world peace. The Third Secret, written down by Sister Lucy in 1944 and which remains the focal point of great controversy, was partly revealed by the Vatican in 2000. But Sister Lucy had said the Blessed Mother wanted the Secret revealed in 1960 "because it would be clearer then."

The Catholic world awaited 1960 with an air of great anticipation. In the 1950s, Hollywood even bowed to the Catholic interest in Fatima by producing a highly successful movie about the Miracle of the Sun starring one of their

big box-office attractions of the time, Gilbert Roland. So, 1960 came. The revelation of the Secret was expected, but it was never given. Instead, a news release from an anonymous Vatican source appeared in the Portuguese press announcing that the words of the Blessed Mother to the Fatima seers contained in the Third Secret would likely remain sealed forever. No explanation was given.

Disappointment and puzzlement among many Catholics turned to doubt and cynicism. The Third Secret could not have been so important, many thought. By extension, Fatima could not have been so important, or was no longer important. There was also a sense that Catholics had been somehow misled or deceived into thinking Fatima the focal point of modern history. Fatima, in consequence, became largely forgotten or else remembered as something of an embarrassment. Doubts about whether it may have been to a large extent exaggeration or imagination were even entertained, with the aid of skeptics such as the Jesuit writer, Father Edouard Dhanis.

The new light on the ho-

rizon in 1960 became the Second Vatican Council. It seemed that the Miracle of the Sun was to be eclipsed by Pope John XXIII's great convocation of the world's bishops, an event of incalculable importance which had not been attempted in almost a century.

What Catholics did not know and were not to learn for some time was that Pope John read the Third Secret and decided not to reveal it. The existence of a pact between Moscow and the Vatican in which, in return for Russian Orthodox observers at the Council, the Holy See guaranteed that communism would not be the subject of a condemnation was also unknown.

In light of this, it can come as no surprise that Fatima's call for the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and its promised conversion to Catholicism ran contrary to the policy adopted by Pope John and, later, carried on by his successors and honored to this day. It may also be safely assumed that the part of the Third Secret yet to be disclosed did not support the optimism being broadcast with regard to

the Council. But what was to be done about Fatima? It certainly did not belong on the agenda progressive theologians were drawing up for their reform. There was a simple solution: ignore it.

Fatima versus the Spirit of Vatican II

Now, the scene was set for a repositioning of the Catholic Church. When Pope John XXIII, in his opening address to the Council, distanced himself from those "prophets of gloom" who saw the world as ever more boldly opposing the Church, it seemed plausible, even likely, that he was referring to the pre-Vatican II mindset of Catholics who looked to Our Lady of Fatima's call for repentance and sacrifice and Her warning of chastisements if Her requests for the conversion of Russia were not heeded.

But human prudence was preferred to Divine guidance. The Council produced a tome of ambiguous documents, which later were used to justify every vagary of the post-conciliar epoch. The spirit of the Council came to be a specter that haunted the ruined habitations of the Church: its empty monasteries and

convents, its closed schools and parishes, its abandoned seminaries. And Our Lady of Fatima appeared ever more incongruous in the new updated Church, in which miracles and Divine interventions became historical embarrassments to the post-conciliar establishment.

But the spirit of Fatima still contended with the spirit of the Council, and the traditional Catholic Faith, with its venerable forms of worship and piety, stubbornly endured. Apostolates dedicated to the revelation of the Third Secret and the Consecration of Russia sprang up. The Holy See kept receiving requests and petitions to obey Our Lady of Fatima. Pope John Paul II consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart in 1984, but no mention of Russia was made, nor did the world's bishops participate. The "Fatimists" were not satisfied.

And all attempts to silence the "Fatimists" failed. Then, in the year 2000, the Vatican decided upon a policy designed ostensibly to honor Fatima while laying it to rest in the vault of history.

DFB provides the reader with a detailed account of all

that has occurred since the year 2000, when the Third Secret was alleged to have been fully revealed. In some respects, the book resembles a good detective story, with its authors acting as relentless sleuths determined to find the truth and fighting their way through every obstacle. Vatican officials put in their path.

The Vatican publication of the Third Secret was accompanied by a document, *The Message of Fatima (TMF)*, which obviously was designed to dismiss the literal truth of the vision presented in the Third Secret and to undermine the credibility of the seers. *TMF* offers itself as an "interpretive key" to understanding the import of Fatima. It also suggests that what Lucy saw may have been the product of her own imagination, as *TMF* claims it accorded with what she may have seen in religious books of the period.

TMF also quotes as its sole expert on Fatima the skeptic Jesuit, Edouard Dhanis.

But not even the secular press accepted the logic and plausibility of *TMF*. As the *Los Angeles Times* concluded, the Vatican was trying to

“gently debunk Fatima.” But in the month preceding the publication of *TMF*, Francisco and Jacinta Marto were beatified at a ceremony in Fatima presided over by Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father, however, yielded the platform to Cardinal Sodano, then-Secretary of State, who announced the forthcoming publication of the Third Secret.

It was also Sodano’s position, and one still maintained by his successor, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, that the vision of the Third Secret, that of a bishop in white killed by soldiers with bullets and arrows, refers to the assassination attempt by a lone gunman against Pope John Paul II in 1981. But the “interpretive key” did not fit the lock.

What Happened to Our Lady’s Words?

Then, those who had studied all that was known about the Third Secret, which contains the words of Our Lady, as the Vatican’s own communiqué in 1960 states, asked why the published Secret contains no such words. And not only are no words in the published Third Secret from the Blessed Mother, there is also no warning about the

dangers to the faith that those who read the Secret, including Pope Benedict XVI when he was Cardinal Ratzinger, told us the Third Secret contains.

DFB does an admirable job of marshalling all the facts from all the experts on Fatima and the Third Secret. The book, in its first publication, established beyond doubt that the vision published as the Third Secret cannot be the complete text. In fact, so thorough and convincing is *DFB*’s documentation and reasoning that the book became the catalyst for an event that its latest edition covers in great detail.

The persistent claims of the “Fatimists” that the full Third Secret had not been revealed and that the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart by the Pope and the bishops had never taken place aroused the ire of a prominent Italian journalist and TV personality, Antonio Succi. Succi was squarely on the side of the Vatican when he began his work. He was determined to write the definitive book that would lay to rest the controversies surrounding Fatima and show that those who dissented

“Let’s Crush Them”



June 26, 2009. North Korea Promises “Fire Shower of Nuclear Retaliation”

Punching their fists into the air and shouting “Let’s crush them!”, some 100,000 North Koreans packed Pyongyang’s main square for an anti-U.S. rally as the Communist regime promised a “fire shower of nuclear retaliation” for any American-led attack.

Several demonstrators held up a placard depicting a pair of hands smashing a missile with “U.S.” written on it, according to footage taken by APTN in Pyongyang on the anniversary of the day North Korean troops charged southward, sparking the three-year Korean War in 1950.

North Korean troops will respond to any sanctions or U.S. provocations with “an annihilating blow”, one senior official vowed – a pointed threat as an American destroyer shadowed a North Korean freighter sailing off China’s coast, possibly with banned goods on board.

On **June 26, 2000**, 9 years earlier to the day, while pretending that the whole Third Secret was released, Cardinal Bertone told us the “period of history marked by tragic human lust for power and evil” is over.

from the Cardinal Secretary of State’s position lacked credibility.

Critic of the ‘Fatimists’ Switches Sides

He read the “Fatimist” literature, including the most

comprehensive compendium of information that argued against the official position, *The Devil’s Final Battle*. He had previously been prejudiced against the “Fatimists,” finding their polemical tone

offensively strident. He also trusted in the integrity of his sources in the Vatican. But Socci, to his great credit, is possessed of an intellectual honesty and journalistic integrity that compel him to acknowledge the truth.

To his great surprise, he discovered the facts and argumentation in *DFB* never to have been satisfactorily addressed by Vatican officials, who instead either ignored or vilified the "Fatimists." He wanted to lay his concerns candidly in front of Cardinal Bertone, with whom he had long been on friendly terms. To his surprise, the Cardinal Secretary of State refused to be interviewed on the matter.

Socci continued to dig and to ask questions, but the more he pursued the truth, the more *persona non grata* he became in the halls of power within the Vatican. Eventually, Socci published his findings in his own book, *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*.

In it, he frequently cites *DFB* and its editor, Father Paul Kramer, as having been instrumental in bringing to light those facts that were being ignored or obscured or falsely contradicted by those who wished to consign

Fatima to history and be done with it. Socci ironically found himself becoming, in his own way, a "Fatimist."

It is rare that the reaction provoked by a book requires that a new edition be issued to incorporate that reaction. But the ecclesial earthquake caused by *DFB*, which led to the aftershock of *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, has shaken Rome and continues to shake it. The new edition reports the astounding change in the state of the Fatima controversy occasioned by its initial publication.

In short, *The Devil's Final Battle* became more than a book: it became an event in recent Church history. The new edition is sure to provoke a major response in Rome and among devout Catholics who realize that we are living in extraordinary times. It deserves a careful and patient reading by anyone who wants to know what has happened to the Catholic Church in our day and what the future portends. And it presents the only solution to the dangers facing the Church, the world, and individual souls: Do what Our Lady of Fatima asks. 