



FORMATION PROGRAM #12
The Third Secret
 A Simple Interpretation in Mystical Language

[NOTE: *In offering this personal interpretation of the Third Secret, we do not wish to go before the Church in presuming this as an exact explanation. It is but a humble submission of a possible interpretation offered in the light of the Fatima message, which has gone before it with the same symbolic meditations found in the preceding lessons.*] Read the Third Secret in its entirety first (found on the next page) and then return to this page for its accompanying commentary.

“After the two parts which I have already explained, at the left of Our Lady and a little above...” - Our left is usually seen as the side ‘against us’, even as the right is ‘for us’. The Angel is at Our Lady’s left because She doesn’t wish us to suffer the chastisement, but is a little above because God’s justice demands it.

“we saw an Angel with a flaming sword in his left hand;” - This Angel, a minister of God’s justice, symbolically stands over us, just as he stands before the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24), a mystical garden, which encloses the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life. The Tree of Knowledge could be said to house WHAT God is (i.e. His attributes of knowledge of good and evil), while the Tree of Life houses WHO God is (i.e. the Holy Eucharist). Let us look at each ‘tree’ in the light of today’s events:

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil symbolizes knowledge that is not only known to us, but also knowledge that is forbidden to us—knowledge of future events (good or evil), or of peering into areas that are dealing with the world of spirits. This information is often sought after through vain curiosity, such as “apparition hopping” or through forbidden means, such as disobedience to the voice of the local Church, or interest in the occult. We fall away from our daily duty when we have “itching ears” to seek after another gospel. This Tree also houses what God is NOT, such as self-seeking and sin of all kinds.

The Tree of Life symbolizes Mary⁹, who brings forth the Fruit that gives everlasting Life. It can also be said to be the Cross. This tree bears within it the mystery of Christ’s love. Through self-denial, Jesus gives the self-sacrificial gift of Himself: His Body and His Blood. Jesus shows us the body is for crucifixion, i.e. penance, self-denial; and the blood (our life) is to be poured out in acts of self-giving mercy in the service of others.

From this we see that the Tree of Life is Christ and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is anti-Christ.¹⁰

“flashing, it gave out flames that looked as though they would set the world on fire;” - This mystical garden has been crossed, or rather the Tree of Life has been violated, not so much by the world (for it will always partake of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), **but by the members of the Church** that partake of the Tree of Knowledge AND the Tree of Life. It is the Church that has the mission to save the world by partaking of the Tree of Life and of living Christ’s life — a life of penance and of self-giving through service to God and our fellow men. How is the world to be saved when its ‘savior’ has become anti-Christ; slayers of Christ and of society??

“but they died out in contact with the splendor that Our Lady radiated towards him from her right hand;” - Our Lady has obtained mercy for us (this, of course, was obtained together with the merits of Christ, with all those who have been obedient to Her message, and those who have suffered patiently)...but it is only a TEMPORARY GRACE. We have reached the “fullness of times”; in other words, the cup has been filled by the sufferings and obedience of those who have said, “Yes”. The world has been temporarily saved by Our Lady through the merits of Jesus Christ, together with the few. Those who have partaken of the Tree of Knowledge have been deceived; they have chosen an apparent good. Our Lady manifests the prayer of Christ, “Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.” Now there comes the second stage:

“pointing to the earth with his right hand, the Angel cried out in a loud voice: ‘Penance, Penance, Penance!’ - **Now** is the time for **all** of us to respond, **and** it is **URGENT!** **All need to receive the Message and all of us have need to respond because the time of grace and mercy is temporary!** ¹¹

“And we saw in an immense light that is God: ‘something similar to how people appear in a mirror when they pass in front of it’” - [This calls to mind when the three shepherd children saw themselves in this light and exclaimed, “O Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament!]

This can be said to be the soul’s revelation or unveiling and its likeness to God. Just as He is veiled under the appearance of bread, so He is veiled by our appearance in human form.

“a Bishop dressed in White ‘we had the impression that it was the Holy Father’. - They see the hidden Christ on earth crucified in the Pope, and how his life compares with Our Lord’s.

⁹ The Secret of Mary by St. Louis de Montfort, IV. “The Tree of Life: It’s Culture and Growth”.

¹⁰ **Pope John Paul II:** speaking in September 1976, then Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, said: “We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has gone through. I do not think the wide circles of the American society, or wide circles of the Christian community, realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel versus the anti-Gospel, between Christ and anti-Christ. This confrontation lies within the plans of divine Providence; it is a trial which the whole Church must take up.”

¹¹ **Sr. Lucia:** writing to the Holy Father on May 12, 1982, referring to the prophecy “various nations will be annihilated”, added: “If we have not yet seen the complete fulfillment of the final part of this prophecy, we are going towards it little by little with great strides.” Deadline - The Third Secret of Fatima by John Haffert, pg. 4 - 5

“Other Bishops, Priests, men and women religious going up a steep mountain, at the top of which there was a big Cross of rough-hewn trunks as of a cork-tree with the bark;” - This symbolizes the mystical climb of their spiritual life. The rough-hewn trunks of a cork tree call to mind the basic raw, sometimes harsh, difficulty of the performance of one's daily duty. This is the call of the Gospel expressed at Fatima where cork trees are common. Our Lord told Sr. Lucia, “The sacrifice required of every person is the fulfillment of his duties in life and the observance of My law. This is the penance that I now seek and require.”

“before reaching there the Holy Father passed through a big city half in ruins...” - This is the Church. The First Greatest Commandment has fallen into ruins, while the Second Greatest Commandment stands as though for its own sake.

“and half trembling with halting step,...” - The Holy Father seems to stop, as though to look again at the situation in the Church and the world. He cannot reach them by the means which has been traditionally been traveled. No one is listening. He begins new steps with his focus on addressing that which is basic to everyone: respect for the common dignity of every human person. In this way the whole person can be addressed, and an attitude of understanding must be formed to know the reasons *why* people think as they do. Through listening and dialogue, and by focusing on that which we have in common as a brotherhood in Christ, we are called to make our pilgrimage as Catholics who know our Faith and then share it in true concern for our fellowman instead of focusing on our differences and accusing one another. We must forgive and be forgiven. We must go forward in faith.

“afflicted with pain and sorrow, he prayed for the souls of the corpses he met on his way;” - The Holy Father prays for those dead through mortal sin. He wants to reach them too.

“having reached the top of the mountain,...” - spiritual maturity; the fullness of Christ in suffering...

“on his knees at the foot of the big Cross...” - Here he makes the offering of his life...

“he was killed by a group of soldiers who fired bullets and arrows at him...,” - It is finished. He can give no more. Spending himself completely for the life of the Church, his enemies had totally succeeded in crushing his life to the ground. He died a mystical death...a complete death to self. His enemies had desired to kill any knowledge or remembrance of Christ from the face of the earth by directing it at his person. Bullets are the intent to kill the life of Christ and arrows are words of hatred and criticism. The physical attempt on the Pope's life was merely the open manifestation of what lay hidden.

“and in the same way there died one after another the other Bishops, Priests, men and women Religious, and various lay people of different ranks and positions.” - These too suffer mystical death (white martyrdom). These deaths and the death of the Pope (i.e. death to self), all together fill up the measure which the splendor of Our Lady's right hand used to cause the fire to die out, which was to strike the world principally due to the fault of sins and disobedience within the Church.

“Beneath the two arms of the Cross there were two Angels each with a crystal aspersorium in his hand, in which they gathered up the blood of the Martyrs and with it sprinkled the souls that were making their way to God.” - The two arms of the Cross can be said to be love of God and neighbor. The blood of those who have physically died as Martyrs is mystically sprinkled on those who made this mystic journey and were responding to the call of prayer and penance. Red and white martyrdom call to mind the Blood and Water gushing from the side of Christ Who offers us His Mercy.

REFLECTION AND RESPONSE: It can be seen in this, the Third Secret of Fatima, the action of the Holy Spirit in the Mystical Body of Christ in redeeming souls and the role of the Blessed Mother in gathering us all in Her, so as to obtain mercy and forgiveness for all humanity from Christ, Who set the pattern in His suffering and death to save us all. This work is not yet done. We are still in danger unless enough people today respond to the message of Fatima. Otherwise we shall bring upon ourselves our own destruction. The Gospel is the timeless message of prayer and penance. The message of Fatima is tailor made for us to see its practical application in our lives and for the times in which we live. Its urgency and importance bids us no longer be distracted, or preoccupied, with the joys of this world, but to be generous in our response for the sake of saving both body and soul of ourselves and of others.

If you have not yet done so, please make the commitment to do what Our Lady asks of each of us: for love of God, for your own good, and for the good of others. Pray the Rosary; meditate on the lives of Jesus and Mary- our Pattern of living. Wear the Brown Scapular; consecrate your life to Their Two Hearts- live in Their Presence and under Their protection. Do your daily duty, accept and live your responsibilities to God and to others- your part of the cross. Make the First Saturdays; repair for those who are bringing the world to its destruction by their crimes so that they too may receive forgiveness and healing- this is the hope of the world. Say “Yes”. Sign the World Apostolate of Fatima Pledge- the outward sign of your commitment to be a part of the Church militant in bringing God's Kingdom to this world so there will be peace.

“In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph and there will be peace.”

Will you join Her ranks?

[Brief period of silent reflection]

Discussion

Examination of last month's resolutions

Apostolic resolution

Resolution in brief: **Sign the World Apostolate of Fatima Pledge...and live it. If you have already done so, renew your commitment and get others to join.**

Act of Consecration