

--To Whom Will We Go To?--

"At that time Jesus answered and said: I confess to You O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them to little ones. Yes, Father for so it has seemed good in Your sight" (Matthew 11:25-26). We have it on the authority of Scripture that this is the dispensation of Divine Providence in its dealings with us. An instance of this is Mary's apparition in the mountain of La Salette in France where the two children were given a secret which was later transmitted to Pope Pius IX. Another case is Fatima and its famous Third Secret. In Lipa, the Blessed Virgin Mary gave to the young seer Teresita Castillo a Secret which was subsequently entrusted to His Eminence Ricardo Cardinal Vidal in 2007.

In the recent plenary assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, July of this year, His Eminence wrote the members of CBCP as regards the Secret of Lipa which prophesied the present crisis sparked by China's expansionist drive for territorial gain. The Secret was given to the seer of Carmel Lipa in October 1949 in the very same month and year that the People's Republic of China was established by the communist government.

The Initiative of the Cardinal from Cebu

Permit me to quote from the letter of Cardinal Vidal dated July 19, 2014 to the bishops of the Philippines which sets before us the hard truth of our precarious existence in the face of the territorial ambitions of this emerging Communist world power:

"We witness with ever-increasing apprehension the emerging international power of China which has its repercussions for the security and peace of our country. Our Lady of Fatima said that war is a punishment for sin, and it is in this light that we see that our offenses against God and His commandments can make of China the instrument of Divine justice. Pornography and obscenity, drug and substance abuse, greed manifest in graft and corruption reaching levels of plunder, contraception and birth control institutionalized by the evil RH Law, immodest fashion, live-in conjugal arrangements, homosexual unions--all these and other sins will bring on us punishment by the aggressive expansionism of China."

"On October 17, 1949 Mary Mediatrix of All Grace prophesied and told the seer of Lipa *'Pray hard for China's dream to invade the whole world. The Philippines is one of its favourites. Money is the evil force that will lead the people of the world to destruction.'*"

"It is thus to the Queen of Prophets under her title of Mediatrix of All Grace to whom we will have recourse in order to avert the build up of tension and to check the territorial ambitions of this Asian super-power."

The logic of Cardinal Vidal's proposition is readily grasped. It was our Lady of Fatima who prophesied that Russia would spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church and that the antidote for this was to be the collegial consecration of Russia as spoken of by our Lady herself at Fatima. The Secret of Lipa parallels that of Fatima. It was the Mediatrix of All Grace of Carmel Lipa who gave this prophetic message about China, and thus it is to Our Lady under this title of her universal mediation to whom we will run to as the geo-political situation in our part of the world worsens and deteriorates.

Cardinal Vidal bluntly tells us: "The Philippines cannot by any stretch of the imagination equal or overtake China in economic growth or prevail in a military confrontation. China can bring to bear its huge financial, material and human resources as well as its advanced military capability in any struggle with a smaller and poorer country like the Philippines with its ill-equipped armed forces."

The second part of the Lipa prophecy reads: "*Money is the evil force that will lead the people of the world to destruction.*" This second part of the Lipa prophecy is an echo of the encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" (QA), "On The Reconstruction of the Social Order" issued by Pope Pius XI on May 15, 1931:

"This accumulation of (economic) might and of power generates...conflict...between States themselves, not only because countries employ their power and shape their policies to promote every economic advantage of their citizens, but also because they seek to decide political controversies that arise among nations through the use of their economic supremacy and strength." (QA 108)

The Master Plan of China

As events have unfolded and are unfolding, the objective of China in the light of the prophecy of Lipa is now discernible. China intends to achieve geo-political supremacy by means of the economic and financial invasion of the world. Its most recent thrust is the creation of the New Development Bank (NDB) by Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS). China is fully supportive of the NDB initiative because "it can serve as a useful tool to further the expanding political and economic interest of China." The NDB is so huge an enterprise that it is foreseen that it may encroach on the roles of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The NDB

is part of the overall strategy of Chinese economic statecraft in pursuit of global economic power. For years now China has registered continuous and impressive economic growth and is projected to become the dominant economic power of the world displacing the United States of America. The invasion spoken of in the Lipa Secret is primarily economic though without detriment to resort to the threat of armed force if deemed expedient, especially to increase its resource base.

The Philippine Bishops Believe in Lipa

Cardinal Vidal believes that the Lipa apparitions were true manifestations of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Earlier on, not long after his appointment as the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Lipa in 1973, Archbishop Ricardo Vidal approached the former Auxiliary Bishop of Lipa, Msgr. Alfredo Obviar to ask him on how he was to proceed as regards the apparitions at Carmel Lipa which had received a negative judgment in 1951. With a simple gesture of his finger over his lips, Bishop Obviar cautioned him to maintain silence on the extraordinary happenings in that Carmelite Monastery. Archbishop Vidal complied and during the entirety of his leadership of the Batangas Archdiocese he maintained the reserve advised him by the elder prelate. He kept quiet about Lipa.

Today, the most senior prelate in the Philippine Hierarchy is the Cardinal Archbishop Emeritus of Cebu and years have now elapsed since he made manifest his belief in the authenticity of the apparitions at Lipa. His decision to break his silence and publicly pray before the image of the Mediatrix of Lipa is an example to emulate, as are those acts of the Philippine Bishops by their facilitation of public veneration of the Mediatrix of All Grace.

In 1991 the then Archbishop of Lipa, Msgr. Mariano Gaviola effectively lifted the ban imposed on Carmel Lipa which had suppressed the devotion to the Mediatrix.

In 2004 the incumbent Archbishop of Lipa, the Most Rev. Ramon Arguelles initiated the Annual National Pilgrimage to Lipa held every September 12 at the Carmelite Monastery which continues to this year.

In 2005 Archbishop Fernando Capalla as President of CBCP took official cognizance of the September 12 National Pilgrimage by declaring it a Day of Conversion, Reparation and Consecration.

In 2006 Archbishop Angel Lagdameo likewise as President of CBCP exhorted Filipino Catholics to go to Mary at Her Shrine in Lipa.

In 2007 Archbishop Paciano Aniceto as Chairman of ECFL-CBCP launched the Mediatrix Flores de Mayo as an official initiative of the Family Life Commission.

In 2009 Archbishop Ramon Arguelles issued a Decree which formalized the lifting of the ban prohibiting public veneration of the image of the Mediatrix in Lipa Carmel.

To date, practically all of the ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the Philippines have received and accepted images and devotional literature of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace.

Consistent with the truism that "actions speak louder than words", the cumulative effect of all these acts constitute a de facto recognition of the authenticity of the Apparitions.

You and I have the faith that Lipa is a true apparition. It is not divine faith which I speak of here for we owe divine faith to the truths revealed to us by Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. We pay the Apparitions of Lipa the tribute of pious faith, and this faith must bear fruit in good works, and thus our belief that the Apparitions were genuine demands response commensurate to the grandeur of Lipa and of the fundamental importance of the Messages imparted at the Carmel of Batangas. What are these Messages of vital significance?

Who She Said She is in Lipa

"I am Mary Mediatrix of All Grace" Thus did Mary identify herself in her visit to the Pueblo Amante de Maria, Her beloved Philippine Islands.

Divine communications are never without a purpose, but in one way or another contribute to the great work of the salvation of mankind. The intent of Christ in His apparitions to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was to reveal His Sacred Heart to men. The agenda of Fatima was to propagate devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the world. Following on this, it is reasonable to conclude that it is Heaven's desire to see the spread of devotion to Mary under the aspect of Her universal mediation. As the recipient of the heavenly Apparitions, it is now incumbent on the Church in the Philippines to be at the forefront in promoting devotion to Mary by the title she pronounced with Her own lips at Carmel Lipa. **The propagation of devotion to Mary Mediatrix of All Grace is the unique contribution of the Church in the Philippines to the apostolate of evangelizing and re-evangelizing the whole world.**

Sanctification through the Mediatrix

"I wish you all to consecrate yourselves to me... and be my slaves." Mother Cecilia of Jesus, Prioress of Lipa Carmel at the time of the Apparitions records that on the 7th of

October in 1948 "the Community made their Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to the spirit of Saint Grignon de Montfort."

I know of no other instance of a Marian apparition making explicit reference to a saint of the Catholic Church. By Her use of the word "slaves", Mary is alluding to the teaching of St. Louis Grignon de Montfort who expounded on the "Holy Slavery of Love to Jesus through Mary". This great apostle of Mary of the 18th century was canonized in 1947, just about a year before the apparitions at Lipa. The request to follow St. Louis Grignon de Montfort's method of consecration is a recommendation to make him a guide for Catholic piety. Pope Pius IX says: "*St. Louis de Montfort's devotion to Mary is the best and most acceptable form of devotion to Our Lady*". Montfort's teaching is a standard of Marian spirituality.

Lipa Enlarges on Fatima

"What I ask here is exactly what I asked at Fatima." Again, I know of no other instance of a Marian apparition that makes specific mention of another apparition. What is this Message that the Blessed Mother wishes to point out to us that is common to both Fatima and Lipa? The seers of Fatima provide the key to interpreting this Message of the Blessed Virgin by showing the link between Fatima and Lipa.

The central Message of Fatima is about the Immaculate Heart and the establishment of devotion to this maternal Heart throughout the world. The overarching Message of Lipa is derived from the identification that the Blessed Mother made of herself in Carmel—that She is the universal Mediatrix in the order of grace.

Jacinta, the youngest seer of Fatima declared: "*God gives graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that we must ask Her for them...*"

The eldest of the three children of Fatima, Sister Lucia also tells us of Marian mediation by relating confidences made by Our Lord Himself: "I desire most ardently, He says, the propagation of the cult of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because *the love of this Heart attracts souls to me; it is the center from which the rays of My light and My love go through all the earth, and the unquenchable fountain from which the living water of My mercy flows into the earth.*" (Letter of Sister Lucia of May 27, 1943 to the Bishop of Gurza)

A profound element in Marian mediation was revealed at Fatima in the course of a vision of Sister Lucia who reported: "*Our Lady opened her hands... communicating to us a light so intense that, as it streamed from her hands, its rays penetrated our hearts and the innermost depths of our souls, making us see ourselves in God, who was that light*".

Sister Lucia is as it were telling us that it is nothing less than the Divinity itself that is communicated to us by the Blessed Virgin.

It is clear to the seers of Fatima that Mary is Mediatrix. The Blessed Mother declared to the seer of Lipa that she is Mediatrix of All Grace. We are led to sum up what the seers have spoken about the Blessed Virgin and we arrive at the conclusion that the **Immaculate Heart of Mary is the Mediatrix of All Grace**, as the Blessed Virgin Mary is capable of communicating God to us, nothing less than the God of All Grace (1 Peter 5:10). Thus the Blessed Virgin can very well speak of the equivalence of her main message at Fatima with Her essential message at Lipa. The full significance of Fatima is attained only under the light of the doctrine of universal mediation encapsulated in the declaration "I am Mary Mediatrix of All Grace".

As She has mediated the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity to the world by way of the Word taking flesh in Her womb, that is by giving us God the Son in the physical order of nature, She can surely mediate to us the spiritual blessings of salvation and sanctification in the mystical order of grace. Authentic Marian piety is necessarily founded on orthodox teaching, and this doctrine of universal Marian mediation lays the foundation for personal, communal, national, ecclesial and global consecrations to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Fatima is built on Lipa.

Lipa elucidates on Fatima leading to a comprehensive understanding of the awe-inspiring and decisive significance of Fatima, and with this realization of **the salvific power exclusively conferred on the Immaculate Heart of Mary**, the devotion to Her maternal heart will deepen the piety of the faithful leading to an increase in the devotion to the Immaculate Heart. Lipa will propel Fatima further.

Truly She is the Mediatrix of Fatima-Lipa.

Fatima-Belgium-Lipa

Just about the same time that Fatima was making its impact, Joseph-Desire Cardinal Mercier of Archdiocese of Malines in Belgium in the early part of the 20th century initiated a movement to dogmatize Mary's universal mediation of grace upon the prodding of a Carmelite prioress, Mother Magdalen of Jesus, from a Carmel in Belgium.

The insistent request of Mother Magdalen and the need of spiritual support during World War I led Joseph Desire Cardinal Mercier and the whole Belgian Episcopate to forward a petition to the Holy Father to dogmatize the universal mediation of Mary.

"To bring his goal closer to realization Cardinal Mercier attached a further project to that of the dogmatic definition...the Archbishop had made a vow 'to work for the Holy See's approval of a special feast in honor of Mary Mediatrix of all graces'"(Rev. Fr. Manfred Hauke, Mediatrix of Grace, Academy of the Immaculate, 2004)

In January 1921 Pope Benedict XV granted this petition and inserted in the liturgical calendar of the Church the feast of Mary Mediatrix of all graces. The collaboration of Mother Magdalen and Cardinal Mercier bore fruit and this liturgical feast was a major milestone in the path towards dogmatization of universal mediation.

"In January 1925,... Cardinal (Mercier) composed--on the basis of a draft by the Montfortans - a prayer 'to obtain from Heaven the dogmatic definition of the universal Mediation of Mary together with the canonization of her great apostle, Blessed Louis Maria Grignon de Montfort...the prayer stresses precisely this, that *through* the canonization of the Blessed the new dogma might be realized." Cardinal Mercier clearly insisted on the intimate link between devotion to Mary as Mediatrix and the devotion taught by Blessed Louis de Montfort. According to Cardinal Mercier "*a worldwide promotion of Grignon's 'true devotion' among Catholics was identical with the success of the proposal for a dogmatic definition*"(Hauke, p.91)

"Shortly before the death of Cardinal Mercier the Montfort Fathers presented the cardinal an album of over 400 testimonials of episcopal support from all over the world, relative to the double proposal of the canonization of Grignon and the definition of Mary's universal mediation of grace."

Belgium Supplicates, God Answers InLipa

In 1947 Blessed Louis de Montfort was canonized by Pius XII. Thus one of the objectives of Cardinal Mercier's prayer had been answered: Blessed Louis Grignon de Montfort was accorded the honors of the altar by the universal Church. As Cardinal Mercier had prayed and hoped "that *through* the canonization of the Blessed the new dogma might be realized," a new phase in the unfolding plan of heaven for the dogmatization of Marian mediation would open in 1948 bringing in its train awesome miracles and tremendous wonders. Heaven was going to respond to the prayer movement begun by Cardinal Mercier in an astounding way.

The petitions of the Mercier-led prayer movement working for the dogma of Mary's mediation were answered by Almighty God by miracles, especially that of the showers of petals at Carmel Lipa. For months, Filipinos were witness to the awesome spectacle of rose petals falling from on high and this extraordinary phenomenon

principally validated the reality of the Apparition who identified Herself as the Mediatrix of All Grace.

Fatima and Belgium converge in Lipa and thus She is the Mediatrix of Fatima-Belgium-Lipa.

Those Qualities of Soul Most Dear to Her

"Humility and Simplicity are the two virtues I love most" This Message of the Blessed Mother that humility and simplicity are the virtues She loves most does not receive much comment as its meaning is quite plain, yet the practice of humility of heart and of simplicity of soul could very well be crucial for the formalization of the approval of Lipa. The example of the boy seer of Fatima, Francisco is a lesson for us. The story of him being interviewed by two women is edifying as it is moving.

One day, two ladies were talking to Francisco. They wanted to know what career he would choose when he grew up.

"Do you want to be a carpenter?" one of them asked.

"No, ma'am."

Another said: "A soldier, then?"

"No, ma'am."

"Would you like to be a doctor?"

"Not that either."

"I know what you'd like to be... a priest!" To say Mass... hear confessions, preach... isn't that true?"

"No, ma'am, I don't want to be a priest."

"Then what do you want to be?"

"I don't want to be anything!... I want to die and go to Heaven."

And basing ourselves on the word of Our Lady, we know that Francisco is now in Heaven.

There is a directness about Christian simplicity that goes to the heart of the matter which follows through by unhesitatingly taking action demanded of us by the strength of our convictions.

May God grace us with lowliness of heart and the rectitude of simplicity not only to believe in Lipa but to act with courageous and persevering determination on our belief as regards the authenticity of the Apparitions.

Only the Mediatrix. Always the Mediatrix.

I would like to close on a note of hope as I refer again to the Secret of Lipa which was passed on to us by Cardinal Vidal which in its last part reads: *"Prayers, sacrifices, self-denials and the daily recitation of rosary will soften the heart of my Son as I said before."*

I make as my own this call of the Mediatrix of All Grace and I urge you my dear brothers in the priesthood to relay these Messages in order to mobilize the power of prayer and penance for the sake of the security and peace of our country.

To whom shall we go to?

Please follow me quietly in the silence of your hearts with this prayer to the Mediatrix of All Grace:

"Lord Jesus Christ our Mediator with the Father who has deigned to constitute Your most blessed Virgin Mother as our Mother also and Mediatrix with You, graciously grant that whoever approaches You to beseech benefits may rejoice to receive all through Her. Who lives and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever Amen. (taken from the liturgical feast of Mary Mediatrix of all graces instituted by Pope Benedict XV, January 1921.)

Maraming salamat po.

Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, D.D.

Convenor, National Movement for Mary Mediatrix of All Grace

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