

## A Reply to Joanna Bogle Respecting the Third Secret of Fatima

### Part I: Post-conciliar correctness versus the truth about Fatima



Joanna Bogle

The respected English Catholic journalist Joanna Bogle is an intelligent woman and an accomplished writer whose objectivity concerning the crisis in the Church, however, is hampered by an ideological commitment to post-conciliar correctness. An indefatigable defender of whatever the post-conciliar “[regime of novelty](#)” has officially approved, even though the post-conciliar “reforms” have produced nothing but decline and corruption in the Church, Bogle’s blinkered view of the ecclesial scene does not allow her to recognize the seriousness of traditionalist objections to what Cardinal Ratzinger so rightly described as “a continuing process of decay” since the Council. Her response to these objections is that of an ideologue: demagoguery and character assassination.

Rather than engaging traditionalists on the merits of their contentions, Bogle caricatures what they are saying so as to elicit a chorus of hissing and booing from the grandstand before which she indignantly struts back and forth, exhorting her audience to fear and loathing at the Catholic Herald and elsewhere. I am sure she and her public find this approach emotionally satisfying, but it fails to meet the standards of rational discourse, still less rational Catholic discourse. When dealing with the positions taken by traditionalist commentators on the state of the Church today and the reasons for it, the otherwise sober Bogle comes off as little more than a literary harridan.

And so it is with her approach to the traditionalist contention that the Vatican has not been

entirely forthcoming regarding publication of the Third Secret of Fatima and that there must be a text in which the Virgin Herself explains the meaning of the vision published on June 26, 2000, wherein we see a future Pope, members of the hierarchy and laity being executed by soldiers on a hill outside a devastated city filled with corpses.

Not just traditionalists, but Catholics the world over find incredible the Vatican's contention that the vision standing alone is all there is to the Third Secret and that for its "interpretation" we must look to none other than the former Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano, whose "interpretation" is cited no fewer than four times in the [Vatican's "official" \(but non-binding\) commentary](#) on the vision. According to Sodano, the Secret concerns nothing more than 20th-century events culminating in the failed attempt on the life of John Paul II in 1981. A Pope escaping death at the hands of a lone assassin in 1981 cannot possibly correspond to the vision of a Pope being executed along with clergy and laity on a hill outside a devastated city. Sodano's "interpretation" is a clumsy contrivance that bespeaks an attempt to obscure rather than reveal the truth.

For Bogle, however, it's all very simple. We must believe Sodano. The idea that the Mother of God must have explained the vision Herself is just the feverish dream of a few crackpots to be ridiculed and reviled. In full caricature mode, she [writes](#) in the Catholic Herald that "Fatimists" contend that "St John Paul and the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger lied in 2000 when the Third Secret was published," that they are "sinister characters" and that "Pope Emeritus" Benedict XVI "is a virtual prisoner; a double is sometimes presented to the public in his place; he has been hypnotised; he is actually now talking in a sort of code; they are putting drugs in his tea."

Please. Either Bogle is profoundly ignorant of this subject or deeply dishonest in her discussion of it. None of the serious, carefully researched sources on this controversy advance such laughable contentions. A brief and necessarily partial review of the evidence, more fully summarized [here](#) and [here](#), is thus in order by way of response to Bogle's crude agitprop. That will be subject of the next two columns in this series.

At the outset, however, it must be said that the most likely explanation for the suppression of the explanatory text is not that John Paul and Benedict "lied." In fact, they never made any positive representations on the matter and never imposed Sodano's preposterous "interpretation" on the Church. Rather, as the Catholic public intellectual and commentator Antonio Socci maintains, the two pontiffs considered themselves governed by a prudential judgment during the pontificate of John XXIII: that the suppressed text cannot be an authentic revelation by the Virgin and that it reflects only Sister Lucia's personal impressions.

Indeed, the Vatican's commentary on the vision suspiciously avoided Sister Lucia's more complete Fourth Memoir recording the integral Message of Fatima. There we read what would appear to be the beginning of the Virgin's explanation of the vision: "In Portugal, the dogma of the faith will always be preserved, etc." Lucia added the "etc." to indicate the Virgin's further words concerning what would logically be a prophecy of a grave dogmatic crisis in the Church outside of Portugal.

In a blatant attempt to evade the profound implications of the Virgin's reference to Portugal and the dogma of the Faith, the Vatican relied on the Third Memoir instead of the more complete Fourth, dismissing the reference as "some annotations that were added in the Fourth Memoir" and consigning the Virgin's words to a footnote. There we have it: the very words of the Virgin, obviously continuing her prophecy, are reduced to "annotations" deemed extrinsic to the Secret. Therefore they need not be published.

In the next two columns I will indicate some of the major grounds for the reasonable belief, held commonly by well-informed Catholics, that Sister Lucia's "annotations" belong to a suppressed explanatory text that must exist in which the Mother of God continues to speak on the subject She introduces with the momentous reference to Portugal and the dogma of the Faith that the Vatican buried in a footnote in the hope Her words would be forgotten.

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