

**Pope Benedict XVI-  
Speeches & Other Writings  
From the Vatican 2-22-07**

**INTRODUCTION TO CARDINAL  
TARCISIO BERTONE'S BOOK**

"The Last Fatima Visionary: My Meetings With  
Sister Lucia"

H.H. Benedict XVI



To Cardinal Tarcisio  
Bertone, Vatican  
Secretary of State

Venerable Brother, Sister Lucia entrusts so many memories to the book "The Last Fatima Visionary" that treat of events that have marked the history of the last part of the 20th century. She has entrusted them to this book so that they do not remain merely precious baggage of personal emotions, but be handed over to the collective memory as they are not without significance for secular history.

In reality, during that memorable time that was the Jubilee Year of 2000, we experienced together the chapter that treats of the publication of the third Fatima secret: I, as the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and you, as the secretary of the same dicastery. The great Pontiff who preceded me, John Paul II, fecund with prophetic inspirations and personally convinced that the "maternal hand" of the Virgin had deflected the bullet that could have been fatal for him, saw that the time had come to remove the veil of mystery that covered the last part of the secret that the Virgin had consigned to the three little shepherds of Fatima. The congregation, which conserved the precious document written by Sister Lucia, was put in charge.

It was a time of light, not only because the message could thus be known by all, but also because the truth could be unveiled in the midst of the confusion of apocalyptic interpretations and speculations that circulated in the Church and created anxiety among the faithful instead of inviting them to prayer and penance. Nevertheless, on the other hand, one could see the comforting development of Marian piety, authentic font of Christian life, around the imposing shrine of Fatima and in every part of the world where devotion to the Virgin, under the influence of the apparitions of Fatima, took deep root in the faith of the people, inviting men and women to consecrate themselves to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The conversations between the visionary, the last remaining of the three shepherd children, and you, a bishop sent by the Pope, have been important not only for the verification of the veridicality of the facts, but also as an occasion to know the limpid freshness of the soul of Sister Lucia, the intelligence of the heart typical of her femininity, transferred into a robust Christian faith. Through this humble nun, there shines the role of the Virgin Mary who with her maternal hand accompanies the Christian through life's bitterness.

I myself oversaw the drafting of the theological commentary on the event, after having intensely prayed and deeply meditated on the contents of the pages written by Sister Lucia. I was deeply affected by the consoling promise of the Most Holy Virgin, which was like a synthesis and precious seal: "My Immaculate Heart will triumph." As it had been written, "Mary's 'fiat,' the word of her heart, changed the history of the world, because it introduced the Savior into this world -- because thanks to this 'yes' God could become man among us and he will remain such forever."

And again, "From the time that God himself has a human heart and directed human freedom toward the good, toward God, freedom for evil does not have the last word." The message of Fatima is a further confirmation of this.

I invoke the protection of the Most Holy Virgin for all those who will read the testimony offered with this book and to you, dear cardinal, and to Doctor Giuseppe De Carli, who shared the work of producing this memoir, I impart the apostolic blessing.

From the Vatican, Feb. 22, 2007.