

Drawing Aside the Purple Curtain

The Papal System Today: an Analysis of the News

THE “FATIMA” PROJECT: MARIOLATRY AND ROMAN CATHOLIC “SALVATION”

by Shaun Willcock

I received, through the post, a free copy of a book entitled *Fatima: Past or Future? The Unheeded Message*, by Antonio A. Borelli. This came from the “South Africa Needs Fatima” project, a Roman Catholic project dedicated to spreading the message of the supposed apparitions of Mary at Fatima, and thereby actively promoting **Mariolatry**.

It is not my intention, at this time, to examine the Fatima apparitions, or the Fatima message. That is a huge subject and beyond the scope of this short article. What I want to do is to examine, not the book itself, but two aspects of Roman Catholicism which are clearly and strongly set out in the order form and the covering letter which accompanied the book. These are **Mariolatry**, and **Roman Catholic “Salvation”**. In this ecumenical age, multitudes of deceived Protestants think that Roman Catholics do not worship Mary, and that Rome teaches the biblical doctrine of salvation. But the quotations given below prove conclusively that Papists most definitely *do* worship Mary, and that Rome teaches a “salvation” that is at utter variance with the Word of God, the Bible.

Mariolatry

Mariolatry is “**the idolatrous worship of the virgin Mary**” (The Oxford Universal Dictionary). Although they lamely try to deny it, the fact is that Roman Catholics worship a **goddess**; and their goddess’s name is Mary. This goddess of theirs is only loosely based on Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus. She is in fact the all-powerful Goddess-Mother of ancient heathenism, who was worshipped around the world under various titles, and renamed “Mary” within Roman Catholicism while retaining all the attributes and characteristics of the ancient heathen goddess. No matter how loudly they proclaim to the world that they don’t actually worship her, the fact remains that they **pray** to her, **sing hymns** to her, speak of her with names that can only be attributed to **deity**, and **bow down** with reverence before her image. This is all **worship**, nothing less. Their “Mary” is given powers which could belong only to a goddess. Take the fact that she is said to hear and answer prayer, for example. The covering letter that accompanied the book I received says, “**Look to Her maternal gaze, and pray to Her.**” Well, if she can hear and answer prayer, then she is a goddess, nothing less! So the fact that they do not actually refer to her as such is besides the point: she is *worshipped* as a goddess. And not only that, but the *idols*, the graven images, of this goddess are worshipped as well.

The Roman Catholic institution calls itself the Roman Catholic *Church*. It claims to be the one true Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. It professes to teach and uphold Christianity. However, these two facts alone – that Roman Catholics worship a goddess, and worship the idols of that goddess – demonstrate conclusively that the Papal religion is *not* the true Church; that it is not even a true church; and that it is as far removed from biblical Christianity as it is possible to be. For true Christians do not worship any goddess, and nor do they worship any idol whatsoever!

The following Scriptures, just a sampling of the many that could be given, are sufficient: **“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10); “we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Cor. 8:4-6); “ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thess. 1:9); “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them” (Exod. 20:4,5).**

No true Christian worships Mary, and no true Christian worships a graven image! But Papists do both. They, therefore, are not Christians; and their “church” is not a Christian church at all. **It is a heathen religions masquerading as a Christian church.**

Consider this gross idolatry of Roman Catholicism. On the cover of the order form I received, there is a picture of the idol known to Roman Catholics as “Our Lady of Fatima”: a sad-looking “Mary” image, with a huge crown perched atop its head. The idol is described in the order form as **“the beautiful Official Pilgrim Image of Our Lady of Fatima that wept miraculously in New Orleans in 1972.”** Note how they are quite open about it: it is described as a beautiful *image*. And later on in the same order form, they say about the book they are advertising: **“You’ll turn to it again and again. Not only for its inspiring and revealing content, but for the feast of images [their emphasis!] depicting life-like pictures of Our Blessed Mother”.** They do not care in the least that the Bible, the Word of God, says we are not to make any graven image and bow down to it! In fact, in the official Roman Catholic Bible the commandment forbidding idolatry was *removed*, for they knew that what they were doing was idolatry, but they did not care, and arrogantly removed a part of the divinely inspired Scriptures!

As for this statue, this idol, miraculously weeping, Roman Catholicism is full of such tales and “lying wonders” (a mark of Antichrist, the Roman Papacy, 2 Thess. 2:9). Although we do not discount the possibility that in some cases, a demonic deception might actually occur, it is a very simple matter for religious con-men to make a statue appear to “weep”, and it has been done countless times throughout Rome’s history.

Consider these words on the order form: **“the feast of images depicting life-like pictures of Our Blessed Mother”.** But how can these images be “life-like”? Does anyone know what Mary looked like? No; so no image of her can be “life-like.” But no doubt they mean that the images really look like a woman. Yet even in saying they are “life-like”, they are admitting they are *lifeless!* For they only *look* life-like, they are not really alive! And yet the order form also has these words: **“Look into this Maternal gaze... and Let Her look upon you.”** Then it went on as follows: **“Yes, look into her maternal eyes. They know you. They understand you. They overflow with compassion, love, and, above all, hope. They give you a remedy for every defect, help for every problem, hope for every affliction. This is Mary, the Mother of God, and our Mother too, faithfully and beautifully represented by this statue of Our Lady of Fatima. She invites you to feel her maternal love and mercy.”**

Roman Catholics say that they don’t worship the image, but merely the one represented by the image; but this is disproved by these words: “Look into her maternal eyes.” They are exhorting the reader to look into the *image’s* eyes – and yet calling those eyes *Mary’s* eyes! Mary, and the image, are one and the same to Papists. And human beings, living souls created by God, are being exhorted here to look into the dead, man-made “eyes” of this image, eyes which are described as “maternal”, and as being able to look right back at

those who look into them! We pity the poor heathen, deep in some jungle somewhere, who fashions an idol out of wood or stone, the work of his own hands, and bows before it and worships it; and yet over one billion Roman Catholics the world over, many of them living in the most advanced countries of the world, and highly educated according to the world's understanding of education, gaze with adoration into the eyes of an image of a woman fashioned by men's hands, bow before it, worship it, and believe that in so doing they are gazing into the "maternal eyes" of "Mary", and she is gazing back at them – and yet these billion and more Roman Catholics are called "Christians"! What an immense tragedy! They are as deceived, as spiritually blind, as lost, as dead in their sins, and as in need of the Gospel of Christ, as any poor, ignorant jungle denizen!

How applicable the following Scripture is to them: **"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: they have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: they have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them" (Psa. 115:4-8).**

"Yes, look into her maternal eyes. They know you. They understand you. They overflow with compassion, love, and, above all, hope. They give you a remedy for every defect, help for every problem, hope for every affliction." Were it not for the fact that we are told so clearly that the eyes being referred to are the lifeless eyes of an idol of "Mary", one would be forgiven for thinking that it was the Lord God Himself who was being described. For the Bible says, **"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry" (Psa. 34:15).** *The Lord* knows all things, understands all things, sees all things, and overflows with compassion and love towards His people. *He* is the remedy for every defect, the help for every problem, and the hope for every affliction. But no – this order form says, **"This is Mary, the Mother of God, and our Mother too"**. It points men and women away from the Lord God, and towards a heathen deity under the name of "Mary." It is very evident, from this order form, that *Mary alone* is the hope of sinners, as far as Roman Catholics are concerned!

She is called "Mother of God." Is this a scriptural title? Was Mary, who gave birth to the Lord Jesus, the "Mother of God"? There is nothing in all the Bible to support such an absurd and blasphemous claim. Mary was the mother of the *human nature* of the Lord Jesus; but she was not the mother of His *divine nature*, nor could she be! The eternal God has no mother! The absurdity of this can be seen when taken to its logical next step: if Mary was the Mother of God, then Mary's own mother was the Grandmother of God! And her mother, in turn, was the Great-Grandmother of God! Not only that, but then Mary's cousin, Elisabeth, is God's cousin as well; and John the Baptist, Elisabeth's son, is God's cousin too; etc.

As God is eternal, then if He has a mother, she must of necessity be an *eternal* mother. The Scriptures teach that the Son of God is the eternal Son, because an eternal Father must have an eternal Son. There was never a time when the Father was not the Father; therefore there was never a time when the Son was not the Son. This is the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ, set out in many texts of Holy Scripture: that the Son was the Son before His incarnation in Mary's womb, even from eternity (**e.g. Mic. 5:2; Prov. 8:24-26; Jn.3:16; 16:28; 17:5; Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 1:2; 1 Jn. 4:9,14**). But if Mary is the mother of the eternal God, then of necessity she is the *eternal Mother* of God, which means there was never a time when she was not the Mother of God. Yet we know that Mary had a definite beginning in time. Unlike the Son of God, she was not eternal. She had a beginning in her own mother's womb.

The Lord Jesus Christ is both God and man. He has two natures, the divine and the human. As God the Son, He is without beginning, He is the Son of God by an eternal generation. A deep mystery, received by faith by all true Christians. As God He had no beginning, and no mother; but as man, He had a beginning in Mary's womb. The Roman Catholic doctrine of Mary being the "Mother of God" is nothing less than blasphemy and heresy. This false and heretical doctrine was defined at Rome's Council of Ephesus, which then went on to declare, in 431 AD: "If anyone does not confess that Emmanuel is truly God and, therefore, that the holy Virgin is the Mother of God... let him be anathema." And this condemnation was repeated at the Council of Lateran. The Second Vatican Council stated, in the 1960s: "The Blessed Virgin was eternally predestinated... to be the Mother of God" (*The Documents of Vatican II*, by Walter M. Abbott, S.J., pg.91. Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1966).

She is called, also, in this order form, "our Mother too." This is because there is a Roman Catholic doctrine which proclaims Mary to be "the Mother of the Church". This is no less a lie than that she is "Mother of God." The title, "Mother of the Church", was conferred on Mary by the Roman pope, Paul VI, during the Second Vatican Council in 1964 (*The Documents of Vatican II*, pg.86).

Roman Catholic "Salvation"

The promoters of this book leave one in no doubt: Mary is absolutely necessary for salvation! Consider the following quotation, from the covering letter that accompanied my copy of the book, written by the executive project director of "South Africa Needs Fatima":

"Mr Willcock, every single day, you and your family are subjected to the onslaught of the moral filth in today's society from television, newspapers and so many sources. And you may ask, "But what can be done?" The answer is: spread Our Lady's Fatima message and bring it into people's lives!"

What would a true Christian's answer be to the question, "What can be done?" It would be, "Preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Lord! Spread His message, the glad tidings of salvation from sin by God's grace, through faith in the Son of God!" But this Roman Catholic man says that the answer is to spread the message of an "apparition" of the heathen goddess the Papists worship as "Mary"!

But there's more, and it gets worse. He continues: *"YES! God sent His Holy Mother in our century to save our sick and dying world! Her Fatima message is a maternal call to mankind to renounce sin and return to God through prayer and penance."*

Wait a minute! The Bible says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16)*. Yet this Roman Catholic man says, "God sent His Holy Mother in our century to save our sick and dying world!" Could there be two more opposite messages than these? Either we believe the Word of God, or we believe the word of a Roman Catholic devotee! Either *"God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 Jn. 4:9)*, or "God sent His Holy Mother in our century to save our sick and dying world"! The Roman Catholic "gospel" is the direct opposite of the true Gospel of Christ. It is *"another Gospel, which is not another" (Gal. 1:6,7)*: not in truth, for in truth there is no other Gospel but the true one; yet it claims to be the Gospel, and therefore is said to be "another" one, a lying and false one. Either Christ is the Saviour, or the Papist "Mary" is. The Bible is clear that only **Christ** can save His people from their sins (*Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12*), and Mary herself (the real historical Mary) knew that only the Lord is the Saviour (including *her* Saviour!), for she said, *"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Lk. 1:46,47)*.

Another aspect of this false Roman Catholic "gospel" is seen in the words, "Her Fatima

message is a maternal call to mankind to renounce sin and return to God through prayer and penance.” Nowhere in all the Bible do we read of “penance.” It is *not* the same as repentance! “Penance” is defined as “The sacramental ordinance in which remission of sins is received by a penitent through the absolution of a priest, the necessary parts being contrition, confession, satisfaction, and absolution”; and, “The performance of some act of self-mortification or submission to some penalty, as an expression of penitence; penitential discipline or observance; specifically in ecclesiastical use, such discipline or observance officially imposed by a priest after confession.” None of this is biblical! Penance is a *work of man!* It is the Roman Catholic’s attempt to *earn* one’s salvation by *doing* certain things. The Bible doesn’t say, “Do penance”! It says, “**Repent!**” (e.g. **Acts 2:38; 3:19; 26:20**). And one can only truly repent if God *grants* the *gift* of repentance (**Acts 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25**).

Later in the letter it says: “Our Lady of Fatima said ‘many souls go to hell because there is no-one to pray and make sacrifices for them.’”

Another lie, another aspect of Rome’s false gospel. If souls go to hell because people don’t pray for them or sacrifice for them, then salvation is by man’s own works. Salvation then depends on man! And this of course is precisely what Rome believes. But people don’t go to hell because no one prays or makes sacrifices for them; they go to hell **because of their sins!**

The letter goes on: “Our Lady said that should Her requests be heeded, there would be peace. And peace is *exactly what South Africa needs!*”

In the first place, peace will never come by heeding the false message of a heathen deity! “Mary” does not bring peace. And in the second place, although Christ alone is the Prince of peace, He came to make peace between *man and God*, against whom man had so grievously sinned (**Rom. 5:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:17-21**)! Many men, including so many religious men, are going about to attempt to create peace on earth between men and men, but are ignoring the fact that all men have sinned against God, and are at war with Him, vile rebels against Him; and the peace which the Lord Jesus Christ came to give, is “**peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!**” (**Rom. 5:1**). The false, so-called “social gospel”, embraced and proclaimed by the Roman Catholic institution and other false religious institutions in our day, goes about to attempt to bring “peace” between men; but this is not the Gospel of Christ! It is a pseudo-“gospel”, a false “gospel”, a lying “gospel”! Christ did not come into the world to bring peace between countries, or peace between warring factions of mankind. He came into this world to reconcile guilty, wretched sinners to a holy God!

The covering letter says at another point: “**The eternal salvation of souls is at stake – souls loved by Our Blessed Mother and for whom Our Lord Jesus Christ shed the last drop of His Most Precious Blood as He suffered and died on the cross.**”

Do you see how Mary is made to play a part in the salvation of souls? Yes, they admit that Christ shed His blood for souls; but the words, “The eternal salvation of souls is at stake – souls loved by Our Blessed Mother” essentially set out the Roman Catholic doctrine that Mary is in reality a “co-saviour” with the Lord Jesus Christ. She is as essential to salvation as Christ is. This is again shown at the end of the letter, where the executive project director signs himself, “**Yours in Jesus and Mary.**” Mary is placed on an equality with Christ. To the Roman Catholic, he is as much “in” Mary as he is “in” Christ.

In 1987, the Roman pope, John Paul II, said that Mary “leads us to Christ”, and that we “express our wish to return to God through Mary” (*The Southern Cross*, 28 June 1987). In the Roman Catholic book, *True Devotion to Mary*, by Louis de Montfort, 1974, pg.24, it states:

“Devotion to our Blessed Lady is necessary to salvation”. In the official handbook of the Legion of Mary, published in Dublin in 1975, pg. 144, is this blasphemous statement: “That woman (Mary) is the mother alike of the Redeemer and the redeemed. It was first from her veins that the blood was drawn... which has ransomed the world.” A prayer to Mary which Roman Catholics use goes like this: “Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, Hail our *life*, our sweetness and our *hope*. To *thee* do we cry...” (*Our Sacrifice – the New Order of the Mass*, by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy, 1968. Salesian Catholic Repository).

And it’s significant that *she* is the one said to *love* the souls of men, whereas Christ is said to die for them. There is nothing about *Him* loving souls! The Roman Catholic teaching is that Mary is more compassionate than Christ, more loving, for she is a woman and therefore more tender, and it is safer to pray to her than Christ, letting her intercede with her Son on one’s behalf, because He is stern whereas she is kind and loving and merciful! In the Roman Catholic book, *The Glories of Mary*, by Alphonsus de Liguori, some astounding statements are made: it says that one should call upon Mary rather than Christ; it states, “Many things... are asked from God, and not granted; they are asked from Mary, and are obtained”; and, “Our salvation is in the hands of Mary”. What a horrible, satanic doctrine this is!

Roman Catholic “Evangelistic” Zeal: a Challenge to the True Church

The letter continues: “Our South Africa Needs Fatima volunteers launched this dynamic and challenging campaign to help bring about this peace by spreading tens of thousands of leaflets. Already, it has touched the lives of people in places all around the country.... And people’s lives are being changed!... *But now we must reach out to more people!... In Britain, over a million people have been reached in only a few years! In America, almost ten million people have been touched by Our Lady’s beautiful leaflet in that time. We have teams of young volunteers proclaiming Our Lady’s message in countries on every continent throughout the world!*”

Consider the fanatical zeal of these poor, blind people. They are so devoted to this false message, that they are going into all the world with it. Do they have the true Gospel? No! Do they have true Gospel literature – tracts, or Bibles, for example – to hand out to people? No! What are they passing out? Leaflets about the Roman Catholic goddess, “Mary”, and her false message! *This* is what they are spending their time and energy and money promoting the world over!

The Lord Jesus said, **“The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matt. 9:37,38);** and, **“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (Jn. 4:35);** and, **“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15).** Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have the true Gospel! But how few are actually making it known! Our Lord gave His great commission: “Go into all the world...” We have sound literature available: Gospel tracts, which can be distributed by their thousands; Bibles; good books. But how many Christians actually make use of these tools? Do *you*, dear Christian reader? Do you seek opportunities to engage in conversation with the lost, and share the Gospel with them? You should! Do you carry Gospel leaflets in your briefcase, or your handbag, or your pockets, to pass out to the lost? You should! You have the truth! You have the message of eternal life! Yet the tracts lie unused, and your lips remain sealed. Will the devil’s emissaries put you to shame?

Look at what these zealous Papists do: “Like the Apostles, they go out together in twos, with a beautiful life-like statue of the Blessed Mother, audio-visual presentations, and

books. Visiting homes, schools and parishes, they are contacting thousands of people every month.”

These Roman Catholic devotees are zealously propagating their false gospel! The “Jehovah’s Witnesses” cultists are zealously propagating their false gospel too! So are the Mormons, and so are so many other blinded, lost souls! **Yet what is the Christian army doing?** Where is the missionary zeal which animated the apostles?

The letter goes on: “But there is more. They are also defending the Church [i.e. the “Church” of Rome] in times of crisis, and bravely attacking the worst moral evils threatening our times. These are people determined never to give in!”

These fanatical Papists are defending their false “church”. True Christians should be doing the same for the *true* Gospel and the *true* Church! Paul wrote, “**I am set for the defence of the gospel**” (Phil. 1:17). Jude wrote, “**ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**” (Jude v.3). Not only are Christians to *spread* the Gospel, they are also to *defend* it against its many enemies! We are at war! It is a spiritual war, and it is vicious. Each and every Christian is to play his part in this holy warfare, using the Word of God like the two-edged sword it is, wielding it in defence of the truth!

Let us expose this wicked religious institution for the satanic counterfeit which it is, and preach the glorious Gospel of the grace of God to its lost, deceived millions.

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