

Drawing Aside the Purple Curtain

The Papal System Today: an Analysis of the News

THE INQUISITOR-GENERAL BECOMES THE POPE OF ROME

by Shaun Willcock

“...that Man of Sin... the Son of Perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thess.2:3,4)

Yesterday, 19 April 2005, German cardinal, Joseph Ratzinger, was elected to the office of the biblical Antichrist.

After an extremely short conclave, Ratzinger was elected by his fellow-cardinals to become pope of Rome. The Vatican claims that he is the 265th pope, which is a lie: for they count Peter the apostle as the first pope, something he never was, nor was there such a thing as a pope for centuries. When he accepted the position, Ratzinger at that point assumed the most blasphemous office a mortal man can hold on this earth: claiming to be the “Holy Father”, “Christ on earth”, the “Vicar of Christ”, the head of the world’s 1.1 billion Roman Catholics, and the single most powerful religious and political figure in the world. At that point, he assumed the mantle of Antichrist: the one who dares to think that he can take the place of the Son of God on earth.

He announced that he would take the name of Benedict XVI.

Ratzinger was possibly the third most powerful person in the Vatican during the pontificate of John Paul II, after the Jesuit General and John Paul himself. In fact, he was probably *more* powerful than John Paul. And what very few in the world today realise, is that he headed up the “Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith”, which is the modern name for the *Inquisition!*

The diabolical Inquisition, or “Holy Office” as it was once called, which for centuries persecuted “heretics”, even unto death, by the millions, using fire, the sword, the torture rack, and many other hideous techniques, was *not* defunct, as so many have been led to believe. It simply changed its name, in 1965, to the far more innocuous-sounding “Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith”. Ratzinger, as the head of this office, was nothing less than the modern *Inquisitor-General!* An extremely powerful man, it was his duty to maintain Roman Catholic orthodoxy, to persuade wayward priests and wayward people to tow the Vatican line, and to punish those who did not. And he was very, very good at his job. Ruthless, severe, known in Roman Catholic circles as “God’s Rottweiler.”

The Inquisition today does not (normally) use the same hideous tactics it used centuries ago, to force “heretics” to recant; Rome’s tactics have changed towards Protestants, whom it now terms “separated brethren” and attempts to win by smiles rather than swords (although it still hates them and persecutes them where it can); but it is in its own way just as feared today as it was back then, by Roman Catholics who dare to buck the system.

Even before the cardinals retired into the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican to begin the (supposedly secret) meeting known as the conclave to elect a new pope, it was clear that Ratzinger was a favourite candidate. There is nothing truly secretive about the process, and the Holy Spirit is certainly not guiding the cardinals as they like the world to imagine: even before John Paul II died, and increasing the moment he breathed his last, immense political games were afoot. The choice of a new Roman pope affects the destinies of entire countries, the balance of power between the superpowers, and thus the very course of the world. At the time of the election of John Paul II in 1978, two opposing blocs were at work behind the scenes, one pro-Soviet and the other pro-American. John Paul II was favoured by America, but two popes before him (John XXIII and Paul VI) had been favoured by the Soviet Union. John Paul himself was certainly pro-Communist, but not pro-Soviet; and American intelligence agencies felt they could make use of him to bring in his own brand of Communism in the European eastern-bloc countries and in the Third World. In this they calculated correctly. Thus his election was all about politics in a Europe facing rampant Soviet-controlled Marxism. A pope from Soviet-controlled Poland, a Communist but not a pro-Soviet Communist, was what the Western nations desired to help them in their war against the Soviet Union.

So there are great intrigues, all kinds of political power plays, wheeling and dealing on a vast scale, behind the scenes at the election of a pope. And we can be sure that it was no different this time. For various world powers, and lesser countries too, there was much at stake in the outcome of this election. When those cardinals retired to the Sistine Chapel, they went in with the anxious eyes of world leaders upon them. Moreover, they went in with agendas, with threats hanging over the heads of some and bribes bringing smiles to the faces of others, with plots and schemes well formed in their heads; and despite sweeping the Sistine Chapel for electronic bugs, we can be sure that it was not perfectly bug-free. Furthermore, for the first time in history, the cardinals were not totally isolated during their deliberations: although they were officially banned from contact with the outside world, they were able to move freely about the Vatican (*The Witness*, April 6, 2005). Thus it would have been a very easy matter for intelligence agents and others to maintain contact with them. Perhaps this time round, the cardinals just realised there was no point in trying to keep them completely isolated, since various government agencies have always been able to make contact with them anyhow!

Yes, a papal election is a very political thing, a time of high drama behind closed doors. This is the election of the biblical Antichrist, and Antichrist is under the influence and direction of the *spirit* of Antichrist (1 Jn.4:3), not the Spirit of Christ.

The big question is: why was Joseph Ratzinger chosen to become pope?

There are at least three reasons, and more will become apparent in time. The first is that he is a doctrinal conservative. For over twenty years he was the Inquisitor-General, the Vatican's watchdog on doctrine, making very certain that any Roman Catholics who dared to deviate from Rome's position on matters of doctrine and practice were disciplined and brought into line... or forced out. To a very large extent, he formulated the doctrinal policy of John Paul II from behind the scenes. His nickname of "God's Rottweiler" certainly does not conjure up images of a pleasant, friendly man, easy-going and jovial! He was elected because he will continue with the policies of his predecessor, policies which he himself did so much to create and propagate. A Ratzinger Papacy, it is hoped by the Vatican powers-that-be, will be "business as usual" as he follows in the steps of John Paul. If anything, his reign could prove to be even more conservative than his predecessor's.

The second reason for his choice is that the Vatican wants a man from Europe, who will face the challenges of this day and age. Just as Karol Wojtyła was elected as John Paul II at a time when a man was needed, by Rome, to face the challenge of the might of growing Soviet expansionism, so now a man is needed by Rome to face the challenges posed by an increasingly secular Europe, the might of the European Union and Rome's desire to make certain that the EU is a Papist super-state,

etc.

And the third reason for his election is his age. At 78, it is obvious that his reign as pope will not be a very long one. The Vatican did not want another long pontificate like that of John Paul II, the third longest in history, who was a comparatively young man when he was elected. The world is undergoing very rapid changes, and to a very great degree the Vatican has always checked to see which way the winds of change are blowing, and reacted accordingly. The last thing the Vatican needs is to be stuck with a pope who will live many long years, unbendingly following the same policies with which he began his reign even though the world might have moved on since then. And although the Vatican has never been averse to using the tactic of an “accelerated demise” when a pope has outlived his usefulness (the last example being the short-lived John Paul I, back in 1978), in this media-driven modern world it is so difficult to keep that hushed up, and as the facts begin to emerge they prove so embarrassing to the Vatican. Far better to elect a very old man as pope, who will “go the way of all the earth” on his own, thus saving them the trouble of having to nudge him along.

Ratzinger had the support of the secretive Roman Catholic order known as Opus Dei. A Jesuit cardinal, Carlo Maria Martini, was considered by some to have a good chance of becoming pope, but of course he was not elected. And it is things like this that make some assume the Jesuits are not as powerful as they once were in the Vatican, and that they have been replaced by Opus Dei. But this is a grave error. The Jesuits do whatever suits their purposes. And if it is not in accordance with their purposes to have one of their own elected as pope, then he would not be elected. The Jesuits are just as powerful today as they ever were, if not more so. But it suits their purposes at this time to work from behind the scenes, and Opus Dei is a movement within the Roman Catholic institution that is *controlled* by the Jesuits. Besides, Martini was considered to be a “progressive”, and this time they wanted a conservative to be pope.

There was much talk, especially from within Third World countries in Africa and Latin America, that the next pope could be, or at least should be, from the Third World, perhaps even a black African. But this was always a very remote possibility. In the first place, very few cardinals hail from Africa. And in the second place, even though the Roman Catholic religion is experiencing huge growth in the Third World, whereas it is shedding members in the First World, it would have been a giant step for the Italian-dominated College of Cardinals to elect a black African as pope. As South African Roman Catholic archbishop, Buti Tlhagate, commented, the cardinals fear that if an African is elected, “paganism might come through the back door” (*The Witness*, April 15, 2005). Besides, they doubtless figured that Romanism will continue to grow in Africa anyway, whereas they need a European pope to help consolidate Papal power in Europe and somehow boost numbers there, the home of the Papacy.

But if they have miscalculated, at least they have the satisfaction of knowing that it won’t be too long before Ratzinger passes on, and then they can still elect an African pope if they feel it is essential.

The number one African contender for the papal throne was the cardinal from Nigeria, Francis Arinze. Certainly a very powerful figure in the Vatican these days, it was obviously not deemed the right moment for him to be elected. In his favour was that he is a doctrinal conservative, allowing changes to the way Romanists worship (for example, with African drums, dancing, etc.), but no changes in Roman doctrine. He is staunchly conservative on such matters as abortion, homosexuality, etc.

Yet even though an African was not chosen this time, with the phenomenal growth of Roman Catholicism in Africa the chances of an African being elected at some point in the near future are growing. Even Ratzinger himself, in fact, is on record as having said that choosing an African to be pope would “be a positive sign for the whole of Christendom” (*The Witness*, April 2, 2005). This seems to indicate that the new pope will continue to woo the Third World, as his predecessor had done, knowing as he does that over two-thirds of the world’s Roman Catholics are now estimated to

come from the “global south.”

It is most instructive to look at the lives of some of the other popes who were named “Benedict” in history. After all, when a newly-elected pope chooses, as his new name, the name which many other men before him had used, it indicates his desire to show his continuity with them. Often, indeed, he chooses one based on his own personal “heroes”, men in “Church” history whom he admires. Ratzinger has chosen the name of Benedict XVI. What can we learn of some of the other Benedicts who were popes? It will tell us a lot about Ratzinger himself. Here are just a few details, about just a few of them:

Benedict V, who died in 966 AD, was deposed as a usurper. He fled Rome after dishonouring a young girl, taking with him the entire treasury of St Peter’s; and then he returned to Rome when the money ran out and caused more havoc! Gerbert, an ecclesiastical historian, called this Benedict “the most iniquitous of all the monsters of ungodliness”. He was eventually murdered by the jealous husband of his lover, and his corpse, with a hundred dagger wounds in it, was dragged through the streets and thrown into a cesspool.

Benedict VII died in the very act of adultery, also murdered by the husband of the pope’s lover.

Benedict IX (1021-1054 AD), known as the boy-pope, was only eleven years old when he was elected to that position! Yet one chronicler stated that by the time he was fourteen he had surpassed his predecessors in profligacy and extravagance. He was a man who engaged in continuous immorality. He was described by the English Roman Catholic historian, Philip Hughes, as “a precocious little blackguard.” Others have referred to him as “one of the worst monsters ever to sit upon the papal throne.” Peter Damian, one of Rome’s “saints”, said of this pope, “That wretch, from the beginning of his pontificate to the end of his life, feasted on immorality.” Still another wrote of him, “A demon from hell in the disguise of a priest has occupied the Chair of Peter.” He was the only pope to actually be deposed three times by his opponents. After returning to Rome after his first ejection, some nobles tried to kill him. He had to leave Rome again, but the emperor’s army brought him back. He was again driven out for plunder, murder and oppression, and the Romans chose Sylvester III to be pope in his place. But his family restored him after fifty days. In the year 1045 this pope actually *asked* to be deposed from the papal throne, so that he could marry his cousin, an Italian princess. He sold the position of pope to the man who succeeded him, Johannes Gratianus, and abdicated in 1045 to the joy of the populace.

Benedict XIII was declared to be a heretic and schismatic by a Roman Catholic council itself. He was pope at a time when two other men were made popes as well, so that there were actually three popes all at once.

Benedict XIV decided that if a child was baptized against his parents’ wishes, and even if baptized contrary to canon law procedures, he was a “Christian” (i.e. Papist) and had to live as one; and if he failed to live as one, he was a heretic, and thus deserving of the “Church’s” terrible punishment for heretics.

Such were just some of the popes who bore the name of Benedict through the centuries: wicked men, very far from being the “Holy Father” as they are called by their devotees, or the “Vicar of Christ”, or the “Lamb of the Vatican”, or “Christ in office, jurisdiction and power”, or any of the other blasphemous titles that have been heaped upon them. And Joseph Ratzinger has chosen to be known as Benedict XVI.

True Christians must not be fooled. Antichrist is on his throne, spouting his blasphemies, seeking to conquer the world. One man dies, another takes his place. “Take heed,” the Lord Jesus warned, “that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matt.24:4,5). The dynasty of the Antichrist lives on, and will continue until Christ destroys it, and returns to this earth. For the present, Joseph Ratzinger is that Man of Sin, that Son of Perdition. Satan’s seat, the Vatican, has its new head. The Great Whore, the Roman Catholic institution (Rev.17), continues on, sitting upon and oppressing the peoples and nations of the earth,

with whom the rulers of the earth continue to commit fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. That great city, the city of Rome, continues to reign over the kings of the earth.

It is very doubtful that Ratzinger, as pope, will ever match the immense worldwide popularity of John Paul II. But then again, there was probably not a single cardinal who could. As we have said before, the latter was the greatest Public Relations Officer that Rome ever had. From Rome's perspective, his was an impossible act to follow. And Ratzinger, the stern, frightening Inquisitor-General, who hardly ever seemed to smile for photos in the past but still managed to look menacing and sinister when he did, will almost certainly not have the previous pope's charisma and charm. This is going to be a major loss for the Vatican.

But then again, Ratzinger will not live that long. From Rome's perspective, there is always that.

20 April 2005

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