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The Pope and the Woman: The Mystical Drama of Politics and Faith

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Light, cameras, action! We are all called to be actors in the greatest reality show on earth. The title of our mystical drama being staged is "Purification" as depicted in *The Book of Life*. Like a "Star Wars" finale, the battle between good and evil, light and darkness builds to the mysterious crescendo. Pay close attention to the leading role of "The Woman" as historic and intriguing world events unfold during this tumultuous Lenten Season sparking scientific phenomena, political debate and spiritual warfare controversies. The papal declaration for 2013 to be the "Year of Faith" set the stage. The prologue is found in the Book of Revelation (1:1-3).

Feb. 11 the opening scene begins with Pope Benedict XVI unexpectedly resigning and a few hours' later lightning strikes twice the top of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Mainstream media reports the timing of this event of nature as "a sign from God." The startling papal announcement is followed by three spectacular meteorite fireballs streaking across the skies with thunderous sonic booms, hitting hard enough to cause significant damage and injuries in the Ural Mountains reportedly not far from nuclear storage sites. Apprehension and bewilderment is reported in three notable places outside The Vatican: in Cuba, Russia and San Francisco Bay.

Prophecies from ancient times to current days point to the theological and eschatological conclusion. Watch "The Woman." She is on the set and will be in the sequestered Conclave, directing the cast and crew of cardinals, at least by spirit -- The Holy Spirit. All of these guys should listen to "The Woman" before it is too late. She is the Jewish mother of Jesus, beloved in Islam and revered in other faith traditions. "The Woman" who gave birth to Christianity: the Blessed Virgin Mary.

But like the drama during Vatican II in the turbulent '60s, there will be forces at work trying to undermine and diminish her power. At that time the greatest struggle with the most passionate debate and closest vote was over the influence of "The Woman." Again she is vying for cardinal loyalty with a competing director known as "the beast and prince of the world" (Not Harvey Weinstein or Roman Polanski) the top boss a.k.a. the BIG D-evil. Father Gabriele Amorth, retired Vatican Chief-Exorcist, in media interviews informed the public that Satan is working overtime at the Vatican. "Thanks be to God, we have a pope who has decided to fight the Devil head-on," he said. I submit that Pope Benedict XVI is actually a Marian devoted theologian in spiritual warfare and "The Woman" is his inspiration for the historic early retirement he announced on Feb. 11, notably her Feast Day for appearing as "Our Lady of Lourdes." Her main message in Lourdes was to re-affirm to the world her preeminent maternal status as Mother of God and loving Mother of Humanity.

It is particularly interesting for the United States that Pope Benedict XVI chose that date, for in 1847 Pope Pius IX called for America to be consecrated to "Mary, The Immaculate Conception" based on her direction when she appeared in 1830 to Catherine Laboure in France asking her to make and distribute "immaculate conception" pendants later called

"miraculous medals" as gifts to the world with the words inscribed "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee" offering grace and maternal protection to those who held her gift close. But it was in Lourdes, France, beginning Feb. 11, 1858, that Mary appeared to a 14-year-old peasant girl named Bernadette Soubirous on 18 occasions and confirmed, "I am the Immaculate Conception" the Marian Dogma proclaimed four years earlier. Many documented miracles of healing emanate up to the present day from the water of Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. The two girls Catherine and Bernadette became saints of the Catholic Church and both of their bodies are incorruptible. The significant date the pope chose to resign is tied to "The Woman" affirming Mary's unique holiness as one conceived with an immaculate heart and soul giving her the power from God to overcome Satan according to scripture and documented in countless exorcisms performed invoking her and her Son's name. Definitely this qualifies as mystical drama. As a side Hollywood note, the 1943 academy award winning film "Song of Bernadette" portrayed the moving story with Jennifer Jones winning an Oscar as best actress. The first Golden Globes took place in 1944 and the film took both best picture and best actress.

Cardinals would be well advised to stay close to Mary and heed her motherly advice when politicking and discerning in preparation to elect the new pope. Outwardly viewed as being run by men clothed in mystery, the Catholic Church is actually a maternal institution with "The Woman clothed in the sun" in charge of its destiny, as revealed in apocalyptic scripture (Revelation 12:1). Mary is "The Woman" who Pope Paul VI at the close of Vatican II fervently declared as "Mother of The Church" reminding cardinals of her position and power. Mary is the leading lady globally playing many parts as a uniting force for good. Through documented apparitions, locutions and miracles her words are clear and consistent: "penance, prayer and love." The first miracle performed by her son Jesus was at the Wedding of Cana at her behest. His mother told the stewards, "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5). Cardinals listen to mama!

The recent series of inexplicable events were topped off by an asteroid coming uncomfortably close to earth this month. These thought provoking episodes happened simultaneously to rebellious measures of two rogue celebrities involved in politics and faith. Kim Jong-un, Supreme Leader of North Korea ordered an underground nuclear missile launch to provoke the U.S. while demonstrating disrespect for neighbor China and causing them an earthquake. Cardinal Mahony, Archdiocese of Los Angeles belligerently attempted to embarrass his humble successor Archbishop Gomez and the Vatican by continuing to demonstrate disregard for the teachings of the Catholic Church when reprimanded for his gross negligence in ending evil acts by clergy. These disturbing occurrences leave one to ponder what to expect in the month of March leading up to the election of a new pope and moral authority before Easter Sunday. "Purification" is the mystical action packed drama underway in the Catholic Church and "The Woman" is cleaning house with the cooperation and help of Pope Benedict XVI as her loyal German shepherd. General confessions for all cardinals before voting in The Conclave is highly recommended for the enormous graces which come from this under-utilized Sacrament of Reconciliation and for completing "Purification."

As cardinals from around the globe flock to the Vatican for the dramatic vote of the next man to fill the shoes of the fisherman and sit in the Chair of St. Peter, it would be wise for these "men of cloth" to listen to "The Woman clothed in the sun." Put politics aside, consider the words of the leading man from the cross, "Behold thy Mother" (John 19:27) lest the wrath of God be brought upon us all. "The Woman" is the Mother of Humanity and she is not happy with the bad behavior of some of her children.

Before his election to become the 265th pope in 2006, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in 1999 wrote in "Mary, The Church at the Source":

The Church must relearn her ecclesial being from Mary. Only a conversion to the sign of 'The Woman', to the feminine dimension of the Church, rightly understood, will bring about the new opening to the creative power of the Spirit, and so

to Christ's taking form in us, whose presence alone can give history a center and a hope. The sign of the woman has become the sign of hope; she is the signpost of hope.

One could say Mary, "The Woman," is the one to watch, she is the one to listen to and she is the one to embrace. That is exactly what the pope is doing and the cardinals should follow his lead. Politics must be set aside in the Conclave for the good of the Church, the good of souls and the good of the world.

Father Amorth informs us that Pope Benedict XVI desires that the Catholic Church immediately call upon help from "The Woman" and "The Angel" found in the Book of Revelation to combat the mounting forces of evil. The Pope wants the clergy and families to say the Rosary as requested by Mary at Lourdes and repeatedly and for the Church to re-institute the following vital prayer removed during Vatican II, into the offertory prayers of the greatest mystical drama made real daily, "The Holy Mass:"

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protector against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Amen.

As the good pope exits the world stage, we hope he finds peace and we pray that the cardinals listen to "The Woman" Director and do whatever Jesus tells them. Stay tuned for the next act.