 Reading time: 8 min.

“*The family of those who steal from God does not reach the fourth generation*.”

*The pretender to the throne of Italy, **Victor Emmanuel of Savoy** (b. 12.02.1937 – † 03.02.2024), the fifth descendant of the first King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy, died a few days ago. He was granted burial in the crypt of the Basilica at Superga, Turin, where dozens of other mortal remains of the House of Savoy are located. This event reminds us of other dreams of Don Bosco that came true.*

In November 1854, a law was being prepared on the confiscation of ecclesiastical property and the suppression of convents and monasteries. To be valid, it had to be sanctioned by the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy. At the end of that month of November, Don Bosco had two dreams that came true as prophecies concerning the king and his family. Let us recall the facts with Fr Lemoyne.

Don Bosco was anxious to scatter an ominous cloud that loomed darker and darker over the royal house. Toward the end of November 1854, he had a dream in which he seemed to be standing by the pump near the wall of the Pinardi house-where now the main portico, then only half built, is located. He was surrounded by priests and clerics. Suddenly a red-coated court valet appeared, rushed to Don Bosco, and said aloud,

“News! News!”

“What news?” Don Bosco asked.

*“Make this announcement: **A state funeral at court!**”*

Don Bosco was shocked by the sudden apparition and cry. The valet repeated: “A state funeral at court!” Don Bosco wanted more information, but the valet vanished. Don Bosco awoke in distress. Grasping the significance of his dream, he instantly drafted a letter for the king, revealing this dream.

[…]

…What really whetted their curiosity was that Don Bosco had written to the king. They knew well enough how he felt about the usurpation of ecclesiastical property. Don Bosco did not keep them in suspense but clearly told them what he had written in order to persuade the king to oppose that infamous law. He then narrated his dream and concluded: “It deeply upset me and left me exhausted.”

One could see that he was worried. Now and then he would say: 2Who knows? . . . Who knows? . . . Let us pray!"

Dumbfounded, the clerics kept asking each other whether anyone had heard of any important person at the court being ill. Nobody had. In the meantime, Don Bosco sent for the cleric Angelo Savio and showed him the draft of the letter to the king. "Copy it," he said, "and send it to the king." Savio did as he was requested. Don Bosco later learned from confidential sources within the royal palace that the king had read the letter.

Five days later, Don Bosco had another dream. He seemed to be writing at his desk when he heard a horse's hoofbeats in the playground. Suddenly the door flew open and again the red-coated valet appeared. He strode into the middle of the room and exclaimed: "Make this announcement: Not one state funeral at court, but state funerals at court!" He repeated these words twice before withdrawing.

*Anxious to know more, Don Bosco rushed out to the balcony. The valet was already in the playground, mounting his horse. Don Bosco called out to him, but the valet, once again shouting "**State funerals at court!**" vanished into the night.*

At dawn, Don Bosco personally wrote to the king. He informed him of his second dream and begged him to oppose that bill at all costs and save himself from the threatened punishments.

After supper that evening Don Bosco said to the young clerics around him: "I have something to tell you that is even more surprising than what I told you the other day." Then he narrated his second dream. More mystified than ever, they kept wondering what it might portend. We can well imagine how anxiously they waited to see how these predictions would be fulfilled.

On the side, however, Don Bosco unequivocally revealed to the cleric John Cagliero and to a few others that these predictions were genuine threats of punishments which God would inflict on those who were conspiring to cause still greater harm to the Church. He was indeed profoundly grieved and kept remarking: "This law will wreak havoc upon the royal house." These things he said to his boys so that they would pray for their sovereign and mercifully obtain from God that the religious would not be dispersed and so many vocations lost.

Meanwhile the king had handed the letters to Marquis Fassati. After reading them, he returned to Don Bosco to remonstrate. "Do you think this was the proper thing to do? You deeply hurt the king and made him furious."

Don Bosco replied: "What if those predictions come true? I regret having upset the king, but after all, his own good and that of the Church are at stake."

Don Bosco's warnings went unheeded. On November 28, 1854, Urbano Rattazzi, Minister of Justice, submitted a bill for the suppression of religious orders to the

Chamber of Deputies. He had the support of Count Camillo Cavour, Minister of Finance, who was determined to push it through at all costs. In their philosophy it was an incontestable principle that there existed no society superior to or independent of civil society; the State was all; therefore, no moral persons-not even the Catholic Church-could claim juridical existence without the consent and recognizance of the State. Now-the two gentlemen argued-the State did not recognize the universal Church as having dominion over the properties of each religious congregation. These congregations could claim juridical existence only insofar as they were recognized by the State.
The State could therefore modify or even cancel their juridical existence. In such a case, the properties, without heirs, would fall under the sole, absolute ownership of the State. This was a crass assumption, because should a religious congregation cease to exist for any reason, its heir would be the Church of which it was a member, the Church established by Jesus Christ and represented by the Pope. (BM V, 115-117).

That these were warnings from Heaven is also confirmed by a letter written four years earlier, on 9 April 1850, that the King's mother, Queen Mother Maria Teresa, widow of Charles Albert, had addressed to her son, King Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy.

God will reward you, He will bless you, otherwise who knows what punishment, what dire penalties from God you will call down upon yourself, your family and the country, if you should approve the law. Just think about the grief you would feel if the Lord were to allow your beloved Adele, whom you so rightly love, or your Chichina (Clotilde) or your Betta (Umberto) to fall sick, or to be taken from you. If only you could look into my heart and see how grieved I am,
how anxious and fearful that if you immediately ratify this law, many misfortunes would be visiting on us, if you do this without the consent of the Holy Father. Perhaps your heart, which is sincerely honest and sensitive and has always been deeply attached to your poor mamma, would allow itself to be softened. (Antonio Monti, Nuova Antologia, 1 January 1936, p. 65; BM XVII, 855).

But the king took no notice of these warnings and the consequences were not long in coming. The negotiations for approval continued and the prophecies were also fulfilled:

– on 12 January 1855 Maria Theresa, Queen Mother, died at the age of 53;
– on 20 January 1855 Queen Maria Adelaide died, aged 33;

– on 11 February 1855 Prince Ferdinand, the King's brother, died at the age of 32;

– on 17 May 1855 the King's son, Prince Victor Emmanuel Leopold Mary Eugene died, aged just 4 months.

Don Bosco continued to issue warnings, publishing the charter of the foundation of Altacomba (Hautecombe) with an exposition of all the maledictions inflicted on those who dared to destroy or usurp the possessions of the Abbey of Altacomba, inserted in the document by the ancient Dukes of Savoy to protect the place where dozens of the illustrious ancestors of the House of Savoy are interred. And he also continued by publishing in April 1855, in the *Letture Cattoliche* (Catholic Readings) a pamphlet written by Baron Nilinse entitled: *Stealing Church Property and Its Consequences*; *with a brief appendix on the events in Piedmont*. On the frontispiece was written: The frontispiece featured a quotation of St. Ambrose: "*What! A private citizen's home is inviolable, and yet you dare lay hands on the house of the Lord?"* The incidents related in this booklet, many of which had their source in the testimony of Protestant authors, detailed the frightful punishments that had befallen those rulers or private citizens who had confiscated, sold, or purchased what had once been consecrated to God: "***The family of him who steals from God shall not attain the fourth generation!"*** (BM V, 149).

On 29 May Victor Emmanuel II signed the Rattazzi law, which confiscated ecclesiastical property and suppressed the religious corporations, without taking into account what Don Bosco had predicted and the mourning that had struck his family since January… not knowing that he was also signing the destiny of the royal family.

In fact, here too the prophecy came true, as we see.

– King Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy (born 14.03.1820 – † 09.01.1878), reigned from 17.03.1861 – to 09.01.1878, died at the age of 58;

– King Umberto I (b. 14.03.1844 – † 29.07.1900), son of King Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy, reigned from 10.01.1878 – to 29.07.1900, was killed in Monza at the age of 56

– King Victor Emmanuel III (b. 11.11.1869 – † 28.12.1947), grandson of King Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy, reigned from 30.07.1900 – to 09.05.1946, was forced to abdicate on 9 May 1946 and died a year later

– King Umberto II (b. 15.09.1904 – † 18.03.1983) the last King of Italy,

reigning from 10.05.1946 to 18.06.1946, great-grandson of Victor Emmanuel II (the fourth generation), was forced to abdicate after only 35 days of his reign, following the Institutional Referendum of 2 June of the same year. He died on 18 March 1983 in Geneva, and was buried in Altacomba Abbey…

Some interpret these events as mere coincidences, because they cannot deny the facts, but those who know God's action know that in his mercy he always warns in one way or another of the serious consequences that certain decisions of great importance, affecting the destiny of the world and the Church, may have.

Let us just recall the end of the life of the wisest man on earth, King Solomon.

For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. For Solomon followed Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not completely follow the Lord, as his father David had done. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who offered incense and sacrificed to their gods. Then the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, ***who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this matter, that he should not follow other gods; but he did not observe what the Lord commanded.*** *Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, 'Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant.* (1 Kings 11:4-11).

Just read history carefully, both sacred and profane….