

**Cardinal Giovanni Angelo Becciu Deposition, 5/5/2022**

*Translated by Bree A. Dail*

*Distinguished President, Distinguished Judges,*

*I would like to offer to the Tribunal, in respect of the Truth, some statements that I believe useful to the understanding of the facts, reaffirming with strength my absolute innocence with respect to what I am accused.*

*Mr. President, I immediately say that for me, a priest, it will not be easy to speak because I am torn by a deep inner disagreement, because if on the one hand the search for judicial truth requires me to say what I know, on the other hand my priestly identity leads me to forgive, not to flaunt the evil done by others, to be rich in mercy towards those who have erred, as Pope Francis often reminds us. But, in obedience to the Holy Father, I am predisposed to make my contribution to the ascertainment of the truth.*

*I will focus on the individual allegations contained in the counts that have been alleged against me.*

*I will then indicate, submitting them to your third and independent scrutiny, some events that have particularly disturbed me and that you need to know about.*

*I will therefore proceed, as I said, starting from the charge already substantially dealt with in my previous statements, relating to the hypothesis of embezzlement in favour of the SPES Cooperative.*

*I have already highlighted and documented the absolute correctness of my conduct and I reiterate how the only contributions under dispute, which are then the only sums that in the seven years were donated by the Secretariat of State, in 2015 and 2018, as has been documented, had a charitable destination. Bishop Sanguineti's 2015 request of 25,000 euros was used to purchase machinery that was useful to the Bakery to restart after the fire. That of Bishop Melis, of 2018 was intended to contribute, in the sum of 100,000, to the construction of the Citadel of Charity, the total cost of which was around 1,300,000 euros. The sum was set aside in*

*anticipation of its use, as proven and declared by the Bishop, and work on the Work materially began last [February 28](#), as documented.*

*I would like to clarify that everything concerning the Diocese of Ozieri, its resources, its organization, as well as the local Caritas or the Spes Cooperative, is beyond my prior knowledge.*

I therefore intend, Mr. President, to resume the discussion on the SPES of Ozieri, already addressed in the first questioning, to make some clarifications and considerations:

### PRECISIONS

**Mrs. ZAMBRANO** loan: I would simply like to point out that the loan made to Mrs. Zambrano was given by Caritas of Ozieri and not by the Spes Cooperative, as was said the last time.

I would like to underline once again, on this point, how the circumstance of this loan has been made known to me by reading the procedural acts.

As I have already illustrated, prior to the present events I had no reason whatsoever to request information about the administration of the Diocese, Caritas or Spes, which in fact I have never requested.

Moreover, my role as Substitute did not allow me to exercise control over the administration of a diocese or its ecclesiastical entities, either at the pastoral level or at the administrative level. The one who has the competence and authority to control a diocese is the Congregation for Bishops, in Western countries, while for missionary territories it is the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and for Middle Eastern territories it is the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

In any case, the probity and honesty of the successive Bishops and all those involved have never made me doubt irregularities or shortcomings of any kind or sort;

## **b. the role of my brother Tonino:**

I would like to say a few more words about my brother, Tonino, because he has often been made to look like a fixer and someone who speculates on church money.

- I would like to underline once again that the cooperative, as erroneously claimed by the Prosecution, is not "*my brother's*". He is one of the many partners - among others, I recall that Caritas of Ozieri itself is a partner! - certainly involved since its establishment and he is its legal representative. But to identify the cooperative with the person of my brother is a stretch that I reject.
- The SPES cooperative was created in 2005 (I was far away at the time, I was Nuncio in Angola) by the then Bishop of Ozieri, Monsignor Sanguinetti, who stated verbatim: "*It was I who inspired and accompanied the birth of the Cooperative, identifying in Prof. Tonino Becciu and in some members of the diocesan association "Volontari del 2000" the appropriate people to manage it*". The bishop continues: "*the identification of Prof. Becciu stemmed from the generous dedication he had always shown both within Caritas and in the animation of the Volontari del 2000 association. In the context of ecclesial life, as well as a professor of Catholic religion, he was always available to give his contribution of ideas and practical collaboration. (...) In the little more than a year in which I was able to verify the first steps of Coop Spes, I was able to appreciate the charitable spirit of Professor Tonino Becciu, the constant dialogue with the ecclesial reality and with Caritas in particular, and the intelligent identification of concrete paths for the integration of various disadvantaged persons*" (Mons. Sanguinetti, January 29, 2021, cit.)
- I reiterate, then, as my brother
  - o 2005-2016: so for over ten years, he has given his work for free to the noble purposes pursued by the cooperative, supporting himself with his work as a religious teacher;

- 2017-21: he abandoned the teaching of religion to devote himself exclusively to the cooperative and for those 4 years he received a compensation of 1800 euros, less than what he received as a professor (2200 euros)
- December 2021 receives pension and waives Cooperative fees

I have already said it but I would like to repeat it, and shout it out if necessary: as a priest, I blush when I think of Tonino's commitment to the poor and the community.

### **c. The "mixed" account**

I would like to focus once again on the so-called "promiscuous" or "private" current account of Caritas, as defined by the Prosecution.

This current account was opened in 2011 by H.E. Monsignor Pintor, then Bishop of Ozieri. It was opened both to receive sums from the Prefecture of Sassari in favor of refugees assisted by Caritas, and to facilitate the use of sums intended for projects 8X1000 of the CEI. He wanted those purposes not to be confused with the others and he thought it was much easier to control the incoming and outgoing items, with the creation of such an account.

Bishop Pintor was aware of this, as were the successive Bishops, Bishop Sanguinetti and, most recently, Bishop Melis.

As a further demonstration of what I am saying, I can show here other documentation that attests to the fact that in requesting new funding for other charitable projects ("Laudato sii" project, "Al Centro" project), the Presulators always indicate the same account to Caritas Nazionale, that account: the one that was indicated to me for the two disputed transfers.

In particular, in a letter dated January 9, 2017, Msgr. Melis expressly indicated the aforementioned current account; furthermore, in a communication dated March 4, 2022, Caritas italiana communicated the donation of a contribution, once again indicating the same current account (**attachments**)

Now Caritas Nazionale, which is so strict in demanding the accounting of the sums paid by it, if it had noticed irregularities in their management and especially

with the fuss of alleged wrongdoings raised in the last two years, wouldn't it have refused to accept the requests that came from Caritas Ozierese? Instead not only she doesn't refuse them, but she finances punctually and with high sums of 100 thousand euros the projects that are presented to her!

The truth, Mr. President, is that the "promiscuous" nature and the "private" purpose of that current account, so much emphasized by the Prosecution, have never existed. With the funds received, good has been done and, above all, work is being guaranteed for about seventy people and no one, but none of my family members, has ever become rich with them.

Ultimately, I emphasize that of the 125,000 euros that the Secretary of State destined for Caritas of Ozieri, the same pages of the lawsuit attest that **25,000 euros** were used for machinery for the Cooperative's oven and **100,000 euros** are still in the account available to the bishop. Where did the money come from to enrich my family members? This is a baseless accusation. Yet it was the mother of all my misfortunes!

## 2. Final Considerations

Mr. President, in underlining the groundlessness and gravity of these accusations, I cannot fail to refer to the moment when they were first addressed to me, that is, at the papal audience on the evening of September 24, 2020.

The SP told me that, following *ad hoc* investigations, it had been reported to him that the sums of St. Peter's Levy that I had sent to Caritas of my diocese of Ozieri had served to enrich my brothers, in particular my brother Tonino. He also told me that he was saddened that an Italian weekly magazine already had news of this serious accusation and that an article on the subject would soon be published.

I confess that I was speechless, so absurd and unfounded was that accusation, as today the facts finally prove.

The 125K write-off was the only charge he made to me. The SP specifically told me he had no others.

Having taken note of this accusation, although certain of its groundlessness, for love of the Church I considered it necessary, with immense sorrow, to resign

from the office I held, that of Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

From that moment on, a public pillory of worldwide proportions began for me: even in Angola, where I had been nuncio for seven and a half years, I was told that the national TV dedicated a week of debates to the subject; I was thrown on the front pages of newspapers all over the world; deprived of every ecclesiastical office; relegated to the margins of the Curia and the Church.

It grieved me and continues to grieve me, then, to have exposed my family to a lacerating and unjust suffering.

For more than a year and a half I have been plagued by a question: why were these false allegations reported to the SP? For what purpose? How could the person of the SP be instrumentalized, creating in the Church a scandal of unprecedented gravity? Since that day my life has been shaken, but also many believers all over the world have been disturbed in their faith.

## **SECOND ISSUE**

### **INVESTMENTS AND OBOLUS (IN GENERAL)**

In addition to the infamous accusations concerning the Spes cooperative, accusations are made against me concerning the investments of the SdS, with respect to which - I want to say it clearly - I would have abused my powers, not for personal gain but to enrich people substantially unknown to me.

With regard to these investments, I am first of all accused of my alleged lack of legitimacy to dispose of the finances of SdS.

Moreover, I am accused of the use of money coming from the Obolo di San Pietro, to which I would have given purposes incompatible with their institutional destination. All of these allegations, Mr. President, are totally unfounded.

### **Art. 172 *Pastor Bonus***

First of all, Mr. President, I am accused of having violated Article 172 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*. In essence, according to this approach, the SdS should have requested the consent of the APSA (Administration of the Patrimony for the Apostolic See) for the financial investments, made in the institutional interest, that it has conducted.

In this regard, I must point out that this article cannot be applied to the funds endowed by the Secretariat of State because, since their creation, dating back to the pontificate of Paul VI, only the Holy Father, the Secretary of State, the Substitute and the employees of the Administrative Office of the Secretariat of State were aware of them.

The SdS therefore reported directly to the Secretary of State and the SP on its administration, including the financial investments made with its own funds, and this was done by the Substitute on a six-monthly basis.

I strongly emphasize that these were not "slush funds," to use journalistic terms, but a true and proper Sovereign Fund, established well before my arrival and not accounted for in the Holy See's budget.

Therefore, contrary to the accusation, I strongly reiterate that there was a general consensus and a personal conviction that SdS was not bound to respect the provisions of Article 172 of *Pastor Bonus*.

After all, the following facts prove it:

- The practice of my predecessors: What I have said so far, far from being an invention of mine, is rather to be defined as a "legacy", a way of conducting the Section for General Affairs, stratified over time, by the various Substitutes who have succeeded one another and to whose practices I have conformed, considering them undoubtedly correct and also useful.

- Every six months I presented to the Cardinal Secretary of State and the Holy Father the financial statements prepared by the Administrative Office. Never, in this work of presentation, did I have an observation or a censure. The presentation was exhaustive and there was never any need for additional information or particular clarifications. There was always, therefore, maximum transparency and full normality of behavior among all those involved. Neither the Holy Father nor the Secretary of State ever objected as to why the Secretariat of State was promoting investments. On the contrary, there were signs of satisfaction when I communicated that every year these investments brought benefits; although I did not have the documents at the time, I seem to remember that they amounted to around 10 million euros per year.
- Delegations conferred by the Cardinal Secretary on the Substitute: at the moment of taking office as Substitute, and renewed for five years, the Substitute received a special delegation of authority from the Cardinal Secretary of State with which he was authorized to dispose of the financial resources of the SdS. This states, verbatim: *"H.E. Monsignor Becciu ... has assumed, therefore, the power to sign severally on any contract of a banking nature, on the request and subscription of financing, on operations of deposit, withdrawal, payment, purchase and sale of securities, carried out in the name and on behalf of the SdS, in observance of the regulations in force on the subject. "We have produced a copy to the Court (attachment 9 of the first documentary production).*
- Regarding the financial autonomy of the SdS, there is also an interview with SE Monsignor Nunzio Galantino, the current President of the APSA (Avvenire - October 30, 2021). In this interview, he confirms that the SDS did not need assents or authorizations for the expenses within its competence: *"[the SDS] was not required to ask for any authorization for acts of extraordinary administration, as other dicasteries are required to do, which must ask for the nihil obstat of the Spes"*



- Lastly, Motu Proprio *"Concerning Certain Competencies in Economic and Financial Matters"*: December 26, 2020. With this Motu Proprio *"Concerning certain competencies in economic and financial matters,"* the SP decrees that ownership of funds and bank accounts as well as investments of the SdS are, from now on, transferred to the APSA, *"which will take care of their management and administration.* It follows, with all evidence, that until December 26, 2020 the SdS had absolute autonomy in its management and administration, otherwise these new provisions would not have made sense.

### **What resources for investment?**

Not only did I have, as I have shown, full legitimacy to dispose of the financial resources of the SdS to make such investments; but it is necessary to clarify a further error committed by the Prosecution on this point, namely the nature of the resources used to make the contested investments.

One of the most publicly exhibited questions of this judicial affair is the following: were funds deriving from the Obolo di San Pietro used for the investments in question or not?

- My firm answer is: no! It was not the funds of the Obolus that were used, but the reserve funds of the Secretariat of State. I support my answer first with Monsignor Galantino's words and then with some information that I will give on the extent of the Obolus and its purpose.

- Msgr. Galantino, in the aforementioned interview, stated: *"However, it is important to say that the losses were borne by the reserve fund of the SdS, not by other funds nor by the Fund of St. Peter's Levy, which is used, year after year, for the expenses of the Pope's mission"*; and again, Msgr. Galantino: *"The losses of the investment in London were borne by the reserve fund of the SdS, and not by the Fund of St. Peter's Levy or by that at the disposal of the Holy Father"*.

## The Obolus of Saint Peter

Let me now say a few words about St. Peter's Obole.

### 1) What is San Pietro's obolus?

The Obolus of St. Peter, if Mr. President will allow the small historical digression, has ancient origins. Its history can be traced back to the early Middle Ages, when an Anglo-Saxon king is said to have financially supported pilgrims to Rome with an annual *penny* from each family in his kingdom.

But the Obolus proper, as we understand it today, was born after the collapse of the Papal State in 1870, when the Pope found himself without economic resources and unable to carry out his mission as Universal Pastor.

It was the American Catholics, followed by the faithful of other countries, who began to collect the so-called Peter's Pence, or the Obolus or the Argent of Saint Pierre, the offerings to be sent to the Pope to support him in the expenses of the Roman Curia. Pius IX, the Pontiff of the time, in 1871 wrote an Encyclical *Saepe Venerabiles*, to thank the faithful all over the world for such generosity. And since then, the collection of the Obolus, usually fixed for June 29th, the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, has spread more and more throughout the world and has become a constant practice.

The original and main purpose of the Obolus was to contribute to the expenses of the central government of the Church. In recent times, the charitable purpose of the Pope has also been added to it, but this was not always the case and still is not.

If one goes to the site of the obolus, one can find the following wording: "*the obolus has a twofold purpose: 1) the support of the universal mission of the Successor of St. Peter, who avails himself of a complex of organizations that take the name of Roman Curia (cf. Cann. 360-361 CIC) and of over one hundred Pontifical Representations scattered throughout the world (cf. Cann.*

362ff. CIC) 2) *the support of the Pope's works of charity in favor of the most needy*".

It seems clear, therefore, that the purpose of the Obolo di San Pietro is primarily to support the Roman Curia, in addition to supporting the needy.

2) Continuing the illustration on the Obolus: can it be invested? A crucial question! I immediately reiterate that, as also affirmed by Monsignor Galantino, it was not used for such investments; but in any case, even if this had been the case, I firmly disagree with the approach of the Accusation and in doing so I want to quote the words of the SP - pronounced in the press conference on the return flight from Japan, on November 26, 2019 - that best describe the real terms of the question: *"First of all, normal good administration: the sum of the Obolo di San Pietro arrives, and what do I do? Do I put it in the drawer? No. This is bad administration. I try to make an investment, and when I need to give, when I have the needs, during the year, the money is taken, and that capital does not depreciate, it is maintained or grows a little bit. This is good stewardship. Whereas 'drawer' stewardship is bad."*

3) I would also like to report, always as a demonstration of my absolute good faith during the course of my entire activity, what the same Head of the Administrative Office, Monsignor Perlasca, wrote to me on October 29, 2019, in response to my precise question, by message, present in the acts (*exhibit sheet*): *"Do you remember how much of the Obolus is destined for the poor and how much interest more or less of all our investments I presented every semester to the Pope?"*, the Monsignor replied: *"It depends on the years and the requests. Generally, we meet immediate needs resulting from natural disasters, requests for scholarships. A project for assistance in the parishes of Rome and in the areas where migrants land has been financed. About 2 million, I would say, out of 60 million collected. But beware: charity and pastoral ministry of the Holy Father. And pastoral ministry means the Roman Curia. What could the Pope do without the Roman Curia? Interest also*

*depended from year to year. We had two big crises in 2008 and 2011. Typically, it was around 10 million average per year."*

Anyway, when I came to SdS in 2011, it was materially impossible to invest resources that actually came from the Obolo fund.

In fact, the collection of the Obolus every year, on average, amounted to 45/50 million euros. Of these, every month the SdS had to transfer, as a contribution, 5 million euros to the APSA for the needs of the Curia (for a total of 60 million per year). This contribution then increased to 8 million per month thanks to Cardinal Pell's reforms (for a total of 96 million per year).

In addition, the SDS bore part of the expenses of Vatican Radio, whose total amounted to about 33 million euros per year, as well as those of the Holy See's diplomatic missions, for a *budget* of about 30 million.

What, then, was left of the Obolus? Nothing!

This was the reason why the investments were not only possible, as historically done, but necessary to contribute to the needs of the Curia and certainly not supported by the Obolus!

These are the reasons, of a mathematical kind, for which the accusatory assumption results completely denied.

### **THIRD FILE**

#### **THE SUBSTITUTE AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

## **1. The Substitute for General Affairs**

### a) The nomination

At this point, I think it is appropriate, before specifically reviewing the individual objections relating to investments, to clarify some aspects of the position I have been honored to hold for a seven-year period, that of Substitute, in order to make the Court better understand the daily life of that institutional figure, also in relation to the financial aspects, which are contested by the Promoter of Justice.

First of all, you become a Substitute not through competitions or by applying: you are called.

I was contacted by the then Secretary of State, Cardinal Bertone, who sought me out in Cuba, where I was then acting as Nuncio. I immediately expressed to him my reluctance, my fears, for such a delicate and demanding role. I certainly had experience in leadership, having held positions in Nunciatures in the four corners of the world, so to speak, but I do not deny that the commitment that was generously offered to me did not worry me. I believe this is a natural reaction of anyone with a sense of responsibility.

However, I was immediately reassured by Cardinal Bertone, who informed me of the presence of a team of valid and well-experienced collaborators, who had already been working for some time on the key-roles of that office, and in particular on the Administrative Office, which, as we know, manages the finances of the SdS. The Office directed by Msgr. Perlasca, which I will return to shortly.

I took two days of reflection and then, faithful to my priestly purpose of always making myself available to the calls of the Church, I accepted.

That same spirit of service of which I speak, Mr. President, is the same one that led me to accept, in my service to the Apostolic See, assignments in the Central African Republic; Congo-Brazzaville; Sudan; New Zealand; Sierra Leone; London; Paris; Washington, and then as Nuncio, Angola and Cuba.

## b) Duties of the Substitute

The Substitute for General Affairs, when he or she assumes office, shall simultaneously assume leadership of the following offices:

- Personnel Office (Curia and Nunciatures)
- legal department
- protocol office
- office for the preparation of the Pope's speeches
- office for the preparation of the Pope's trips
- office for the communications of the SDS (daily bulletin, press review, releases, relations with the Holy See Press Office)
- the language sections (Latin, Italian, English-speaking, French-speaking, Spanish, German, Polish, Arabic,)
- digit office
- press room office and Oss. Romano
- Apostolic Prefecture (audiences, trips to Italy)
- Each dicastery of the Roman Curia then referred to the Sostituto for any problems to be resolved or presented to the SP.
- There were, then, further periodic commitments, including
  - o trips with the Holy Father, both in Italy and abroad;
  - o the trips for the inaugurations of the new Nunciatures;
  - o in addition, of course, to the table audiences with the Holy Father and the weekly meetings with the Secretary of State and the other Superiors of the Secretariat of State.

Not to mention the emergencies or convocations received by telephone, without prior notice, from the Holy Father;

These and other areas of intervention, have formed the main commitments of my days, which - always with the intent to clarify the real perimeter of feasible surveillance or intervention of the Substitute - had more or less the following time scan.

The working day (which - of course - also included Saturday and Sunday mornings, until 12:45 p.m.), began at 8:15 a.m., with the meeting with the Delegate for the personnel of the Curia and the Nunciatures, as well as the meeting with the Head of the Administration Office.

From 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. there was waiting for paperwork to be processed or hearings to be held with other office managers.

From there, and until 2 p.m., various hearings were held, according to contingent commitments.

After a break, from 17.00 to 20.45, there was a time ordinarily reserved for the study of various practices, signing of documents (in the number of about fifty per day) and participation in other various hearings.

I think it is important here to recall how the daily schedule just summarized was integrated with the following commitments: on Tuesday and Friday mornings, from 9:30 to 11:30, the Substitute participated in meetings with the Superiors of the Secretariat of State; Tuesday evening, instead, was always dedicated to the Audience with the Holy Father.

I can say, in full conscience, that in seven long years of service, I spent **myself** unreservedly for the Holy Father and for the **Church. Aware of my** commitment and dedication, I feel satisfaction for the many results achieved for the good of the Church and deep sorrow for the unfounded accusations from which I am called to exonerate myself.

## **2. The Administrative Office**

As I said, the financial aspects of the SdS were taken care of by the Administrative Office, **described** by Cardinal Bertone when he called me for the proposal of assignment as a competent and experienced office.

It **was** composed of eight employees: the Head of Office; the cashier; the legal officer; the Nunciature officer; the insurance officer for diplomatic personnel; and the investment officers.

The individuals who filled these roles were "inherited" by me from the previous Deputy: they had enjoyed the trust of those who had preceded me and had had the positive references I mentioned.

Everywhere, but especially in the ecclesiastical world, **trust** is the prime mover of every choice; therefore, I had no reason to make any changes, replacements or additions to the staff. I did not resort to the *spoil system*, I did not introduce people I knew long ago, or fellow countrymen, or anything similar.

This is how the day-to-day operations of the Administrative Office functioned, in the relationship with the Substitute, bearing in mind that it had to be combined with the almost endless other obligations I mentioned earlier.

Every morning there was a meeting, defined as a table, with the Head of the Office, as a liaison. In the absence of the Head of Office, during my service he was replaced by another official, sometimes I remember Dr. Di Iorio. I demanded, in these cases, that matters of particular importance were not brought to my attention, since I wanted the impulse and the opinion of the Head of Office, Monsignor Perlasca.

For each issue to be dealt with, the office prepared notes or minutes, a copy of which is also among the acts of the process and of which I will speak later. This is a summary of the matter to be decided, where the central aspects of the single issue were condensed, in a simplified, atechanical form, and which, therefore, allowed decisions to be taken also by persons, as in my case, who were distant from economic-financial training.

At the bottom of these notes was an element of central importance: the so-called *mens*. This is a note, usually handwritten, from the Head of Office, who gives, in addition, his own opinion in summary form, and for me it was a source of considerable support. It was - how should I put it? - an "extra guarantee" regarding the proposal drawn up by the office technicians, which mainly guided my choice.



Above all, we must never forget the **fundamental** parameter that guides relationships in the ecclesiastical dimension: **trust**. The Church is not a business, but a communion of faithful and, in the case of prelates, of **confreres** (a term used not by chance), who have a common sensibility and vision of the world and a single, shared purpose: to serve the Church and the Pope. There are no different ideological sensibilities or profound political differences, as could more easily occur in a public or private lay administration. This is why the bond of trust is so deeply felt and, at the same time, a fundamental parameter for making decisions.

### **Monsignor Perlasca**

Precisely speaking of fiduciary ties, I cannot now fail to mention the Head of the Administrative Office, whom I found already present in the post when I took office, and whom I maintained throughout my term.

As mentioned, at the time of my service, Msgr. Perlasca was the Office Manager. He had been since 2009 and remained so after I left office. One could say that the Administrative Office was almost his own little kingdom, of which he felt he was the head. I remember that in the last period, when the change of competences of the Administrative Office in favour of the SPE was on the horizon, I saw him almost in tears.

In the relations of office, I have no difficulty in recognizing in him a high sense of duty and a profound technical competence - that of which Cardinal Bertone spoke to me and which, instead, is not to be found in my baggage of competences - to the point that among his positions there is that of professor of administrative law at the Urbaniana University (University of the Dicastery for the Missions). He was a technician of profound experience and high dedication to the office and its delicate activities, which he showed to know abundantly. With him, as Head of Office, I interfaced on every issue, and I was reported by him in every affair. I have never taken decisions without gathering his technical opinion, which in turn led to synthesis of the investigations carried out by the members of the Administrative Office, and

which I followed slavishly, precisely because of the combination of expertise that I recognized in his person and in the entire office, on the one hand, and maximum trust, on the other, which never had reason to crack or be questioned in the seven years of joint work.

Moreover, precisely because of the technical competence and the trust I placed in Monsignor Perlasca and in the entire Office, during my service I never took a decision regarding financial investments that was not in line with what was proposed to me.

I can say, from a character profile, that Monsignor Perlasca was short-tempered and touchy, perhaps even jealous of his own autonomy and of the absolutely managerial role he had in the Office. He cultivated, then, a great desire: to become an Apostolic Nuncio.

Monsignor Perlasca's character intemperance was however balanced, in my eyes, by an undisputed technical competence.

The relationship with Msgr. Perlasca continued, on a personal level, even when I was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, leaving the post of Substitute. I can testify to a continuation of the relationship in terms that were certainly cordial (just for an example, from the messages I received, which are present in the records: June 2, 2019, on the occasion of my birthday, Msgr. Perlasca wrote to me: "*The people you love and to whom you are grateful you always carry in your heart*").

The start of the investigation of the present proceedings, which later reached - for me, with great wonder - even his person, prostrated him terribly. In prey to a deep loneliness caused by these events, he took refuge with me seeking comfort, which I did not want and did not know how to deny him. The numerous SMS exchanged in that period, available to the acts of the process, are ample proof. Sometimes we shared meals, during which I tried to be close to him and to support him.

At that time he also represented to me his great bitterness at being removed from his position in SdS. There is a trace of this in the messaging in the records of the trial and I believe that their reading helps in the correct reconstruction of the facts: it was June

18, 2019 when he informed me of his removal with this message: "*At 18.30 I got a call from Card. Parolin and told me that I have to leave the office and all the administrative tasks that I have and if I want I can go to the apostolic signature without a precise assignment.*" Questioning me about the reasons that could have determined such a decision, I asked him: "*But isn't it that you are responsible for investments gone wrong?*". He replied: "*Of course*". I expressed my displeasure, as was often the case in that period.

At that time, then, he insistently asked me for help to defend his position, which he said was one of firm innocence; he hoped I could intercede with the SP in order to procure him a papal audience. He hoped I could intercede with the SP in order to procure him a papal audience. I did not think, in conscience, to deny myself and, in a meeting with the SP, I expressed to him my plea for the meeting, which I later learned had taken place.

Even after these events, however, his situation did not change, and his mood worsened further. I cannot help but mention one episode, albeit with pain and hesitation, given the public forum in which we find ourselves; but its relevance is deemed by me such that I cannot keep it silent.

On July 3, 2020, I received from Mons. Perlasca's alarming messages, already produced to the Tribunal (attachment 3, first documental production), in which he announced his intention to commit suicide, according to him the only possible solution to get out of that situation that left him no prospect of seeing his innocence recognized by a Tribunal (verbatim: "*I am not joking... at this point it would be the only way to get out of it and to tell all the people who know me, who believe in me and who are suffering with me that I am innocent... the court will never recognize it... throwing myself from my room I would die right on the chapel... maybe the best thing. I thank your Eminence dearest, but I do not feel... but anyway I repeat that I want you and I have always loved you*"). I was terrified and immediately replied: "*Nooo!*", activating myself to help him. I immediately alerted Msgr. Gaid, then personal secretary of the Holy Father, who lived with him in Santa Marta, to be near him; he, not being at home, alerted another confrere. Not receiving a prompt reply, I went

myself and went to Santa Marta. I found various people alerted because Monsignor Perlasca was not in his room. I instructed the priest indicated by Archbishop Gaid to stay close to him when he returned. He did so, also informing the Commander of the Gendarmerie. Bishop Perlasca returned late in the evening and was seen to be rather agitated and disorganized in his speech. The Commander called the medical guard who - they told me - administered a mild sedative to calm him down and make him sleep.

In the following days I called him and made him understand that by committing suicide he would not have obtained anything, much less recognition of his innocence; on the contrary, the newspapers would have passed on the version that he had killed himself because he was oppressed by guilt.

I continued to write to him, to bring him comfort, in the following period, always continuing to receive friendly replies (produced in attachment 4 of the first documentary production).

Upon his return from the summer, Bishop Perlasca expressed the desire to see me, perhaps having dinner together, as he said to repay me for the good that my caring presence in those painful months had brought him. The appointment took place on September 5, at Lo Scarpone restaurant.

On that occasion, I found a man quite different from the one I had known for so many years and, albeit with the changes described, also from the one of the last period: he appeared very strange and touchy, unusual for a man who was also used to joking; above all, he went into many questions about my person and my activities, even the most confidential ones, almost as if it were an interrogation, with a manner very far from the announced "thanksgiving dinner" he had promised me.

I attributed these oddities to the moment of great suffering and discomfort that had afflicted him for months and, although bitter, I let it go without expressing any doubts.

I have to say that when, very recently, in the course of the last few hearings, I heard reference to the possible existence of a recording of that dinner, I couldn't help but think that that recording would explain that otherwise outlandish behavior.

Let me say, Mr. President, that it would be for me, in that case, the suffering of a further suffering: a priest who betrays his ancient Superior!

After that dinner, he moved away from me for good and, also because of the events that had taken place, I had no more reason or occasion to meet him.

### **Genoveffa Ciferri Putignani**

I feel obliged to make a few hints now about a figure that I would not hesitate to call disturbing and that appeared out of the blue in my story. She is a certain lady, who introduced herself as Genevieve Putignani, born Genoveffa Ciferri.

This lady appeared in my life in early May 2020, with a phone call. The call was passed from the switchboard of the Vatican Gendarmerie to the landline of my apartment. She introduced herself as a lady who knew Msgr. Perlasca very well. She showed me all her concern about what was happening to him, especially about his dismissal from the Holy See. She asked me in insistent tones to do something for him, to speak especially with the Pope to convince him to recognize his innocence. Finding myself also psychologically favorable to the Monsignor, as I have illustrated, I showed benevolent attention and I would say sharing in what he said. I assured her that I would do everything in my power to take an interest in him. I was a bit surprised by his determination to dictate his proposals to me and by the lack of kindness, not to mention the pleasantries that a polite person usually shows towards a Cardinal. I barely perceived the name she spoke to me and, to tell the truth, I didn't care so much because I thought I would never hear from her again, much less see her. Instead, he called me back another time, but I don't remember when or the details of the conversation except that he expressed in a cold and haughty tone of voice his doubts about the effectiveness of my intervention with the Pope because until then he had not noticed any change in the measures taken against Monsignor Perlasca.

She called me back a third time to ask if I could receive her at home. I accepted her request, in spite of the perplexity that resulted from her phone call to try to support Monsignor Perlasca's requests, with the intent of clarifying the priest's position and explaining everything to her verbally.

I received her on July 10 at about 7:00 p.m. in my apartment. Welcomed by Sister Sara, one of the two nuns of the house, she was shown into the living room, where I met her a few minutes after her arrival.

I went serene, thinking I was meeting a docile, caring, kind lady, grateful for what I was doing for her friend. What was my disappointment from the very first lines! I found a cold woman, I would say arrogant and insolent. First of all, she began by beatifying the monsignor, whom she described as an intelligent man, dedicated to the good of others and a very sensitive soul. Then she began to reproach me that I had done nothing for him, that it was not true that I had gone to the Pope as I had assured her in the previous phone call or, if I had gone, that I had not defended his protégé at all and that, on the contrary, I wanted to do everything to get rid of him. And then a series of less than benevolent remarks towards the Pope, which really filled the gap. At this point I stopped her and tried to speak, but seeing that she interrupted me, I told her that out of politeness she should listen to me if only because in silence I had given her attention for a long time.

I tried to give my version of the facts, but I did not succeed, such was the eagerness that animated the lady. She resumed her tirade against me and every positive gesture I made towards Monsignor Perlasca she fancifully misrepresented in a negative sense. Thus, the sedative given to Perlasca on the evening of the agitation and suicide threat? I was the one who called the doctor and gave him the order to give him a massive dose of sedative in order to eliminate him. The advice I had given him to return to his home in Como and to leave Santa Marta, where he risked, in his solitude and with his inner torment, a terrible depression, also because of the suicidal intentions that had occurred? Mine was nothing more than an attempt to get rid of him.

To my rather strong reaction, with a voice altered as I had never seen myself, in the face of all this insolence, he responded with a threat: "*Remember: if you do not do everything to restore honor and employment to Msgr. Perlasca, you will lose your cardinal's hat and his hat will be a simple ignominious memory for you!*" He then made insinuations between a threat and an enticement: "*Know that I know journalists*

*both in Italy and in England who will be able to destroy or exalt you depending on your commitment to Perlasca.* And in milder tones, she added that, if I agreed, she could send her driver to take me to her house, or rather her villa, one of those evenings, where we could discuss the matter further. Among other things, she introduced herself as a former agent of the Italian secret services.

At that point, I begged her to get out and go away, because by now she seemed to me a mythomaniac with whom I could not in any way interact. After all, an hour had already passed since this unpleasant conversation had begun. In the meantime, Sister Sara had entered the living room, because she was concerned about the somewhat altered tone of my voice, which she had never heard since she had met me. She later confided to me that because of the unusual and loud tones she had become alarmed and, as she approached the door, she was able to hear a good part of the conversation.

The next day the lady sent me a WhatsApp message: *"Your Eminence, in light of the animated conversation that took place last night, July 10 h. 20, which saw me opposed to you, although united with you in the mutual goal of good for the person in question, I invite you, once again, to contribute to the resolution of the problem, from which you cannot exempt yourself, holding full moral responsibility. I reiterate therefore the prayer to put your purple in the service of justice and truth, and not of cowardice and simulation. On the other hand, it would not be useful to you, nor would it benefit the good of the Church, to entrench yourself behind the curtain of arrogance and arrogance. Devoted regards. Dr. Genevieve Putignani"* I also asked Monsignor Perlasca who this friend of his was. He, showing his dismay, replied with this message: *"Eminence, good morning. I am sorry. I beg you, let it go... and in any case, it is absolutely not my thought.* I received, again, in the following days, a second message from the lady with the following tenor: *"Your Eminence, just returned from London, and on the basis of our conversation, I have the honour to inform you that I have taken steps to close some taps, to reopen others, past and recent, of more substantial importance. With regret, I deduce that you will have to procure lawyers, on English and Italian soil, of a higher caliber than those paternally recommended to your former collaborator (...)"*.

Anyway, after these terrible episodes I stopped the telephone contact. She later tried to contact me in the Department, but I told the secretary to ignore her.

### **The phone call to my brother**

On September 10, 2020, Mrs. Ciferri contacted my brother, Mario, on the phone with such serious tones that, in the following period, he formally denounced the threats received (attachment 6 of the first documentary production). My brother received two phone calls from Mrs. Ciferri, in which she was once again very threatening towards me and in particular told him to get ready to visit me in prison starting from the beginning of October and that in the meantime, precisely between September 15-30, I would lose my cardinalate!

At this point, I cannot help but notice a singular succession of dates for these events. These are dates that have marked behavioral twists and have marked the chronology of these events:

- April 29, 2020: First interrogation of Bishop Perlasca to the Promoter of Justice in which he defends his own work and that of the SDS;
- April 30: Msgr. Perlasca receives a letter of removal from office signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, with a joint request to leave his lodging in Casa Santa Marta and return his diplomatic passport;
- July 3: Monsignor Perlasca threatens suicide because of the accusations received;
- August 31, 2020: interrogation of Msgr. Perlasca in which, for the first time and in a completely opposite manner to the previous interrogation of April 29, he begins to use hostile tones towards me, producing a bizarre memoir, even composed of questions and answers about my person and also about facts completely unrelated to the investigations in progress;
- September 5: dinner at Lo Scarpone restaurant;
- September 10: phone call from Mrs. Ciferri to my brother: "*he will lose his cardinal's hat*".



In limiting myself to the account of these events so chronologically succeeded, I leave naturally to your scrutiny every consideration!

I conclude, on this point, by pointing out how in the months following the emergence of the formal accusations against me, my attorneys were able to demonstrate a long-standing and very close acquaintance between Monsignor Perlasca and Ms. Ciferri, evidenced, among other things, by some notarial acts, already in the availability of the Court (Annexes 1 and 2 of the first documentary production), with which Ms. Ciferri - already in 2017 - donates to Monsignor Perlasca some real estate properties, reciprocated by the prelate as follows: "As consideration for the transfer ... Mr. Perlasca Alberto undertakes, for the entire duration of the assignor's life, to execute the real estate properties of the prelate, in exchange for the transfer of the real estate properties to Monsignor Perlasca. Perlasca of real estate properties, thus reciprocated by the prelate: *"By way of consideration for the transfer ... Mr. Perlasca Alberto undertakes, for the entire duration of the transferor's life, to perform the following services in favor of the same transferor: 1) to provide the transferor with adequate moral and spiritual assistance; 2) to celebrate or have celebrated Gregorian Masses in suffrage post mortem for a cycle of five years, as per the current pro-tempore Diocesan tariff."*

#### **FOURTH ISSUE**

#### **SUBJECTS AND INDIVIDUAL INVESTMENTS**

## **Background**

After describing the context of the office I held and the true extent of the internal relationships within the Office, I would like to talk about the disputed investments and any relationships with outside financial advisors.

### ***Falcon Oil Investment***

This investment proposal, from which the events of the London Palace originate, are clearly known to the Tribunal; therefore, I will only give a brief outline. This is the investment proposal relating to the purchase of the right to exploit deposits in Angola. In particular, I would like to point out that, contrary to what usually happened, it was I who pointed out to the Administrative Office the possibility of an investment, which came from an old acquaintance of mine at the time of **my stay** in Angola: the entrepreneur Antonio Mosquito. I had a good **personal** acquaintance with him **and I held him in high esteem, also because he was a benefactor of the Nunciature.**

I specify - as, moreover, emerges unquestionably from the acts - that my intervention was limited only to the reporting of the simple proposal; and on several occasions, as is natural, I urged Msgr. Perlasca to carry out with the utmost rigor all the investigations necessary to protect the Holy See from any possible financial risk, and to participate with inflexibility in any negative judgment, completely ignoring the personal relationship with the Angolan businessman. Obviously, the Superiors were, as always, duly informed of all this: the full knowledge of the then Cardinal Secretary of State, Bertone, appears in the records, who in a communication of July 1, 2013, addressed to UBS, confirmed my authorization to operate on the economic reserves of the SdS for that specific purpose: "*Project "Angola" (...) I confirm to you that the Substitute of the General Affairs Section of the SdS is authorized to carry out the operations of credit and pledging of assets, aimed at the conclusion of investment transactions, and that these take place in accordance with the provisions in force on the subject*" **(Attachment)**

During the progress of the preliminary studies by the Administrative Office, which lasted a long time, I repeatedly called for the utmost scrupulousness, as demonstrated

by the notes, or minute notes, of which I spoke previously, which the Administrative Office presented to me to show me the progress of the work and which I, when necessary, wrote down with the necessary indications.

In the early months of 2014, after almost two years of investigation, Bishop Perlasca informed me that the investment did not present sufficient guarantees of reliability and proposed, therefore, that I abandon it. As is my wont, appreciating the dedicated and careful work of the Office, and in the spirit of full confidence that I have always held in it, I quietly accepted the response. It reads, under my signature, in the Memo of May 30, 2014, in the records: "*Having lost the initial certainty and convenience, the negotiation can be closed here. I am sorry for the loss of time and energy expended*". Msgr. Perlasca himself, in the interrogation of April 29, 2020, when asked by the Promoter how my reaction had been, replied: "*this Dr. Mosquito, a friend of the Nunciature in Angola and, let's say, a friend also of... of Monsignor Becciu, who, by the way, in this matter has been extremely correct from the beginning and has said: 'I warn you, if the conditions are right you will do it, if the conditions are not right you will not do it'*". (interrogatory April 29, 2020, p. 12).

This I want to recall, Mr. President, to show how I cared so deeply for the greater good of the Holy See that I preferred it to any other personal interest or friendship.

I reiterate that this was the only investment proposal that I personally reported to the Office; and that all the other investments I will talk about in a moment, on the contrary, referred to subjects completely unknown to me.

And it was precisely the rigor shown by the Administrative Office and Monsignor Perlasca in the *Falcon Oil* affair that led me to believe that all evaluations of subsequent investments should be accompanied by the same diligence and attention to the higher interest of the Holy See.

## **Athena Fund**

Among the investments that were subsequently carried out, and which appear in the charges, is that relating to the London Palace, carried out through the Athena fund.

It is now known that, through Dr. Crasso, an old and esteemed financial consultant of the SdS, Dr. Mincione, a person unknown to me, was involved as an expert in the matter, in order to examine the feasibility of the *Falcon Oil* operation. Under the control of Monsignor Perlasca and his office, his own fund, Athena GOF, was then involved, which at first was supposed to participate in the operation in Angola, but then fell through.

Thus, the competent Office identified a different real estate investment option in the now well-known London building (60 Sloane Avenue).

I want to strongly emphasize that in the Memo prepared, as is customary, by the Administrative Office, dated July 8, 2014 and placed before me, the investment proposal is magnified.

Among other things, **it is** stated that: "*without prejudice to the possibility of closing the fund, agreeing with the manager (Athena Capital) an appropriate exit strategy, it would be, instead, of the subdued opinion to use it in a profitable way*"; and again: "*the most promising and guaranteeing hypothesis, which would allow a real diversification of the existing investments, is the one suggested for some time by dott. Mincione, of CapInvest, and defined in the meeting held last June 20 in SdS, with Dr. Catizone, CEO of Athena, Dr. Crasso and Monsignor Perlasca. It is the participation, pro-quota, through Athena GOF, in a real estate investment in London, acquiring about 40-45% of the freehold (the building and the use of the land) located at 60 Sloane Avenue (...).*" In this regard, a third party company, Sloane & Cadogan of London, was asked to provide a technical opinion on the property in question (...). Sloane & Cadogan believes that the investment is worthwhile, it knows the property well, as it had participated in the auction for its acquisition without succeeding (...). (...) The renovation project of the property is ambitious and will give the opportunity to raise the quality standards of the entire street, even if the district in which it is located, Knightsbridge, is considered one of the most prestigious areas of London (...) It should be noted that the project is coordinated by one of the most famous architects

*in the world, recipient of the highest international awards: David Chipperfield," and so on.*

The Administrative Office, after such laudatory descriptions, closed the Memorandum with the following proposal: *"It is believed, s.m.i., to follow the indications of Dr. Catizone by investing about \$100M.... "*

This was followed by the recalled *mens*, that is, the personal opinion of Monsignor Perlasca: *"Yes, we cannot stand still. Whatever happens with Falcon Oil, the money is there. I am therefore very much in favor of it.*

These, Mr. President, were the historical premises that led me to confirm the investment proposal, writing at the bottom of this note a brief: *"Proceed"*.

I still wonder today how I could have acted differently, in light of the information brought to my attention at the time, which, for any decision-maker in good faith and who, like me, wished only for the good of the Holy See, left no room for interpretation!

Moreover, to make the financial operation, which had the favor and **support of** the Administrative Office, even more convenient in my eyes, there was the fact **that our stocks were not affected, since a bank loan was used, moreover at a favorable rate, which would have been completely absorbed by the return on investment.** On this point, **Dr. Crassus, in a recent interview, reiterated what he indicated to the Administrative Office at the time: "It was a good deal for the Vatican. The interest on the loan was 0.65% and the yield on the property was 3.4%. One would be an idiot not to take out a loan when the capital is so cheap."** (DIE ZEIT OF July 29, 2021)

For the sake of completeness, I recall that also the Cardinal Secretary of State, Parolin, on December 21, 2016 authorized in writing, as Cardinal Bertone did previously, the pledging of the assets of the SdS for the same purposes, specifying verbatim that: *"We consequently confirm that the SdS - General Affairs Section, has the faculty and the legal capacity to enter into, in its own name and on behalf of the Holy See, the credit agreement attached hereto and to sign the deed of pledge as a guarantee for the granting of the credit (...) We confirm in fine that S. Angelo Becciu, Substitute of the Holy See, may validly stipulate, in his own name and on behalf of the*

*Holy See, all the documents concerning the credit agreement with Credit Suisse, including the deed of pledge as a guarantee for the credit in question, aimed at the conclusion of investment transactions".*

And even in very recent times, when I had already left my position at SdS, Cardinal Parolin expressed himself favorably in a letter to the then president of the IOR, Dr. de Fransu, indicating them verbatim as "*valid investments*," as reported even by the press, already produced to the Court (attachment 12 of the first documentary production).

Certainly, I believe that these consents were the exclusive result of the evidence that was presented to him, in absolutely positive terms, by the Administrative Office, as was the case with me.

My absolute good faith in limiting myself to approving what was submitted to me by the Office at the outcome of the technical investigations conducted emerges even by drawing on the messages, present in the records, between Monsignor Perlasca and myself, which in times subsequent to the facts - when I was no longer in the SdS, and news of the present investigation had already begun to circulate in the press - peremptorily describes my extraneousness.

On October 2, 2019, I wrote to him, "*But can you and I be held accountable for anything?*". He answered me with a sentence that today appears enlightening to anyone who approaches the understanding of these facts without prejudice: "*She I think not.*"

There is no need to emphasize how Monsignor Perlasca, in times not under suspicion, was aware of my absolute lack of responsibility for the investments under dispute.

If, in all conscience, I have to attribute a fault to Monsignor Perlasca today, it is that of not having made known to me any critical issues that were known to him (and only to him) during my years at SdS.

I would now like to describe my relationships, if any, with the other figures indicated by the Prosecution as competitors in the crimes charged.

### **1) Dr Enrico Crasso**

Dr. Crasso had been working as an external financial consultant for SdS since 1990, and was therefore a personality of the utmost trust and consideration, which he enjoyed **from** my predecessors and **from** anyone who knew him in the environment.

With him, however, I only had personal meetings during the Christmas holidays, when he came to the office to present me with his best wishes-

To testify to the formality of the relationships and, in good substance, to their meagreness, I report that even in the summer of 2018, Dr. Crasso, who was present in Sardinia, wanted to participate **in the** Holy Mass that I celebrated **in my holiday areas**; he did not even have my personal cell phone number yet, so much so that he turned to Monsignor Perlasca to get it, and he informed me with this message dated August 16, **2018, I repeat 2018, that is, when I had already ceased my assignment as Substitute!** SMS present in the acts: "*Your Eminence, good morning. Dr. Crassus is in Sardinia and would like to come and see you. He asked me for your number ..... before giving it to you, but I thought it appropriate to inform you and receive your instructions. Thank you*".

All of this is to show how his advisory work and attendance in the Secretariat of State were exclusively directed to the Head of Office, Monsignor Perlasca, or to the other officials in charge of investments.

### **2) Dr. Raffaele Mincione**

I had no prior knowledge of Dr. Mincione, who was involved by the Offices in relation to the investment hypothesis in Angola, from what was explained to me by Monsignor Perlasca because of his professional qualities in that field. I **remember greeting him only a couple of times in SdS**, without entering into operational details of the financial events but limiting ourselves to greetings of mere courtesy; I never saw him again, not even after he left office.

I would like, however, to strongly refute a distorted reading of a fact, considered very relevant by the Prosecution, but devoid of any foundation.

It relates to alleged negative references on Dr. Mincione's account, which I allegedly received from the Gendarmerie in 2014 and which I deliberately ignored, **because I was caught up in the** investment desire we discussed and, therefore, unduly benefited Dr. Mincione.

The fact, in these terms, does not correspond to the truth.

Reconstructing the documents made available by the Prosecution after the preliminary investigation, I was able to ascertain, on the contrary, a correct functioning of the Administrative Office and of Monsignor Perlasca.

This is June 2013, during the study of the proposed investment in Angola, with the participation of Dr. Mincione and the Athena fund.

On that occasion, a *Credit Suisse* official, a certain Raimondo Morandi, on June 7, 2013, addressed an article to Dr. Tirabassi in a newspaper, *Il Mondo*. **In it, a reconstruction is made of the Athena fund, traceable to Dr. Mincione, and some doubts are raised about his work.**

Far from hiding it, Dr. Tirabassi, in agreement with Monsignor Perlasca, drew up a Memorandum, with all due haste, the very next day (June 8), in which he brought these presumed critical points to the attention of the Superior and at the same time gave an account of a series of activities of scrupulous verification that the Administrative Office, in the meantime, had conducted to protect the interests of the SdS.

**In this Memorandum** it is recalled that the Office became acquainted with Dr. Mincione through a reference by Dr. Crasso; that on the Athena fund "an *excellent certificate of knowledge, for the type of vehicle and seriousness, was received from Dr. Antonio Prestia, of ENI*"; that *Credit Suisse* had conducted a legal analysis on this fund, with a positive outcome; and that, in any case, the Office had already contacted Dr. Mincione for the purpose of a legal analysis of this fund, with a positive outcome. Antonio Prestia, of ENI"; that *Credit Suisse* had carried out a legal analysis on this fund, with a positive outcome; and that, in any case, the Office had



already contacted Dr. Mincione through Dr. Crasso, who had, as verbatim written in the note: "*declared himself available to clarify his position and to show what had been delivered to Consob and Banca d'Italia in his defense*". Therefore, the Office note concluded that before receiving Dr. Mincione for clarification, it would be "*useful to acquire, in a short time and in confidence, further information*" through the Gendarmerie. The Head of the Office, Monsignor Perlasca, agreed with this advice with his personal *opinion*: "*I am in agreement*".

And therefore, in my turn, having no interest in concealing or avoiding any kind of control on the person of Dr. Mincione, I myself, in the superior interest of the SdS, requested on June 9 the investigation of the Gendarmerie, writing: "*It should be done as soon as possible*", with all promptness.

Forget about ignoring the results of the note from the Gendarmerie: if first the Administrative Office, then Monsignor Perlasca, and finally myself, had not acted as the note shows, the Gendarmerie would never have been interested at **all!**

The records show, then, that the Gendarmerie drew up an informative note on the account of Dr. Mincione, found in the trial documents, which results, from a footnote, delivered on June 20, 2013 to Dr. Mauriello and, by the latter, to Monsignor Perlasca. I do **not remember having read it but, even if I had, there were no reasons to prevent the continuation of the professional relationship.**

That note, which the Court will be able to read, far from expressing negative facts about Mr. Mincione, is little more than his CV, which is, moreover, of the highest order: we read in it that, since he was young, Mr. Mincione was an advisor to the most prestigious banks and investment institutes in the world, such as Goldman Sachs, Nomura, Merrill Lynch; that he held a number of companies (certainly not unusual for an international financier...).

Among the alleged negatives, it was indicated that he had had professional contacts, in the 90s, with Sergio Cragnotti, **the former patron of the Lazio soccer team.** Moreover, Dr. Mincione would have been stopped, during a police check, with some gentlemen reported, more than ten years before the drafting of the note, for some crimes, about which nothing was said about their investigation.

Therefore, I want to state, with absolute conviction, that it is not at all true that I ignored a note from the Gendarmerie that exposed Dr. Mincione in a negative light, such as to make him an unreliable subject, and therefore with whom to interrupt any kind of relationship.

And again, I go back to wondering and asking you, Mr. President, what so much I should have done to benefit a stranger!

Since it is a hypothesis of embezzlement, in which it is not even contested to have diverted in my favor not even a penny, what should have pushed me to perform an activity so deplorable to enrich then a person that I barely crossed twice in life?

### **3) Dr Alessandro Noceti**

I never met Dr. Noceti personally. Any consulting relationship was held by Bishop Perlasca and the Administrative Office, to the extent of their respective responsibilities.

With reference to the two objections raised against me concerning his person, relating to the Sloane & Cadogan real estate investment fund and, then, to a payment of 700,000 euros, I can report the following.

As for the **first matter** - the identification of this real estate fund and the payment of unjustified commissions to it - I can only refer, **as usual**, to the Administrative Office and to Msgr.

The latter, already during the first interrogation to the PdG (April 29, 2020) confirmed what I am saying, namely that this fund - like any other initiative of that Office - was brought by him to my attention, with positive notes about the investment proposal to be undertaken and, therefore, with such a tone as to approve it, without any hesitation or uncertainty.

I read what Monsignor Perlasca said to the Promoter: "PROMOTER ... *you explained to us earlier how the office worked, that you reported to the substitute... that is, how did it happen? That is, the substitute said, 'are these 4 SPVs (Special Purpose Vehicles) being bought?*

*Monsignor PERLASCA Alberto: no... but no (...) I went to the substitute and said "look there is this... they offered us this opportunity... it seems to us a serious thing, something that can be done (...) and he authorized it. (...) we proceeded" (interrogation April 29, 2020, p. 334 of the transcript).*

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As far as the **second** event - the payment of 700,000 GBP - is concerned, the matter is correlated to the one just summarized, and in this case, too, it is to be found in a provision following an investigation by the Administrative Office.

Perlasca, in the same interrogation, expressly affirmed, in order to justify the payment, that: *"and because he had practically brought him... that is, he believed he had brought these two from SLOANE & CADOGAN and he wanted his... he wanted his own as well.... (...) the mediator of the thing"*.

And, with regard to the justification that was provided to me by the Administrative Office, he specified verbatim that: *" he was probably told that this one was to be liquidated and sent away..."* (interrogatory April 29, 2020, p. 341 interrogatory)

To confirm this, I also point out one of the Notes that the Administrative Office routinely prepared for me, precisely the one dated March 27, 2018, present in the records, in which it is confirmed that the payment to Dr. Noceti was due, by way of commission, for the intermediation activity carried out in the interest of SdS.

In view of this investigation and what was represented to me, I really could not have done otherwise.

Once again the question comes back: why should I have authorized an undue payment in favor of a gentleman who is completely unknown to me?

I cannot rest, Mr. President, thinking that I am being accused of having favored unknown persons, even thus damaging the Holy See!

**Gianluigi Torzi**

Finally, Mr. President, I will proceed in a much more agile manner in relation to the person of Dr. Torzi, whom I have never met: I even exclude having met him once in my life.

On the other hand, I am not involved in the accusations against Dr. Torzi, as they relate to a period in which I was no longer Deputy.

## **FIFTH ISSUE**

### **THE ALLEGED MISREPRESENTATION**

Mr. President, even if it is not the subject of a specific dispute, I would like to make some remarks on an alleged, albeit absurd, activity of misrepresentation that I would have put in place with respect to the investigations of the Promoter of Justice.

I am sorry to have to point out that the approach used by the Prosecution suffers from a lack of knowledge of the ecclesiastical world, which ends up influencing the entire evaluation of the facts, favoring a seriously erroneous and certainly unfounded judgment.

The absence of active roles in the SdS, unlike in lay administrations, did not prevent me from taking an interest in the affairs of the Church. It is certainly true to say that I no longer had any operative power over the work of SdS, but this certainly did not prevent me from being involved in everything that, in my opinion, could have benefited the whole Church.

In fact, it is well to remember that every member of the faithful has the right to address the SP, to the point that in the SdS there is an office, called the *Office of Private Correspondence*, which receives an average of five thousand letters addressed to the Pope every month!

But above all, as a Cardinal, I had this right/duty and, above all, I felt this need to actively help the Holy Father and the Church. As canonists know, the Cardinals are,

in the Roman tradition, *pars corporis papae*: they are part of the Pope's Senate and, in this capacity, they contribute to the government of the Church, helping the Holy Father in his ministry, accessing his person even without the need to hold particular offices or functions in the Curia. To this end, it is sufficient to hold the dignity of cardinal.

Having said that, Mr. President, I would like to briefly go over the facts, from which the absolute groundlessness of the accusatory deductions will emerge.

The proposal for the purchase of the Palace, of all respect, came to me from Dr. Marco Simeon, a businessman expert in international relations, in relations with the Holy See for about twenty years: there was, I was told, a U.S. fund interested in the real estate deal.

Above all, it was represented by very important people: His Excellency Castellaneta (former Italian ambassador in Washington); the Hon. Innocenzi Botti (former government undersecretary), who were known to me for their undisputed seriousness, which prevented any doubt about the validity of the proposal.

I thought it might be an opportunity, therefore, to eliminate any disadvantageous consequences of the investment that the press had described as unprofitable, and therefore potentially harmful to the Holy See.

I then presented the proposal to the SP. He welcomed it. He instructed me to continue the negotiation. Collected this authorization, I thanked the Hon. Innocenzi Botti, asking him to acquire the details of the offer.

The proposal made, in fact, was of high regard and, to the best of my knowledge, there was no connection with Dr. Torzi.

Having gathered the general details, I reported them to the SP, who referred me for the further course to the SPE secretary, Father Guerrero, and to the Cardinal Secretary of State, Parolin.

The latter, having received the news from me, informed me that he would discuss it the next day during a meeting with the Substitute, SE Penha Parra, and with Father Guerrero himself.

The next day, at the outcome of that meeting, I received from him the news that the agreements would not be continued, without receiving an explanation of this determination. I didn't even ask for an explanation: as far as I was concerned, my interest had come to fruition, having offered to the people in charge of making operational decisions a proposal that I believed to be of the utmost seriousness.

For these reasons, I really cannot understand how it can be assumed that I engineered the entire operation to interfere with the investigation of Dr. Torzi.

As a definitive refutation of this inference, particularly emblematic is the letter that I addressed to Cardinal Parolin on June 12, 2020, which I produce, in which I also gave account of a meeting that had taken place the previous day with Professor Milano, Promoter of Justice, in which I personally participated in this proposal, in order to verify whether such an option could have interfered with the investigation in progress.

Other than depredations!

I read from the letter: *"I immediately explained to Prof. Milano how the events occurred, specifying that there were neither maneuvers nor personal interests, but that it was simply a clear proposal of which I had immediately informed the Holy Father and of which I had then followed the indications. (...) However, what surprised me most was his reaction made of surprise and positive interest. He pointed out that a possible sale would not have interfered with the process underway"*.

Here, Mr. President, I would like to ask a question: if the hidden purpose of my initiative was really to obstruct justice for the benefit of some defendant, would I really have spoken directly to the judge?

The truth is only one: I acted in the superior interest of the Holy See, animated by noble ends, as I have always tried to do in my ecclesial life.

## SIXTH ISSUE

### QUESTION MRS. MAROGNA

*Returning to the charges, I am accused, under charge HH), of having facilitated Mrs Cecilia Marogna, as a public official, to appropriate sums of money which she would then have used for voluptuous purchases, incompatible with the purpose impressed on her by the SdS.*

*This accusation, like the others, is completely unfounded, and I reject it categorically.*

#### **Background**

First of all, I would like to clarify, Mr. President, that the opposition to the Judicial Authority of the Papal Secret was certainly not aimed at the protection of my person, but, given the delicacy of the matter, only and exclusively at that of the Holy Father and the Apostolic See. The Holy Father has disposed otherwise and I now take advantage of this moment to publicly thank him for having dispensed me from the obligation of secrecy, thus allowing me to speak freely and defend myself with total transparency.

#### **1. Mrs. Marogna**

Before explaining in detail the facts in dispute, I would like to finally reconstruct my relationship with Mrs. Marogna, after almost two years of silence, kept in the deepest respect for the Tribunal and waiting for this moment of clarification.

However, allow me a general premise: I must express here and now a strong and vibrant indignation for how this relationship has been distorted with offensive inferences, of a very low nature, harmful - even - to my priestly dignity. I believe that

this attitude also betrays a lack of consideration towards women in general, and I feel obliged to ask myself if such treatment would have been reserved for a man.

That said, I point out that I met Ms. Marogna in 2016 when she requested an interview with me. I immediately appreciated her expertise in geopolitics and *intelligence*.

The lady proposed herself for a professional collaboration with the Secretariat of State on these matters of her choice. I must point out that I did not intend it as a request for employment but as a simple offer of external collaboration. For this reason, I sent her to the Commander of the Gendarmerie, Dr. Giani, who received her. The same, then, informed me to have drawn from the meeting a good impression, but that there was no possibility, in the immediate future, to accept his proposal.

I was able to cultivate this knowledge in subsequent meetings, which always had as their object geopolitical issues and international security. It was through these meetings that I learned more about her technical expertise. My trust in her and my appreciation of her expertise grew over time.

Last but not least, a series of high-level institutional meetings promoted by Ms. Marogna herself certainly contributed to increasing this fiduciary trust: for example, with Generals Carta and Caravelli, which took place starting in October 2017, which she sponsored, participating in turn, in which I could further measure her expertise, also inferring it from these qualified professional acquaintances.

The same, however, had the opportunity to introduce me to the then Member of the European Parliament Lorenzo Cesa, with whom she had carried out institutional collaboration activities.

It favored the growing professional consideration, then, also the introduction to the Inkermann company, of which I will speak shortly, as said procured by Mrs. Marogna, demonstrating her competence and her network of knowledge in the field of security services.

Finally, I would like to further specify - from the point of view of the references received - that Mrs. Marogna enjoyed the confidence of the then archbishop of Cagliari, Monsignor Arrigo Miglio. The latter asked me to introduce her to Cardinal



Mamberti, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, in order to present him a case of his diocese. I had also learned that he had had meetings in the Curia with Cardinal Coccopalmerio.

## **2. The facts**

Having thus clarified the real relationship with Mrs. Marogna, I prepare to expose the facts concerning the kidnapping, which occurred, as they will recall, in Mali on February 7, 2017, of Sister Gloria Cecilia Navaes Goti, Franciscan of Mary Immaculate, of Colombian nationality.

I must confess that today I can do so with greater serenity, since Sister Gloria, as everyone knows, returned to freedom on October 10, 2021, also receiving the blessing of the Holy Father in St. Peter's. In this regard, I think it is appropriate to recall how Assimi Goita, President of Mali Transition, issued a statement to the press in which he said: *"Her liberation is the result of four years and eight months of combined efforts of several intelligence services."*

At the time of the Religious' abduction, I held the position of Substitute, and so it was natural that, by function, this painful affair was quickly brought to my attention.

In fact, during the first months of her imprisonment, and because of its continuation, I received several requests from people who were institutionally close to Sister Gloria, who advocated an action to allow a prompt resolution of this odious affair. **I received** phone calls from the then N.A. in Colombia, Msgr. Ballestrero, and letters from Sister Gloria's sisters expressing deep concern for her safety.

Those heartfelt requests placed me in a dilemma, the delicacy of which can certainly be appreciated by the Tribunal. The dilemma was whether to work to try to save a human life with all the risks involved, such as exposing the Vatican, if the news had not remained confidential, to a negative judgment by international bodies, as well as that of endangering the life and safety of other missionaries, or the solution of letting others deal with it. This last option seemed too convenient and not in keeping with my sense of responsibility. Obviously, the only one who could resolve the doubt was the Holy Father, to whom I proposed to present the matter.

In the meantime, before actually addressing the Holy Father, I spoke of these profiles and of the serious considerations around them to Mrs. Marogna, with whom I had often spoken about issues concerning international security.

The lady told me about an English *intelligence* agency, Inkerman, with which, according to her, she could profitably interface, activating all the operations necessary for the liberation of Sister Gloria.

So, in one of the audiences at the table, I presented the Holy Father with the question and the first considerations that had matured. He was pleased that efforts were being made to free the nun and immediately understood the need not to expose the Vatican to unnecessary, and indeed harmful, publicity. He gave me the authorization to proceed and, to my explicit question if I had to speak about it with the Commander of the Gendarmerie, he answered no, inviting me to assume personally the responsibility of the initiative and adding that the matter had to remain confidential between him and me, just to avoid that the news would leak out and the risks mentioned above would be run. I had no difficulty in serving the Holy Father, as always, even on this occasion, faithfully and scrupulously carrying out His will.

Subsequent to this initial authorization, I met with officials of the Inkermann agency in London in the first half of January 2018. In the presence of Ms. Marogna, who had arranged the meeting at my request, we were received at their offices by three gentlemen, one of whom acted as interpreter.

They showed themselves to be willing to accept the assignment, but at the same time they pointed out to me the (admittedly intuitable) difficulties they would encounter in carrying out the mission and, above all, that they would not be able to guarantee with certainty its success. They also made it clear that if we wanted to prevent the association of Vatican institutions with similar facts, any direct reference to persons or addresses that could raise the slightest suspicion of traceability would have to be avoided. It was for this reason that I renewed the indication of Mrs. Marogna, as I said present at that meeting, as the only intermediary, for the shared reasons of confidentiality.

Regarding the costs of the operation, the Inkermann officials informed me that they could not make a specific estimate, given the uncertainty of the activities to be carried out, which could well be more than a million euros, and that they would in any case work on account, requested from time to time through Mrs. Marogna. I assured them that I would respond to their availability once I had spoken with the appropriate person (naturally, I did not mention the Holy Father).

I returned to Rome and reported the meeting to the Holy Father the following day. It was exactly January 15, 2018. I remember it well because I spoke to him on the plane, on the apostolic journey to Peru. He listened to me and confirmed my intention to proceed.

In a subsequent meeting with the Holy Father, once in Rome, I told him in more detail about the conversation I had had with the Inkermans and about the amount of money we should have budgeted: about one million euros, partly for the operations of creating the network of contacts and partly for the actual release of the nun. I pointed out that we should not go beyond that amount. He approved. I must say that every step of this operation was agreed upon with the Holy Father.

I confirm, therefore, that Mrs. Marogna took care of the security operations aimed at the liberation of Sister Gloria. The fiduciary credit obtained in the described ways, together with the inherent confidentiality of this kind of operations, induced me to place the maximum trust in her work, following the indications I received from her, always accompanied by information about the activities carried out and to be carried out.

In particular, after the meeting I had with Inkermann in London in January 2018, and after the consent I received from the SP, I communicated to the aforementioned company, again through Ms. Marogna, the consent to initiate the transaction.

In the period immediately following, I learned that representatives of Inkermann had gone to Colombia to gather the first information useful for the operation, at the family of origin of Sister Gloria, together with the Apostolic Nuncio, Monsignor Ballestrero, and representatives of the Colombian security service. I had confirmation of these activities from the Nuncio himself. The Nuncio called me to tell me that he

had met with officials of the English company Inkerman, who had gone to Colombia to acquire preliminary information about the nun. He asked me for feedback on the operation and the activities of the Inkerman agents, which I did, while recommending the utmost confidentiality.

In the following months, I met personally, on two occasions, in Rome, representatives of the *intelligence* agency, once at the Orange Hotel, in via Cola di Rienzo, I think I remember in March, and another one at the Michelangelo Hotel, in via stazione di San Pietro, in June.

In both meetings, in the presence of Mrs. Marogna, I was given updates on the operation, including the activities they had carried out in Colombia and in Africa, where they had started strategic relationships from which they had received information on the health status of the religious woman and through which they had established a direct relationship with the group that held her.

In those meetings, I was also told of the need to set up a new current account to which SdS would have sent in the future the further down payments necessary to carry out the operation; and this, in order to avoid a direct traceability of similar activities to the English company, considering the confidential and delicate nature of the whole affair.

I should point out that on both occasions I had used the utmost caution to respect the obligation of secrecy required of me by the Holy Father, even choosing a meeting place outside Vatican territory.

I must point out, of course, that the very need to keep any portion of the activity within an area of absolute secrecy, has guided me in not leaving any note of what was happening; reason why, and I hope you will understand this, I had difficulty in reconstructing the many junctions of the story.

### **3. Payments**

As for the payments that are contested to me, I would like to point out that they were arranged - always on Mrs. Marogna's indication - on current accounts that she indicated to me from time to time, and that I have always considered related to the

operation-negotiation carried out by Inkerman and, therefore, aimed at the liberation of Sister Gloria and the expenses to be incurred for that purpose.

I want to underline that no sum had been assigned as compensation to Mrs. Marogna. However, in relation to the operation in which she was involved, I had pointed out to her that, if the negotiations were successful, I would ask the Holy Father to authorize a compensation for her.

I must confirm that the Holy Father had expressly authorized me to carry out the operation, confirming my ownership and responsibility for it, and the payments necessary for Sister Gloria's liberation therefore continued regularly, even after I ceased to be Substitute.

I reiterate that only the Holy Father, myself and Monsignor Perlasca were informed of the operation.

In December 2018, Msgr. Perlasca reported to me that my successor, H.E. Msgr. Peña Parra, was having difficulty authorizing the transfers. I met with Peña Parra: I explained to him the terms of the matter, illustrating the negotiations in progress and my role. On that occasion, he replied that the Holy Father had already spoken to him about it a few days earlier and that he had authorized him to continue making the payments.

The circumstance that the Holy Father had authorized the new Substitute to continue the payments for the liberation of Sister Gloria, in addition to having been confirmed to me verbally also by Bishop Perlasca, is documented by a message sent to me by **the latter on January 11, 2019**, in which, with regard to the requests for clarification made by Peña Parra for the aforementioned transfers, he wrote to me ***"he wants to know (referring to the then Substitute Peña Parra). Already the other time he wanted to go to the sp who told him to pay" - page 215).***

The reference to the "other time" is of course to be understood in the previous payment, of which the messaging in the records offers ample confirmation.

At this point, I feel I must again thank the Holy Father who has offered me the possibility of clarifying the whole affair and reconstructing the facts as they really happened, thus allowing me to dispel any shadow on my person.

## **SEVENTH ISSUE**

### **SUBORNATION**

I now turn, Mr. President, to illustrate the last accusation, which is particularly painful for me, and which refers to a conversation I had with His Excellency Monsignor Cantoni, Bishop of Como, which the Prosecution has even transformed into an attempt to suborn him.

#### **The facts**

I would like to point out that, with reference to this dispute, I did have a conversation with Monsignor Cantoni, an old acquaintance of mine, but for a completely different reason from the one hypothesized by the Prosecution.

How did this conversation between us come about?

In the course of the investigations, several newspapers (an example of which is attachment 13 to our first documentary production) reported that Monsignor Perlasca was making false statements about me; and even - a fact that in my eyes was much more serious and extremely intolerable - such falsehoods, according to the newspapers of the time, would have been transfused into letters addressed by Monsignor Perlasca to the Holy Father. Such a prospect was unspeakable for me - a Cardinal who had sworn loyalty to the Pope -: for a priest to tell a falsehood to Justice or, even worse, to the Holy Father, is a sin, even before being a crime!

I would not tolerate falsehoods being told about me, and even less so would I tolerate lies being told to the Holy Father; on the other hand, I would not have wanted to harm a man, Msgr. Perlasca, who, as I mentioned earlier, was living a period of great despair, pushed to the brink of suicide.

Therefore, the only way I could think of at that moment was to **confide in the** Bishop of Como, expressing to him all my displeasure and pain in learning that Bishop

Perlasca was telling falsehoods, telling him that if Perlasca had really said what I read in the newspapers, I would have been forced, with deep pain, to protect my honesty, and therefore, despite myself, to denounce him for slander.

I confided in the Bishop because he knew Monsignor Perlasca and therefore could understand what was happening to him and, hopefully, help him to recover, to find himself and to understand that it was not right to tell falsehoods, least of all to the Holy Father.

Therefore, contrary to what is erroneously hypothesized by the accusation, I never wanted to induce Bishop Perlasca to tell a falsehood, and I deny having had a peremptory attitude with the Bishop, to whom I certainly did not attribute an intimidating role in prejudice to Bishop Perlasca.

## **BOOKLET EIGHT**

### **CARD. PELL**

In closing, Mr. President, allow me to make a brief clarification that I believe will be to the advantage of the Truth, and also useful to the Promoter of Justice in shedding light on a matter that was also explored in the course of some of the interrogations given by Monsignor Perlasca,

For more than a year I have been exposed to unbearable public pressure, with the shameful accusation of having even financed false testimonies to the detriment of a confrere, Cardinal Pell, with the money of the SdS.

I now want to sweep away this very serious insinuation with the words of the Cardinal Secretary of State, Parolin, who has ascertained and given account of the absolute falsity of this ignoble and unbearable inference.

I deliver to the Tribunal the letter of April 29 in which, among other things, Cardinal Parolin states verbatim that: "*Cardinal Pell continues to raise doubts about the transfer of 2.3M Australian dollars to Australia, suspecting that these funds were*

*used by Cardinal Becciu to negatively influence the criminal trial in which he was accused of child abuse.*

*The sum, however, as recalled several times, was used to pay for the Internet domain ".catholic". This information was appropriately communicated to the Embassy of Australia to the Holy See by verbal note 2112/21/RS of February 18, 2021".*

So, over a year ago.

But it doesn't end there, Mr. President.

My bitterness is even more profound in learning, from reading the correspondence I produce, that it was Cardinal Pell himself who authorized the payment of this sum, in a letter dated September 11, 2015.

### **CONCLUSION**

I thank you, Mr. President, and the Justices, for the attention you have given me in this contribution to the search for Truth that I have tried to offer you.