

CARDINAL BECCIU IS INNOCENT



OPEN LETTER TO POPE FRANCIS

By Alberto Vacca

OPEN LETTER TO POPE FRANCIS ON THE CASE OF CARDINAL BECCIU

Dear Pope Francis, I am writing to you to express that Cardinal Becciu is innocent. I had already sent you a letter in April 2021, in which I highlighted that Angelino Becciu has always been an honest person and has never committed the offenses he was accused of by individuals driven by a biased spirit. I am unsure if you have read my letter or if your collaborators brought it to your attention. Therefore, I am reproducing the text here:

Dear Pope Francis, I first ask for your forgiveness for taking the liberty of sending you this letter regarding a matter that seemingly should not concern me, as I have not been part of your Church for some time. It pertains to the issue concerning Angelino Becciu.

I was his classmate for four years at the regional seminary of Cuglieri. I still remember him as a young seminarian - honest, simple, diligent, friendly to everyone, devout, disciplined, and always obedient to the orders of superiors. I lost contact with him after leaving the seminary, and after many years, I learned he was in Rome, at the Vatican. When the media scandal erupted, tarnishing his moral image, I had no doubt that it was a plot against him. I found it inconceivable that he had become corrupt and stolen money meant for the poor. I immediately expressed my solidarity on September 25, 2020, with the following message:

"Dear Angelino, I learned from the press about the situation concerning you. I understand that this may be the most painful moment of your life, and I am spiritually close to you. You have been involved in a surreal situation, undoubtedly orchestrated by minds driven by a biased spirit. I knew your honesty in our youthful years, and I believe the defamatory accusations against you are untrue. Nevertheless, I hope and wish that the situation can be resolved in a positive way for you. It will take time, but the truth will come to light sooner or later. As Manzoni said in the final part of 'The Betrothed,' misfortunes come to us whether we seek them or not, and trust in God makes them more bearable. You did not seek out this situation, and, as a priest, trust in Manzoni's Providence will surely help you overcome it."

Dear Pope Francis, you may wonder why I write all this, given that I am no longer a member of your Church. The reason is simple. As your Church is part of the broader community that is Humanity, the issue, if not concerning me as a believer, concerns me as a human being. I believe that my old classmate has suffered an injustice perpetrated by those who promoted a fierce media campaign against him, based on the distortion of facts. From what I knew in our youthful years, Angelino Becciu cannot have become the corrupt and scheming person that certain media continues to portray him as. I believe he has always acted in good faith, under the supervision of his superiors, and that if there were mistakes in his actions, they were not serious enough to warrant the severe sanction imposed on him.

During the Good Friday Via Crucis, which I watched on television, I was struck by the testimony of a young boy who reproached himself for not defending a classmate unjustly accused of theft. This is why I decided to write this letter: to testify that my old classmate is not a thief of the money meant for the poor.

At this point, I ask you only one question: "Doesn't it seem to you that after Angelino Becciu's 'passion', there should be a 'resurrection' that rehabilitates his moral character, refuting the false reconstructions of the facts spread by certain media fueled by certain Vatican circles?"

When I was in the seminary, I had a somewhat stern Jesuit father as a rector, who, however, could change decisions he made when re-examining facts based on the observations presented to him. I hope the same can happen in Angelino Becciu's case. The High Court of Australia has "resurrected" Cardinal Pell; you, and only you, can "resurrect" Cardinal Becciu.

I apologize, finally, for the colloquial tone used in addressing you. This is because, beyond your hieratic figure, you remind me of the Jesuit fathers with whom I was a student for some years and whom I remember overall positively.

I conclude by wishing you peace and goodness for the rest of your days.

Rome, April 18, 2021

Alberto Vacca

Dear Pope Francis, until December 16, 2023, I had hoped that you would do justice to Cardinal Becciu, freeing him from the mud thrown at him by a relentless and biased media campaign. Unfortunately, I was disillusioned. Reading the verdict, I was shocked by these words: "IN THE NAME OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS, the Court [...], invoking the Most Holy Name of God to be enlightened on its decisions, [...] condemns [...] BECCIU Giovanni Angelo to a sentence of five years and six months of imprisonment and a fine of 8,000.00 euros (eight thousand) with perpetual disqualification from public office".

It is in your name and on your behalf that Cardinal Becciu has been condemned. Moreover, since before the decision, the enlightenment of the Most Holy Name of God was invoked, it is a sentence not only human but also divine. Despite the conviction, I repeat to you: Cardinal Becciu is innocent! This is because I live in the Italian State, a state of law, where the principle of the presumption of innocence of the accused until a final conviction prevails. Article 27 of the Italian Constitution is very clear on this, stating: "The accused is not considered guilty until a final sentence is pronounced," and even more precise is Article 48 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which asserts: "Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law". I implore you, dear Pope Francis, to explain this to your followers, who must consider Cardinal Becciu innocent, as most of them currently see him as guilty.

Dismayed by the verdict, cardinals, bishops, and priests remain silent. The bishop of Ozieri, your brother in the episcopate, commenting on the sentence in a letter to the faithful of his diocese, wrote: "I am truly in difficulty, and with extreme humility, I lay bare confessing to you: I do not understand". I don't think that the Bishop of Ozieri does not understand. He understands, perhaps very well, but maybe he cannot say what he thinks. Because if he did, he would certainly be subjected to a trial in the Vatican for complicity in the crime of embezzlement, for having helped enrich the cardinal's brother, Antonino, through the diocesan Caritas. However, he could clearly tell his followers one thing: that Cardinal Becciu should be considered innocent and not guilty because there is no final conviction yet. Cardinal Becciu has been provisionally sentenced in the first instance of the trial for two embezzlements and an aggravated fraud. The first embezzlement would consist of stealing \$200,500,000 from the Holy See to enrich financier Raffaele Mincione and others, under the pretext of purchasing a building located in London, 60 Sloane Avenue, which would supposedly benefit Vatican finances. The second embezzlement would involve the theft of 125,000 euros to enrich his brother Antonino, using the Caritas of the diocese of Ozieri as an intermediary. The aggravated fraud would be committed by withdrawing over 570,000 euros from the State Secretariat's coffers, ostensibly for the release of a kidnapped nun in Africa, while actually used for the maintenance of his "lady," Cecilia Marogna. However, from the trial records, it emerged that Cardinal Becciu did not keep a single euro from these alleged thefts. It would be a truly peculiar figure of a thief who steals for others and not for himself. This reconstruction of the facts is entirely surreal because it turns Cardinal Becciu, who has always been an honest person and a faithful servant of the pope, into a criminal who, leading a band of thieves, assaults Vatican finances. Where were his direct superiors, Cardinal Parolin, and the pope, who were supposed to oversee his actions? It will be said that they were deceived by the gang leader of the thieves. But the first to be deceived was Cardinal Becciu himself, to whom his collaborator Monsignor Perlasca had not presented any risk in the operation of purchasing the London building. And then, why didn't the Prosecutor and the Court question Cardinal Parolin and the pope, who could have testified whether Cardinal Becciu conspired against them, keeping them in the dark about his alleged shady dealings? The answer is simple. Because the State of the Vatican City is not a rule of law and is ruled by a monarch who enjoys absolute power over his subjects.

This is the reality of the facts. Facts, as we know, are inherently silent and do not speak for themselves. It is we who make them speak with the interpretation we give them. Well, the Tribunal that condemned Cardinal Becciu has interpreted them all in a perspective entirely unfavorable to him, disregarding the truthful reconstruction he provided. In reality, as you well know, dear Pope Francis, the investment in the purchase of the London building was aimed at increasing the assets of the Holy See, which did not materialize, certainly not due to causes attributable to Cardinal Becciu. You also know that the payment

to the Caritas of the Diocese of Ozieri was aimed, as testified by Bishop Corrado Melis, at the noble cause of assisting a population that, like in other parts of Sardinia, is facing severe economic difficulties, and not at the personal enrichment of one of the cardinal's brothers. Finally, you are aware that the funds allocated to Marogna were intended for the release of a nun kidnapped in Africa, not for her maintenance, and any misuse by her is not attributable to Cardinal Becciu. A new and more accurate evaluation and interpretation of the facts are therefore possible in the subsequent stages of the trial. "Errare humanum est," and the history of our Western world is filled with judicial errors, starting from the unjust convictions of Socrates and Jesus. You, dear Pope Francis, in the Church, are not only the Supreme Pontiff but also the supreme Judge. The condemnation or acquittal of Cardinal Becciu depends solely on you. I repeat to you, Cardinal Becciu is innocent. If you definitively condemn him, you will make him an innocent victim, forcing him to unjustly spend his days in the Vatican prisons, where, due to serious grief, he will lose his life but not his innocence. In future centuries, he will be remembered as a martyr, and you as his persecutor.

Nevertheless, even in the face of a tragic and surreal situation, we must not lose our sense of humor, as you encourage us to do. I read in the newspapers that you have decided to be buried, after your death, in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, precisely in the Pauline Chapel, where the icon of "Salus Populi Romani" that you love and venerate is located. I am familiar with the chapel. Two of your predecessors, Paul V and Clement VIII, who – as you well know – were great inquisitors, are also buried there. Clement VIII, as you know better than I, was the one who condemned Giordano Bruno to death, burned alive in Campo dei Fiori. Legend has it that occasionally, Giordano Bruno's shadow goes to Clement VIII's tomb at night to reproach him for unjustly condemning him, disturbing the peace of his eternal sleep. Dear Pope Francis, if you do not want to run the risk that, after your death, your eternal peace in the Pauline Chapel may be disturbed, in the years and centuries to come, by the shadow of Cardinal Becciu coming to reproach you for unjustly condemning him, I would humbly advise you to do everything necessary to ascertain his innocence. Because if you do not ascertain it yourself, History will ascertain it anyway, as it has happened with Giordano Bruno, Socrates, and Jesus.

Before concluding, dear Pope Francis, I want to tell you that I recognize and appreciate the great merits you have for everything you have done and are doing to combat pedophilia within the Church; to defend the poor and migrants, who are looked upon with disdain and annoyance by our opulent and selfish Western world; to safeguard the value of peace in the world.

I conclude, as in my previous letter, wishing you peace and goodness for the rest of your days, which I hope are many to give you time to recognize the innocence of someone whom I believe has been the most loyal and faithful of your servants. May the "Salus Populi Romani" enlighten and protect you, now and always!

With a sense of human fraternity.

Rome, December 25, 2023

Alberto Vacca