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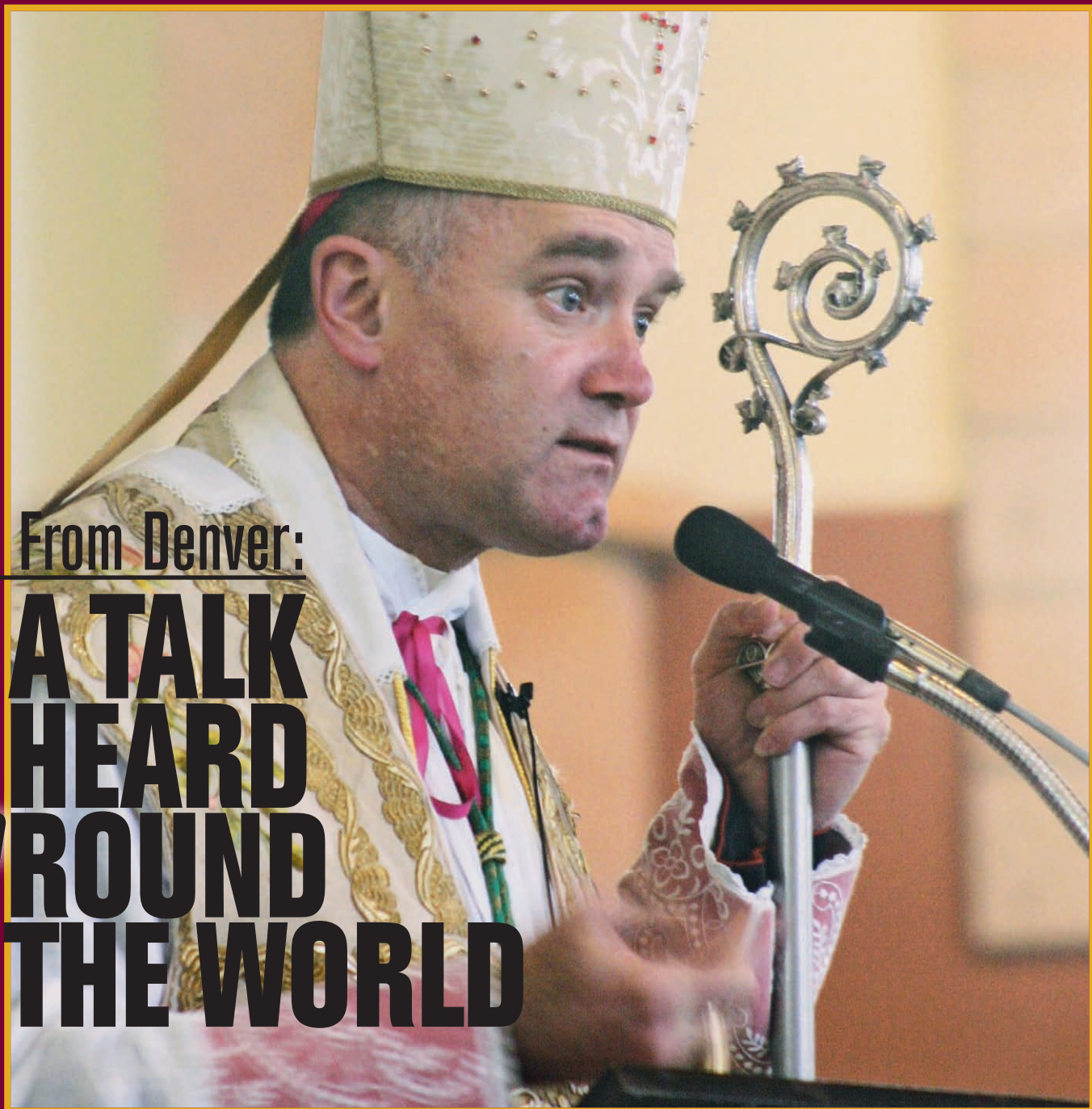
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ANGELUS

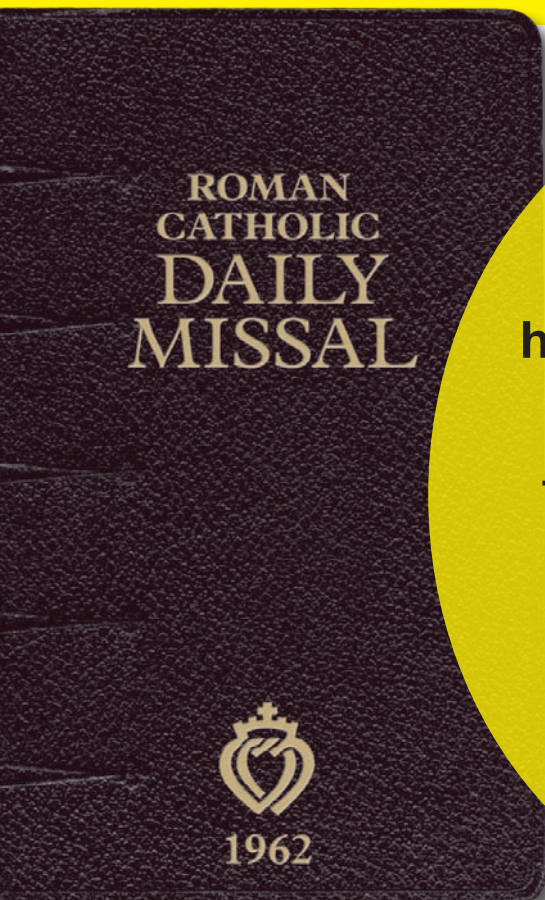
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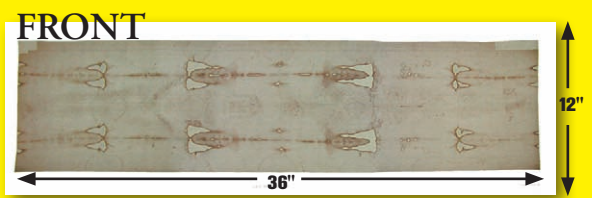
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A JOURNAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION

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—Pope St. Pius X

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ON OUR COVER: Bishop Fellay preaches during the Pontifical Mass at St. Isidore the Farmer Catholic Church, Denver, Colorado (Feb. 18, 2006), for the taking of perpetual vows by Br. Vincent, O.S.B., a benedictine monk of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, Silver City, New Mexico. The following day Bishop Fellay gave a conference concerning the relations between the Society of Saint Pius X and Rome which is reprinted in this issue of *The Angelus*, pp.2-16, 25-31.

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A TALK HEARD ! ROUND THE WORLD

A conference by Bishop Bernard Fellay, given at St. Isidore's Catholic Church, Denver, Colorado (Feb. 18, 2006), on the occasion of the taking of perpetual vows by Br. Vincent, a Benedictine monk of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, Silver City, New Mexico.

You would probably like to hear something about our relations with Rome. I will try to give you some knowledge about this. It is impressive to see the number of rumors and other things going around. Just this morning, I heard that there is an agreement between the Society and Rome which is about to be announced. As proof, "Bishop Fellay apparently has frequent personal phone conversations with the Pope." Well, if someone can give me his phone number, please feel free.

So many rumors have been spread since the audience with the Holy Father, which Benedict XVI granted to us on August 29, 2005. I'll try to shed some light on this situation.

The Principles of Our Activity

I would not like to begin directly with facts, but rather with principles. This is because we live by principles; we certainly do not want to be led merely by facts or happenings. We have an aim, an end, in mind, and these principles dictate what we do or do not do. The first principle which dictates these happenings is that we are and we want to stay Catholics.

If we may say so, the first requirement to be a Catholic is Faith. There is a beautiful Symbol, *i.e.* a creed, of St. Athanasius which was, in former times, prayed every Sunday by each priest since it was in the Breviary for Prime. Then it was prayed only on the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. It is the Symbol which begins with the word *Quicumque*. "Whoever wants to be saved first of all must hold the Catholic Faith; and he who does not keep it, full and integrally, without any doubt, he will enter eternal damnation."

It is clear; if you want to be Catholic, you must stick to the Faith. And the Faith is not something of today; it is based on what God has taught us about Himself in Revelation, which was completed with the death of the last Apostle. Since then, the Church has had the magnificent duty of transmitting the Faith to future generations.

The First Vatican Council has a tremendous description of the role of the Faith and, because of it, of the reason for the foundation of the Church by Our Lord Jesus Christ. The documents from the Vatican Council have only two dogmatic constitutions: One is about the Roman Pontiff and one is about Faith. The one about faith explains what faith is, a supernatural virtue which makes us hold as true the teachings of God through the Apostles and prophets and His only-begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Supernatural means it is above any human means, that it comes from God, and that no one can pretend to have the Faith if they have not received it from God. Normally, we receive it in baptism, so little children get it in this fashion.

When we say faith, we can consider several aspects. We can consider what God has put in us, which is a virtue. We can also look at the object "The Catholic Faith," by which we mean a certain number of truths, the object which is presented to this virtue within us. Then we have the act of faith. If we speak of vision, when we see, the faculty of seeing is the eye. The faith which is put in us is like this eye which enables us to see God, under a veil here on earth, and then in heaven when this faith will be transformed into the light of glory. We will see God in the eyes of God, that is, without any intermediate created instrument; we will see God as He is and how He sees Himself.

This is for heaven, but here on earth, the object of faith is the same: God. Of course, as we are little human creatures, we must split the immensity of the simplicity of God into parts because God is

too great for us to comprehend. Because of this simplicity of God, you must realize that if you try to take something away from a simple thing, you lose everything. It's like trying to take a part of a balloon away with a knife. I am not saying God is a balloon, but the Faith is like that. You cannot have merely a part. You have everything or nothing.

The man who says he believes in the Holy Trinity, in Our Lord, and in the Blessed Lady, but who doubts the existence of hell does not have faith. The same goes for someone who denies the Immaculate Conception or any other doctrine of the Church. These persons who allow themselves to discuss any point of the Faith must know that they do not even have a part of the Faith; they have nothing. What remains may look like some kind of faith is but an illusion. Take Protestants for instance: "But I believe in the Bible!" Well, the Protestant has nothing of this reality which we call faith. What they have is only a human thing which we call a human belief. This looks like faith under certain aspects but is in no way Catholic faith, this supernatural virtue given by God without which it is impossible to please God, according to Scripture—impossible to receive grace, impossible to go to heaven. That's the teaching of the First Vatican Council.

Hence, on the side of God, because He wanted this Faith to be transmitted to us through the instruments of human beings, arises the founding of the Catholic Church. You know how it works if you want to transmit a message from one person to another and to another, *etc.* There is a children's game called Telephone. You whisper something into the ear of your neighbor who whispers it to his neighbor, and so on. It is always fantastic to see the capacity of our imagination and of transmission. But to make sure that the Faith would be transmitted faithfully, God had to intervene with a very special intervention. We call this infallibility. The certainty that the next generation would receive what He told the Apostles is not a human characteristic.

Someone may object, "But we have the Bible!" To which I respond, why then do we have so many different Protestant denominations? They all have the same book, but they all read it with a different eye. And since they claim that they have a direct relationship with the Holy Ghost, no one can claim that he has a better interpretation than the other. So they establish different groups.

The Catholic Church does not work like that. She says that we have the Bible, but we know that not everything is in the Bible. Even St. John says that, although he has written his book, if he were to write everything that happened, the whole world could not contain the books that would have to be written (Jn. 21:25).

So we have what is called Tradition, which is the non-written transmission of the Faith. During the first years after the death of Jesus, Christians did not

have the New Testament. The transmission was oral. The Apostles St. Matthew and St. Mark wrote their Gospels around 50 A.D. St. Luke wrote his a little later, around 60 or 62 A.D. St. John wrote his towards the end of the century.

So we have something in writing and something that is oral. But even this is not sufficient. We need an authority which is constantly able to correctly explain the understanding and interpretation of the book. This is why God founded a Church with an authority which would transmit the Faith necessary for salvation, as the First Vatican Council teaches. We all know that while faith is not sufficient, it is necessary. Our Lord told the Apostles “Whoever shall be baptized and believe shall be saved.” Therefore there are two elements: Baptism and belief, neither of which is sufficient by itself; faith and grace.

Infallibility: Dilemma or Safeguard?

Thus, we come to the problem of infallibility. Obviously, we are here because of the Faith, but do we contest infallibility? No, we don't. We only see and know that this privilege has been granted to human beings, and that a human being has the particularity of being free, and that God, even when He grants something like infallibility, does not push someone into a kind of determinism. Man is free and God wants us to work out our salvation freely, using our intelligence and will. This is also true of the Pope. In other words, the Pope has been promised the privilege of infallibility, but it is up to him to make use of it. And if he does not want to, he won't be infallible. He must freely make use of it.

Similarly with baptism, if a child is going to die before reaching the age of reason, the parents must baptize the child. It must be freely done. It is exactly the same with infallibility. The Church has explained, to a certain extent, what the nature of infallibility is. Not everything is under definition. When the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, making a solemn declaration, the Pope is infallible. We also know that there is another kind of infallibility which is more difficult to explain and define because the Church has not yet given us the definition. This is what the Church calls the universal ordinary magisterium.

Universal means it applies to the whole Church, everywhere. Ordinary is used as opposed to extraordinary. Magisterium refers to a teaching. There was much debate during the proclamation of the doctrine of infallibility. When the Church first taught that we are bound to accept and believe the extraordinary magisterium and the universal ordinary magisterium, the Church said she did not want to speak of the Pope at that time, but of the whole Church. The Pope is covered in *Pastor Aeternus*, another document, where his infallibility is covered. At that time, they said that the Holy Ghost has not

been promised to St. Peter and his successors in such a way that through a new illumination, the Pope could proclaim something new. So the Holy Ghost is not promised, there is no infallibility, if the Pope says something new. This is according to the very text of the Pope's primacy and infallibility.

The text continues by saying, “But through His [the Holy Ghost] own intervention, the Pope may transmit faithfully and conserve saintly the deposit of the Faith.” This means that the Pope has infallibility, but under very precise conditions. It must be linked to Revelation, it must not be something new, and it must deal with the faithful transmission of the teaching of Our Lord and Revelation and the holy conservation of the deposit of Faith. It is very, very important to understand this teaching and to keep it in mind. The Pope is not a machine of infallibility. You do not push a button and get infallible teaching.

One of the best proofs of this reality is the Second Vatican Council and the novelties that were introduced afterwards. During the Council, several times, bishops asked the question whether the texts they published were infallible. Other bishops responded that the pastoral nature of some of these texts were linked to human circumstances and were less precise, so we should make, simultaneously, dogmatic texts which define words and terms. The response to this latter objection was always no, because “we don't want to make a dogmatic Council, we want a pastoral Council.” It is very important.

At a certain time, from the Council itself, the question was asked, “So what is infallible in this Council?” A note, an explanation, from the Secretary of the Council, Cardinal Felici, said “What is infallible in the Council is what the Council says is infallible.” And you find nowhere in the Council a statement by which the Council says “This is infallible.” So what remains of infallibility in the Council is only what was already infallible. If, in the Council, you find something about the Holy Trinity being three Persons in only one God, it's infallible because it was infallible before. But there is no specific act in the Council in which the Council made use of infallibility. And this is something very special. It is the first time in the history of the Councils of the Church that we find this situation: a Council which expressly did not want to make use of infallibility. It's true; it depends on free will, so the Church can make use of it where she wants. At the Council, she chose not to.

If you look at the history of Pope John Paul II, you see that, first, he knew very well what he had to do when he wanted to make use of infallibility. On the other hand, he hardly made use of this infallibility—I would say three times. He used it to proclaim the impossibility of admitting women to the priesthood. And in one document, he used it twice: to condemn abortion and to condemn euthanasia. In the text condemning the ordination of women, he uses precisely these conditions which are necessary to be infallible: he spoke as the head of the Church, the

Supreme Pastor. He spoke on faith or morals. He gave a definition and provided clear boundaries. Finally, he expressed his will to oblige and bind the consciences of all the faithful. These are the four conditions of infallibility.

Even then, dear faithful, in this precise text where infallibility is clear, Cardinal Ratzinger said that it was not the personal infallibility of the Pope, since he was only repeating what Tradition had already decided. Thus, Rome itself said that the Pope did not make use of his personal responsibility in this issue. This shows you that it's too simplistic and wrong to pretend that everything which comes out of the mouth of the Pope is infallible. It's simply not true, it never has been, and it never shall be. When we speak so, we speak merely in a negative way.

The Reality of the Mystical Body

So the Faith is necessary. The Church is necessary. If we want to be saved, there is no other way except for the Church which Jesus has founded. Between God and creation, there is an infinite gap. On the side of man, since Original Sin, there is no way to cross this infinite abyss except by the bridge imposed and created by God in His only-begotten Son made flesh, Our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way to go to heaven except Our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lord Jesus Christ wanted to associate with this work of Redemption the souls who would be united with Him, in Him, through Baptism, and which constitute the Mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church. What a tremendous mystery.

This is why the Church is as necessary as Jesus; because it is the same reality. What is the difference between Jesus and the Church? The Church is Jesus extended in space and time in the souls which are one body with Him, incorporated in Him: the Mystical Body of Christ. St. Paul dared to use unbelievable words: We are the bones of His bones, the flesh of His flesh. It's very expressive to say how deeply we are united with Christ in baptism. But that's the Church! When you say "the Catholic Church," you say "Jesus" plus all these souls who are united to Him.

Because we speak of the Church, I will add a comment, which has two sides. There is the invisible union with Christ which happens through grace, a reality which is real even though we can't see it, and the Faith. We are living members of the Church if we are in the state of grace, through charity. But then, also, because we are human beings and because we are not only souls, but also bodies, Our Lord wanted this union with Himself to be materialized and visible. Thus, although the most important element of this union is invisible, and which we call the Soul of the Mystical Body, the Soul of the Church, there is a visible part. The three external signs of union are open profession of faith, open union with the Pope,

and open union in the worship of God. These are the three visible elements of the Catholic Church.

If you went to a priest and said "I am a Catholic," and he asked you to prove it, you would show him your baptismal certificate, a visible sign. You can't just say to him, "I am united with Christ." He would just look at you and say, "Well, me too, but I can't know who else." There must be something from this earth. That's why there are two ways to speak about the Mystical Body of Christ. There is a way where you speak of the visible side, when you speak of the necessity of the baptism of water to become part of the Church.

We know that there are two other baptisms, that of desire and that of blood. These produce an invisible but real link with Christ but do not produce all of the effects which are received in the baptism of water. For example, with baptism of blood or desire, you do not receive the character of baptism. You only receive the grace, which means that those who die with these baptisms go to heaven—because they are united with Christ—but they will not have this wonderful and impressive gift which we call the character. It's noteworthy to see that this is the main reason why certain Fathers of the Church, including St. John Chrysostom, teach that the Blessed Virgin was baptized. She did not need baptism because she did not have Original Sin, but in order to receive the other sacraments, it makes sense that she would have received what allows us to receive the other sacraments: the character of baptism. This is not part of a definition about the Blessed Virgin Mary and we are not bound by the Faith to believe this, but we do have Fathers of the Church who went so far as to say that our Lord baptized St. Peter and then the Blessed Virgin Mary, or that St. Peter baptized our Lady and the rest of the Apostles.

At any rate, it may be surprising, but it is important that these things be clear in our mind. Today, we have so many surprising theories around, and so we must hold fast to what the Church has always taught. And the Church has always taught that you have people who will be in heaven, who are in the state of grace, who have been saved without knowing the Catholic Church. We know this. And yet, how is it possible if you cannot be saved outside the Catholic Church? It is absolutely true that they will be saved through the Catholic Church because they will be united to Christ, to the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Catholic Church. It will, however, remain invisible, because this visible link is impossible for them. Consider a Hindu in Tibet who has no knowledge of the Catholic Church. He lives according to his conscience and to the laws which God has put into his heart. He can be in the state of grace, and if he dies in this state of grace, he will go to heaven.

But these things are so invisible, so subjective, that the Church has hardly spoken about it. We know the principle, but the Church has never made

a practical application of it because it is too sensitive and delicate. Who can know who is in the state of grace or not? The Council of Trent teaches that no one can know it except through a special revelation or illumination from God.

The Church does give some signs for being in the state of grace. For example, having a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, having a great care of avoiding sin, maintaining friendship with God, following His laws, *etc.* Thus, there are certain signs by which one can determine whether one is in the state of grace, but to pretend that you can know with certainty, beware: The Council of Trent says that it is impossible without a special illumination. That is why the Church will not speak on this level. The Church only says that if you want to be saved, you have to be Catholic. Period. For the others, it is in God's hands. It's very prudent.

With the Second Vatican Council, we see the opposite approach. The Council essentially says, "Well, there are lots of good people around. It's impossible that all these people will go to hell. So there must be good." Which is true. But the next step is: "The religion which feeds these people is good; you find a lot of good in these religions." And thus you enter into ecumenism, which is the wrong way.

An individual may receive these graces, but definitely not a false religion. You will find elements of truth in any religion. Definitely. But they will be mixed with error and, in fact, that's the essence of error: error is always a gap in the good. A deprivation of a good is something which should be there and is not. You will never find evil by essence. The evil is always a "bite" in the good, if I may say so. It's like the worm in the apple. As long as the worm has something to eat in this apple, this evil will work. Once the apple is totally eaten, the worm will die because there is nothing to eat anymore. This is the same with evil and error. In every error, you will always find something true. If you could find an absolute error, no one would bite because it would be obviously wrong to everyone.

When we believe something, we believe it because we think it is true. At the very moment we see that it is wrong, we no longer believe it. So, the most dangerous errors are those which have the most truth in them because we bite them much more easily. Thus, I may say that the most dangerous false religions are those which are closest to the truth, the most structured, the most logical and coherent, because they give an impression of authenticity. If you have a wonderful meal with very appetizing food, you will enjoy even the look of it. If you put a drop of poison in a dish that looks attractive and place it next to a bowl of food which doesn't even look good, which will people choose? They will choose the one that appears good. This is one of the greatest dangers of error: admixture with the good. You must

remember the definition of evil: *privatio boni debiti*, the failure of a good which is due.

I used this definition when I spoke to Cardinal Castrillon about the Mass. I said to him that the New Mass is bad, is evil. He did not accept that. He even gave a conference in Germany where he said, "Bishop Fellay claims the New Mass is bad, but he is wrong because it has been promulgated by the Pope, and hence, it's good. It is covered by the infallibility of the Pope." This is what he said at Munster. Afterwards, I had the opportunity to speak with him and he said the following about the Mass: "The Pope and I like the New Mass. We think that it is more pastoral than the old Mass. But it is true that there is something failing and so we have to compensate by and with the appropriate catechesis."

Then I made use of what he had said: "You say that something is failing in this Mass. That is the precisely the definition of evil: the privation of something which is due. You say that something which is due is failing. So you say that the New Mass is bad!"

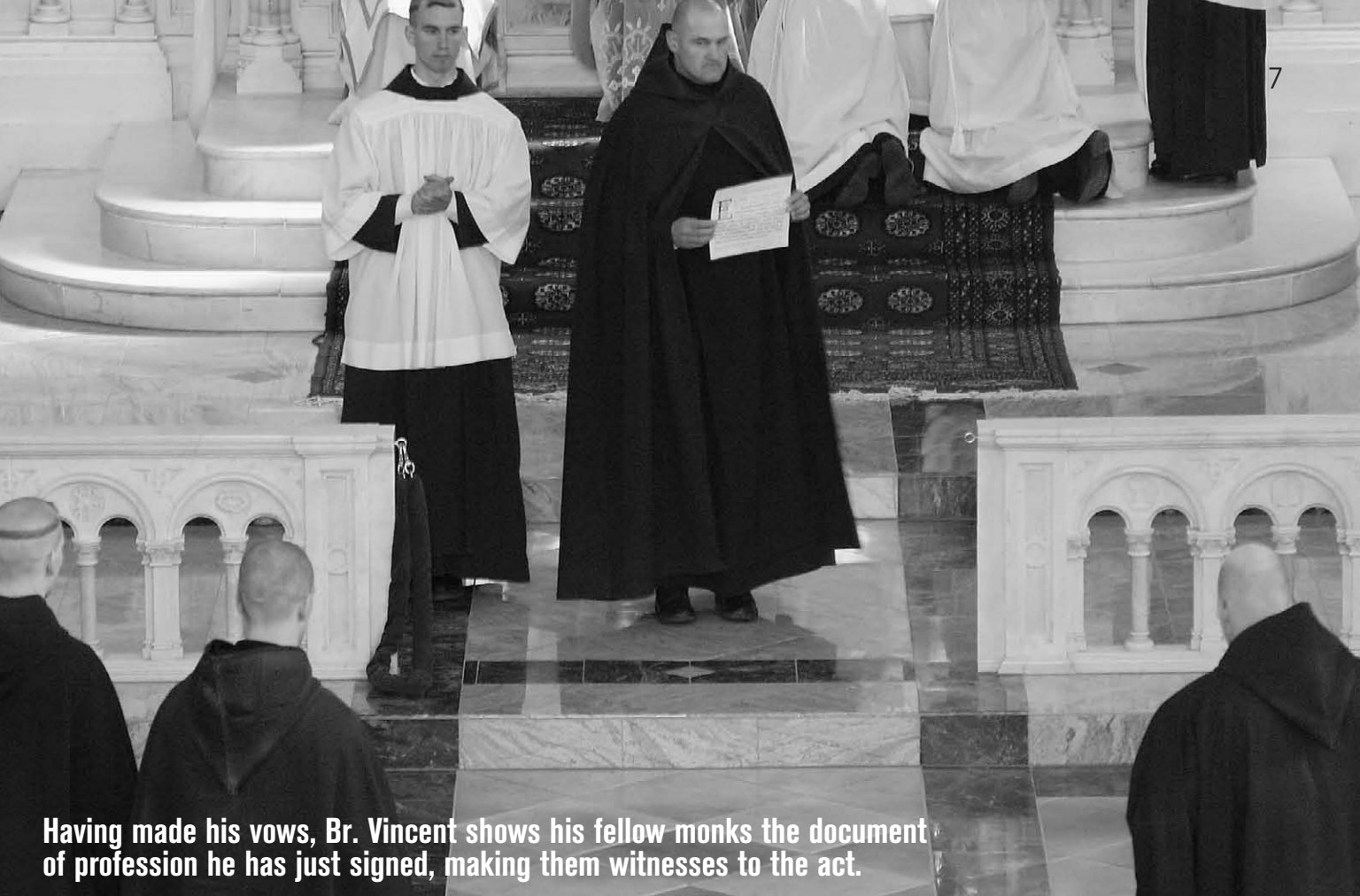
He had nothing to say, but after the meeting, he asked two of his secretaries, "Why didn't you come to my help when Bishop Fellay attacked me?"

You can see how important it is, then, to have the right definition of things. This is also why, when we speak of the definition of evil, we must remember that sin is the great evil. If you look at Scripture, who can tell what a sin is? How can we say what is sinful? Sin is a failing; something good which is due that is failing. And it is in relation with God Who is infinite. In fact, those who understand the most what sin is are the ones who understand most clearly Who God is. Because a sin or an evil will always be something negative, and to understand something negative, you must first understand what is positive. Otherwise, it is like trying to explain vision to a blind man. A blind man by birth will never understand his misfortune. On the other hand, a man who loses his vision at some point will understand fully the evil of being blind. These matters are not so simple.

Remember that the greatest saints always claim to be the greatest sinners in the world. How can they dare to say so? They are saints! Many of them said it, because they understood in a profound sense who God is. They understood what it was to not give God what was due to Him, even if it were the slightest thing.

Keeping Things in Perspective

We maintain that we need the Faith. We maintain that we need the Church. We run into a problem here, however. When we say we want to be Catholic, we say we are Catholic, we say we stick to the Catholic Faith and the Church, there is a danger. And this danger is to make our own world; even to make our own God. Many people make their own God. This is



Having made his vows, Br. Vincent shows his fellow monks the document of profession he has just signed, making them witnesses to the act.

why St. John says, “He who claims to love God and does not love his neighbor, he is a liar.” It’s so easy to say that you love God. But, if, at the same time, you do not do your best to love your neighbor, St. John says you are a liar, you are wrong.

So it is important, and we must pay attention to staying in reality about God and the Church. To claim to wipe out the entire Church by denying the Pope, hierarchy, and bishops and to act as if you were then the entire Church—I’m sorry, but such is not the reality, a reality which is puzzling and hard because we believe in the Church, which is Holy and One. And we look for this holiness and unity and we wonder where it is. Where is the unity in liturgy? Every church has its own liturgy.

Sometimes you really wonder if there are not jokers in Rome, especially when you hear someone like Cardinal Arinze, who is responsible for the Congregation of the Liturgy, say that the Pope should not give freedom for the Tridentine Mass because it would create confusion in the liturgy. You wonder if he ever went around and noticed the confusion we already experience now with the New Mass. There is so much confusion already that I don’t see how the introduction of the old Mass could bring any more confusion at the level of the liturgy. On the contrary, this Tridentine liturgy will restore unity in the liturgy of the Church, and it will not only be unity of language. Now you go from church to

church to find Masses in different languages. Someone told me once, after attending a Tridentine Mass, “We did not understand all the words, but we knew what was going on.” Now we understand the words, but we don’t know what is going on! Even Cardinal Castrillon told me once, that when he was in Africa, there was a Mass where even he did not know when the consecration was said. So, when I say that we must stay with reality, I mean this: We have to stick to this reality which is called Rome and the Pope. That’s why we say that we adhere to Rome, that we are Roman Catholics. Today, many refuse the word “Roman.” A lot of Catholics today, especially priests, claim that what is important is what happens in their own parishes, not in Rome. They call the Pope the Bishop of Rome. These are not just words in the air; let me give you an example. Last week, I read the bulletin of a parish in Switzerland where they are getting a new bishop. The bulletin thus described the role of a bishop and they said, “The bishop must be very balanced because he must take and choose what comes from Rome so that he is not too close to Rome, so that he can be close to the faithful.” I’m sorry, but we do recognize that there is one person on which the Church has been built: Peter, the Vicar of Christ on earth, and his successors, who maintain this unity of the Church.

Is the Pope gone? The Church is gone, which is why this is not an easy question, and hence you

have this crisis in the Church. The famous marks of Holiness and Unity are a nightmare right now. The situation of the Church in general is a nightmare. But that does not mean that everything has disappeared. That is why we stick to the Pope. That's why we pray for the Pope; we recognize that there are still bishops around, even if we don't follow them in everything. We must maintain this, because it is God who wanted it this way. He wanted to entrust His treasures to men, and we know that, by doing so, He allowed the possibility of a certain number of failures. This has happened throughout history. Most heresies have begun inside the Church. Until the Church kicked them out, there were priests, bishops, and deacons who became heretics. It started inside. What does that mean?

On the one hand, we are bound to recognize that there is still someone in Rome who has the authority granted by God to lead the Church. But on the other hand, many times, we try to listen and it doesn't seem like it's Jesus Who is speaking through his mouth. And this is the great drama in which we live. When we think that John Paul II kissed the Koran, in which it is stated that to believe in the Divinity of Jesus is a blasphemy—the Vicar of Christ kisses this book? It is a heart-breaking drama, a scandal in the very precise meaning of the term: something which leads people into sin. The Muslims were obviously happy. But how will they then become Catholics? How can we tell them their book is wrong when they can say “Your boss kissed it!” It is one little example which presents the great mystery in which we live.

I don't mean something confusing by saying “mystery.” I mean a truth which overwhelms us, a part of our Faith. Each point of our Faith is a mystery. The Incarnation is a mystery. The Holy Eucharist is a mystery. In the words of consecration themselves, the priest says *mysterium fidei*—the mystery of faith—when he consecrates. These are truths which are infinitely higher than what we can understand, yet we must submit to and accept them. So, we accept that there is a Pope, even when we see failures.

Obedience Is Easily Misunderstood

Now, of course, we don't follow failures. It's obvious; it's strictly forbidden to do any kind of sin or error. God has given us an intelligence for the truth and a will for the good. Whenever we do something wrong, we sin. And when we sin, we engage our own responsibility, also in obedience. We can never say, “Because I obeyed, the guilt falls on the one ordering.” We have our part, because we are free. When we obey, we make use of our freedom. And if we obey wrongly, we sin. It's something which not everybody understands. I remember a Carmelite professor of dogma in Rome who told us, “I prefer to be in error with the Pope.” I beg your pardon?

“I prefer to be wrong with the Pope.” But if you're wrong, you're no longer with Jesus or God!

Obedience is a very high virtue. You cannot have a Catholic without obedience. The Catholic must show his dependence on God, and God wanted this dependency to be shown to other human beings. You will always have superiors, in work, in a family, *etc.* There is always someone above you, even if you are the Pope. (It seems that Benedict XVI was not allowed to have his cats in his apartment for a time, so he must also obey!) The right understanding of obedience always means that we submit to God. Supernatural obedience is always linked to God. We submit to human beings because they represent God, His law and His word. Now if it is clear that if what we are asked to do is against God's law, you can no longer speak of obedience. Maybe it is submission to a human being, but not to God. This is why St. Peter says to the Sanhedrin, which was the highest religious authority in the Old Testament: “We ought to obey God, rather than men.” That was his answer, and that's still our answer too.

We're going to obey the Pope, as long as He uses Jesus' word. Our Lord says, “Who listens to you, listens to Me.” So we are eager to hear from the mouth of the Pope the voice of Christ. And when we don't, we are full of sorrow, we can no longer move. And when I say “the Pope,” we could say the Council, the bishop—it counts for the same. And we must have this clearly in mind, because the great damage caused to the Church since the Council has been caused through this wrong understanding of obedience, or the understanding of the wrong obedience. It's striking, when you see, when you look, how they have introduced the novelties. It's absolutely unbelievable how they have behaved. I'll give you some examples.

One was the introduction of the New Mass in Italy. You have the official text which comes from Rome, which says, we'll give two years to the bishops' conferences to decide when the New Mass will be introduced in their countries. And in Italy they decided to introduce it at the latest possible time, at the very end of these two years. And then, suddenly, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, you have the text without any signature which said that the New Mass in Italy will be celebrated immediately. The President of the Italian Bishops' Conference, who at the time was Bishop Carli, said to Archbishop Lefebvre, “I am going to make a protest to discover who is behind these texts without any signature!” Here we have a beautiful example of the abuse of authority.

Another one was the introduction of Communion in the hand. The text which introduces Communion in the hand starts by saying that it is no good, that those who have already allowed Communion in the hand are disobedient. And then what? And then they say, “But in these places, they can keep it.” And that was how Communion in the hand was introduced into the Church: by stating that it is wrong, but stating

that we will let it go. And from then, in each country, it just spread, from a text which was supposedly condemning it, but opening a door at the same time.

The text about Indulgences and penance said penance is very good, so Friday abstinence is very good and we will let the bishops' conferences decide what the faithful will do on Friday. We can change, and no longer abstain from eating meat. We can replace that penance with something else. And the bishops' conference decided nothing, so now everybody thinks that there is no binding penance anymore on Friday. This is absolutely not true! But you can find many things like that! They say these things are good, but..., and with the "but" they introduce and open everything.

Take the example of obedience in the religious orders; the Carmelites in France, for instance. There was a meeting of all the superiors—the Prioress, the Sub-prioress or Mistress of Novices—of all the Carmels in France: about 120 persons, maybe more. And at that meeting, a Buddhist specialist or expert taught the nuns that Christian meditation and Buddhism is all the same. It goes much, much further. The Sisters will be obliged to get out of their habits, put on a kind of gymnastics clothing, and put themselves in Yoga positions, and so on, in the liturgy of this Buddhist monk. One Sister protested; she was kicked out of the Order. Then Rome gave her right, but she remains outside, and she is alone, and all the others have gone through this craziness. Their religious orders have been demolished in the name of obedience.

So many times they have introduced psychiatrists, for example, in the Benedictines—very famous: they obliged all the monks to go in front of a psychiatrist. They literally emptied the monasteries. And all this in the name of obedience! Another Sister, she is now with us as an oblate, was commanded in the name of obedience (vow), to watch television. The reason was, "Well, the whole community is in front of the TV for recreation. You are the only one who doesn't, so you have to join in recreation and come in front of the TV!" Isn't that nice? to oblige somebody, a religious soul, to really look at worldly things... It's absolutely not necessary for a religious soul in the name of holy obedience. By obedience her soul is put in total obedience to God, who is going to speak by the superiors. And of course, in such a case when the superior gives such an order, he's committing a wonderful abuse of power. And of course, in such a case, if you obey, you sin.

We must say no. True obedience in such a case is to say no. Paul VI already recognized this drama in the Church. Paul VI spoke of an auto-demolition of the Church, a self-destruction of the Church. He *said* it. He said that somewhere in the temple of God the smoke of Satan has entered. Strong words! In the holy Temple, in the holy Catholic Church? Satan? Yes! What does he tell us?—a diabolical possession. Do you know what diabolical possession is? You

have someone who has a devil taking possession of his body, and that makes his body move, no longer according to the orders of the soul, which is the real owner of the body, but according to the devil's angelic might, which is going to be pretty strong—that's a diabolical possession.

If you say that the devil has entered the Church, in a certain way, you speak of a diabolical possession of the Church. Strong words. But I tell you, to kick out the devil from the soul, from the body, costs a lot. It's a fight. And now we have to fight, and kick the devil out of the Church. Do you think this will happen without a fight? Well, we live this fight every day. But don't wonder if you are an object of hatred, if you feel around you suddenly and unbelievably people who look at you as at the devil, and who behave really mean towards you. It's normal! You're fighting the devil, and he does not like you! And he shows it through certain people around you. It's a fight.

Our History and Protective Measures

But this situation in the Church has obliged us to take protective measures. Well, all of you have been put in this situation where you have had to say, "I can no longer go this way. If I go this way, the way of the official Church, the way in my parish, with my parish priest, if I go this way with my bishop, I do wrong!" So you have to say, "No! I have to get out of it!" Why? "Because I have to protect my faith, I have to protect my Catholic status!" And that's the way the Society started.

You had seminarians who were going to seminary in Rome, who came to the Archbishop in 1968 and they said, "Please do something for us because here in Rome they teach us heresies!" And that's the way the Society started. At first, the Archbishop did not want to start anything, because he was already old, he was retiring from the Holy Ghost Fathers, but he was so pushed by these seminarians that finally he led them to Fribourg, in Switzerland. It seemed they had already a Catholic University which was more or less in order, and then the local bishop agreed, and founded the Society of Saint Pius X in the diocese of Fribourg, in Switzerland.

And then the Archbishop understood very well, very quickly, that it would be impossible to send these seminarians back to their dioceses as priests, because they would be trapped themselves, this time as priests. So that's why he founded this congregation, which is ours now, the Society, and that's why we have schools, again, to protect these children; our Catechism classes, to protect against the novelties which are spread around.

As an example, in Denmark, which is a very Protestant country, you have only one Catholic school. And there is a Catholic doctor who sends his daughters there. And they are introducing something

like sexual education, so he tried to do something against it. He followed the hierarchical order, going to the principal, the pastor, the chaplain, the director of the school, and the bishop, yet nothing happened. He went to *Rome*, and sent a dossier with the whole case, begging Rome to do *something*.

After awhile the answer came from Rome, from the Cardinal who is responsible for the family. The response said, "Dear Dr. So-and-So, yes, these documents which are presented to me are absolutely unacceptable." So, a clear condemnation of the thing which is done in that school in Denmark. But then in the second paragraph he wrote: "But I cannot do anything against it. So what I am suggesting to you is that you gather and join other faithful around you, and you fight the case."

This doctor told me, it's like the sheep who goes to the shepherd and says, "There's a wolf! There's a wolf!" and the shepherd says, "Yes, yes, there is a wolf. But I cannot do anything. But you, the sheep, get together, and attack the wolf."

You can imagine what's going to happen! What would happen to this doctor if he were to continue this fight? Immediately the bishop would say "You are disobedient, you have to obey, submit" and so on. And if the case would go again to Rome, they would say the same thing. We have witnessed it so many times with priests who would try to say the Tridentine Mass. The bishop condemns them, they make an appeal to Rome, and Rome says, "Oh, the bishop was right!" One of the beautiful cases was the case of Fr. Somerville in Canada. Fr. Somerville is famous because he was one of the official translators of the new liturgy. And so one day he came back, thank God, and then he became close to us. But then he was summoned by the Bishop of Toronto and he was threatened with suspension if he continued to work with us. He continued, he was suspended. He made an appeal to Rome, and Cardinal Castrillon answered by saying, "Well, the bishop has the perfect right to suspend you!"

The same Cardinal Castrillon told me that the Pope and himself, and Cardinal Ratzinger, and Medina, and Sodano, all agree that the old Mass has never been abrogated, hence, that every priest can say it. He continued by saying, "But you understand, the Secretary, and the Under-Secretary, they don't agree. So you see, the Pope agrees, the Head agrees, but the Secretary, and Under-Secretary don't agree, so we can't give it to you." He said that overtly, in writing. "Some faithful and some bishops think that to allow the old Mass would deprive the New Mass of something and would hurt Paul VI and his Liturgy." So, *some* faithful and *some* bishops.

I thought that the head of the Church was the Pope? I didn't know that it was *some* faithful and *some* bishops. But it shows you with what, and with whom we have to deal. It's not easy. And once again, there is no other way than to take these protective measures

just to survive. We have been using survival skills for years; we just try to survive, period. We know that to stay Catholic we have to stick to all the principles, we cannot discuss any of these principles. But at the same time, of course, we are not going to do anything, God willing, that could hurt this faith! If we hurt our faith, we condemn ourselves! We destroy ourselves! We cut the only roots to heaven! We can't, by any means.

The Work of Tradition

And so you have all these very, very striking, surprising, admirable works of Tradition, like little oases in the middle of a deluge, of an enormous catastrophe of demolition, which is not only surviving but gaining some strength. This is our story. On one hand, we are condemned by the official Church; on the other hand, this official Church in Rome starts to say and to recognize that we bear good fruits. How could it be? Words from Cardinal Castrillon: "The fruits are good, hence, the Holy Ghost is there." And so I asked him, where do these good fruits come from? No answer. Of course; how do you expect him to answer? So we have different levels in our perspective and view of what is happening now.

Let's look at the past, just to show a little bit that there are principles which we cannot discuss: we want to be Catholic, we have to stick to it, and there is no discussion about the Faith or about Doctrine. There is nothing to compromise. Nothing.

So when we attack the Council, for example, it's because of the Faith. We see that at the Council there were introduced gaps and holes. They made holes in the boat, and you know what happens when you make a hole in a boat—it's going to sink. So when they say to us, "Oh, you have a nice boat, so we'd like you to join. But there's only one condition. *Make a hole.*" Do you think we're going to say yes? By no means! But that's the problem. On the one hand, they recognize that we have a nice boat, and they would like to make use of it, because they see that it is a good boat. It's working, especially when they compare it with their boat. But at the same time they say, "Okay, yes, good, but...you have to recognize the Council. You have to accept the New Mass." And these are precisely the holes! Thus we say no! And that has been the story from the beginning, and that's the story which continues today.

If you look at the letters which have been exchanged, for example, in 1982 and 1983, in the beginning with Cardinal Ratzinger as head of the Holy Office in Rome—he already dealt with these matters at that time! The Archbishop said, "Okay"; the Pope said, "Okay, I want to solve the problem, but you have to recognize the Council," and so on. But Archbishop Lefebvre said, "No, I can't. But I would be ready to say that I accept the Council in the light of Tradition." But then, of course, it appeared that it was ambiguous, so the Archbishop then wrote,

“I have to make it more precise. When I say, in the light of Tradition, I mean, it is Tradition which judges the Council. That means, that what is in harmony with Tradition, we accept. What is doubtful, where we don’t understand what it means, then you take the meaning which you have in Tradition. And when it is clearly the contrary of Tradition, well then, forget it. You kick it out.” That’s what the Archbishop wrote to Cardinal Ratzinger. And Cardinal Ratzinger said, “Well, the first part (accepting the Council in the light of Tradition), is okay. But the remarks which you make afterwards, no, by no means, you can’t.” And this is between 1983 and 1985. We are still there, still the same.

Recent Developments

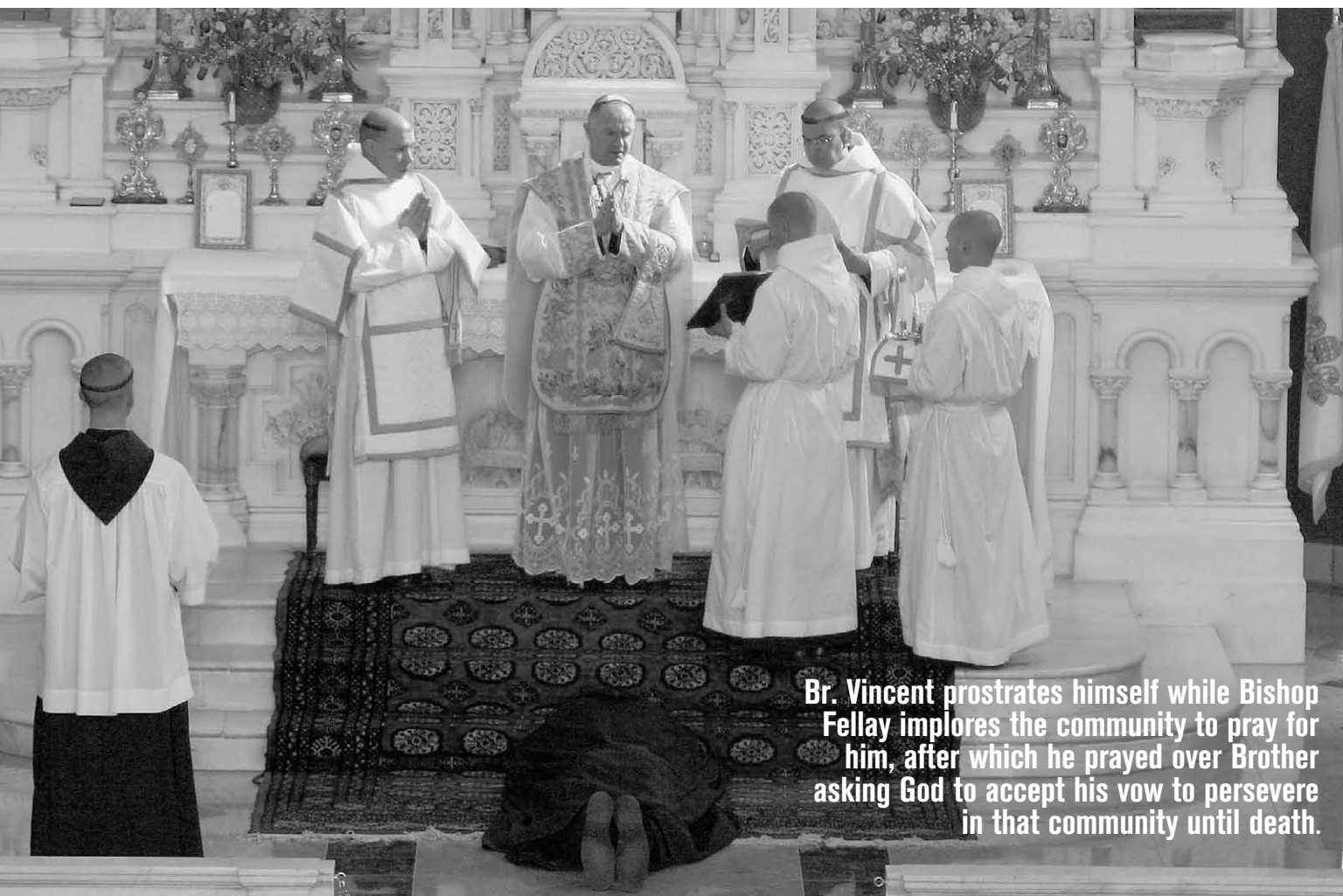
Let’s go to the audience, or just before the audience. Is there any change? Is there anything which has changed through these stages? There are several things which, let’s say, have undergone a certain development. For example, until the year 2000, Rome clearly attacked us. Officially, once again, (since there was *individual* calmness and friendliness), the position was: “The Society? Bang.”

But since the year 2000, there has been a move from Rome which is more positive. We had Rome come to *us* and say, “We want to solve the problem. We have a problem there, so let’s solve it.” It is

something positive. I don’t say totally positive, but there is a certain good will on the side of Rome. And we said, at that time, “Listen, we don’t trust you. You’ve been so mean with us, we are not entering into any kind of agreement. First, show that you really want us. And we are not interested in words, we want deeds. So give proof that we can trust you again.” And so we proposed two things—we could have done many more—but two things: give the freedom of the Mass, and take away this scarecrow, these bad terms which you use against us, like “excommunication,” “schismatics,” and so on.

In fact, they have not touched us at all. The Mass we have, so we don’t need permission. And excommunication is like water on the feathers of a duck. That means it makes us neither cold nor warm. We don’t care, because we very well know that it is not fitting. And so it’s not for us, these conditions, or preambles, if you want. We asked for signs to see whether Rome was ready to do at least that, to show that they are, in a certain degree, in favor of Tradition. Because as long as Rome is not in favor of Tradition, once again, not in words but in deeds, there will be no agreement. It is impossible because it means suicide.

When we started with this, the answers from Rome were, concerning the excommunication, “We’ll lift it when we make an agreement.” About the Mass, as I said, the Pope agreed, all the heads of the Congregations, the Cardinals, agreed, but the



Br. Vincent prostrates himself while Bishop Fellay implores the community to pray for him, after which he prayed over Brother asking God to accept his vow to persevere in that community until death.

Secretaries and the Under-Secretaries didn't agree. "So we cannot give it to you." That was in the year 2000. Since then, and John Paul II, there were several back-and-forth exchanges, but more or less always with the same topic. That is, we continued to say, "You are very kind to us, it is very nice for you to think about giving us something like an apostolic administration, but first, you have to regain our trust. And to regain our trust is not just to show us a nice smile, but to show it in the Church, in the life of the Church, that you really do want to reintroduce Tradition."

Problems with the Indult

Now, during these years, the Society of Saint Peter and *Ecclesia Dei* had several experiences which are interesting, and which are more or less the following:

In the beginning, Rome supported these groups against us, trying to get the faithful and the priests away from Archbishop Lefebvre. That's why you have the Society of Saint Peter, that's their reason for existing. And the bishops don't like them. Many are hard on them, and give them a hard life. And many of the faithful who try to be under *Ecclesia Dei* have it hard, with difficulties getting their Indult Mass. When they get them, the bishops impose a lot of tremendous conditions. I remember some years ago here, the American bishops decided that you could have an Indult Mass, but there had to be at least two hours between the New Mass and the Tridentine Mass, with no other sacraments: no Baptism, no Marriage, no nothing with the Tridentine Mass. And even now, more or less, there are very few exceptions. They continue these kind of rules.

And so Rome was frustrated. I know of a case, here in the States, where a group of 250 faithful asked the bishop for the Tridentine Mass, and the bishop refused, so they wrote Rome. Cardinal Castrillon wrote five times to this bishop, saying, "*Give them the Mass.*" And the bishop did not care. So you can imagine how frustrated they feel in Rome. In Rome they say, "I am the boss." But the boss is not obeyed.

So around the year 2003, we had the beginning of this reflection in Rome, which went: These traditional people, even *Ecclesia Dei*, are good people. They are Catholic. So it's not correct to be so mean towards them. So if the bishops really want to continue this way, Rome was going to do something for them. They were going to set up a structure for them. Of course, the first idea came with Campos. But the idea continued, and last year, from 2004-2005, a Cardinal studied these questions. His name was Ratzinger.

And the idea was to give to these groups what we call an "apostolic administration." So they have been working now on these projects for several years—at least two or three years now. It does not deal exactly or directly with us, but it's something which is in the air. And then, in this atmosphere, came the death of

John Paul II and the election of a new Pope, a new Pope who was known to have criticized the New Mass, among the very few who did, and who has also spoken in favor of the old, who has said that he could not understand how one could prohibit the faithful and priests from the celebration of the old Mass, that that would be an abuse of power, and that he would understand that these people would distrust Rome.

The Audience

So we have a new Pope. There were great expectations everywhere. People said, with this Pope, everything will change; we'll go back to the old. A lot of rumors went around. When I say "rumor," watch out. Let's distinguish. I use the word "rumor" only by speaking of things which come from *Rome*. It comes from people who work in Rome. I don't speak of what is speculated by reporters, or from sedevacantist sides, or anything else; only what we hear from people who are working in Rome. So we heard pretty soon after his election that the new Pope was going to give to *Ecclesia Dei* these famous apostolic administrations. There would be several, depending on countries and continents, and this should arrive pretty soon, early in autumn of last year.

We also heard that he would do something for the Mass. Precisely one week before the end of the Synod, someone who was working on the project, or very close to it, was firmly certain that at the end of the Synod, a text would be published allowing, at least partially, the old Mass. And nothing happened.

Well, not exactly nothing. What happened was a counteraction from the progressivists. And it was a letter, written and signed by the Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation for the Liturgy; a letter—they call it a note—a secret note. Of this "secret note" we know that it has seven pages. And we know that it says to the Pope, "You cannot allow the freedom of the old Mass, because it has been abrogated and abolished by the New Mass." Now author of this letter, Archbishop Sorrentino, the Secretary for the Congregation of Divine Worship, after this letter was kicked out of office. He is now the Archbishop of Assisi. But he is no longer in Rome.

Alas, the same Cardinal, just a few days ago, again said the same, again attacked the Pope, trying to prohibit and prevent the Pope from giving any easiness to the old Mass, in the name of the new. So we have these different rumors, and you see they don't happen. But it goes even further.

We heard that the Pope had entrusted a certain number of experts in the Vatican to prepare two liturgical "rites." One will be named the "Modern Rite" ("*ritus modernus*"): it will be the New Mass, with some cosmetic changes. For example, in this new Mass, the old Offertory will be "*ad libitum*"; that is, the priest will be free to choose between the new Offertory and the old. Some parts will be obligatory

in Latin. Two of the Canons will be suppressed (numbers two and four). Then there will be the “*ritus Romanus*,” the “Roman Rite,” which will be the old Mass with some, we dare say, cosmetic changes. That is, no prayers at the foot of the altar, the universal prayer before the Offertory, no last Gospel, and perhaps the new lectionary.

So what is this? How far are we bound to believe this is true? I may say about all these things which come from Rome as “rumors,” that you should take them this way: as true *ideas*, projects, and nothing more, as if they came from somebody who is thinking, reflecting, having ideas about what to do? “We could do that, we could do this—let’s try to reflect a little bit on that,” and no more. So if these projects one day become reality? Wait and see. Don’t believe that because you hear the rumor in Rome, “this” will happen tomorrow. Don’t believe that. In part, it’s absolutely normal that these people in Rome, who are the authorities, reflect on possible projects.

Now, of course, in the process, we have big problems. And these problems mean that there is a fight in the Church. You have different tendencies. You have the progressivists and the conservatives, and then in Rome you have also other “things” like lobbies, the Mafia, and Freemasons. It’s a whole combination of various things which make these ideas or projects run into counterprojects, different in each city. Things are put into drawers and so on.

Don’t rush after these rumors! Stay on the ground, and say, “I want to see it before I believe it.” Play St. Thomas the Apostle. “I will believe it when I *touch* it.” And the same for things about the Society. There are a lot of things going around, a lot of rumors. When I hear through the newspapers like you do what Rome is planning, what is true in it? I have absolutely no idea. And now they speak of “apostolic administrations” and so on. I will tell you what I know about it.

There were four individuals during the audience with the Pope. The Pope, Cardinal Castrillon, Fr. Schmidberger, and myself. That’s all. No secretaries, nobody else. And the Pope started by saying, “So, where do we stand?” And he directly asked Cardinal Castrillon. You have to understand, it’s not just a meeting where everybody can speak. It’s really the Pope who gives the words to you, and that’s it. If you want to say something, you may try to raise your hand. And so, we had the Pope asking Cardinal Castrillon, “Tell us where we stand.” And Cardinal Castrillon started by saying, “Holy Father, everything is fine, everything is ready. It’s up to you now to make the regularization of the Society. Everything is fine. Perfect. And I have given to you a proposal of structure for the Society.” Now it was the first time that I heard, for years, that Rome had prepared a structure for the Society!

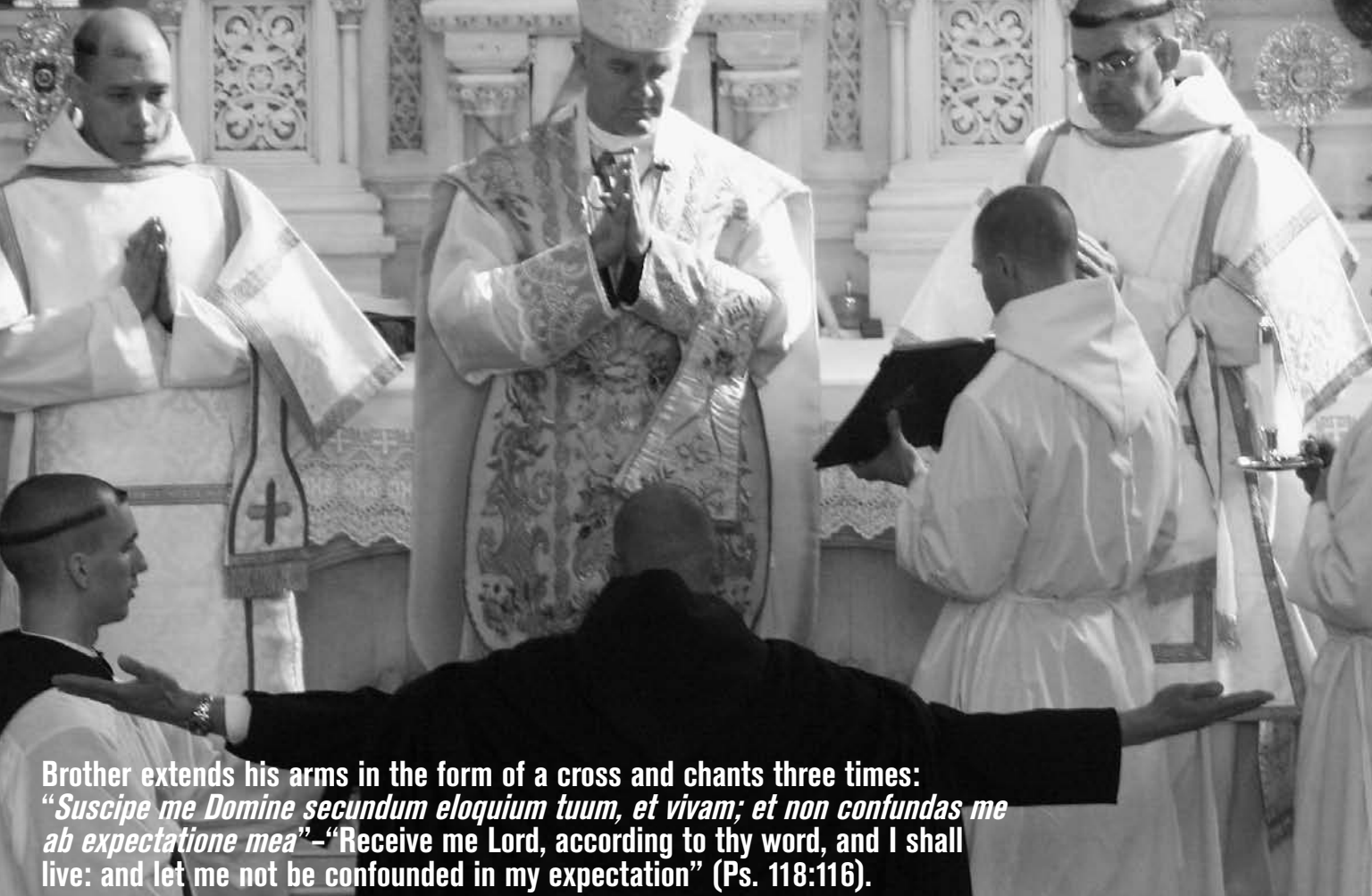
Years before, of course, they had proposed something, but the last time I’d heard about it was in

2003. Now, two years later, I hear the Cardinal has given a firm proposal to the Pope about a structure! I had absolutely no idea about it! And the only thing I know now about it, is that it is a structure! And something more, because the Pope answered, “Yes, I have entrusted this study to the Commission [those are his words, in fact, it is a council] for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, to be sure that this structure does correspond to the spirit of the law and of the Church.” Now to use such words means certainly that it is something new. Maybe analogical, corresponding to something which already exists, but if there’s something already existing, the Pope does not need to make a further study by the experts in Canon Law to make sure that this idea does correspond to the spirit of the Church and of the law. So that means that Rome is thinking about proposing something to us, a structure, which is supposed to protect against...whom?

Let’s suppose the bishops. That’s the only thing I know. And then the Pope turned to me and said, “You. What do you think?” Well, I had to put on the brakes! In fact, the Good Lord gave us a tremendous hint before the audience. A Cardinal told us the way the Cardinals prepare their audiences. When they go to meet the Pope, they send him a note a few days before, about one page, with the main topics that they are going to speak about. This is so the Pope can already think about it, and already reflect on solutions. And that’s precisely what we did.

A few days before the audience, we sent a note to the Pope and we are absolutely certain that the text went into his hands, and that he read it. This note had the major points we wanted to discuss with the Pope. I may say about these points that almost none of them was spoken about during the audience. But it doesn’t matter! The thing was brought to the Pope! In a certain way, I may say, the note was ten times more important than the audience itself. In the note, we first, quoting the Pope himself, manifested the enormous, tremendous, dramatic crisis in the Church. Then we presented the Society, its works, and presented it as a solution to get out of this crisis. But then we said, “It’s not possible for the time being if you do not make changes in the Church.” I used the words “Catholic Life”—normal, Catholic, traditional life is made impossible in the official Church. And so, if you want an agreement, you must first make it possible again. And so then we insisted on the freedom of the Mass, taking away the hellish halo.

When he asked me, “Where do we stand?” I went back to this idea that *Catholic life is made impossible*. It’s no longer possible to have a simple, Catholic life today, in the “normal,” official Catholic Church, because the bishops take care of making it impossible. And if somebody wants, let’s say, to live a Catholic life, he is hindered on all sides. If a priest tries to establish in his parish the good things, after a few years he is removed, and the next one comes, and,



Brother extends his arms in the form of a cross and chants three times:
***“Suscipe me Domine secundum eloquium tuum, et vivam; et non confundas me ab expectatione mea”*—“Receive me Lord, according to thy word, and I shall live: and let me not be confounded in my expectation” (Ps. 118:116).**

bang, demolishes everything. The bishop tries to set up a seminary, to make it a little bit more normal, but in between this nightmare, comes the next bishop, and he smashes this seminary. All of what I tell you now are examples which I have present in my head.

Really and literally, the Catholic life is made impossible in the official Church. Some people sometimes are maybe offended when we tell them that, but I say, look yourself. Where do you go to Mass? Can you say that you can go, with blind eyes, to your parish? The law of the Church tells you that the normal place where you have to go on Sunday to your Mass, to fulfill your Sunday obligation, should be the High Mass of your parish. Look at even the conservatives—I don’t even speak of the *Ecclesia Dei* people, just the conservatives, those who want to just be seriously Catholic. They have to choose! They can no longer go with blind eyes to their parish church, because it can be anything: a clown Mass, a children’s Mass, a jazz Mass, a Coke Mass, I don’t know what, but everything. Everything. Even then they have to make choices. Of course, they don’t go far enough; but that’s as I say: normal Catholic life is made impossible. And it is a strong argument, because it’s an enormous reproach to Rome, but that’s the situation.

So I said, “We can’t say just now that we are sorry for everything. First, these changes must happen in the Church. We have to go step by step: reintroduce

the old Mass, take away all these negative attitudes towards Tradition, and then we will see.”

Then the Pope started to speak, and he said that he saw see three levels of difficulty between the Society and Rome. And he started with the relation to the Pope, the submission to the Pope. And he said this submission to the Pope has to be effective to be real. And then he immediately switched to the idea of the “state of necessity.” He said, “You base your activity on a state of necessity in the Church. But you are not right. You do not have the right to base your activity on a so-called ‘state of necessity.’” And then he gave the reason, and said, “Because I try to solve the problems.” These are his words. But with these words you have the wonderful expression, from the mouth of the Pope himself, that indeed, there is a state of necessity—because there are problems, if he tries to solve them! And while he tries, they are not yet solved. So the problems are real, and they are now, and they are not yet solved. So while he does tell us that he tries to solve them, well, we are still stuck in the process that they are not yet solved.

And guess what? In his own, words, after having said that, he finished by saying, “Well, we should see whether there is or not a state of necessity in France and Germany.” So he himself opened the possibility of the reality of this state of necessity in France and Germany. But now if you compare France and Germany to the other countries in the world, well

really, I don't see much difference. And so, we have to thank the Holy Father, because he does recognize that there is a state of necessity in the Church! Even if he says we don't have the right to base our activity on it, he himself says that it is so. It is interesting, anyway.

Then he went to the second level. And he said that the second level is the acceptance of the Council. He said, "The venerable Archbishop Lefebvre signed a formula where he said that he recognized and accepted the Council in the light of Tradition." Clearly meaning with this, that we needed to do the same. Then he continued by saying, "You do not have the right to attack the Council interpreted in the light of a reporter, or theologians. No. It must be, and it's the only acceptable interpretation, the light of the living Tradition. What matters is the intention of the Fathers, the intention of the text." These are his words. Now the problem is that what we attack is not crazy interpretations; of course, they have to be attacked also, but what we point out is precisely the text. When the Pope says that's what matters, that's precisely what we attack. When we say, *these* precise texts are at the least ambiguous; and we expect from the Council clear texts, not ambiguous ones, we expect that these texts do *not* need interpretation because they are clear enough.

But when you look, you have something very interesting in the Council. In the dogmatic constitution about the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, they speak about collegiality. Now, the text of the Council is so ambiguous that the Pope (Paul VI) had to write a note that is joined to the texts of the Council, a note that you are supposed to read before you read the texts of the Council so that you have a right understanding of the text. The official name of this note is "Nota Prævia," a previous note, a note you have to read before. That's already sufficient to express one point, that's not the only one, but that's the ambiguity of the text!

If the text is ambiguous, whoever would have read it would have understood it in a certain way. If the text is clear, well, at least the majority would have understood it correctly. If it is ambiguous, no, because you will come on the text and say, what does it mean? And you will say, maybe it means this, maybe it means that. And if you have a progressivist's heart, an inclination to new things, you will say, "Ah, *it means this!*" And you will have another who will say, "No, *it means that!*" And you have a fight! So why make a text which is not clear? It's a waste! A waste of time, of energy, of everything. And that's already, I may say now, the least objection we have against the Council. We have much more severe criticisms; that's already one level.

And of course, there are some errors. One of them is what we call Religious Liberty. The Pope clearly indicated in the words he used during the audience, that for him, it is impossible to accept

someone in the Church, at least in his, let's say, modern way of looking at the Church, who would not accept the Council. He was very clear. When I heard these words there, and especially one word afterwards, for me, the big fight we will have under this pontificate will be the fight about the Council.

I do consider that the fight for the Mass is more or less already won. Even though right now we don't yet have it, there are enough elements here to see, to understand, that we will get it. We will get the old Mass. It may take some time, maybe some fighting, but the very *point* of the fight will be the Council. And why? Because we have a Pope who is convinced of the goodness of the rightly interpreted Council. More than that. His *way* of thinking is such, that for him, there is no other alternative than the Council.

In his speech to the Cardinals of the 22nd of December, he expressed it. I think we can consider that this address given to the Curia for the New Year's greeting is definitely the most important text of his whole pontificate until now, much more so than his encyclical about God's charity. There is no comparison. This text of December 22, 2005, deals with the Council and the interpretation of the Council.

In the first part, the Pope condemns the interpretation of the Council which has been done in the name of the spirit of the Council. He says that no, that is a wrong interpretation, it cannot justify the novelties in the name of the spirit of the Council. That cannot be.

It's a good point, but it is not enough. Anyway, you could consider that with this he is condemning about three quarters of what has been done in the Church under his predecessors, and maybe it is correct to say so; I am not absolutely sure. But what does he really mean? Obviously, he does reject too modernistic, too progressivistic behaviors in the Church which pretend to be based on the Council. That is clear. But then he explains that it was a duty of the Church to redefine, to explain, to study, a new relation between the world and the Church, and that's the work of the Council. He gives three levels of new relations between the Church and the world: 1) the relation between modern philosophy and the faith, or, if you will, science, which is broader than just philosophy; 2) the relation between the Church and the modern State, what we call religious liberty; and the third level will be the relations between the Church and the other religions, and especially Judaism.

The Underlying Philosophy

In his speech, he develops to a certain extent the second point, religious liberty, and to a certain extent the relations between faith and science, and not so much the third point, the relations between the Church and the other religions, but the theory

is the following (which is very interesting because it shows us what kind of philosophy the present Pope has). He says, that in the 19th century, the world was very radical against the Church, and so the Church had to take a very radical position against the world; hence, the very strong condemnations of the modern world which you find in the 19th century, like the condemnation of liberalism in *Quanta Cura* and the Syllabus; modernism, by St. Pius X; *Mirari Vos*, etc. And then he continues by saying: But you see, after that, there is a change; there is an evolution in this modern world. The modern world is no longer so radical against the Church; now the modern State is much nicer than before, and he gives as an example the state of the United States—the relation between the State and religions. He says that before, science pretended to have all the answers about God and so on, but now it does recognize that it does not have all the answers.

What kind of philosophy do we find there? In fact, we see clearly that the present Pope does not have the philosophical formation which we may call the classical formation, the formation which was given in the Church before, which relies on Aristotle and the Greeks, and on the Middle Ages and St. Thomas, and which is a very realistic philosophy. At the level of knowledge classical, Thomist philosophy tells us that God has made us in such a way that for us to know something, it has to go through our senses. Whatever we know comes from the senses. But then we have in our mind a wonderful capacity which “reads into” the thing and which discovers the essence of the thing, and forgets about all the accidents, that is, the things which are contingent. The mind leaves these aside and goes straight to the thing. An example: You show a child a tree, a pine tree. You tell him, “That’s a tree.” The little child will say, “Tree,” and then the little child will turn around and he will see an apple tree. The shape is totally different; that is, the accidents, the things that come to our senses, are totally different—the leaves, the shape, the fruits are different. But the little child turns to this and says “Tree!” Why? Because his intelligence has gone to the essence of the thing. That is what is wonderful with the way God has made our intelligence. It works like that: we call it *abstraction*. We abstract from all these things which fall under the senses, and we go straight to the essence, to the thing that does not change. All that falls under the eyes changes: color, shape, flower, fruit.

Now, our present Pope has another understanding of knowledge. For him, we are not able to separate the essential from these contingent things, which makes it that when we speak of something, we have to constantly be adapting to the new situation. That is why what the Church said in the 19th century about the situation of the world was fine, *but for that time*. And now, as today, we are living at a time when the contingencies are different, so we can no longer apply

what the Church said two centuries ago. We have to speak in a new way, in the new circumstances, with the new contingencies. With this, you become crazy.

But you have a very direct application on the very matter of religious liberty. In an incident which happened between Archbishop Lefebvre and Cardinal Ratzinger, Archbishop Lefebvre said, “How do you expect us to follow this religious liberty, as it says exactly the opposite of what Pope Pius IX’s encyclical *Quanta Cura* said?”

And Cardinal Ratzinger answered, “But Your Excellency, we are no longer at the time of *Quanta Cura*.” You see, *Quanta Cura* was good for the time of *Quanta Cura*, but now we are no longer at that time.

And Archbishop Lefebvre answered: “If things are so, I’ll wait for tomorrow.”

Because tomorrow will no longer be the time of Vatican II. And in a certain way, that is the argument that I am already using now. I say, “Vatican II, that’s the *past*. It’s 40 years ago, now it’s something new, something else...so let’s go back to the old.”

But that is dramatic, you know.

Living Tradition

It goes even further. When he speaks of Tradition, he speaks of *living* Tradition. Now, what is *living* Tradition? That is himself. Living Tradition, that is the Pope, who says today what he understands from yesterday. He makes or gives today a re-reading of the past: that is living Tradition. Can you understand that with this we are stuck. There we have a big problem, because when we say “the Council in the light of Tradition,” we mean that it is the past, what the Church has always said, the things which do not change, which have always been like that, that is going to judge what the Church says today. And we have a Pope who says, “No, Tradition is the way the magisterium does explain what the Church has always believed, but today.” So, once again, it’s him.

I just guess that you understand that we have a big problem there.

If I may say, the thing is very complex. Why?—because on the one hand, we have a Pope who clearly does or would like to see some improvement in the liturgy, and, who knows, most probably, a reintroduction of the old Mass. I would summarize it by saying, that his heart is conservative. He is a man who is serious about his faith; he is somebody who has a very Catholic family origin, and who is happy with it, and who dreams of it. He is a man who likes discipline, order. He likes religious to have their religious habit and their religious rule. At the same time, his mind is modernist and liberal; and there we have a big problem.

(continued on p.25)

Traditional Religious Orders

DISCIPLES OF THE CENACLE

VELLETRI, NEAR ROME, ITALY



Just as the Sisters of the Society of Saint Pius X sprang from a girl's desire to do something for God, the Church, and Catholic Tradition, so too did the Disciples of the Cenacle. And just as the Sisters of the Society have as a mission to assist the Society priests in their ministry, so too do the Disciples of the Cenacle have a part to play in the Society's work in Italy...today. But let us start with first things first.

Spirituality

The Disciples of the Cenacle form a small community of Sisters who, "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3), wish, as far as possible, to conform their existence to the teaching of the Redeemer, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Jn. 14:6). Putting their trust in Divine Providence, they attend firstly to their own spiritual formation in order to increase their interior life ever more and more so as to be able to carry out their work fruitfully. They like to keep in mind the sublime words of Jesus:

Fear not little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom. Sell what you possess....Make to yourselves bags which grow not old.... Behold the birds of the air... the lilies of the field....For your Father knoweth that you have need of these things (Mt. 7:25-34).

Their founder was Fr. Francesco-Maria Putti, a Roman priest and beloved spiritual son of Padre Pio, who guided and formed them until his death in 1984 (see p.24). In a memorandum he wrote at the time (April 10, 1965) to the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Salerno, the ancient Italian coastal city south of Naples, Don Putti himself relates how the first cenacle came to be:

In carrying out my ministry, I had the opportunity to get to know and to guide some high school girls and university students, as well as some who had already completed their studies. Some of them expressed their desire to be able to consecrate their lives to the Lord in a life of prayer and action which could be of service to the Church.

After much reflection, and after having sought advice and having verified the existence of a common aspiration among them, a small group of these young women was formed. The



Community with
Bishop Fellay



Printing *SiSiNoNo*

general purpose of the community is to hasten the advent of the kingdom of God, the sanctification of its members, and that of obtaining, through the communion of saints, the sanctification of the priestly ministry and the conversion of sinners. The specific end is the exercise of whatever activity may be of service and at the same time consonant with a life of prayer, action, and sacrifice in a cenacle of reparation.



After a Clothing Ceremony



Newly Professed

It was Don Putti who chose for them their distinguishing name: the Disciples of the Cenacle, which is taken from the Acts of the Apostles (1:14): "All these were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." By choosing this theologically significant designation, he desired to evoke the essence of Catholicism, the heart of the Church: the holy sacrifice of the Mass was instituted together with the priesthood in the Cenacle, and it was there that the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and whence the Apostles emerged fortified and confirmed. Don Putti desired that his Sisters, like the holy women with Mary and the Apostles, meditate upon and love the mystery of the love of Calvary renewed mystically but actually on our altars in the celebration of the holy Mass.

He desired that the Disciples of the Cenacle sacrifice themselves for holy Church, particularly for priests, under the protection of the Prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, the first Pope. Don Putti desired for them a great union with the redeeming passion of our Lord, like the Blessed Virgin Mary on Calvary, for only in this manner can their action be fruitful: "Unless the grain of wheat falling on the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:24-25).

A Good Start

In June of 1965, the first four Sisters began their life in common. Soon, the Archbishop of Salerno, Demetrio Moscato (1945-68), gave them a big house near Salerno, and Don Putti drafted a general statute, which he sent to the archbishop on November 21, 1966, communicating to him that, despite numerous difficulties, they already had ten vocations. Thus, at the very time when the disastrous post-conciliar period was starting, there began in the Church a new institute, the Disciples of the Cenacle.

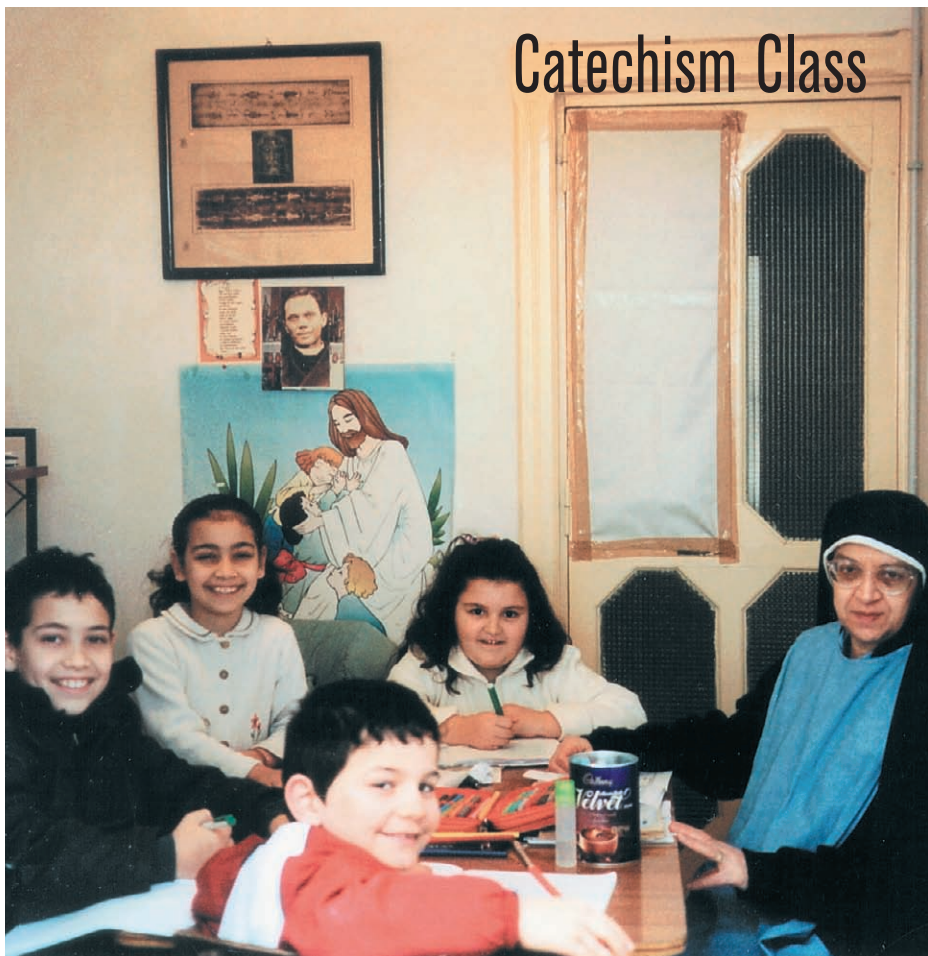
Peregrinations

Almost all of the first young Sisters taught in public schools. Their teaching supported the little community, and it

was a form of apostolate. Having left their respective families, they perfected their consecration to the Lord by uniting the contemplative life to an active life. Their families, in general, could not understand their sudden resolution, which struck them as a lark, a leap from a safe and respectable situation into the unknown.

During summer vacations and whenever they could, the Disciples went to San Giovanni Rotondo in order to nourish their souls near Padre Pio. They had permanently rented a little house near the monastery. Don Putti wanted the Disciples to live as long as possible at San Giovanni Rotondo so that they could benefit from the example of Padre Pio's life, his merits, his confessional, and his counsels. From Padre Pio and Don Putti, the Sisters learned to love the Holy Sacrifice of the altar. Following their founder's directives, they remained faithful to the Latin Mass.

At Salerno, the community's life went serenely along, even in its relations with the archbishop. But soon, clouds formed....Don Putti informed the Sisters of the difficulties which had arisen in their relations with the archbishop. He explained to them the reasons compelling them to leave for another region. After a year at Grottaferrata, a walled medieval town a short distance south of Rome famous for St. Nilus Abbey, and two years at Frascati, also in the Roman region, the little community settled on the Via Anagnina near Grottaferrata in 1971 and remained there until 1983. But Don Francesco wanted to acquire a house. A donation from a monsignor, a very eminent benefactor, enabled them to acquire their present house at Velletri, not far from the SSPX's priory at Albano Laziale south of Rome, an acquisition that was completed on October 4, 1984, by the purchase of a neighboring parcel with a little house which they renovated for use by the community's chaplains and guests.



Don Putti's Legacy

On December 21st of that same year, having put in order the temporal and spiritual affairs of his Sisters, Don Putti died. In their Rule he left the testament of his faith and love and an antidote against the current deceit of a "false Catholicism, easy and devoid of sacrifices," whereas "the very essence of sacrifice is and will always be a life centered on the cross." It alone prepares the life of supernatural charity without which "the Catholic life, let alone the religious life, does not exist."

PADRE PIO'S PRAYER

Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have Thee present so that I do not forget Thee.

Thou knowest how easily I abandon Thee.

Stay with me, Lord, because I am weak and I need Thy strength, that I may not fall so often.

Stay with me, Lord, for Thou art my life, and without Thee, I am without fervor.

Stay with me, Lord, for Thou art my light, and without Thee, I am in darkness.

Stay with me, Lord, to show me Thy will.

Stay with me, Lord, so that I hear Thy voice and follow Thee.

Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love Thee very much and always be in Thy company.

Stay with me, Lord, if Thou wish'st me to be faithful to Thee.

Stay with me, Lord, for as poor as my soul is, I want it to be a place of consolation for Thee, a Bethany.

Stay with me, Jesus, for it is getting late and the day is coming to a close. Life passes; death, judgment, eternity approach. I fear the dark, temptations, desolation, crosses, sorrows. How I need Thee, my Jesus, in this night of exile! Let Eucharistic Communion be the light that dispels the darkness, the strength that sustains me, the unique joy of my heart.

Stay with me, Jesus. I do not ask for divine consolations, because I do not deserve them; but the gift of Thy Presence, oh yes, this I do ask of Thee!

Stay with me, Lord, for it is Thee alone I seek,

Thy love, Thy grace, Thy will, Thy heart,

Thy spirit, because I love Thee and ask no other reward than to love Thee more and more. Amen.

(This is the prayer of Padre Pio that Dom Putti would give to those whom he met for the first time.)

Don Putti bequeathed to his Sisters the press apostolate of *SiSiNoNo*, a periodical he started in 1975 [an English-language edition has been published by Angelus Press since 1994–*Ed.*], by which he sought to check “the growing desert of the true faith, whether in those who should be responsible for teaching it, or those who should learn it.” As stated in the editorial of the inaugural issue, *SiSiNoNo*'s mission was “the thankless task of going against the flow by saying yes to everything

which, according to the Catholic Faith, was taught by the Apostles, and by saying no without equivocation or compromise to everything that seeks to supplant it.” So it was that during the 1980's the Sisters began to leave the field of education in order to better help Don Putti in his *SiSiNoNo* apostolate. After his death, a priest of the SSPX became editor-in-chief of the periodical, which continues to be published



monthly. Under the direction of the editor-in-chief, the Sisters do all the production work for *SiSiNoNo* from copy editing and typesetting to mailing. They currently print 3,500 copies monthly, but to this number must be added the circulation of English, French, and Spanish editions of this unique newspaper which is read in the Vatican and worldwide.

Religious Life

After Don Putti's death, the community was assisted spiritually by the Society of Saint Pius X and by Msgr. Francesco Spadafora (d. 1997), a renowned exegete and professor at the Pontifical Lateran University. The chaplaincy of the community is still provided by priests of the Society of Saint Pius X, while authority in the community is vested in the Mother Superior, who is responsible for decisions over their daily life and apostolic works.

The Disciples of the Cenacle are a religious institute of simple vows. Postulants must be of age in order to be accepted, although exceptions may be examined by the Mother Superior and her council. The Community does not require a dowry or a specific trousseau; each one may bring what she can for her use. Good health is not necessary; however, persons with nervous conditions or contagious disease are not accepted. The postulancy lasts one year and the novitiate, two, at the end of which the aspiring religious makes her first temporary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Vows are renewed annually; perpetual vows are made the tenth year. At present, there are nine professed Sisters in the community, two novices, and one postulant. While Italian remains the common language, the Disciples became an international community when in 1993 a young



DAILY SCHEDULE

- 6:00 AM** Rise
- 6:20 AM** Morning offering, Lauds, meditation, and holy Mass
- 8:10 AM** Breakfast
- 12:00 PM** Recitation of the *Angelus* and a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament
- 1:00 PM** Dinner and recreation
- 3:40 PM** Way of the Cross or second meditation
- 6:00 PM** Rosary and Vespers
- 8:00 PM** Supper and recreation
- 9:00 PM** Compline

Englishwoman knocked on the convent's door. Subsequently, other vocations have come from Australia (1), Gabon (2), the Philippines (1), and Poland (1).

Daily Life

From their morning offering till their nocturnal visit to the Blessed Sacrament, the day of the Disciples of the Cenacle is centered round the little chapel and Jesus present on the altar. Throughout the day, the Sisters take turns in spending a half an hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in order to keep our Lord company. Prayer alternates with work throughout the day, as the Sisters undertake the usual tasks associated with the life of a religious community: sacristy, cleaning, cooking, laundry, and gardening. In addition, the Sisters are open to any kind of external work or profession which is compatible with the consecrated life. Work is carried out in silence, with a stricter silence being observed from Compline till after breakfast.

The Rule does not exclude any ministry that Divine Providence might indicate and that circumstances call for. Currently, the Disciples of the Cenacle devote themselves especially to the apostolate of the press, which is focused on defending orthodoxy in light of Tradition and the Magisterium. Some Sisters devote themselves to teaching the traditional catechism; others offer spiritual assistance, and aid and comfort to the elderly; still others make traditional liturgical vestments. Several Sisters are helping the SSPX Italian District at the priory at Rimini, northeast of Rome on the Adriatic Sea, and they also help with the SSPX's annual girls' summer camps.

Interested ladies are invited to send their inquiry to:

Reverend Mother Superior Maria della Croce
 Le Discepolo del Cenacolo
 Via Madonna degli Angeli 78
 I-00049 Velletri, Roma, Italy
 Tel: [39] (06) 963-5568
 (Add six hours to EST for deciding when to call.)


DON FRANCESCO PUTTI (1909-84)

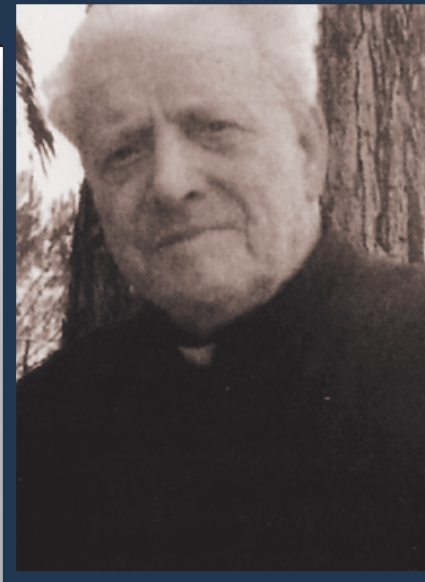
Founder of the Disciples of the Cenacle and the anti-modernist newspaper *SiSiNoNo*

Roman by birth, Don Francesco was a spiritual son of Padre Pio, who guided him towards the priesthood. His was a late vocation. Having worked in business until the age of 40, he began his studies for the priesthood and was ordained in 1956. After many vicissitudes with the ecclesiastical authorities before and after his ordination, he settled at Avellino, and devoted himself to the ministry of confession, of which he was a highly appreciated apostle.

In 1963, he publicly exposed the presence of microphones in the places where Padre Pio heard confessions in order to deliver the holy stigmatist from persecution by Rome. The scandal was enormous, because, on the one hand, placing microphones in the confessional was a sacrilege, and on the other because of the fame of the Capuchin's holiness. During this period he founded the Religious Congregation of the Disciples of the Cenacle. In 1968, Don Putti became Roman once again, settling in the Eternal City.

To counteract the growing influence of modernism over the clergy of Rome, even at the highest levels, he founded, in 1975, the anti-modernist review *SiSiNoNo* for the defense of the Catholic Faith. It was an era of big battles that would upset more than one Vatican prelate. In 1979, the Vatican's newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, attacked the periodical's editor in a libelous article entitled "Sower of Bad Seed." Don Putti defended the reputation of his review by taking the director of *L'Osservatore Romano* to the courts of the Italian Republic, where he obtained a judgment against him. It was the first time in the 121 years of its existence that *L'Osservatore Romano* was condemned to publish an excerpt of the judgment convicting its director of libel.

With his review, which became increasingly known and read not only at Rome but also in the major part of the Catholic world, Don Francesco became, in the words of Archbishop Lefebvre, a herald of the Catholic Faith. 



The Christian State

In this speech to the Cardinals on the 22nd of December, he is going to express to the Cardinals that the Council has assumed one point which is essential to the modern State, which means the State is impartial towards religions. It is neutral—no rule for Christ in the State; the State is neutral for any religion. He will say that, of course, the State should respect good values, but what does this mean. Oh, we go much further. He says that the Church, by making the State “laicized” or secularized and no longer confessional, is going back to the Gospel; that the Church is now in harmony with the Gospel. He is striking out, he is condemning 1,700 years of the Catholic Church. The Church for 1,700 years has always promoted the Catholic State. When you look at the Apostles, the missionaries, consider what they did: they went to the king. They tried to convert the head, knowing very well that when they converted the head [of State], the head would issue laws which would help all their subjects to convert, at least to behave better, and, who knows, to go to heaven. That is what they did.

When you have a Catholic State, you mean a State which binds itself to follow and to apply God’s law, to respect the law of God, which means that, at the temporal level, which is the level of human behavior, the State will organize itself in such a way that it will help souls to make it to heaven. I come from a little Swiss canton, the Republic of Valais. It was a Catholic State—not Switzerland, just the Valais. I remember that the police would intervene and separate people who were living together without benefit of marriage. I remember the time when a judge overruled the policeman who had fined a woman for wearing a mini-skirt. Now, when the judge overruled the policeman’s decision, this created a great scandal. But you see with these little examples how a State which respects God’s law can indeed do a lot, *tremendously*, to help souls go to heaven. And, of course, if the State does not care about God’s law, it is going to make any kind of law and give all kinds of permissions which will lead people straight to *hell*.

So when you look at this aspect, it is not difficult to understand why the Church, during centuries and centuries, insisted on saying that the State *must* be—as far as it is possible, of course—Catholic. If you have a State where there is a great mixture of religions, and if by saying that now the only religion which will be accepted is the Catholic religion and you would start a civil war, of course you will not do it. Of course, you have to be sure that the civil order will be respected. That is what we call *tolerance*, and the Church has always taught tolerance. It is perfectly understandable, but nevertheless, you tend, you try to work for the ideal, and you don’t give it up. It is very clear: Our Lord is the King of kings; He is the one who gives authority to any authority here on earth. Call them Nero, Stalin, Gorbachev, Bush—anyone; St. Louis,

king. All of them, Catholic or not, they have received their authority from God, and the very day they die, they have to go before their Judge to give an account of the way they have made use of this authority. And this Judge is Jesus Christ, their King.

So I really don’t understand how suddenly a Pope can demolish all this teaching of the Church. But that is what he does in this speech, on a matter which was the determining point for Archbishop Lefebvre about the episcopal consecrations of 1988. Archbishop Lefebvre asked of heaven signs: Should I or should I not consecrate bishops. And he said that he got two signs from heaven: one was [the October, 1986, prayer meeting of religions at] Assisi, and the other one was the answer to our questions on religious liberty.

Now, once again, you see here that we are stuck. We are facing an enormous problem, because it is clear that for the present Pope this new behavior is self-evident; and for us, the Christian State is also self-evident. Something which is self-evident is something which you do not demonstrate, you just accept it as such. And so here we have a very serious conflict.

An Illustration

And you can see, as I have shown you, the consequences are enormous, absolutely enormous. I’ll give you another example now. It is a little bit tricky; I hope that you understand it. Right now, in the Islamic States, there is a big uproar, because in Denmark, about five months ago, a newspaper produced some offensive drawings insulting to Mohammed. There has been an enormous uproar, to such an extent that the Islamic States as State came together—for example, the Arabic League, and made an official protest against Denmark and Europe, saying, that they cannot allow it, that they must punish the newspaper, the cartoonist, and so on. In this incident, you have the State intervening in a religious matter, and bringing to bear all its weight to protect and defend a religious interest. Of course, in this case it is clearly abusive. But I use this example to show you that, if you have a Catholic State, the Catholic State will stand up to defend the interests of the Catholic Church.

I’ll give you an example. Right now in Sudan, there is a persecution by the Moslems against the Catholics, and they make slaves, hundreds of thousands of slaves. If there were a true Catholic State, this Catholic State would stand up and say to Sudan, “Stop that.” Or in China, there is a persecution against the Catholics, too. You see, as there is no Catholic State, nobody will stand up to defend the Catholics’ interests. And, excuse me, when you look at the politics that are driven now by the authorities of the US, you will see that they intervene on certain topics which are maybe genuine, but they do not intervene on others, and you wonder why.

In the US, you fight for freedom; so why then does nothing happen about Sudan, which is making slaves. Curious, isn't it? And we could go down a long list; we could take Zimbabwe, the way President Mugabe is behaving, killing his own people by famine, and so on—an unbelievable State. So why in this country does nobody react. I use all these examples to try to explain to you how deep it can go, and how important it is to have a State which puts itself under the law of God.

The Two Powers Distinguished

That does mean, and the Church has always said, that you have to distinguish between the powers. The State has to deal with the things of this earth, and the Church with the things of heaven. So it is not for the Church to dictate where the roads should go; that is a matter for the State. But in the things which deal with human behavior and salvation—for example marriage—then definitely the Church has something to say; on the subject of education, the Church has something to say.

And here we have a big problem, because the present Pope is totally modern there.

Back to the Report on the Papal Audience

So I go back to the audience now. We are still at the second point of the audience, where he says

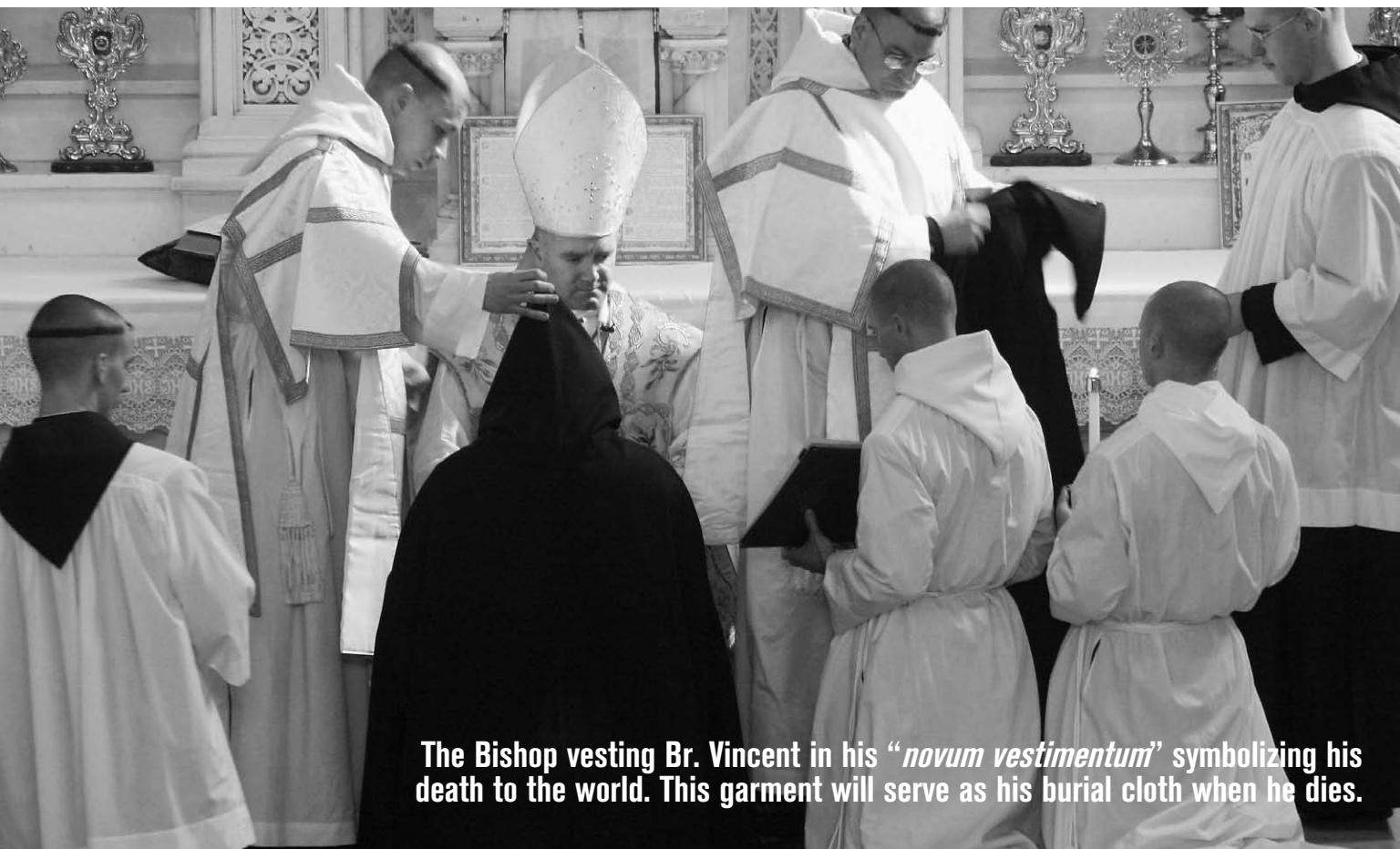
that the Society has to accept the Council in the light of the *living* Tradition. And we are not going to accept the Council in the light of the *living* Tradition. We are not, because we can't.

Then he spoke about the third level of problems. He said that he understands perfectly that the Society needs a structure which is going to protect the members. In other words, the Pope understands that we are not going to mingle or mix with any of the craziness that is happening all round. In other words, he understands that he has to give us a state of exemption, which means that we would not be under the authority of the bishops. So you would have a kind of structure of your own.

If you look at the structure Rome is reflecting on giving us, I think it is good. I think I would go so far as to say that we could not dream of a structure that would be so good. But that is not the problem; the problem is not there. The problem is in that they want us to swallow the poison of Vatican II. The structure is good, but what help can we find if we get a superb structure, let's say a Rolls Royce, but if at the same time we must take in the Rolls Royce and eat rotten apples. Well, I prefer my two-horse car with good apples than the poison, because if I take the poison, I will be killed; and then what about the Rolls Royce? It doesn't matter, you see.

The whole thing is about this poison that they want us to swallow, and we say, "No, we are not going to swallow it."

You may say that that was the audience. Then a few days after, as I saw that we are going to have a big



The Bishop vesting Br. Vincent in his "*novum vestimentum*" symbolizing his death to the world. This garment will serve as his burial cloth when he dies.

problem with the Council, I wrote a letter to the Pope. It was on the 3rd of September, just four days after the meeting, in which I said that I thanked the Holy Father for this audience, but I did not see how I could agree with his vision of the Council. And I added a comment on the new Catechism which he has just published, the Compendium of the Catechism. He was pretty mad... He spoke of arrogance bordering on sectarianism. Okay. Anyway, we put our points down, and then Cardinal Castrillon answered that letter in the name of the Pope, saying, Why did you write that to the Pope? The Pope receives you kindly; he points out the problems, and then you throw them in his face. And I thought, what am I going to tell him; how shall I answer him. I told him, "Because I do not want to have the same problems of conscience that the majority of the priests of the Society of Saint Peter and three fourths of the Campos priests have. That's why I wanted to say clearly that I do not agree with the Council." And then, in this same letter, the Cardinal invited me to a meeting.

This meeting happened on the 15th of November. That is the only time I have met with Cardinal Castrillon after the audience, so all the other rumors are just rubbish. It was about two and a half hours of discussion, which was for once, I may say, very interesting. The other times it looked like you would not discuss. This time, at least, I was able to develop our positions. Then we had a meal together, again for another two and a half hours, so the whole lasted five hours. What was very important was the two and a half hours at the beginning. And there I again used the line, "We cannot trust you." That was the start. You propose, you want an agreement. The Pope says I agree, we have to go by steps but that we should go speedily. It is very clear that the Pope would like to solve the problem, regularize our situation.

Why? There are probably different elements. One of them is that he does recognize that the situation of the Church is a mess, that it is a catastrophe. He does recognize that the Society has good fruits, and he would definitely like to use the Society to help in this mess. This side, I think, cannot be questioned. At the same time, he clearly, definitely wants us to swallow the Council. So what we try to tell him is that we cannot have both. If we have fruits now, it is precisely because we get rid of the Council; and if we swallow the Council, we swallow the poison and we are down to your situation. And so it does not work. But the problem is that for the time being he has not yet understood that.

But he is in a hurry. Maybe because of his age, maybe because he has something on the conscience from the time of the consecrations (that is a maybe from me; I'm not sure—I could imagine). Maybe also because we are bothering them. We are all around the world; we are very active, and we cause trouble. We are troublemakers in many countries of the world, and we are terrorizing the bishops. They retaliate with

the usual measures like excommunication and so on, and we don't care, first; and then we continue. And then even worse, what they have just said to condemn us is publicity for us. So it drives them crazy, and they complain to Rome. And so you can understand that Rome says, let's make a deal with them. If we have a deal, we will be able to control, at least to a certain extent, their movements. So you have this part, too. And I definitely do not exclude that reflection in their eyes.

No Solution for Now

And that is why we are not ready for a practical solution. We tell them so, and that is what I told Cardinal Castrillon: Look now, precisely now we have faithful, we have religious, we have priests who join us. They join us because they are facing scandals; they are facing situations which are unbearable for them. They come to us; we warn them. We say, "If you come to us, you will be censured, you will be excommunicated; you will be labeled with all kinds of bad words; you will lose your friends; and you will have a very hard time." And nevertheless the faithful, the priests prefer to join us rather than to stay where they were. How can they expect that suddenly, through some kind of agreement, they are brought back to the situation they have just left. It is impossible. Of course we don't want it.

And so I told him, you first have to make this Catholic life possible again. And for this you need to condemn what is wrong at the level of the Faith, of the teaching of the universities and in the seminaries; at the level of behavior and discipline; at the level of the liturgy. At all these levels, you have to take things in hand: that means to condemn what is wrong, and to make it known. And then I continue by saying that even that is not sufficient. You also have to be positive, favor the traditional life, promote it.

And then I continue by saying, "Now, forget one instant that we exist. Forget about the Society. You are still in the same state of catastrophe. So solve your problem; forget about us. You solve your problem, and we are no longer a problem, because we are not the problem. Of course, these are hard words, but then I continued speaking about the Mass. I said, "The Tridentine Mass is mighty, it is powerful, and the Church needs that Mass to re-center the Church on Christ, on sacrifice, on the spirit of the cross. And that is not happening with the New Mass; you will never have it."

Then I went on speaking of the Council. I said, "Good point, you do recognize that there is a crisis in the Church. We do, too, but we do not agree about the cause. We say it is the Council. You say, it is the world. And at that moment, I gave a letter from Archbishop Lefebvre, the letter to Cardinal Ottaviani of 1966, written one year after the Council. Archbishop Lefebvre describes how with the

novelties in the Council, you will have the damage in the Church which we call the crisis in the Church. One year after the Council, Archbishop. Lefebvre described the whole situation which we have now. We could not have a better proof of the correctness of our stand.

I made a lot of comments there; it took a lot of time. I also said that in the Council there are a lot of ambiguities. I said, some points are erroneous, but there are also all these ambiguities, all these openings to error. And, well, I did not say this to the Cardinal, but I say this to you, to try to help you understand this point. When they say that the crisis is caused by the world, of course it is. When you look at the situation of the world and at the situation of the Church, you will see that there are many things in common. And it is true, it is the spirit of the world which has entered the Church. This is true, and we are not going to say the contrary. But this is as normal as opening the doors and the windows when a storm is coming in. What do you do at home when you see the storm coming in? You go all around the house and you close as quickly as possible all the windows and doors, because you know very well that if you leave them open, the storm will come and the water will come in and there will be a beautiful mess. Now, if you come home and you see this mess, all the carpet wet and so on, you don't say that it is the storm that did it. You say, "Who left the windows open?"

The same example can be given with the hen house. You come in in the morning and you see so many hens killed, just feathers here and there. And you say, it is the fox. Of course it is the fox, but once again, the farmer does not say it is the fox. He says, "Who left the gate open?"

And the same holds true with the Council—it is exactly this. At the beginning of the Council, in the very first speech of John XXIII, he said, that he wanted to open the windows of the Church to the world, to have some fresh air from the world. There is even a comment from Paul VI, who said, we were expecting fresh air, and the storm came in. There you have it.

It is so simple You want to stop it? Shut the door. Close the door to this spirit of the world. That is precisely what they don't want to do. And so as long as they continue this way, the Church will be in a bad state. That is what we say: Stop it. Stop this; go back to the normal state of the Church, and don't let the spirit of the world go round.

That's about Rome and the present situation.

The Very Latest News of Rome

And now you have probably heard that last Monday (Feb. 13) there was a meeting in Rome of the Pope with the Cardinals speaking about us. I don't know more about it than you; the only thing I know is that, that very morning the secretary of Cardinal

Castrillon telephoned Menzingen to ask for prayers for this meeting. That is as much as I know. I know that Cardinal Arinze did attack us, or attack the Mass. And that's all; I don't know more than you, and I have nothing to do with it. I am not involved. It is pure reflection from the Vatican. And as things are, we have to count on probably one day Rome will come to us with a proposal, and in the package will be a stipulation that you will have to accept the Council, and we will say no. And we will be back to the present state. That is the situation. Probably they will try to make us the bad guys again, those who don't want to agree and so on, but, okay, we will make our stand. Every day we take it as it comes.

Reason for Continued Conversation with Rome

Now we could say, but is it worth it to discuss things with Rome if things are like that? Is it worth it? Yes and no. If I weigh everything, I come to a yes, not directly, but indirectly. You see, the Church is in a bad state, and those who govern the Church are used to this state of affairs. If nobody is presenting them other thoughts on this situation, they will be stuck in it and they will not get out of it. So, we do it; at least we try to do it. We try to present them another view on the situation. "Listen, you say that the world is the cause of this problem, but look around. And if it is really the world, then why do you keep it? Take it away!" That is a way to express it.

So we try to work on them, and of course work on the level of thinking takes an enormous amount of time. You can never think what these high people in Rome will say. They will think about it for hours and hours, if they think about it at all. And maybe one day they will say, "Okay, let's try to find a way." It is in God's hands. What we see: we see some fruits, not so high, but on the level of bishops, of priests. There are several bishops who definitely do agree with us, even in Rome, but they don't dare speak, and they know that the day they speak, they are out. So it is to their conscience. There we cannot go any further. We try to provide them with thoughts, reflections, then it is up to them to act. We can't take their place.

The SSPX on the Horizon in France

Another development is a development in France, which is very interesting. In the last two years, but even now in the last month, there is a very, very new, curious development in the behavior, I don't say of all the bishops, of course not, but of a certain number of bishops in France towards us. And what is it? It is a kind behavior. It is bishops who would like to speak with us. And when we speak with them, we clearly see that they still think as before. They don't agree

with us, so why do they speak with us? The President of the Bishops' Conference said roughly the following: About ten years ago the French bishops thought that Tradition would die out as their supporters died off; that it would be finished. Now they are obliged to include the Society in their ecclesiastical horizon. So to say, we are now part of the picture. In other words, they can no longer erase us. They already understand that they are obliged to deal with us. Already we represent a force which is not yet very mighty, but which is strong enough so that they cannot just ignore it; they have to deal with it.

It is true that the situation in France is a bit special. You have first the Church there which is rapidly going downhill. Then you have the problem of the Moslems, whose numbers are rapidly increasing in France. And then you have the problem of the State, the State which, for the last two years, has been putting pressure on the bishops, saying, "We pay for the maintenance of your churches, which are empty. But this is the taxpayers' money; this is the community's money for your buildings which should serve for the community, so do something."

Now the bishops are coming to realize that they are facing a very big problem, because what are the community groups which are interested in these churches? The Moslems. And so, looking at all that, at least some of them are starting to get close to us. Even some of them is a start, and we shall see if there will be a development there, if they start to offer us churches, if they start to open some churches for ceremonies, as they have done at Lourdes, where we now have access to the great basilica for the Mass; at Lisieux also. But that is only after 20 years of fight. Every year we had a fight, and now they no longer fight. They just leave them open to us. It does not mean that they agree with us. Let us say that they turn to a more peaceful co-existence. That is the progress I can see in France. It is an interesting one.

There is another reason for this change in their attitude, which is also interesting. They realize that Rome is about to give an apostolic administration to the *Ecclesia Dei* people. That means that the French bishops will lose control over a certain part of Catholic life in France, precisely that part of this life which is the most alive. Even if they have not understood everything, the *Ecclesia Dei* faithful at least want some seriousness in their religion, and they still have some life in comparison with the dying, modern Church. So now the French bishops realize that, if Rome is going to impose this, then these people will be out, exempt from their jurisdiction, and so they are going to lose a part of this already dying Church. So what they are trying to do now is to set up, themselves, something for the Indult, traditional-minded people in such a way as to make what Rome is planning unusable or unnecessary.

Opening Moves of a New Era in the Combat

Till now the French bishops have been very strong against anything traditional. But now, because of this move of Rome, they are changing tactics in order not to lose everything there. In other words, if I may say, speaking of tactics, obviously we are entering into a new time. Till now, you had a time of trench warfare, so to speak. You had two positions which were more or less fixed, we on our side and Rome on its side, and we would shoot back and forth at one another. In Rome and in France, where we see it even more clearly, they are now starting a new way of war, which is a war of movement. They come to us; they start to make proposals to us. In France, they are doing all these types of movements, and we have to watch out, because this is creating a new situation, a new situation where we have to do some moves, too—but, of course, correct moves understood in the sense of tactics or strategy of combat. We are not in a peaceful situation; we are in a situation of war. But if we just stay in our position while the other is making a move, you may have what you had in France during the battle of Caesar against Vercingetorix at Alesia. The Gauls were encamped on a high position. And what did the Romans do: they encircled it and starved the Gauls, and the Gauls lost. They lost because they stayed in their camp without trying to escape.

And so what we have to do now is to reflect, to imagine ways of attacking, if I may say so, the other in order to counter these maneuvers. You see, the idea of making an apostolic administration for the Indult Mass groups is that Rome will try to give them more weight, more importance, because they will then have bishops against the Society, making available an easier traditional life, with bishops and so on, than the one we have because we are constantly attacked and so on. The goal is to try to offer the faithful an easy situation, and to try to draw away from us once again the faithful and the priests. So we have to see how we are going to counter that.

There is the good Lord, and He is taking care of us, but if I describe this to you it is so that you understand that we are entering a new situation, which will probably be harder than before, harder because Rome is getting closer to us, in part with good intentions and in part with bad intentions. So we have to be very, very cautious in this situation. But the problem is that this new situation can easily create confusion. What we have experienced these last few months is a very beautiful example of this possibility of confusion, with rumors flying around: Bishop Fellay is going to sell out the Society, they are going to make an agreement, they are going to compromise, and this and that. What can I say? Keep your feet on the ground; don't let your emotions get your heart going up to 150 beats a minute because you have heard something from the Internet. Please don't. We have a telephone line. We want to be Catholic. It has

been 40 years that we have been fighting, and we are not going to give up now just like that.

But, once again, it is a long fight. In the long run, we know that we shall win, because God is on our side. It is so obvious, it is so clear. Every day we see it. Every day we see all these graces, all these blessings that are poured out by God on us in all the places. It is so obvious. Our Lord said that if you want to know the quality of a tree, you look at the fruits. Now, once again, even Rome says the fruits are good. We are not making a self-appraisal. It is always dangerous to estimate yourself, because easily we could... We don't want to put something like that on our heads. No, we are not going to do so, but we look at objective things. We know that there is a promise of God: "The gates of hell shall not prevail," so one day the Church will come back to Tradition. What we all have to do is our best. This day may come and soon.

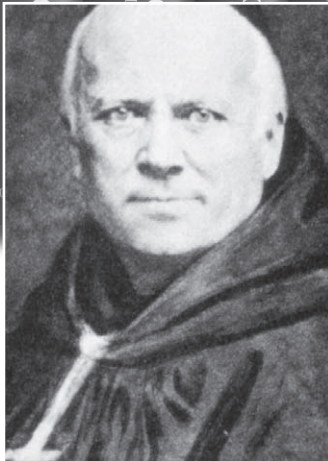
I say our best, at our place, with sacrifices, prayers, and also by defending the faith with studies. We try to go on the dogmatic level, bringing to Rome and to the bishops reflections on the present teaching of the Council, hoping that one day we will see something better. I don't think it will be tomorrow, but it is in God's hands. God knows how, and He is the one who leads things. We must remember that. When we see such a crisis, such a catastrophe, we forget that there is a God above, a God who cares, a God who has not lost control. We have the impression

that everything goes wild, and we see God sleeping in the boat, peaceful. Yes, He is in peace, because all these things in comparison and in relation to our salvation are only superficial in the sense that they can be dangerous, but as long as we stick to God, God is going to use them for our salvation. He is going to turn these things unto good for His glory and for our merit and our salvation. And so what matters is that we stick to God at all costs, whatever happens. That is the thing. All the rest—diplomacy, politics, and so on—comes after. What matters is that we be saved, that we go to heaven. That is what matters. And we know that for that, we have to stick to the principles, and that is it. So don't be disturbed if they tell you that you are schismatics, you are excommunicated, you are this and that; don't be disturbed. You do exactly what your forefathers did, what the saints did to go to heaven. How could that road be suddenly closed? it is the way to heaven.

We know also that those who want to be pious and faithful to our Lord shall suffer persecution. St. Paul said it; it is a promise of our Lord: You want to be faithful? You will have to suffer something. Great. It is a sign, it is a good sign. The day we have no crosses any more and no problems is the day we shall have to worry. As long as we have crosses, blessed be God. ☩

This conference was transcribed by Angelus Press and reviewed by H.E. Bishop Fellay before publication.





On January 20, in the weekly *La France Catholique*, Fr. Jacques-Marie Guilmard announced the opening of the diocesan proceedings for the beatification of the Servant of God, Dom Prosper Guéranger.

THE BEATIFICATION OF DOM GUÉRANGER

On January 20, 2006, in the weekly *La France Catholique*, Fr. Jacques-Marie Guilmard announced the opening of the diocesan proceedings for the beatification of the Servant of God, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-75) by Msgr. Jacques Faivre, Bishop of Le Mans, on December 21.

Following a request from the monks of the Solesmes Congregation about 20 years ago to undertake preparatory steps towards the opening of the cause, Dom Jacques de Préville was appointed postulator in 1999. Last December 21st, the bishop of Le Mans recognized Fr. de Préville's request as "legitimate." The bishop named Canon Olivier Le Jariel examining magistrate and Canon Jean Lusseau promoter of justice, as well as Fr. Camille Moulin notary, and Fr. Yves Thorin assistant notary. Fr. Jacques-Marie Guilmard announced that the tribunal thus formed,

...has the mission of listening to the witnesses called to speak about Dom Guéranger, man of God, a holy man of faith, and in particular, speaking of the habitual recourse they have to the intercession of the Servant of God, and the eventual favors received....The theological, philosophical, canonical—with his bishop Msgr. Bouvier—and liturgical controversies in which Dom Guéranger was involved, are no longer prevailing, but that takes nothing away from his greatness in the spiritual realm. On the other hand, we may well think that it is the future demonstration of his sanctity which will compel us to rediscover the validity of his struggles, and to give them back their true doctrinal and spiritual import....

[T]he mystical life of Dom Guéranger was characterized by a profound equilibrium, coming to him, no doubt, from the grace which caused him to refer in all things to the Incarnation, where Divinity and the most ordinary humanity meet. It is as a result of this that his vision of the natural and of the supernatural world was totally balanced, as were his relationships with others. Dom Guéranger would make an effortless transition from the most solemn liturgical prayer to the real problems of the everyday life of his monastery with a thousand different events of a community to run.... [Dom Guéranger] received the devotion to the Sacred Heart at a very early age, through a particular grace at the Visitation monastery at Le Mans, [and] a short time after, in the same place, it was faith in the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady which forced himself upon him as an evidence.

In all things he wished to serve the Church which he knew through her history and her liturgy and from intimate conversation with God: he could speak with depth and unction of the love of the Church; he knew how to make the liturgy understood and loved, as the prayer of the Church with Her Divine Spouse.

Lastly, we must remember that "his patience was such that his trials were not known even to his entourage. Was this not the fruit of an heroic virtue? His health was ruined following cholera which he contracted in Rome in 1837. Money worries troubled him right from the beginning to the very end of his monastic life. Tragic betrayals and desertions. Above all worries for the universal Church, as much for the faith as for discipline."

The announcement of the opening of the cause for Dom Gueranger's beatification presents *The Angelus* with the opportunity to share with its readers the treasures of *The Liturgical Year*. His magnum opus may be intimidating due to its size, but the incomparable riches that can be found within its pages makes it an invaluable work. We here present a few brief sections of *The Liturgical Year's* section on Lent.

THE HISTORY OF LENT

THE forty days' fast, which we call Lent, is the Church's preparation for Easter, and was instituted at the very commencement of Christianity. Our blessed Lord Himself sanctioned it by fasting forty days and forty nights in the desert; and though He would not impose it on the world by an express commandment (which, in that case, could not have been open to the power of dispensation), yet He showed plainly enough, by His own example, that fasting, which God had so frequently ordered in the old Law, was to be also practised by the children of the new.

The disciples of St. John the Baptist came, one day, to Jesus, and said to Him: "Why do we and the pharisees fast often, but Thy disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them: "Can the children of the Bridegroom mourn, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast."

Hence we find it mentioned, in the Acts of the Apostles, how the disciples of our Lord, after the foundation of the Church, applied themselves to fasting. In their Epistles, also, they recommended it to the faithful. Nor could it be otherwise. Though the divine mysteries whereby our Saviour wrought our redemption have been consummated, yet are we still sinners: and where there is sin, there must be expiation.

The Apostles, therefore, legislated for our weakness, by instituting, at the very commencement of the Christian Church, that the solemnity of Easter should be preceded by a universal fast; and it was only natural that they should have made this period of penance to consist of forty days, seeing that our divine Master had consecrated that number by His own fast. St. Jerome, St. Leo the Great, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Isidore of Seville, and others of the holy fathers, assure us that Lent was instituted by the Apostles, although, at the commencement, there was not any uniform way of observing it.

The whole subject of Lent has been so often and so fully treated that we shall abridge, as much as possible, the history we are now giving. The nature of our work forbids us to do more than insert what is essential for entering into the spirit of each season. God grant that we may succeed in showing to the faithful the importance of the holy institution of Lent! Its influence on the spiritual life, and on the very salvation, of each one among us, can never be over-rated.

Lent, then, is a time consecrated in an especial manner to penance; and this penance is mainly practised by fasting. Fasting is an abstinence, which man voluntarily imposes upon himself as an expiation for sin, and which, during Lent, is practised in obedience to the general law of the Church. According to the actual discipline of the western Church, the fast of Lent is not more rigorous than that prescribed for the vigils of certain feasts, and for the Ember Days; but it is kept up for forty successive days, with the single interruption of the intervening Sundays.

We deem it unnecessary to show the importance and advantages of fasting. The sacred Scriptures, both of the old and new Testament, are filled with the praises of this holy practice. The traditions of every nation of the world testify the universal veneration in which it has ever been held; for there is not a people or a religion, how much soever it may have lost the purity of primitive traditions, which is not impressed with this conviction—that man may appease his God by subjecting his body to penance.

St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, and St. Gregory the Great, make the remark, that the commandment put upon our first parents in the earthly paradise was one of abstinence; and that it was by their not exercising this virtue, that they brought every kind of evil upon themselves and upon us their children. The life of privation, which the king of creation had thenceforward to lead on the earth (for the earth was to yield him nothing of its own natural growth, save thorns and thistles),

was the clearest possible exemplification of the law of penance imposed by the anger of God on rebellious man.

During the two thousand and more years, which preceded the deluge, men had no other food than the fruits of the earth, and these were obtained only by the toil of hard labour. But when God, as we have already observed, mercifully shortened man's life that so he might have less time and power for sin, He permitted him to eat the flesh of animals, as an additional nourishment in that state of deteriorated strength. It was then, also, that Noe, guided by a divine inspiration, extracted the juice of the grape, which thus formed a second stay for human debility.

Fasting, then, is abstinence from such nourishments as these, which were permitted for the support of bodily strength. And firstly, it consists in abstinence from flesh-meat, because this food was given to man by God out of condescension to his weakness, and not as one absolutely essential for the maintenance of life. Its privation, greater or less according to the regulations of the Church, is essential to the very notion of fasting. For many centuries eggs and milk-meats were not allowed, because they come under the class of animal food; even to this day they are forbidden in the eastern Churches.

In the early ages of Christianity, fasting included also abstinence from wine, as we learn from St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, Theophilus of Alexandria,¹ and others. In the west, this custom soon fell into disuse. The eastern Christians kept it up much longer, but even with them it has ceased to be considered as obligatory.

Lastly, fasting includes the depriving ourselves of some portion of our ordinary food, inasmuch as it allows only one meal during the day. Though the modifications introduced from age to age in the discipline of Lent are very numerous, yet the points we have here mentioned belong to the very essence of fasting, as is evident from the universal practice of the Church.

It was the custom with the Jews, in the old Law, not to take the one meal, allowed on fasting days, till sunset. The Christian Church adopted the same custom. It was scrupulously practised, for many centuries, even in our western countries. But about the ninth century some relaxation began to be introduced in the Latin Church.

THE MYSTERY OF LENT

We may be sure that a season so sacred as this of Lent is rich in mysteries. The Church has made it a time of recollection and penance, in preparation for the greatest of all her feasts; she would, therefore, bring into it everything that could excite the faith of her children, and encourage them to go through the

arduous work of atonement for their sins. During Septuagesima, we had the number *seventy*, which reminds us of those seventy years of captivity in Babylon, after which God's chosen people, being purified from idolatry, was to return to Jerusalem and celebrate the Pasch. It is the number *forty* that the Church now brings before us: a number, as St. Jerome observes, which denotes punishment and affliction.

Let us remember the forty days and forty nights of the deluge sent by God in His anger, when He repented that He had made man, and destroyed the whole human race with the exception of one family. Let us consider how the Hebrew people, in punishment for their ingratitude, wandered forty years in the desert, before they were permitted to enter the promised land. Let us listen to our God commanding the Prophet Ezechiel to lie forty days on his right side, as a figure of the siege which was to bring destruction on Jerusalem.

There are two persons in the old Testament who represent the two manifestations of God: Moses, who typifies the Law; and Elias, who is the figure of the Prophets. Both of these are permitted to approach God: the first on Sinai, the second on Horeb; but both of them have to prepare for the great favour by an expiatory fast of forty days.

With these mysterious facts before us, we can understand why it is that the Son of God, having become Man for our salvation and wishing to subject Himself to the pain of fasting, chose the number of forty days. The institution of Lent is thus brought before us with everything that can impress the mind with its solemn character, and with its power of appeasing God and purifying our souls. Let us, therefore, look beyond the little world which surrounds us, and see how the whole Christian universe is, at this very time, offering this forty days' penance as a sacrifice of propitiation to the offended Majesty of God; and let us hope that, as in the case of the Ninivites, He will mercifully accept this year's offering of our atonement, and pardon us our sins.

The number of our days of Lent is, then, a holy mystery: let us now learn, from the liturgy, in what light the Church views her children during these forty days. She considers them as an immense army, fighting day and night against their spiritual enemies. We remember how, on Ash Wednesday, she calls Lent a Christian warfare. In order that we may have that newness of life, which will make us worthy to sing once more our *Alleluia*, we must conquer our three enemies: the devil, the flesh, and the world. We are fellow combatants with our Jesus, for He, too, submits to the triple temptation, suggested to Him by Satan in person. Therefore, we must have on our armour, and watch unceasingly. And whereas it is of the utmost importance that our hearts be spirited and brave, the Church gives us a war-song of heaven's own making, which can fire even cowards with hope of victory and

confidence in God's help : it is the ninetieth Psalm. She inserts the whole of it in the Mass of the first Sunday of Lent, and every day introduces several of its verses into the ferial Office.

In order to keep up the character of mournfulness and austerity which is so well suited to Lent, the Church, for many centuries, admitted very few feasts into this portion of her year, inasmuch as there is always joy where there is even a spiritual feast. In the fourth century, we have the Council of Laodicea forbidding, in its fifty-first canon, the keeping of a feast or commemoration of any saint during Lent, excepting on the Saturdays or Sundays. The Greek Church rigidly maintained this point of lenten discipline; nor was it till many centuries after the Council of Laodicea that she made an exception for March 25, on which day she now keeps the feast of our Lady's Annunciation.

The Church of Rome maintained this same discipline, at least in principle; but she admitted the feast of the Annunciation at a very early period, and somewhat later, the feast of the Apostle St. Mathias, on February 24. During the last few centuries, she has admitted several other feasts into that portion of her general calendar which coincides with Lent; still, she observes a certain restriction, out of respect for the ancient practice.

The reason why the Church of Rome is less severe on this point of excluding the saints' feasts during Lent, is that the Christians of the west have never looked upon the celebration of a feast as incompatible with fasting; the Greeks, on the contrary, believe that the two are irreconcilable, and as a consequence of this principle, never observe Saturday as a fasting-day, because they always keep it as a solemnity, though they make Holy Saturday an exception, and fast upon it. For the same reason, they do not fast upon the Annunciation.

PRACTICE DURING LENT

Having spent the three weeks of Septuagesima in meditating upon our spiritual infirmities and upon the wounds caused in us by sin, we should be ready to enter upon the penitential season which the Church has now begun. We have now a clearer knowledge of the justice and holiness of God, and of the dangers that await an impenitent soul; and, that our repentance might be earnest and lasting, we have bade farewell to the vain joys and baubles of the world. Our pride has been humbled by the prophecy, that these bodies would soon be like the ashes that wrote the memento of death upon our foreheads. During these forty days of penance, which seem so long to our poor nature, we shall not be deprived of the company of our Jesus. He seemed to have withdrawn from us during those weeks of Septuagesima, when everything spoke to us of His maledictions upon sinful man, but this absence

has done us good. It has taught us how to tremble at the voice of God's anger. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; we have found it to be so: the spirit of penance is now active within us, because we have feared.

Thus does our Saviour go before us on the holy path of Lent. He has borne all its fatigues and hardships, that so we, when called upon to tread the narrow way of our lenten penance, might have His example wherewith to silence the excuses, and sophisms, and repugnances, of self-love and pride. The lesson is here too plainly given not to be understood; the law of doing penance for sin is here too clearly shown, and we cannot plead ignorance: let us honestly accept the teaching and practise it. Jesus leaves the desert where He has spent the forty days, and begins His preaching with these words, which He addresses to all men: "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Let us not harden our hearts to this invitation, lest there be fulfilled in us the terrible threat contained in those other words of our Redeemer: "Unless you shall do penance, you shall perish."

Now, penance consists in contrition of the soul, and mortification of the body; these two parts are essential to it. The soul has willed the sin; the body has frequently co-operated in its commission. Moreover, man is composed of both soul and body; both, then, should pay homage to their Creator. The body is to share with the soul either the delights of heaven or the torments of hell; there cannot, therefore, be any thorough Christian life, or any earnest penance, where the body does not take part, in both, with the soul.

But it is the soul which gives reality to penance. The Gospel teaches this by the examples it holds out to us of the prodigal son, of Magdalene, of Zaccheus, and of St. Peter. The soul, then, must be resolved to give up every sin; she must heartily grieve over those she has committed; she must hate sin; she must shun the occasions of sin. The sacred Scriptures have a word for this inward disposition, which has been adopted by the Christian world, and which admirably expresses the state of the soul that has turned away from her sins: this word is conversion. The Christian should, therefore, during Lent, study to excite himself to this repentance of heart, and look upon it as the essential foundation of all his lenten exercises. Nevertheless, he must remember that this spiritual penance would be a mere delusion, were he not to practise mortification of the body. Let him study the example given him by his Saviour, who grieves, indeed, and weeps over our sins; but He also expiates them by His bodily sufferings. Hence it is that the Church, the infallible interpreter of her divine Master's will, tells us that the repentance of our heart will not be accepted by God, unless it be accompanied by fasting and abstinence.

How great, then, is the illusion of those Christians, who forget their past sins, or compare themselves with others whose lives they take to have been worse than

their own; and thus satisfied with themselves, can see no harm or danger in the easy life they intend to pass for the rest of their days! They will tell you that there can be no need of their thinking of their past sins, for they have made a good confession! Is not the life they have led since that time a sufficient proof of their solid piety? And why should anyone speak to them about the justice of God and mortification? Accordingly, as soon as Lent approaches, they must get all manner of dispensations.

The Church sees this frightful decay of supernatural energy; but she cherishes what is still left, by making her lenten observances easier, year after year. With the hope of maintaining that little, and of seeing it strengthen for some better future, she leaves to the justice of God her children who hearken not to her when she teaches them how they might, even now, propitiate His anger. Alas! these her children, of whom we are speaking, are quite satisfied that things should be as they are, and never think of judging their own conduct by the examples of Jesus and His saints, or by the undeviating rules of Christian penance.

It is true, there are exceptions; but how rare they are, especially in our large towns! Groundless prejudices, idle excuses, bad example, all tend to lead men from the observance of Lent. Is it not sad to hear people giving such a reason as this for their not fasting or abstaining—because they *feel* them? Surely, they forget that the very aim of fasting and abstinence is to make these bodies of sin (Rom. 6:6) suffer and feel. And what will they answer on the day of judgment, when our Saviour shall show them how the very Turks, who were the disciples of a gross and sensual religion, had the courage to practise, every year, the austerities of their Ramadan?...

Let, then, the children of the Church courageously observe the lenten practices of penance. Peace of conscience is essential to Christian life; and yet it is promised to none but truly penitent souls. Lost innocence is to be regained by the humble confession of the sin, when it is accompanied by the absolution of the priest; but let the faithful be on their guard against the dangerous error, which would persuade them that they have nothing to do when once pardoned. Let them remember the solemn warning given them by the Holy Ghost in the sacred Scriptures “Be not without fear about sin forgiven” (Ecclus. 5:5)! Our confidence of our having been forgiven should be in proportion to the change or conversion of our heart; the greater our present detestation of our past sins and the more earnest our desire to do penance for them for the rest of our lives, the better founded is our confidence that they have been pardoned. “Man knoweth not,” as the same holy Volume assures us, “whether he be worthy of love or hatred” (Ecclus. 9:1); but he that keeps up within him the spirit of penance, has every reason to hope that God loves him....

...The faithful observance of Lent naturally produces a saving; let that saving be given to Lazarus. Nothing, surely, could be more opposed to the spirit of this holy season, than keeping up a table as richly and delicately provided as at other periods of the year, when God permits us to use all the comforts compatible with the means He has given us. But how thoroughly Christian is it that, during these days of penance and charity, the life of the poor man should be made more comfortable, in proportion as that of the rich shares in the hardships and privations of his suffering brethren throughout the world! Poor and rich would then present themselves, with all the beauty of fraternal love upon them, at the divine Banquet of the Paschal feast, to which our risen Jesus will invite us after these forty days are over.

There is one means more whereby we are to secure to ourselves the great graces of Lent; it is the spirit of retirement and separation from the world. Our ordinary life, such as it is during the rest of the year, should all be made to pay tribute to the holy season of penance; otherwise, the salutary impression produced on us by the holy ceremony of Ash Wednesday will soon be effaced. The Christian ought, therefore, to forbid himself, during Lent, all the vain amusements, entertainments, and parties, of the world he lives in. As regards theatres and balls, which are the world in the very height of its power to do harm, no one that calls himself a disciple of Christ should ever be present at them, unless necessity, or the position he holds in society, oblige him to it: but if, from his own free choice, he throws himself amidst such dangers during the present holy season of penance and recollection, he offers an insult to his character, and must needs cease to believe that he has sins to atone for, and a God to propitiate. The world (we mean that part of it which is Christian) has thrown off all those external indications of mourning and penance, which we read of as being so religiously observed in the ages of faith....Let us only courageously tread the way of penance, and the light will gradually beam upon us. If we are now far off from our God by the sins that are upon us, this holy season will be to us what the saints call the purgative life, and will give us that purity which will enable us to see our Lord in the glory of His victory over death. If, on the contrary, we are already living the illuminative life; if, during the three weeks of Septuagesima, we have bravely sounded the depth of our miseries, our Lent will give us a clearer view of Him who is our light; and if we acknowledged Him as our God when we saw Him as the Babe of Bethlehem, our soul's eye will not fail to recognize Him in the divine Penitent of the desert, or in the bleeding Victim of Calvary. ☩

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AURIESVILLE

SERMON

F R . Y V E S L E R O U X

It is a great joy and honor for me to be here, in the very place where your country was baptized. Is not the blood of martyrs the seed of Christians? Your country, having received this testimony of blood, ought to be faithful to it from now on. You have offered the weariness of this pilgrimage for this intention. May each one of us be personally faithful to this consecration, and, through it, be completely faithful to the grace of our own baptism. You have certainly prayed and offered the trials of this pilgrimage in a spirit of penance and reparation, thinking of the subject proposed for our meditation today: the Second Vatican Council and its consequences. Why is it important to consider this Council? Do we not risk drifting into a systematically negative criticism that is itself un-Catholic?

Obviously, we cannot define ourselves as against the Second Vatican Council. In fact, we have no need to define ourselves. It is sufficient for us to be Catholics, Catholics whose ideal is to fight as soldiers of Christ to bring about His kingdom, and especially His social kingdom on earth. But a soldier can only fight effectively if he is armed and trained to fight, if he has received an adequate formation so that he knows his enemy. That is the reason why it is important to meditate on this fateful Council. It is not our intention to launch now into deep study of the Council. We simply want to be on our guard against the danger of getting used to the current situation in the Church. We want to show what our reaction ought to be in the face of this disaster, which Archbishop Lefebvre called "the Third World War."

We must not fear to say it: the present situation is a revolution. During the Council, commandos took over the command posts in the Church and worked for her destruction from within. Until now, the Church had to fend off assaults coming from the outside, and the attackers never succeeded. But then Satan changed his strategy and attacked Holy Mother Church from within. He infiltrated his henchmen there, spreading error in seminaries so that the young clergy would be tainted by it without even knowing it.

The danger for us would be to forget this and think that the present situation is only a simple crisis that will pass away by itself. Let us not be deceived: the enemies of the Church have sworn her destruction and that of our souls. They will agree to some compromises and some concessions, hoping that we will take the bait, but they will never agree to give up their goal: the complete destruction of Holy Mother Church.

They already have cried victory. They are mistaken. Their battle is lost in advance and their momentary triumph resembles that of the enemies of Christ on Good Friday. Let's not fool ourselves: error will not win. Christ permits this success as a chastisement to purify his church and to bring her to His side on the cross. We must look beyond external appearances, and find within our souls the peaceful certainty that God permits the present humiliation of His Church in order to assimilate her more completely to His Son. He will share with her the triumph of His resurrection. We must wait for that hour, but

remaining always vigilant, as the temptation to seek peace by compromising will be great.

We must also be attentive to see that the error of liberalism, that error which surrounds us and the poisons of which we drink daily, though unwittingly, does not surreptitiously enter into our souls. Let us remember that of which St. Augustine warned us: By seeing everything, we end by enduring everything, and by enduring everything, we are ready to accept anything. That is to say, that what at the beginning justly scandalizes us, little by little becomes so habitual that we take part in it, and thus, unconsciously, we drink the poison. If we are not on our guard, we will be so filled up with this mortal error of liberalism that, in turn, we will also fall and contribute to the destruction of the Church.

This is the time to be on our guard. We must pray and be formed at the source of the true doctrine, so as that error will not contaminate us. After 40 years of seeing the application of the decrees of the Council, we can follow the advice of our Lord and judge the tree by its fruits. Certain advocates of the Council challenge this evangelical judgment and try to separate the Council from its aftermath. But it is not so. The reforms that followed are, in fact, the natural issue of the Council. Without the Council, these disastrous reforms would never have seen the light of day.

The most reprehensible consequence of the Council has been the destruction of the sense of the sacred. We see that very clearly in the systematic destruction of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. By *faith*, by the knowledge we have of Him, we adhere to God directly and enter into His intimacy. By *hope* we raise our hearts above all created things and soar towards God, to adore Him as our Creator and Redeemer, and, with a holy impatience, long to possess Him in eternity. By *charity*, we love God through our Lord Jesus Christ as He loves Himself. Faith, hope, and charity establish us in God, and through these virtues we live in His holy presence. These virtues find their most beautiful expression in the liturgy when the priest offers the holy Mass and we unite ourselves to him, giving God the homage that is due.

Today, the new liturgy shows, sadly but clearly, that the virtues of faith, hope, and charity are no longer the holy way towards God. There is no transcendence, and it is not unusual to hear, in one way or another, that strange profession of faith of Pope Paul VI: "We have, more than any other, the cult of man" [Closing Speech, Fourth Session of the Second Vatican Council, Dec. 7, 1965–*Ed.*]. Does this mean that faith, hope, and charity are now the expression of the faith of man, of hope placed in him and of charity reduced to only a vague philanthropy? It is impossible to think otherwise when we see that the New Theology teaches that all men are to be saved, and yearns for a golden age on earth where we will be united to everyone, beyond our differences, into a universal brotherhood.

Such ideas are a profanation of the theological virtues: *faith* in man, who will save himself as man because he is mysteriously united to Christ by his human nature; *hope* of a universal peace when men will finally recognize the inestimable value of their humanity, which enables them to live in mutual respect of their irreconcilable differences, a mutual respect that they dare to call *charity*; in a word, faith in man, hope in man, love of man—omnipresent man—who thus has become the center of a new worship! We are confronted with a profanation of the mystery of the Incarnation, which has become no more the revelation of the love of God for man, but instead the revelation of the intrinsic value of man himself. There is no longer anything sacred but man!

What more can we say about this delirium? May God have pity on us. The children of God ask for the bread of doctrine, but they have received only stones for food! How shall we react in face of this "destruction of the sacred place," as Pope Pius XII said? Above all, we must not react in a human way, because acting in this manner will expose us to great dangers. We might be even tempted to abandon the struggle, because humanly speaking no solution seems possible....A natural weariness can lead us to excessive and dangerous decisions.

Our reaction ought to be a reaction prompted by faith, and only by faith. We must not reduce the mystery of the passion of the Church to an intellectual problem, or worse, to a sentimental one. It is not for us to understand this mystery of the identification of the Church with Christ crucified, but to acknowledge that it is a providential design of God and then adore Him.

We must follow the advice of St. Vincent of Lerins and hold fast to what the Church has always and everywhere taught. That is to say, that our attachment to tradition is not a question of custom or preference, but a question of faith and of fidelity to this faith. This is also why we cannot sign some practical agreement with "neo-modernist Rome," because we would be drawn down a slippery slope of compromise and would slowly but surely lose the faith.

If our reaction is truly prompted by faith, we will desire to offer reparation. In ascending to heaven, our Lord imposed on us the duty of making reparation for the insults against Him and His holy mother. Is not the destruction of the faith in the very heart of the Church an insult against Christ, who left us, as our inheritance, the deposit of faith to transmit it unchanged? This loss of faith, apart from being most insulting to Christ, is the source of the eternal loss of innumerable souls.

Our duty is clear. We cannot let the insult pass without desiring to make reparation for it. Our reparation consists in living in a way that renders homage to God, and not in enjoying the sinful pleasures that the world proposes. We will make reparation by loyally fulfilling the duties of our state in life. This fidelity to duty rests on two pillars: prayer and mortification. A soul that desires to offer reparation is essentially a soul of prayer and sacrifice.

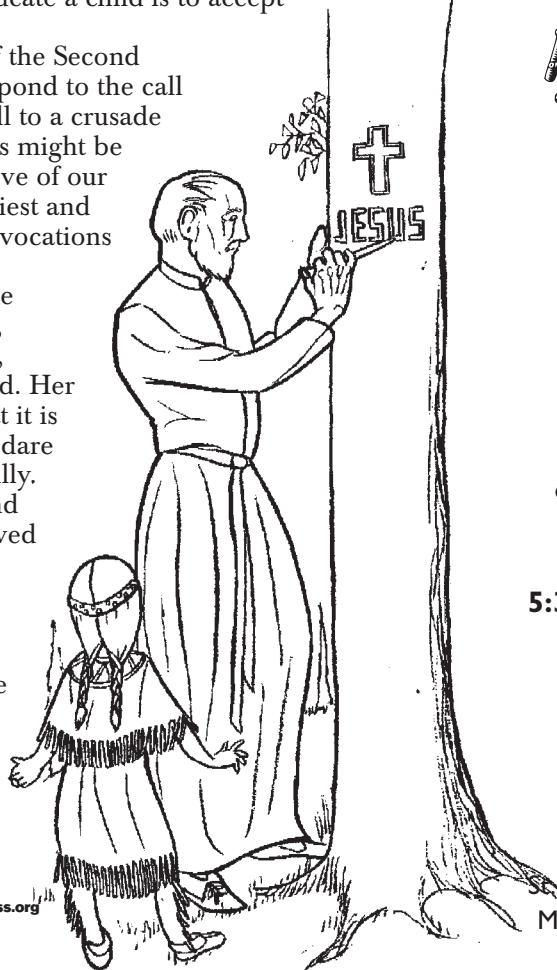
Our prayer must be, above all, the offering of the most precious Blood of Christ to His Father during the Mass, of course, but also during the day, uniting ourselves in spirit to the Masses being celebrated throughout the world; and reciting our rosary, through which we are united to our Lady and to her prayer of intercession. They must be prayers that go forth before the throne of God to implore the grace of obtaining numerous priestly and religious vocations, so that the glory of God may be manifested and that souls will not be abandoned, but receive the graces they need; prayers that simply ask pardon for all those who have introduced novelties in the Church, prayers that repeat for them the words of our crucified Lord: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," prayers for those who follow these mercenaries and are lost.

Prayer certainly, but mortification is also needed to raise ourselves above vain and worldly concerns, and to sustain our prayer with the divine nourishment of sacrifice. Mortification consists mainly in doing faithfully our duty and offering it to God. We want to stress that an important aspect of this duty of state is to take great care to raise our children in a true Christian spirit. That is, not only helping them to put distance from the temptations of the world, but also preparing their souls to fight against these temptations, which will always arise. Do not hesitate, Christian parents, to undertake all the sacrifices required to raise your children. Their souls have been entrusted to you; they have cost Christ His most precious Blood. Do not let that blood go to waste. To educate a child is to accept the sacrifice.

Faced with the disaster of the Second Vatican Council, we must respond to the call of Archbishop Lefebvre, a call to a crusade of parents, so that our families might be truly blazing hearths of the love of our Lord, gathered around the priest and preparing in their bosom the vocations of tomorrow.

Our times are critical. The Immaculate Spouse of Christ, our Holy Mother the Church, agonizes, insulted and mocked. Her children no longer know what it is to be Christians or no longer dare to affirm it loudly and forcefully. Vocations are diminishing, and we fear that tomorrow, deprived of pastors, men will fall into idolatry, as a great number of them already have, alas! The Second Vatican Council promised us a new springtime in the Church, but has left behind it only the rubble piling up.

Our times are critical. It is not, however, a time



for despair. It is the hour of the cross. It is also, mysteriously, the hour of victory. It is the time when we need to go to Mary, who stood strong in her unwavering faith, praying and uniting her sorrows to the sorrows of her Son. She is our mother and she will protect us, so that we will keep the faith thanks to prayer and mortification.

Our Lady has vanquished all heresies. She will overcome modernism; she has promised so at Fatima, affirming that in the end her Immaculate Heart shall triumph. Victory belongs to us; we have the certainty of it. It suffices for us to be her children, to enter joyously in the school of our Lady and to pray and do penance as she has so often asked. Do not doubt the power of prayer, because as our Lady specifically said at Pontmain: "Pray, my children, as my Son allows Himself to be touched by your prayers."

And if our Lord hears us, who will succeed against us? Let us pray. We are the youth of God, full of faith, the faith of our baptism, that of our Mother, the Holy Church; the faith that cannot change in any way, the faith that vanquishes the world, the faith through which we are ready to live and die, in order to defend the honor of God and thus make reparation for the offenses done to Him. ☩

Fr. Yves le Roux was ordained for the Society of Saint Pius X in 1990 and is currently Rector of St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, Minnesota. This sermon was given at the 2005 Auriesville Pilgrimage.

2006 AURIESVILLE PILGRIMAGE

15th Anniversary

Friday, June 16

6:00pm Stations of The Cross

7:00pm Holy Mass

Bonfire

10:30pm - 11:30pm Holy Hour

Saturday, June 17

9:00am Rendezvous at Lock 10

(Sermon) March

Lunch (Sermon)

5:30pm Pontifical Solemn High Mass

celebrated by H.E. Bishop Fellay

8:00pm Irish Festival

Sunday, June 18

8:00am High Mass

For more information contact:

St. Ignatius Retreat House: 203-431-0201

Mr. Richard McCormack: 203-744-4384

Is the crisis in the Church primarily a question of the Mass or of doctrine?

It is certainly true that the general Catholic in the pews is apt to be shocked much more by the changes of the Mass on a day-to-day and week-to-week basis, than by statements of Vatican II or of modernist theologians reinterpreting Catholic teachings in a non-orthodox sense. However, this does not at all mean that the liturgy comes first, or that the crisis is essentially a crisis of the liturgy of the Mass.

The relationship between the liturgy and Catholic dogma was magnificently explained by Pope Pius XII in his 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*, in which he condemned the excesses of the liturgical movement and explained the doctrinal basis for a true Catholic understanding of the liturgy. He there explains that it is not the Mass that comes first, and shows us what we must believe, but that it is the profession of Faith that comes first and that consequently “the entire Liturgy...has the Catholic Faith for its content, inasmuch as it bears public witness to the faith of the Church” (§47). Hence he condemns “the error and fallacious reasoning of those who have claimed that the Sacred Liturgy is a kind of proving ground for the truths to be held of faith (§46), and defines (§48):

The sacred Liturgy, consequently, does not decide or determine independently and of itself what is of Catholic faith...But if one desires to differentiate and describe the relationship between faith and the sacred Liturgy in absolute and general terms, it is perfectly correct to say: “*Lex credendi legem statuat supplicandi*” –let the rule of belief determine the rule of prayer.

Since Faith comes first, and is expressed in the Mass, so likewise does the modernist destruction of the Faith come first, and the overturning of the true Mass follow. The historical connection was particularly apparent after Vatican II. The Council promoted the modernist principles of adaptation to the modern world, the evacuation of penance, of the final last ends, of the eternity of the soul, the confusion of the priesthood of the faithful with the ordained priesthood, the undermining of the sacredness of the Mass and the sacraments, and the doctrinal relativism that opened the door to ecumenism and acceptance of Protestantism as a legitimate form of Christianity. The consequence was the New Mass some four years later, which from 1969 started impressing these false principles on the minds of Catholics, destroying their faith.

The crisis in the Church is, consequently, primarily one of Faith, and only secondarily one of the Mass. The New Mass is evil because it destroys the Faith, that is Catholic doctrine. The traditional Mass is Catholic, and the banner of our resistance against modernism because it preserves and nourishes the Faith.

Some have said that the preoccupation shown by St. Pius X in his condemnation of modernism at the beginning of the 20th century, and the same preoccupation showed by his disciples in defending Catholic doctrine against modernism, is a distraction from the real issue, that of the Mass, presenting the doctrinal problem of modernism as a “*phantom menace*.” Nothing could be further from the truth. All the novelties and changes contained in the New Mass were deliberately engineered by modernists such as Father Bugnini as a means of pushing their modernist agenda.

This point is made particularly well by Fr. Didier Bonnetterre in the conclusion to his book *The Liturgical Movement* (available from Angelus Press, 2002. Price: \$9.95):

Crushed by St. Pius X, the Modernists understood that they could not penetrate the Church by theology, that is, by a clear exposé of their doctrines. They had recourse to the Marxist notion of praxis, having understood that the Church could become modernist through action, especially through the sacred action of the liturgy. (p.93)

Consequently the only resistance possible is a doctrinal one, and it is the application of the principles used by St. Pius X in his 1907 condemnation of modernism in *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. A typical example could be chosen. The turning around of the altar facing the people is not a haphazard invention, but an intentional novelty to express the belief that the Mass is primarily a celebration of the community rather than the action renewed by the ordained priest. This in turn comes from the modernist idea that Christ’s presence in religion is immanent and vital, continuously evolving and present subjectively in the community’s awareness, and that this experience constitutes religion, not objective doctrine. (Cf. *Pascendi*, §§35-37). Likewise for the substitution of the vernacular for the sacred language, and for so many other changes. The doctrinal crisis in the Church over the past century is not a phantom, but truly the origin of the destruction of the liturgy.

Can the rubrical changes of 1955 and 1962 be compared to the new rite of Mass?

It is certainly true that liturgists of modernist tendency, including Fr. Bugnini, had a considerable influence in the commission for the reform of the Liturgy from the time of its foundation in 1948. This is what Fr. Bonnetterre has to say in *The Liturgical Movement* [Angelus Press, 2002. Price: \$9.95–Ed.]:

Protected from on high by eminent prelates, the new liturgists took control little by little of the Commission for Reform of the Liturgy founded by Pius XII, and influenced the reforms devised by this Commission at the end of the pontificate of Pius XII and at the beginning of that of John XXIII. (p.94)

However, until Vatican II these were incidental questions, that did not change the liturgy in itself, such as the suppression of certain vigils and octaves, the restoration and change of the times of the Holy Week ceremonies. They did not change the Mass itself in any way, which remained the Mass of St. Pius V, published in virtue of *Quo Primum*, the document with which every Missal of 1962 begins. Some changes were beneficial simplifications, such as the categorization of liturgical days into four classes and the removal of overlapping octaves. Others can be considered regrettable, such as the shortening of the ceremony for the blessing of Palms on Palm Sunday. However, Providence and the authority of the Church prevented them from going beyond any such minor rubrical changes, such that Pope John XXIII declared himself dissatisfied with the change of rubrics that he authorized in 1960, wanting a more radical change, according to new principles, after the impending Council (*Rubricarum Instructum*). This was to be the New Mass.

Consequently, we are duty bound to accept these minor rubrical changes, as is done in practically every traditional church and chapel world wide. Whether we personally like them or not, they are not expressions of a new, modernist theology, as is the New Mass, but rather of the same nature as the minor accidental rubrical changes that many Popes since 1570 have authorized to the Mass of St. Pius V. The New Mass of Pope Paul VI is evil because it undermines and destroys the Faith, and must be rejected. None of these rubrical changes have any impact on the Mass as a symbol and profession of faith, and consequently there is no objective reason to reject them.

Is the Dialogue Mass a “diabolical disorientation,” and can it be compared to Communion in the hand?

The custom of the faithful making the responses at Low Mass, and reciting with the celebrant those parts that they would sing at a High Mass (*e.g., Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei*) began in 1922, as an outgrowth of the liturgical movement founded by Dom Guéranger and promoted by St. Pius X, to bring about an active participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Mass. St. Pius X had requested in 1903, in his *motu proprio* on Gregorian chant, the restoration of the active participation of the faithful in the Mass, outlining this principle, for the glory of God and the sanctification of souls:

Our keen desire being that the true Christian spirit may once more flourish, cost what it may, and be maintained among all the faithful, We deem it necessary to provide before anything else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its primary and indispensable source, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and the public and solemn prayer of the Church.

The so-called dialogue Mass was nothing other than the application of this same principle to the recited Mass, on occasions on which the Mass could not reasonably be sung (*e.g.,* daily Mass for a community of religious). However, modernism did enter into the application of this principle, for the modernists did not see this form of active participation simply as an elaboration of the liturgy but as necessary to it, in virtue of their substitution of the emphasis on the common priesthood of the faithful in place of the ordained, sacramental priesthood. Consequently, they wanted to insist on the people reciting the Mass not simply as an alternative, but as an obligation.

As with other excesses of the liturgical movement, the 1947 encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, (available from Angelus Press. Price: \$2.50), made the necessary distinctions, condemning the abuses and promoting the correct Catholic understanding of the liturgy. After pointing out the primacy of the interior participation of the faithful uniting themselves with the Divine Victim on the altar, it also recommends the outward participation that expresses this union:

They also are to be commended who strive to make the Liturgy even in an external way a sacred act in which all who are present may share. This can be done in more than one way, when, for instance, the whole congregation in accordance with the rules of the Liturgy, either answer the priest in an orderly and fitting manner, or sing hymns suitable to the different parts of the Mass, or do both, or finally in High Masses when they answer the prayers of the minister of Jesus Christ and also sing the liturgical chant. (§105)

However, the Pope at the same time refutes the modernist error of those who make such external participation an end in itself.

Their chief aim (of these methods of participation in the Mass) is to foster and promote the people’s piety and intimate union with Christ and His visible minister and to arouse those internal sentiments and dispositions which should make our hearts become like to that of the High Priest of the New Testament. (§106)

He continues, drawing the logical conclusion:

They [these methods of participation] are by no means necessary to constitute it (the Mass) a public act or to give it a social character. And besides, a “dialogue” Mass of this kind cannot replace the High Mass, which...possesses its own special dignity due to the impressive character of its ritual and the magnificence of its ceremonies. (*ibid.*)

Consequently, one who accepts the teachings of Popes Pius X and Pius XII cannot question the legitimacy of the so-called dialogue Mass, provided that it be done correctly, and that it be regarded as just a means to a more perfect interior participation; nor can the dialogue Mass possibly be compared with such sacrilegious and openly modernist practices as Communion in the hand, a practical denial of the Real Presence. ❏

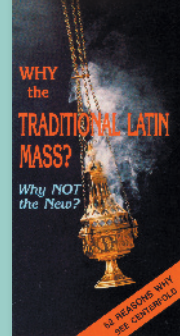
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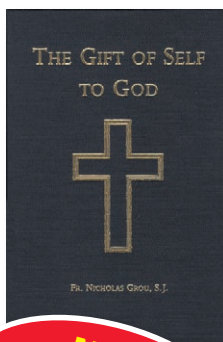
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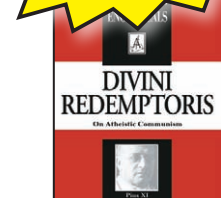
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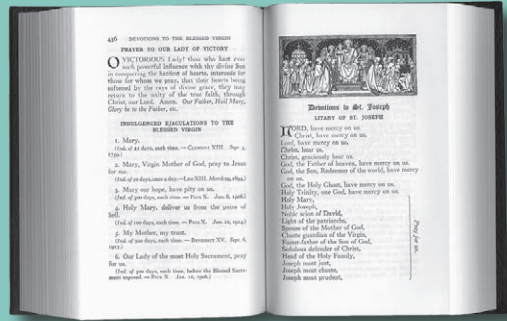
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