

The

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ANGELUS

A JOURNAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION

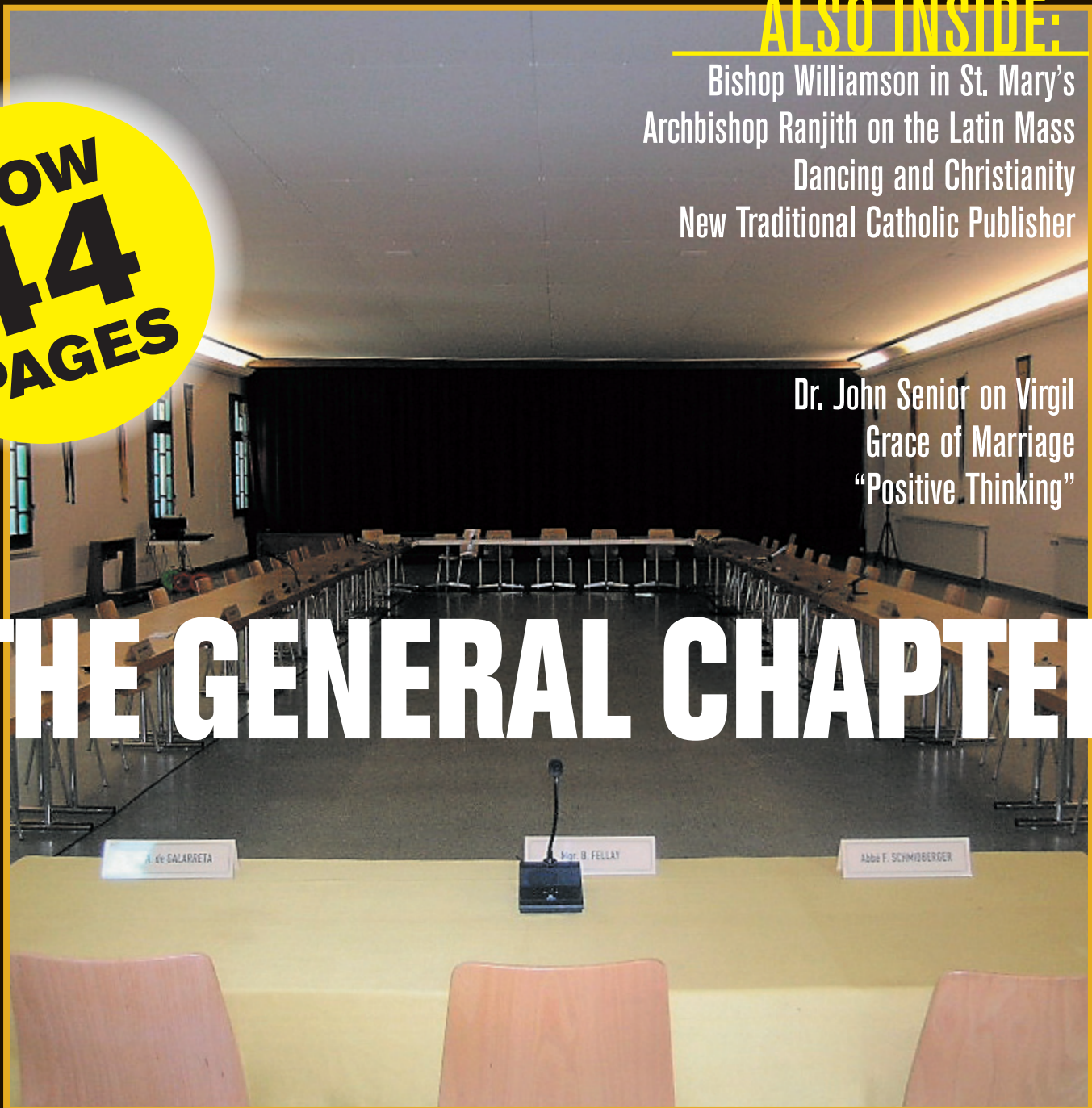
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THE GENERAL CHAPTER



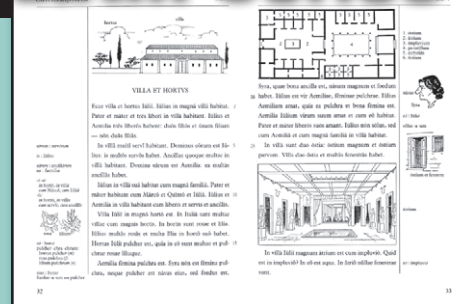
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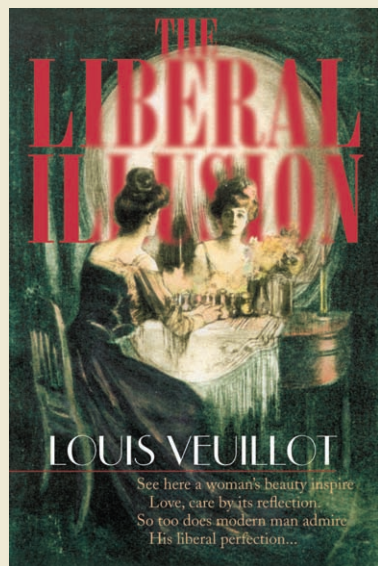
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		6	6. How the Church has been changed by the modern world.
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		8	8. How the Church has been changed by the modern world.
		9	9. How the Church has been changed by the modern world.
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		12	12. How the Church has been changed by the modern world.
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III FALSE ARGUMENTS	WE MUST MOVE WITH THE TIMES	21	21. How the Church has been changed by the modern world.
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Game Plan of THE LIBERAL ILLUSION	
PRINCIPLES	
GOD CREATED MAN FREE [Chap. 13]	
God created man free to choose between true and false, between good and evil. [Chap. 13]	
God established TOLERANCE of error and evil. [Chaps. 13, 21, 22]	
Freedom and tolerance came before truth and goodness. [Chaps. 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31]	
THERE MUST BE NO LAW BUT LIBERTY [Chap. 23]	
THEORETICAL CONSEQUENCES	PRACTICAL
TRUTH RELIES ON LIBERTY [Chap. 21, 22]	MODERN WORLD RESTS ON LIBERTY [Chap. 31]
Tolerance is unacceptable. [Chap. 13]	The modern world came of age, is more than acceptable. [Chaps. 3, 26, 29, 30, 32, 33]
Force must be given up, privilege renounced. [Chaps. 3, 16, 21]	Liberty is inalienable, the past is over and done with. [Chaps. 20, 27, 31]
CHURCH AND STATE MUST BE SEPARATE [Chaps. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24]	THE CHURCH MUST MOVE WITH THE TIMES [Chaps. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24]

“Instaurare omnia in Christo—To restore all things in Christ.”

Motto of Pope St. Pius X

The ANGELUS

A JOURNAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION

“To publish Catholic journals and place them in the hands of honest men is not enough. It is necessary to spread them as far as possible that they may be read by all, and especially by those whom Christian charity demands we should tear away from the poisonous sources of evil literature.”

—Pope St. Pius X

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ON OUR COVER: The meeting room of the Third General Chapter in Ecône.

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Third General Chapter of The Society of St. Pius X Official Communiqué

On Tuesday, July 11, 2006, at the seminary of Ecône (Switzerland), the General Chapter of the Society of Saint Pius X elected its Superior General and his two General Assistants.

After having verified that the forty members of the Chapter had been convoked according to the rules and after having heard the report by the Superior at the end of his term of office, the Chapter re-elected Bishop Bernard Fellay as Superior General for a twelve-year term. Fathers Niklaus Pfluger and Alain-Marc Nély were elected first and second assistants, respectively, also for twelve-year terms.

Bishop Bernard Fellay was born on April 12, 1958, in Switzerland, and entered the seminary of Ecône in October 1977. He was ordained a priest on June 29, 1982, and was immediately appointed General Bursar of the Society. He was at the same time chaplain for several youth groups and exercised his priestly ministry in parishes. He made several apostolic journeys throughout Third World countries. On June 30, 1988, he was consecrated a bishop while retaining his functions as General Bursar until his first election as Superior General of the Society in July 1994. Bishop Fellay is fluent in French, English, and German, and conversant in Italian and Spanish.

Rev. Fr. Niklaus Pfluger was born on November 3, 1958, in Oesingen (Switzerland). He entered the seminary of Zaitzkofen (Germany) in 1978, and was ordained a priest in 1984. After one year in the priory of Oberriet (Switzerland), he was prior in Basel from 1985 to 1989. Superior of the District of Switzerland in 1989, he was appointed rector of the seminary of Zaitzkofen in 1991. In 1998, he resumed the charge of District Superior of Switzerland. Since 2004, he has been superior of the District of Germany. Fr. Pfluger speaks French and German.

Rev. Fr. Alain-Marc Nély was born on February 18, 1950, at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre (France). He entered the seminary of Ecône in 1979 and was ordained in 1984. From 1984 until 1994 he was vice-rector and professor of philosophy at the school of St. Joseph des Carmes in southern France. From 1994 until 2004, he was dean and prior in Marseilles. Since 2004, he has been District Superior of Italy. Fr. Nély speaks French, English, and Italian.

Fr Alain Lorans
Director of *DICI*, the Press Bureau of the SSPX

Taken from *DICI* (July 11, 2006), the Press Agency of the Society of Saint Pius X.

First Interview with the Superior General and His Two Assistants

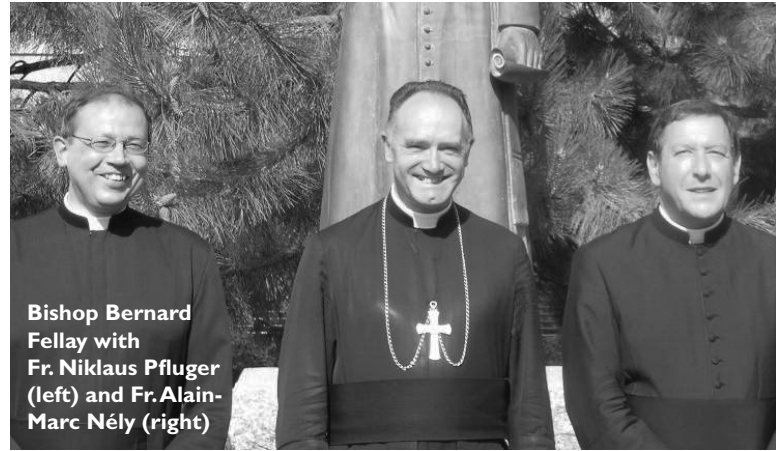
Fr. Lorans: On Tuesday, July 11, 2006, in the seminary of Ecône, the 40 members of the Chapter came together—and in fact are still together because the Chapter continues throughout this week. They have just re-elected you as Superior General for a twelve-year period. You have been Superior General for twelve years and now you have been elected for another twelve-year term. What is your impression? Did you expect it? Certainly in the Society, there is no candidacy, no campaigning. What impression has this made on you? Do you see it as a mark of trust or as a new burden?

Bishop Fellay: It is certainly a mark of trust. Precisely every twelve years there is an election, for which the members of the Chapter take an oath before God to choose him whom they consider should govern the Society. So, it is certainly a mark of trust. But this is a difficult question, of course. One should not talk too much about oneself or in one's own favor. Obviously, after 12 years, I said to myself, "Now I can rest a bit," because this charge is not easy. Well, I will have to keep going. But I am very happy.

Fr. Lorans: What do you expect—according to the statutes, but also personally—from your two Assistants?

Bishop Fellay: According to the statutes, the Assistants are meant, well, to assist. Their first duty is to advise. Together with the Superior General, they form the General Council. They must help in the direction of the Society. It is true that the Church, on the one hand, insists very much on personal responsibility. The Church is not only hierarchical, but monarchical. There is, therefore, a responsibility that falls upon one person. On the other hand, the Church is also prudent and knows very well that the person in authority must be surrounded by protections, aids, helpers for his government. It is well known that four or six eyes see better than two. In this manner, I can have a richer vision of things than if I were alone. Thus, in societies like ours, for the important decisions, the Church demands a decision of the Council. On those occasions, the Assistants have a voice, their own voice, which counts for the validity of the acts. When we look for the specific function of the Assistants in the Council in the laws, we find little specification. They must assist, and that is a very wide charge, leaving a great freedom of action, of interaction, between the Superior and his Assistants for the good running of the Society.

Fr. Lorans: Fr. Pfluger, you have just been elected First Assistant of the Society of St. Pius X. You were born in 1958 and ordained in 1984. You have occupied different posts. You have been prior in Basel and then, in 1989, District Superior of Switzerland. You were Superior of the seminary in Zaitzkofen in 1991. Afterwards, you were again Superior of Switzerland and since 2004, you have been District Superior of Germany. Presently you may be thinking: "Now I am



Bishop Bernard Fellay with Fr. Niklaus Pfluger (left) and Fr. Alain-Marc Nély (right)

a superior at the side of the Superior General. What should I do?"

Fr. Pfluger: Above all, it was a surprise. But I think that all these years as a superior have given me a certain experience regarding the priests, their needs and concerns. If now, drawing from these experiences, I can give advice to the Motherhouse, I think that this could be a help for the Society.

Fr. Lorans: Certainly, certainly. And you, yourself, what do you personally retain from these years of ministry? Which was the most interesting ministry for you?

Fr. Pfluger: I must acknowledge that the best time was when I was a prior. There, you can work directly with those for whom you are responsible: the faithful. But my first year as a priest, under Fr. Kocher, was the most important. There, with him, I knew a well-ordered house, living the statutes of the Society. That made me understand the importance of the priory, of community life. Then came the years as Superior. I was very young, but with these different charges, I was able to see almost all sides: the importance of the seminary, the problems of the priors, of the faithful, of the young priests who are a bit lost in the world. That has given me a certain understanding of what is most important for the Society: as the Archbishop said, the harmony between the perfection, the sanctification, of the priest and the apostolate. This harmony is very important for the Society—to find a harmony between these two elements which are the objective of all institutes, of all congregations.

Fr. Lorans: Thank you very much and good luck.

Fr. Pfluger: (Laughing) Thank you. And pray for us.

Fr. Lorans: Now, I turn to the Second Assistant, who was also elected today, Fr. Alain-Marc Nély. You were born in 1950 and ordained in 1984. You were vice-rector and professor of philosophy at the St. Joseph des Carmes School. Then, from 1994 to 2004, you were dean and prior of Marseilles, and since 2004 you have been Superior of the District of Italy. I ask


you the same question as Fr. Pfluger: What do you retain of these years of priesthood? What has been the most enriching experience?

Fr. Nély: First of all, the experience with the young-teaching, transmitting what I received at the seminary, through the subjects that I taught during those ten years, but especially the religion classes, which are, for me as a priest, the most important. Then, afterwards, the contact with another kind of apostolate in a very lively city in the south of France, with a beautiful church, an important priory and a number of faithful large enough to give to all the ceremonies the greatest splendor, thanks to their participation in the liturgy, in the choirs, and in the processions. That was a great consolation. And the last assignment in Italy has been the occasion of placing myself at the service of my fellow priests. As Archbishop Lefebvre founded the Society for the priests, this assignment was already, on the part of the superiors,

a mark of trust—a mark of trust which has been renewed by my fellow priests by the choice that they have made today. I think that it is like reaching a summit, to be able to consecrate one's priestly life to the service of one's fellow priests.

Fr. Lorans: When you were in those charges, perhaps you were saying to yourself, "Ah, if the Superior knew..." And now, you are the Assistant of the Superior and you have the power. What are you going to do?

Fr. Nély: (*Laughing*) I'll try to do my best. But as the superiors have much to do and the Society has developed very much in these last years, I think that they can be excused for not having been able to do what they wanted to when it needed to be done.

Fr. Lorans: Again, thank you very much, and we pray for you. 

This interview was published in *DICI* (July 11, 2006), the Press Agency of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Letter to the Faithful from Bishop Fellay

Dear Faithful,

Allow me to begin this first letter of my new term by thanking you for your many prayers for our General Chapter. We indeed felt the spiritual support that you gave to us throughout the whole Chapter, in an atmosphere that was serene, but at the same time also intense.

I would like to explain to you some of the fruits of your prayers and of the Chapter.

First of all were the elections. The Chapter then decided to entrust to me once again, and this despite its length, a new term as Superior General. I come to request of you an increase of prayers in order that, with this precious help, I might better consecrate myself to the fulfillment of this task that is at the same time burdensome and magnificent.

The Chapter also elected two Assistants.

Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, who has two brothers and two nephews as priests with us, a third being a religious brother, without counting two religious sisters! He is Swiss, to whom was entrusted the responsibility of District Superior (in Switzerland and then in Germany) and Seminary Rector (Zaitzkofen). He has thus acquired a great deal of experience, both in the formation of priests, and also in the government of two districts.

Fr. Alain Nély, first of all teacher at the school of St. Joseph des Carmes, then Prior in Marseilles, and finally District Superior in Italy, has also acquired a profound knowledge of youth and of priests, as well as the government of a district.

The two Assistants will both reside at Menzingen in Switzerland, where our General House has been since 1993. They will be invaluable collaborators for the Society's good functioning, and will have the opportunity of traveling throughout the world, thus

enabling the General Headquarters to keep in closer touch with the Society's members, as well as with the faithful.

The Chapter is not just a question of elections. It is also the opportunity of assessing our situation, of analyzing the weaknesses that ought to be improved, of establishing rules in order that our priests might always live their priesthood better according to our statutes, and thereby obtaining more effectively grace and Heaven's gifts. We also, quite obviously, considered the state of our relationships with Rome. Out of a desire for the greatest clarity possible, and also with the intention of avoiding all false hope and every illusion, the Chapter unanimously decided to make the declaration that you will find as an annex.

Along the same lines, the Chapter asks me to communicate to you the following ambitious project: The Society has the intention of presenting a spiritual bouquet of a million Rosaries to the Sovereign Pontiff for the end of the month of October, month of the Rosary.

These Rosaries will be recited for the following intentions:

- 1) To obtain from Heaven for Pope Benedict XVI the strength required to completely free the Mass of All Time, called the Tridentine Mass.
- 2) For the return of the Social Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3) For the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We are calling you, therefore, to a true Crusade of the Rosary. This prayer has been so many times recommended by the Most Blessed Virgin Mary herself, and has been presented as the great means of support, of protection and of salvation for today's Catholics in this time of crisis. For centuries, since the opposition between the world and the Church has

Declaration of the General Chapter

become more and more clearly apparent, this prayer has appeared as the weapon given by Heaven for us to defend ourselves, to sanctify ourselves, and to vanquish.

We consequently request urgently that you begin without delay to bud forth the spiritual roses for our bouquet. Shortly, the priests will give you the directions required to put together this treasure.

By this obviously symbolic quantity, we desire also to make it clear to the authorities in Rome, as well as to Heaven, that we have the will and the determination "to pay the price."

Confident that our good Mother in Heaven will hear the assiduous prayer of her children, and that she cannot but be

For the glory of God, for the salvation of souls and for the true service of the Church, on the occasion of its Third General Chapter, held at Ecône in Switzerland, from July 3 to 15, 2006, the Priestly Society of St. Pius X declares its firm resolution to continue its action, with the help of God, along the doctrinal and practical lines laid down by its venerated founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

Following in his footsteps in the fight for the Catholic Faith, the Society fully endorses his criticisms of the Second Vatican Council and its reforms, as he expressed them in his conferences and sermons, and in particular in his Declaration of November 21, 1974:

We adhere with all our heart and all our soul to Catholic Rome, guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the traditions necessary for the maintaining of that Faith, to eternal Rome, mistress of wisdom and of truth. On the contrary, we refuse, and we have always refused, to follow the Rome of neo-modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies, which showed itself clearly in the Second Vatican Council and in the reforms that issued from it.

Contacts held with Rome over the last few years have enabled the Society to see how right and necessary were the two preconditions¹ that it laid down, since they would greatly benefit the Church by re-establishing, at least in part, her rights to her own Tradition. Not only would the treasure of graces available to the Society no longer be hidden under a bushel, but the Mystical Body would also be given the remedy it so needs to be healed.

If, upon these preconditions being fulfilled, the Society looks to a possible debate on doctrine, the purpose is still that of making the voice of traditional teaching sound more clearly within the Church. Likewise, the contacts made from time

to time with the authorities in Rome have no other purpose than to help them embrace once again that Tradition which the Church cannot repudiate without losing her identity. The purpose is not just to benefit the Society, nor to arrive at some merely practical impossible agreement. When Tradition comes back into its own, "reconciliation will no longer be a problem, and the Church will spring back to life."²

On this long road to reconquest, the Chapter encourages all members of the Society to live, as its statutes require, ever more intensely by the grace proper to it, namely, in union with the great prayer of the High Priest, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Let them be convinced, along with their faithful, that in this striving for an ever greater sanctification in the heart of the Church is to be found the only remedy for our present misfortunes, which is the Church being restored through the restoration of the priesthood. *In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph.*

¹ Unconditional freedom for the traditional Mass, and withdrawal of the decree of excommunication of the Society's four bishops.

² Letter from Archbishop Lefebvre to Pope John Paul II, June 2, 1988.

This Declaration and the Letter to the Faithful from Bishop Fellay are taken from issue No.140 of *DICI*, the Press Agency of the Society of Saint Pius X.



touched by the harshness of the present time, as well as the spiritual misery that surrounds us, and that sooner or later she will hear our prayer and respond to our cry, we have entrusted all the Chapter's decisions to the motherly kindness of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to the protection of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in order that He might bless them, and make them more efficacious for the greater glory of God and for the salvation of us all. *Nos cum prole pia benedicat Virgo Maria.*

+ Bernard Fellay

July 16, 2006

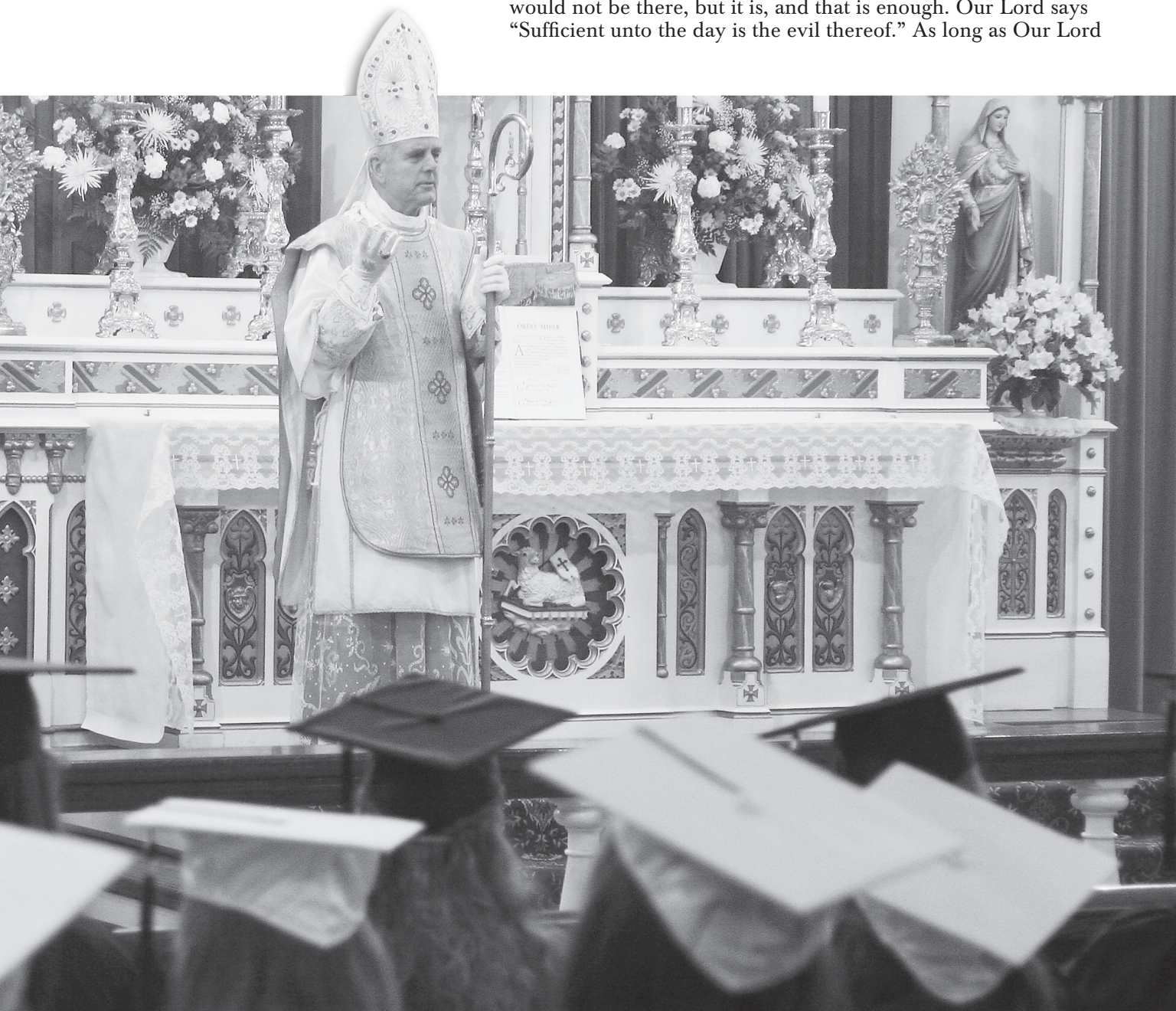
Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

A chart which may be filled out for the Rosary Crusade is available in chapels of the Society of St. Pius X and online at <http://www.sspix.org>

BISHOP RICHARD WI
GRADUA

Dear Graduates and Brethren,

At this solemnity, the end of the school year, another year of the miracle of St. Mary's, we must realize that, for such an institution to sustain itself in our times is a miracle. That, Heaven knows, is plain enough. If it depended upon the enemies of Our Lord, St. Mary's would not be there, but it is, and that is enough. Our Lord says "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." As long as Our Lord



WILLIAMSON

St. Mary's College, May 27, 2006

GRADUATION SERMON

allows, as long as Our Lord shields, as long as Our Lord protects, St. Mary's continues, and the graduates may be each year more numerous. So it doesn't depend on the enemies of Our Lord, and it doesn't depend on us. Our Lord shields and protects us, yes, even from ourselves.

Let me tell you a little story about St. Mary's graduation. I ran into a young lady the other day, a mother of four. She told me she was a graduate of St. Mary's and that she was scared stiff by the bishop who came at the end of each year to talk to them and say, for instance, that they should have 25 children. But, dear girls, there has been inflation since then!

Graduates, you are going out into a crazy world. To describe this crazy world, I will resort to Virgil. [See related story "The Importance of Virgil," by Dr. John Senior, on pp.11-16 of this issue of *The Angelus*. This is the first appearance of this work by Dr. Senior, published posthumously from his notes from the lecture he gave at the University of Wyoming in 1967.-Ed.] For anyone who might say this is pagan literature, let me remind you, if you do not already know, that Virgil was a prime source for minds in the Catholic Middle Ages. And he was taken very seriously by the Fathers of the Church in the early ages. You might want to read, if of course you haven't already, St. Basil the Great on the reading of pagan authors.

Virgil was like an oracle. The Protestant king of England, Charles I, used to open the pages of Virgil to decide what he should do. Catholic kings of England had done the same in the past, and Roman emperors before them. It was a common, age-honoured practice, this "*sors Virgiliana*"; one opens the *Aeneid* to a random page, and blindly finds a line with a finger. This line, and perhaps some that follow, are taken as words from an oracle. Of course, as with for instance the Oracle at Delphi, one has a bit of a task in divining the meaning.

There is a great deal of natural truth in Virgil, especially about human nature, life, and the world. My dear friends, you are going out into the natural world to obey the same laws, to follow the same rules.

Of course, since the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the whole dimension of grace has been added, which alone fully solves the problems of nature. However, these problems are well described in these ancient rule books. Moreover, nobody can say that Virgil was implicitly or explicitly an apostate, because Our Lord had not yet taken flesh. Nobody at the time of Virgil could deny Christ because Christ was not yet in being. Remember too the marvelous legend of St. Paul weeping at Virgil's tomb.

In the second book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Aeneas the hero, one of the sons of King Priam, and son of Venus, is running amidst the flames during the fall of Troy. The Greeks are penetrating Troy and are sacking and ravaging the city. The night before, there appears to Aeneas (at the moment when the Trojan horse is entering), in his sleep, the great hero Hector. Hector, who had been killed in combat by the Greek Achilles in a brutal death, comes to advise Aeneas what he should do. As Troy is falling, he tells Aeneas to flee. Here are Virgil's seven lines, and their translation by a famous English poet of the 17th century:

*"Heu fuge, nate dea, teque his", ait, "eripe flammis.
Hostis habet muros; ruit alto a culmine Troia.
Sat patriae Priamoque datum: si Pergama dextra
defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.
Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penates:
hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quaere
magna, pererrato statues quae denique ponto."*

"O goddess-born! escape, by timely flight,
The flames and horrors of this fatal night.
The foes already have possess'd the wall;
Troy nods from high, and totters to her fall.
Enough is paid to Priam's royal name,
More than enough to duty and to fame.
If by a mortal hand my father's throne
Could be defended, 't was by mine alone.
Now Troy to thee commends her future state,
And gives her gods companions of thy fate:
From their assistance mighty walls expect,
Which, wand'ring long, at last thou shalt erect."
(Translation of Dryden)

“Alas, flee, and save yourself from these flames! The enemy possesses the walls! Troy has fallen from its great height! If Troy could have been defended by a right arm, it would have been my right arm,” says Hector. But the gods had allowed Hector to be defeated by Achilles, so he says:

Troy entrusts to you, Aeneas, our house-gods and sacred relics! Take these as the companions of your destiny, and with these to set up the great walls which you will found after traveling across the sea.

Hector gives Aeneas his mission: Troy is falling; Aeneas must not hang around. The very gods are decreeing the fall of Troy; Aeneas must take the house-gods and relics with him and found a replacement for the city of Troy, new city-walls after long travel across the sea.

My dear friends, you and I are Roman Catholics, and this is no accident of history; Ancient Rome was Divine Providence at work. Virgil is teaching us Romans the mission of Rome, the cradle of Christian civilization. Virgil had a deep consciousness of the mission of Rome, but of course only naturally, not supernaturally as we do, and we have an understanding of the meaning of history which he could not have had. He did not know what that real, supernatural mission was, but he knew the greatness of Rome. The praise of Our Lord for the Roman centurion in the Gospel suggests how Rome might become the natural foundation of Christian civilization. The Fathers of the Church recognized the work of Providence in founding Rome to prepare for the coming of Christ, in the fullness of time.

“*Heu fuge, nate dea...*”

“Flee, my sons, flee...”; run from the dying, falling, burning modern world. Rock musicians have sung of the problems in their wretched songs, but they don’t have a solution. They do, however, know we have a problem with the modern world. Don’t blind yourself to the true problem; the problem is enormous, and it is being created day by day. Yesterday, I was lambasting TV and the Internet, these things that nobody even dreamed of at the time of the Jesuits who founded this holy place. Electronics are completely changing people’s lives. Pope Pius XII said technology is changing the psychic structure of man. These little machines are ruining people, and civilization is being burned to death. Civilization is being electronified, and electrocuted, by these machines, by what they are causing to happen to the morals and minds, especially of young human beings today. Can the effect of these machines be exaggerated? Am I exaggerating to say that these machines are now forming the fabric of the youngsters’ minds and lives?

“*...teque his, ait, eripe flammis...*”

“Take yourselves away! Snatch yourselves from these flames; they are all around you!” They may not be visible like the flames of Troy, but they are there nonetheless. They burn souls, and will burn them for all eternity. Yes, the

modern world is on fire, consuming itself. You must flee from it. Enough has been given to this waste of civilization which has wasted itself. It’s done. It’s finished.


Don’t pour water into sand. As you grow up today, you don’t have much, or many resources. What water you have, don’t pour into the sand. Don’t waste your efforts on things that don’t deserve it. Snatch yourself from the flames and recognize that if this civilization could have been defended, this materialistic apostate civilization, it would have been defended, but it is not worth saving. Remember St. Augustine when the Vandals were at the gates of the city. He said let them in, let them have it; there is nothing here worth saving. He lived in a time not unlike our own, when the world was on fire, destroying itself; when there was a great, progressive, materialistic civilization, and it wasn’t worth saving.

For example, I suggest that you do not become a young political party worker in the hopes that you can do something in politics. No, no! Snatch yourselves from the flames! The system is shot, and politics are not only immoral, but in these days unworthy of your effort. Put your effort into fleeing, and taking with you these relics.

Dear youngsters, heaven forbid that I should discourage you from going out into this world, but do see what is out there and be ready to invest wisely what resources and strength you have.

“*...Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penates...*”

The Catholic Church entrusts to you her faith, her hope, her charity and grace, that you may preserve these things while the world is crashing around you. Do see, the world is crashing down around you! Do not believe in the supposedly smart modern world which is gone, shot, finished. Take your faith, hope, and charity as foundations for the walls of tomorrow’s Church and tomorrow’s Catholic civilization. The remnants and fragments of our Catholic Church and our Catholic homes will soon need to be pulled together on the other side of an enormous conflagration. We have been warned repeatedly. Aeneas had to save his family; the Trojans were losing the fight and it was best to flee in order to save what could be saved. So flee from the allurements of the modern world, especially electronics; they enchant, enervate, demobilize, and corrupt you! They take over your minds and hearts. Some say if you have the wisdom to use them wisely, they can be good and useful instruments, but these machines cannot give us wisdom or help us transmit it living to the next generation. Wisdom must come from somewhere else.

Seat of Wisdom, pray for us. *Sedes Sapientiae, ora pro nobis.* 

This article was reconstructed from Bishop Williamson’s 2006 Graduation Sermon to the High School and College graduates of St. Mary’s College and Academy, St. Mary’s, Kansas. Due to the lack of any audio recording of the sermon, Mrs. Anna Vogel made a transcription for Angelus Press of a videotape borrowed from the Randy Fred Family. Bishop Williamson directed that Mr. Andrew Senior, a member of the St. Mary’s faculty attending the Mass and sermon of that day, fill in the unintelligible parts which His Excellency then reviewed and approved. Picture provided by Mr. David Kleinsmith of St. Mary’s.

Painting of Virgil
(right). *Aeneas and
Dido in Carthage*,
Claude Lorraine,
1676 (main picture).



The Importance of VIRGIL

DR . JOHN SENIOR

The following article is taken from a speech Dr. Senior gave to faculty at the University of Wyoming in 1967. It should be noted that this speech was given at a state university; the occasion and audience were secular, and not overtly religious.

When a contemporary disparager said to Virgil, “You have done what anyone could have—simply imitated Homer,” Virgil replied, “It is strange no one else ever has.” And that is still true: Virgil is the only one who ever got away with stealing from so great a man—because he did more than plagiarize; he made poetry Roman and at once raised the political vision of Julius Caesar to the permanent *imperium* of the mind and heart. Virgil did in letters what Augustus did in rule—together, they gave Western civilization its stamp. In the *Aeneid*, Jupiter, the parent of men and gods, predicts that Romans shall rule the world forever:

To them I ordain neither period nor boundary of empire;
I have given them dominion without end (MacKail’s¹ translation).

Virgil is therefore a prophet in the Old Testament sense of one who gives God a voice. At any rate, it is very difficult to read him in the context of Christianity without feeling that to be true. He had a vision of history; for him, history has a plot, a beginning, a middle and an end. The cosmos is a poem, it has an order, and each of us has a job to do within that order. The future is necessarily rooted in the past; what we do now is rooted in the past and will affect the generations to come. Virgil is a traditionalist, but do not mistake that word. Nothing could be further from tradition than stagnation, as some might think. One easy way to stagnate, in fact, is to live for the present alone; nothing is so dated as the latest thing. The newspapers, the magazines, the television shows, these give you the sorry chronicle of all that is dead about a culture; they rub off the epidermis,

they give you the nail and hair clippings and, finally, the corpses of history—newspaper files are fittingly called the morgue—whereas the vital sap of history flows in poetry and statesmanship. History, within a culture, is continuous; it is a motion from sometime to some other and the poet is the one who tells us where we stand.

Virgil went to school in Homer, because the root of poetry is there. It was fashionable some years ago to talk about the Epic as a worldwide form; we were told the Gilgamesh story, for example, or the Mahabharata² and the Ramayana³ were epics; but whatever such poems may be, they are not anything like the *Iliad*. Homer is the first epic poet and any other imitates him. This form is peculiar to what we called Western civilization, though that word is scarcely accurate today. (Western civilization prevails in Australia, for example.) The Greeks themselves were convinced that Western civilization was the only kind there was. They called every other barbarian—which certainly did not mean savage because the Greeks had contact with rich and fertile nations, the Persian and Egyptian for example. But the word *culture*, for Greeks, meant not just what people happened to do; rather as Matthew Arnold⁴ said, it meant the best that has been thought and said. And the Greeks were certain that they were different and better.

All arguments about cultural relativity stumble on the Greeks. No matter what theory, anthropological or sociological, you may hold about culture, the *Iliad* is a fact, the Parthenon is a fact, and Plato is a fact. There is nothing like this anywhere else. You can imagine a great Pantheon of all the cultures of the world—but the Greeks will not fit in. Anyone who truly holds the view that all cultures are essentially one, must stumble on the Greeks just as anyone who holds that all religions are the same must stumble on Christians. The late Ananda Coomaraswamy,⁵ the Hindu writer, said of Christians that the best of them had at most risen to proclaim the insufferable slogan that “We all worship the same God—you in your way and I in His.” With all the changes of tone that have come over our relations with other people, there are very few Westerners who really think we have the right to put the white man’s burden down. However repulsive the wording of that phrase may seem in the context of the civil rights movement and the Peace Corps—still, is not that really the burden of the civil rights movement and the Peace Corps? Any real criticism we make of ourselves for having failed the world is made in terms of our failure to make all the people of the world civilized and Christian. We deny the terms sometimes because they seem so arrogant, but what other values are we bringing to the jungles and the slums if not Greek and Christian values? Without these, we are nothing but spoilers. The shameful fact is that we often have been.

Rome is the nexus. Virgil went to school in Homer and Western civilization has gone to school in him ever since. What he learned at school was fortified by life.

He grew up amid the flashing military and political career of Julius Caesar—who take him all in all is, from the secular point of view, the greatest man who ever lived. And Virgil suffered the bitter shocks of mob violence upon Caesar’s assassination and the oriental escapades of Mark Anthony; and then, in his maturity, he grasped those architectonic realities of politics constructed by Augustus in the light of his uncle’s vision—and committed them to verse. The Roman Empire is as much the work of Virgil as of Caesar. The truths that Caesar grasped, he fixed in poetry forever. If you want to have civilization in the Greek sense, the Western sense, you must have roots. You cannot order your life on the newspapers, nor on symbolism; culture is not *kitsch*. The latest novel or the newest drug can only be tested against the best that has been thought and said.

Since the first public readings of the *Aeneid* in the reign of Caesar Augustus and actually also within the time of the reign of Herod the King, Virgil has never been considered less than the second greatest poet, and over the larger period of the two thousand years from then until now has been thought the very first. This astonishing supremacy puts us to the test when we read him: What is our failure—not his—if his poems no longer speak to us. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that Virgil and the Bible have been the only common documents of Western education. It follows, as a very strong probability, that the fortunes of our civilization are connected with the values Virgil fixed in the forms of his poetry. The essential liveliness of Virgil, his revivifying power, is, it seems to me, more important today in what a communist critic of the 1930’s called this “dying culture,” than at any time since the poems were written.

There are those, of course, who think they do not want civilization, who opt for the destruction of the West. I believe that most who hold this view are ignorant. The crisis in the West today, the serious illness, the paralysis of will we suffer, is in very large part the consequence of the fact that a determinate number no longer knows Virgil. That sounds like the opening scene in Molière’s play about the *bourgeois gentilhomme*,⁶ but it is so.

The sociologists say that a certain number—it varies according to the circumstances, sometimes quite a small number—determines society, sets the standards, raises the taste, fixes the fashions, strikes the tone in music, art, and literature. When a determinate number has been brought up on Virgil, you have civilization. When that is not so—you still have civilization for a time, because decay is slow—and so, in short you have what we have now, a world in which, as Yeats⁷ said,

The best lack all conviction

While the worst are full of passionate intensity.

If Virgil had not written the *Aeneid*, we would be savages by now. It is my thesis in this article, 2,000 years after the poem was written, at a distance far from “high-embattled Rome,” that the classical school must

be restored for a determinate number and I should hope some among that number are reading this.

The general decline in education is clearly visible in the step-by-step backward moving of its matter over form. In the 50 years of most recent and rapid decline, the quantity of administrative personnel and buildings has increased exactly in proportion as the quality of education has diminished, until today, a school is first a group of buildings and a superintending force, and only then a faculty and student body. T. E. Page, British classicist and school master of the last generation and editor of Virgil, predicted this half a century ago, but few believed him then:

At the time of the Royal Commission in 1863 the position of classical studies was supreme and unchallenged....Now, however, matters have already much changed, and the whole tendency of drift of events is to still larger and more far-reaching changes. As the number of schools which now rank as "public schools" has much increased, so the competition between them has naturally much increased also, and it has too often taken the form of extravagant expenditures of buildings and the like so that a great school is now also a great establishment, the cost attracting the favour and support of comparatively wealthy parents. Financial considerations, in fact, affect public schools more than they once did, and more than, having regard to the true welfare of education, they ever ought to do. Their noble and richly equipped buildings, their ample and well-ordered grounds please the popular eye and look well in an illustrated paper; but, though these outward things are not without their value, it is certain that they are purchased at too great a cost if their existence induces teachers to consider not what is right, but what is profitable; not what is best, but what is most in demand.

That such a tendency exists today there can be no question, and should it ultimately become dominant, it will canker and kill all liberal education....Such a statement may, perhaps, seem to many intemperate and foolish but there is real risk that under the influence of panic we may some day fling the classics almost entirely overboard.

Intemperate and foolish indeed in 1902, but it has happened. It is difficult now for us to imagine the great headmasters of a century ago—Butler, Arnold, Thring—who were primarily scholars and teachers, not administrators, but head masters. It is even more difficult to imagine the school of earlier centuries in which two or three teachers taught an average of 150 pupils in a single room with not even a janitorial staff or a latrine. In 1838 when the students at Eton⁸ asked for running water in the dormitories they were told, "You will be wanting gas and Turkey carpets next." "Philosophical happiness," said Edmund Burke,⁹ "is to want little."

Philosophic happiness is not mere sentiment. My thesis is in fact the abstract generalization consequent upon a great theme: and that is the substance of this article. If I succeed in giving anyone even the slightest glimpse of Virgil's theme I shall have made my case for the restoration of education.

The *Aeneid* begins with a disaster. The first magnificent scene of the poem is a shipwreck. The first emotion of its hero, fear. His first words, a cry *de profundis*:

East wind and south wind together, and the gusty south-wester, falling prone on the sea, stir it up from its lowest chambers, and roll vast billows to the shore. Behind rises shouting of men and creaking of cordage. In a moment clouds blot sky and daylight from the Teucrians' eyes; black night broods over the deep. The heavens crash with thunder, and the air quivers with incessant flashes; all menaces them with instant death. Straightway Aeneas' frame grows unnerved and chill, and stretching either hand to heaven, he cries thus aloud: "Ah thrice and four times happy they who found their doom in high-embattled Troy before their fathers' faces. Ah son of Tydeus, bravest of the Grecian race, that I could not have fallen on the Ilian plains, and gasped out this my life beneath thine hand! where under the spear of Aeacides lies fierce Hector, lies mighty Sarpedon; where Simois so often caught and whirled beneath his wave, shields and helmets and brave bodies of men."

Rome gave Greece its form and implicates us in the fortunes of the Trojan War. That war is our war, it is the only one we have the right to fight—and it seems to me to be more than accident that Virgil ties us to the losing side. Our history begins in shipwreck too. We are the descendents of Aeneas, victims of the Trojan horse—it should be called the Greek horse really. Now look squarely at Aeneas especially in that first scene—in the very first phrase describing him: "Straightway Aeneas' frame grows unnerved and chill..." But Aeneas is a hero. Many intellectuals have confused heroes with Dick Tracy (the child really is father to the man) and gone on from there to a further unwarranted inference that anyone not like Dick Tracy is an anti-hero. Indeed there are anti-heroes in life and in literature. Theristes in the *Iliad* is an anti-hero, Sinon in the *Aeneid* is another. One of the most interesting things about Sinon—the spy sent to confuse the Trojans over the real import of the wooden horse—is that he is not afraid and has to simulate being "unnerved and chill." We are expressly told he was "confident of his courage, and doubly prepared to spin his snares" or to meet "assured death." The fearless blackguard, cheat, liar, presuming upon the gentle hearts of the Trojan heroes, calling up their sympathy for anyone in trouble—this fearless blackguard, as I say, is one of the great detestables and anti-heroes of all time.

But I have got ahead of the story. All that is filled in later in a flashback. Some of the ships are saved from this first wreck because Neptune soothes the tempest, the turbulence of that first scene ending in one of those enamelled phrases Virgil is famous for; Neptune, we are told, goes "gliding on light wheels along the watery floor."

MacKail translates that brilliantly by stealing the last two words from Milton's *Lycidas*—because Milton had stolen them from here. Disaster, turbulence and peace—that is the order of the poem both in the whole and the parts.

The first heroic simile is thematically significant of this also and it happens, not accidentally, to follow immediately upon that line. Neptune

channels the vast quicksands, and assuages the sea, gliding on light wheels along the watery floor....Even as when oft in

a throng of people strife has risen, and the base multitude rage in their minds and now brands and stones are flying; madness lends arms; then if perchance they catch sight of one reverend for goodness and worth, they are silent and stand by with attentive ear; he with speech sways their temper and soothes their breasts even so has fallen all the thunder of ocean, when riding with forward gaze beneath a cloudless sky the lord of the sea wheels his coursers and lets his gliding chariot fly with loosened rein.

MacKail's uses the word *reverend* to describe him. Virgil actually uses the word *pious*, a much misunderstood and now degraded epithet. It once meant "grave in duty" according to Conington. That one man, "grave in duty" who stills the crowd as Neptune stills the sea...he is Carlyle's Samson, the *prudhomme* of the French chronicles, the *verray parfit* gentle knyght in Chaucer, or Theseus. In his person he is the figure of the theme of Virgil's poem and of our civilization. He is George Washington, whose birth we scarcely celebrate today, and he is Winston Churchill in his finest hour. Even Mark Twain, where you might least expect it, shows him stopping a lynch mob in some southern town in *Huckleberry Finn*. But I started to say that some of the ships, saved from wreck by Neptune, finally beached on a strange shore. Aeneas shakes off his own chill, his own dread, and gives a short, telling exhortation. No frippery, no sophistry, ten hexameters only—he is a man of few words, but what words: This is the one man stilling now the terrors of his men—as Neptune did the sea—and he himself is not at all like Sinon, confident of his courage. Exactly opposite to Sinon who feigns fear, Aeneas, "feigns hope and keeps his anguish hidden deep in his breast." And he says aloud:

O comrades, for not ere now are we ignorant of ill, O tried by heavier fortunes—to these also God will appoint an end. The fury of the Scylla and the roaring recesses of her crags you have come nigh, and known the rocks of the Cyclops. Recall your courage, put sorrow and fear away. This too sometime we shall haply remember with delight. Through chequered fortunes, through many perilous ways, we steer for Latium, where destiny points us a quiet home. There the realm of Troy may rise again. Keep heart, endure till prosperous fortune come.

"Keep heart, endure. This too sometime we shall haply remember with delight."

I have often consoled myself with these lines when trying to learn Latin. The poem in fact may be taken as a figure for education—as for any part of life, that it begins in shipwreck, drives through trouble and one day, one hopes at least, to truth—which is the peace and rest of the intellect. But, of course, he is not directly talking about the intellect.

It is an irony resulting from our systems of classification that Virgil has been the most obvious begetter of classicism, because he has given us also our greatest romance.

Aeneas has been washed ashore at Carthage whose Queen has sympathy for refugees because, as she says, "Me too has a like fortune driven through many a woe...not ignorant of ill I learn to succour the afflicted."

There is a community of those who have learned by suffering. Two famous words sum up this aspect of the theme—the tears of things. Virgil believes this about life, that it really is tears—and that it is good.

Dido's love for Aeneas begins with their common sense of sorrow, which is the origin of all romance—which means that love is tears and that it is good. Dido's love for Aeneas overwhelms us today; it embarrasses us. There is nothing like it in the movies or the magazines. Professor MacKail thought Virgil himself did not intend it to happen. He says:

The story of the love of Dido and its tragic issue had beyond his first intention and almost against his will, taken hold of him, expanded to a greatness and deepened into an intensity unsurpassed in ancient or modern poetry.

Unsurpassed it is, but the speculation is unwarranted; it is in fact a tribute to Virgil's art that it seems as if to us he could not possibly have intended the greatest effect of the poem.

In a scene not even Thomas Hardy¹⁰ has been able to destroy—though he imitated it, nor D. H. Lawrence,¹¹ who imitated it also, nor a hundred operas and movies you have seen even on TV—nature conspires to trap Dido and Aeneas alone. They were on a hunt, then the sudden rain—it is the primordial implication of the sky and the earth and rain in the lives of lovers. I would certainly agree that there is more to this than Virgil would be able to explain, but I should deny he did not intend it. He wrote it and rewrote for ten years and the world has been reading it and re-reading it ever since: and no one has ever been able to destroy it or to do it better or to explain its power:

Meanwhile Dawn has arisen forth of ocean. A chosen company issue from the gates while the morning star is high; they pour forth with meshed nets, toils, broad-headed hunting spears, Massylian horsemen and hounds. At her doorway the Punic princes await their queen, who yet lingers in her chamber, and her horse stands splendid in gold and purple with clattering feet and jaws champing on the foamy bit.

Ladies are always late. If some of the words and names seem strange, they are strange as in a dream, coming from some memory; they are strange, but not foreign.

At last she comes forth amid a great thronging train, girt in a Sidonian mantle, broided with needlework; her quiver is of gold, her tresses gathered into gold, a golden buckle clasps up her crimson gown. Therewithal the Phrygian train advances with joyous Julius (Aeneas' son) and first and foremost of all, Aeneas himself joins her company and mingles his train with hers: even as Apollo, when he leaves wintry Lycia and the streams of Xanthus to visit his mother's Delos, and renews the dance while Cretans and Dryopes and painted Agathyrans mingle clamorous about his altar, himself he treads the Cynthian ridges and plaits his flowing hair with soft heavy sprays and entwines it with gold; the arrows rattle on his shoulder: as lightly as he, went Aeneas...When they are come to the mountain heights and pathless coverts, lo, wild goats driven from the cliff-tops run down the ridge, in another quarter stags speed over the open plain and gather their flying column in a cloud of dust as they leave the hills.

This is the prototype of all the hunting scenes in Chretien de Troyes¹² and all the romances—the colors crimson and gold, the fiery horse champing at the bit, dancing to get on with the chase and then the run... You can see it in the mind's eye, though no hunt we have been on was ever quite like this—still the ones we have been on are the less for that.

Meanwhile the sky begins to thicken and roar aloud. A rain-cloud comes down mingled with hail; the Tyrian train and the men of Troy and Venus' Dardanian grandchild, scatter in fear and seek shelter far over the fields. Streams pour from the hills. Dido and the Trojan captain take covert in the same cavern. Primeval Earth and Juno the bridesmaid give the sign; fires flash out high in the air, witnessing the union, and Nymphs cry aloud on the mountain-top. That day opened the gate of death and the springs of ill. For now Dido reeks not of eye or tongue, nor sets her heart on love in secret: she calls it marriage, and with this word shrouds her blame.

Of course this love must be destructive because it is not marriage:

How leavest thou me to die? (She says at the end.) At least if before thy flight a child of thine had been clasped in my arms—if a tiny Aeneas were playing in my hall, whose face might yet image thine, I would not think myself ensnared and deserted utterly.

There you have a difference between sex and love, so frightfully contrasted by those who think that the worst thing that can happen is the birth of a child. Because she loves him, she wants his child because the child would be a part of him. Dido does not love herself or some degraded pleasure; she loves Aeneas and she wants to be his wife and the mother of his children.

He replies: "*Non sponte sequor.*" "I do not follow of my own will." Which is to say, "I am not my own man."

Out at sea, at dawn, looking back, he sees the flames from Dido's funeral pyre. She had committed suicide. The neo-classic age reduced this tragic conflict to a formula: love and duty. That is correct, but the formula provides no solution. It is an irreducible conflict. In the most influential Book of the *Aeneid*, the sixth, the descent into the realms of death, Aeneas sees her shade and she is mute. Guided by the Sibyl, he descends:

They went darkling through the dusk beneath the solitary night, through the empty dwellings and bodiless realm of Dis; even as one walks in the forest beneath the jealous light of a doubtful moon, when Jupiter shrouds the sky in shadow, and black night blots out the world. Right in front of the doorway, in the entry of the jaws of hell, Grief and avenging Cares have made their bed; there swell wan Sickness and gloomy Eld, and Fear, and ill-counseling Hunger, and loathly Penury, shapes terrible to see; and Death and Travail, and thereby Sleep, Death's kinsman, and the Soul's guilty Joys, and death-dealing War full in the gateway, and the Furies in their iron cells, and mad Discord with blood-stained fillets enwreathing her serpent locks.

...Hither all crowded, and rushed streaming to the bank, matrons and men, and high-hearted heroes dead and done with life, boys and unwedded girls, and children laid young on the bier before their parents' eyes, multitudinous as leaves

fall dropping in the forests at autumn's earliest frost, or birds swarm landward from the deep gulf, when the chill of the year routs them overseas and drives them to sunny lands....

Wailing voices are loud in their ears, the souls of babies crying, whom, taken from sweet life at the doorway and torn from the breast, a dark day cut off and drowned in bitter death....

Here they whom pitiless love has wasted in cruel decay, shrouded in myrtle thickets, not death itself ends their distress.... Among whom Dido the Phoenician fresh from her death-wound, wandered in the vast forest; by her the Trojan hero stood, and knew the dim form through the darkness, even as the moon at the month's beginning to him who sees or thinks he sees her rising through the vapours....

"Unwillingly, O queen, I left thy shores..." he cries. And her silence is the most eloquent speech in the poem.

Virgil has no answer to the conflict between love and duty. Nothing could shake him from the conviction that both Dido and Aeneas are right.

Non sponte sequor—I am not my own man. Aeneas certainly is not. When he finally arrives in Italy after so much suffering, both physical and romantic, he still has half the poem to go, having got through an *Odyssey*, he has an *Iliad* to fight. And the *Aeneid* is still the movement of love and its twisted opposite, which is not so much hate, as the wrong kind of love. The Trojans, and Aeneas with them, had got into all their many troubles in the first place at the instigation of the goddess Juno because her vanity had been slighted by Prince Paris, who presented the golden apple as the prize of beauty to dimpled Venus, rather than to herself; and so she hated the Trojans and their hero Aeneas, especially because he was Venus's son. "If I cannot bend the gods," she cries as he approaches Italy at last, "I'll stir up hell," which sounds like Milton's Satan. Juno sets Alecto loose to start a war. Aeneas does not want war; war is the last thing he wants. The great heroes are never war-mongers; it is for peace that they fight. Alecto the harpy enters into Queen Amata's heart infecting her with frenzy—what amounts to a new religion, in fact. Virgil's description of this demoniacal possession reaches a sublimity of horror:

At her the goddess flings a snake out of her dusky tresses and slips it into her bosom to her very inmost heart, that she may embroil all her house under its maddening magic. Sliding between her raiment and smooth breasts, it coils without touch, and instills its viperous breath unseen; the great serpent turns into the twisted gold about her neck, turns into the long ribbon of her chapelet, inweaves her hair, and winds slippery over her body.

In her frenzy, she is like a top that "runs before the lash and spins in wide gyrations," spreading the infection through the city. And the women,

their breasts kindled with madness, run at once with single ardour to seek out strange dwellings. They have left their homes empty, they throw neck and hair free to the winds.

This is the Bacchic frenzy so terribly documented in Euripides' play, the *Bacchae*, in which a mother, maddened by sex, tears her own son's body to shreds. These myths are not mere phantasies; they represent

the reality of an evil intelligence gnawing at the human heart.

Contrast this fanatic fire, raging in the streets of Latium, with that other fire which illumines Lavinia, Amata's daughter, who finally becomes Aeneas's wife and general mother of the Roman race. She stands dutifully beside her reverend father when

feeding the altars with holy fuel she seemed...to catch fire in her long tresses and burn with flickering flame in all her array, her queenly hair lit up, lit up her jewelled circlet, till enwreathed in smoke and ruddy light, she scattered fire all over the palace.

The distinction between these two kinds of fire is that between the use and abuse of passion. The terrible women incited to riot in the unlawful rites of Bacchus are contrasted with the comely maiden, no less passionate, but lawfully awaiting her lord in the rites of marriage. Since the world is often at pains to deny that marriage has its fires at all and contrasts the Bacchic life with marriage as a flame to a clinker, it would be a wise virgin indeed who trimmed her lamp and read Virgil.

The theme is order. And order is derived from an intention toward some end. The end of love is children. The end of war is peace. The end of all Aeneas's effort is the foundation of an empire based on the law of peace.

Others shall beat out the breathing bronze to softer lines, I believe it well; shall draw living lineaments from the marble; the cause shall be more eloquent on their lips; their pencil shall portray the pathways of heaven, and tell the stars in their arising; be thy charge O Roman, to rule the nations in thine empire, this shall be thine art; to ordain the law of peace, to be merciful to the conquered and beat the haughty down.

Every generation is divided at this line and has been since the Fall of Man, I think. As the sheeted dead once squeaked and gibbered in the Roman streets, so they do today, and make a lot of noise. They get publicity. There is a clamor in the streets right now. Why not be new? Homer is dead. Virgil is dead. Let us have a literature of our own. Let us have a God of our own. In a word, why not be modern? I am not opposed to being alive; but I am opposed to being modern—because that really means *destructive*.

Gabriel Marcel, the French philosopher, in a book called *The Decline of Wisdom*, says that an American Officer in a town in Burgundy which had virtually been destroyed in World War II said to a friend of his: "You should be grateful to us for bombing all this old stuff. Now you can have a clean new town."

There are some, it would seem, who would like a new literature—one would hesitate to call it clean. Well, it all depends upon your view of history.

Evelyn Waugh ends his novel *Scott-King's Modern Europe* with this interesting, I think prophetic, colloquy between an ambitious school administrator and a classics man:

The headmaster sent for Scott-King.

"You know," he said, "we are starting this year with fifteen fewer classical specialists than we had last term?"

"I thought that would be about the number."

"As you know, I'm an old Greats man myself. I deplore it as much as you do. But what are we to do? Parents are not interested in producing the "complete" man any more. They want to qualify their boys for jobs in the modern world. You can hardly blame them, can you?"

"Oh yes," said Scott-King, "I can and do."

"I always say you are a much more important man here than I am. One couldn't conceive of Granchester without Scott-King. But has it ever occurred to you that a time may come when there will be no more classical boys at all?"

"Oh yes, often."

"What I was going to suggest was—I wonder if you will consider taking some other subject as well as the classics? History, for example, preferably economic history?"

"No, headmaster."


"But, you know, there may be something of a crisis ahead."

"Yes, headmaster."

"Then what do you intend to do?"

"If you approve, headmaster, I will stay as I am here as long as any boy wants to read the classics. I think it would be very wicked indeed to do anything to fit a boy for the modern world."

"It's a short-sighted view, Scott-King."

"There, headmaster, with all respect, I differ from you profoundly. I think the most long-sighted view it is possible to take." 

Dr. John Senior was a professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Classics whose career spanned the latter half of the 20th century. While teaching at Cornell University in the late 1950's he converted to Catholicism and shortly thereafter moved to the University of Wyoming. Later he taught at the University of Kansas, the most well-known period of his life, where he was instrumental in several hundred conversions and many vocations. He was widely known and respected in the traditional movement across the globe. He was among the early great pioneers of traditionalism; he knew and counted as friends men such as Archbishop Lefebvre, Walter Matt, Michael Davies, Fr. Marchosky, Fr. Miceli, Dr. Marra, Hamish Fraser, *et al.* He died in 1999 and is buried in Our Lady of Peace cemetery in St. Mary's, KS. This is the first appearance of this work by Dr. Senior, published posthumously from his notes of the lecture he gave at the University of Wyoming in 1967.

¹ John William MacKail, 1859-1945, Scottish literary historian, now best remembered as a Virgil scholar. His *Latin Literature* (1895) is a standard work.

² Sanskrit word, meaning literally the Great Bharata (Story). It is one of the two great epics of the Hindus.

³ A Sanskrit epic detailing the adventures of Ramachandra, the seventh incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu.

⁴ 1822-88, English poet and critic, whose "Dover Beach" is a classic. He was an inspector of elementary schools from 1851-86.

⁵ 1877-1947, art historian. After 1917, he was fellow for research in Indian, Persian, and Moslem art in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

⁶ Jean Baptiste Poquelin, 1622-73, French dramatist, actor, and master of comedy. The play *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670; Engl. tr., *The Merchant Gentleman*) is a comedy of character ridiculing the parvenu or social climber.

⁷ William Butler Yeats (yāts), 1865-1939, Irish poet and playwright.

⁸ Eton School, 20 miles west of central London on the left bank of the Thames opposite Windsor. The largest and most famous of the English public schools, founded by King Henry VI in 1440.

⁹ 1729-97, British statesman and political writer. His *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) made him the spokesman of European conservatism.

¹⁰ 1840-1928, English novelist and poet, whose novels were violently denounced as books depicting indecency and immorality.

¹¹ 1885-1930, English author whose novels include *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *Women in Love* (1920), and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928).

¹² Late 12th century, French poet, author of the first great literary treatments of the Arthurian legend.



Interviews with Archbishop Albert Malcolm Ranjith

Secretary of the Congregation for Divine
Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

Archbishop Albert Malcolm Ranjith [rŭn'jĭt], Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, recently granted to the press two interviews concerning the liturgy in which he recalled that the Tridentine Mass is not "outlawed." In so doing he set himself in radical opposition to his predecessor, Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino.



Interview given to the Press Agency *i.media* of Rome (June 22, 2006)

Archbishop Ranjith: The liturgical life of the Church is the specific time when the faithful are given the possibility of entering into a more intimate relationship with the Lord. In the liturgical life, the Gospel and the faith become a choice. Faith is not only in the intellect; it becomes something of the heart and leads to an engagement. In the liturgical experience this relationship with the Lord, which is faith, is strengthened and becomes life. For this reason the liturgy is most important. The Council Vatican II greatly desired this renewal, this *aggiornamento*, in which the faithful understand what they believe or seek to understand it. Thus the liturgy should be the vehicle for this renewal. But, unfortunately, after the Council certain changes were made without sufficient reflection, in haste, in the enthusiasm of the moment and as a rejection of certain exaggerations from the past. This led to a situation which was the very opposite of what was desired.

For instance...

We can see that the liturgy went in the wrong direction. For instance, it abandoned the sacred and the mystic. It created a confusion between the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood which is a specific vocation. In other words, there is a confusion between the role of the laity and that of the priests. There is also the concept of the Eucharist considered as a common banquet instead of laying stress on the memorial of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary and its sacramental efficiency for salvation. There are still other changes, like the fact of having "protestantized" the churches by emptying them.... These changes of mentality weakened the role of the liturgy instead of

reinforcing it. Such was not the idea behind *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy, promulgated by Paul VI on December 4, 1963–*Ed.*] which desired that people participate in the liturgy, that it be more profound, and place them in contact with the Word of God and the meaning of catechesis. This caused other negative results for the life of the Church. Thus, in order to meet the rise of secularism in the world, we ought not have become secularists ourselves. We ought to have delved deeper, for the world increasingly needs the Spirit and interiority. Our abandon of certain aspects made us lose an opportunity. In today's youth, including young priests, we can feel a nostalgia for the past, a nostalgia for certain aspects which have been lost. There is in Europe a very positive awakening.

What can the Congregation for Divine Worship do in this respect?

We want to remind everybody, and especially those with responsibilities like the bishops, the liturgical commissions, or the researchers, that these aspects must not be forgotten. We do not say that we must completely abandon what we gained with the Council, like for instance the use of the vernacular, the extensive use of Sacred Scripture, *etc.* But, while reinforcing what we gained at the Council, we must also strengthen what was acquired in the past.

Does this mean that the pre-conciliar missal of St. Pius V must be recognized again?

This question is more and more frequent. This also shows that some would like to use it. The Church must be sensitive to such desires, which people do feel, and she should restore some aspects of the liturgy of the past. I do not know whether this should be by an approbation of the missal of St. Pius V or by a revamping of the present missal [of Paul VI–*Ed.*]. The Pope knows all that, he knows these issues, he is very much aware of the problem, he is thinking about it and we are waiting for his directions.

Was the missal of St. Pius V really forbidden after Vatican II?

It was never abolished or forbidden. But because of what happened with the faithful of Archbishop Lefebvre, this Mass took on a certain identity that is unjustified.

Does this mean the Church should, in some way, “rehabilitate” the missal of St. Pius V?

That’s what we expect, that the Pope will make a decision on this proposal. Even if the Mass of St. Pius V is rehabilitated, the post-conciliar Mass of Paul VI must be thoroughly studied and perfected where this is possible. This is what some call the reform of the reform. If the Mass of St. Pius V is approved once again, this does not mean the Mass of Paul VI will remain unchanged. We must deepen it more to make it even more beautiful, more transcendent.

Is there an urgency to make these decisions?

When one is in a hurry to make decisions, one can fall into error. We must reflect, and above all pray for the Pope and the Church, and listen to what the Lord wants of us without emotion, but with an absolute objectivity, looking at the past, what we have won, where we have made mistakes, and how we can recover these lost aspects. The bishops are called to become pastors loving their people, to become agents of salvation for their faithful, not only a political salvation, but also an interior and profound one. This love must necessarily be expressed in the joy of consecrating oneself to a joyous, mystical, and sacred liturgical life.

Interview conducted by Antoine-Marie Izoard

la-Croix.com

From the June 25, 2006 edition of *La Croix*.

One gets the feeling that, for Benedict XVI, the liturgy is a priority.

And with good reason. When one goes over the history of the liturgy through the centuries, one can see how important is the need for every man to hear God and make contact with the other world. The Church has always been conscious that her liturgy must be oriented toward God and convey a profoundly mystical atmosphere. For some years now there has been a tendency to forget this, to substitute a spirit of complete liberty that puts great emphasis on invention, without any rootedness or depth.

Would this be why the liturgy has become the object of polemics, debates in the Church, even a cause of serious divisions?

I think this is a Western phenomenon. The secularization in the West has caused a strong division between those who seek refuge in mysticism while forgetting about life, and those who render the liturgy

banal, depriving it of its function of mediating between this world and the next. In Asia, for example in Sri Lanka, my country, each person, whatever his religion, is very conscious of the human need to be oriented toward the other world. And that must translate into everyday life. I think one should not lower the sense of the divine to the level of man, but on the contrary, to seek to raise man up to the supernatural level, where we can approach the divine Mystery. Now, the temptation to become a protagonist of this divine Mystery, to try to control it is strong in a society that deifies man, as does Western society. Prayer is a gift: the liturgy is not determined by man, but by what God causes to be born in him. It implies an attitude of adoration toward the Creator-God.

Do you think the conciliar reform has gone too far?

It’s not a question of being anti-conciliar or post-conciliar, nor conservative or progressive! I think the liturgical reform of Vatican II never “took off.” Moreover, this reform does not date from Vatican II: in fact it preceded the Council, it was born with the liturgical movement at the beginning of the 20th century. If we pause over the decree *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of Vatican II, the issue was to make the liturgy the entryway to the Faith, and the changes on the subject had to appear in an organic way, by taking account of tradition, and not in a hasty way. There were numerous shifts, which made the real sense of the liturgy disappear from view. We can say that the orientation of liturgical prayer in the post-conciliar reform was not always the reflection of the texts of Vatican II, and in this way, we can speak about a necessary correction, about a reform in the reform. We must regain the liturgy, in the spirit of the Council.

Concretely, how will this come about?

Today, the problems of the liturgy revolve around questions of language (vernacular or Latin) and of the position of the priest, turned toward the congregation or turned toward God. I’m going to surprise you: nowhere in the conciliar decree do you find it said that the priest should from now on face the congregation, neither do you see a prohibition of Latin! If the use of the vernacular is allowed, notably for the Liturgy of the Word, the decree certainly specifies that the use of the Latin language will be preserved in the Latin rite. On these subjects, we expect the Pope to give us directions.

Must we say to all those who, in a great spirit of obedience, followed the post-conciliar reforms that they were mistaken?

No, one must not make an ideological problem out of this. I remark how young priests here love to celebrate in the Tridentine rite. One must clearly point out that this rite, that of the missal of St. Pius V, is not “outlawed.” Should we encourage it more? The Pope will decide. But it is certain that a new generation is demanding a greater orientation toward mystery. It’s not a question of form, but of substance. In order to speak about the liturgy, one must not only have a scientific or

historico-theological mind, but above all an attitude of meditation, prayer, and silence. Once again, it's not a matter of being progressive or conservative, but simply one of permitting man to pray, to listen to the voice of the Lord. What happens in the celebration of the glory of the Lord is not merely a human reality. If one forgets this mystical aspect, everything gets foggy and becomes confused. If the liturgy loses its mystical and celestial dimension, who will then help man to liberate himself from egoism and self-slavery? The liturgy must first be a way of liberation, opening man to the dimension of infinity.

Interview conducted by Isabelle de Gaulmyn



On July 13, Archbishop Ranjith gave a new interview to Antoine-Marie Izoard from the *i.media* Agency where he commented again on his declarations to *La Croix* of June 25.

You recently affirmed in the French Catholic daily *La Croix* that the liturgical reform of Vatican II had “never taken off.” These words surprised many people...

I am surprised, because I did not say that and it's not true. I meant that the conciliar reform—with the spiritual movement expected to accompany it, with profound catechesis that was supposed to renew the Church faced with increasing secularism—had produced results that are not so positive. The reform definitely took off. Thus, the use of the vernacular language is a positive thing, for everyone in the world can understand what is happening at the altar or during the readings. Also positive is the sense of communion which developed. But these elements have sometimes been a little too accentuated while abandoning certain positive aspects of the tradition of the Church. Cardinal Ratzinger himself, in the preface to the book *Turned Toward the Lord: The Orientation of Liturgical Prayer* by Fr. Uwe Michael Lang, recalled that the abandonment of Latin and the orientation of the celebrant toward the people were not part of the Council.

For some who have faithfully followed the Council your words were surprising.

It's not a question of abandoning the Council, because it has already influenced the Church greatly, as in its opening to the world. But, at the same time, it could be necessary to deepen what we already possess. As the Council said, an “organic” change could be necessary, without the jarring aspects, without abandoning the past. The encyclical *Ecclesia de*

Eucharistia of John-Paul II [published in April 2003—Ed.] and the instruction *Redemptoris Sacramentum* (April 2004) that he had requested from the Congregation, definitely indicate that something was not going well. The Pope spoke at the time with a certain bitterness about what was happening. Thus, one cannot say that everything was going well, but one cannot say either that everything was bad. The reforms of the Council, in the way they had been translated and put in place, have not born the hoped-for fruit.


Concretely, what must be done?

There are two extremes to be avoided: to permit every priest or bishop to do as they please, which would create confusion, or on the contrary, to completely abandon a vision adapted to the modern context and to wrap oneself up in the past. Today, these two extremes continue to grow. What is the right way?...It's good to reflect a moment, to seriously celebrate and improve what we have today.

Should we expect a pontifical document or one from your congregation on this subject?

In his book *The Spirit of the Liturgy* [published in German in 2000, then in French in 2001—Ed.], Cardinal Ratzinger presented a very complete overview of the question. I think that the Pope is very conscious of what's happening, that he studies the question and that something must be done in order to move forward. He will take measures to show us with what seriousness we must celebrate the liturgy. He has the responsibility to see to it that the liturgy becomes a sign of edification of the faith and not a sign of scandal. For if the liturgy is not capable of changing Christians and making them become heroic witnesses of the Gospel, then she will not have fulfilled her true mission. He who has participated in the Mass must leave the church convinced that his social, moral, political, and economic engagement is a Christian engagement.

Are liturgical abuses really that widespread?

Every day, we receive so many letters, signed, where people lament numerous abuses: priests who do as they please, bishops who close their eyes or even justify what their priests are doing in the name of “renewal.”...We cannot remain silent. It is our responsibility to be vigilant. For, in the end, people are going to go to the Tridentine Mass and our churches will be empty. The Tridentine Mass does not belong to the Lefebvrists. It's time to stop the confrontations and see if we have been faithful to the instructions of the conciliar constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. This is why we need discipline for what we do on the altar. The rules are laid out in the Roman Missal and the documents of the Church....

Taken from issue No.139 of *DICI*, the Press Agency of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Do persons who arrive late for Mass every Sunday commit a sin?

Many lukewarm Catholics ignore the two aspects of their Sunday obligation. The first is to be present physically from the beginning until the end of Mass. The second is to assist at Mass with attention, that is in a prayerful manner. Persons who deliberately and through their own fault fail in either of these elements do not fully satisfy their Sunday obligation.

The theologians agree that a person who misses a substantial part of the Mass through his own fault commits a mortal sin, and that if it is a lesser part of the Mass it is only a venial sin, but it is still sinful if it is culpable, through negligence or deliberation. It is considered a substantial part of the Mass if a person arrives after the Offertory, whereas it is considered a lesser part if he arrives at any time up until the Offertory. In such a case, the person ought to wait for the next Mass, if there is one, and assist at the part of the second Mass that he missed at the first Mass. Clearly, anybody can arrive late once in a while simply because he is not well organized. However, a person who regularly arrives late every Sunday cannot be excused of culpability; and, furthermore, he gives grave scandal to his fellow parishioners. How, indeed, can somebody rush into church off the street, enter Mass when it is well advanced, and then truly be recollected to pray and offer it as he ought? Such a practice rapidly engenders indifference to sacred and holy things.

Is it permissible to go to the bathroom during Sunday Mass?


In itself, leaving the church for a couple of minutes for a bathroom stop during Mass does not break the assistance at Mass, for a notable part of the Mass is not missed. However, if a person were to leave for the Canon of the Mass, including the Consecration, he would have missed a notable portion of the Mass.

This being said, it remains very important to maintain the principle of discipline, namely, that one satisfy the needs of nature before and after Holy Mass, but not during. Whereas it is understandable that parents with very young children might have to take them out for the bathroom, it is not to be expected that this continue to be the case with children who have the use of reason, and especially not during Sunday Mass during and after the sermon. Parents must teach their children discipline, and adults ought to give a good example in this regard.

How could Archbishop Lefebvre have signed the documents of Vatican II?

The Archbishop himself constantly and repeatedly stated that he signed all but two documents, but did not sign the two worst documents, namely those on Religious Liberty (*Dignitatis Humanae*) and the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*). When it was pointed out that his signature was on these documents, he responded that it was the list of the bishops present for the vote that he signed, but not the documents themselves.

Bishop Tissier de Mallerai, in his biography of the Archbishop (*Marcel Lefebvre*, pp.312-13), maintains that he had a memory lapse, and that he did in fact sign those documents, but afterwards forgot about it. Although this would be comprehensible after a 20-year interval, it does seem a little surprising to affirm that the Archbishop would have erred on such an important point. Nevertheless, whatever it was that he signed (and it may not have been clear to the bishops at the time), it is certainly true that he continued voting against these two documents every time they were presented, until the very day of their promulgation.

Be that as it may, the signing of these documents, if it did actually take place, can easily be understood. For the Archbishop did not state that Vatican II was openly and explicitly heretical, but simply that it contained dangerous errors that favored heresy. It was for this reason that he was willing to accept Vatican II “interpreted in the light of Tradition”—which means excluding those errors that are contrary to the Church’s magisterial teaching (such as religious liberty and ecumenism). Consequently, it would not have been in contradiction with his principles to have signed documents that could be “interpreted in the light of Tradition.” This is the explanation of his certainly having signed other documents that also contain errors, such as *Dei Verbum*, which contains serious errors on the sources of revelation, and *Lumen Gentium*, which contains serious errors on the Church. Furthermore, the fact that he constantly and unchangingly stood up against the errors of Vatican II from the very time of the Council indicates that he cannot be incriminated for a moment in adhering to these errors or professing his faith in an ambiguous manner. The question of whether or not he actually signed these documents is consequently a rather irrelevant historical detail. 

si si no no

THE ANGELUS ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTICLE REPRINT

Let your speech be, "Yes, yes," "No, no"; whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37) • September 2006
Reprint #71

St. Pius X and the Duel Between Modern Thought and Catholic Theology

PART

3

CONCLUSION

P R O F E S S O R M A T T E O D ' A M I C O

Modernism

After a rather long but necessary exposition, we can now begin a rapid analysis of *Pascendi Gregis*. Let us not forget that our objective was specifically to understand as well as possible the genesis of the forms of thought against which the great pontiff St. Pius X fought, the genesis of this *bad philosophy* that polluted, or rendered less effective, Christian philosophy and

René Descartes
Friedrich Nietzsche
Gottfried Leibniz

Pope St. Pius X
St. Thomas Aquinas
St. Augustine

theology, and led to the noxious success of modernist thought.

If we have understood the premises, and if you have accepted my interpretive proposition, according to which idealism, as well as Marxism, constitutes a violent return of ancient gnosis, then it is easy enough to take the next step. If idealism is the last form of Western metaphysics, and if we are still in its shadow, we are *de facto* under a heavily heretical and gnostic shadow, even beyond, obviously, the intentions and conscious choice of the authors.

It was on these theoretical bases, especially in France,¹ a country in which the Church was the object of terrible persecutions,² that philosophy developed in a way that was incapable of withstanding the ground swell of modern subjectivism and immanentism. We know who the authors are; they are the authors *Pascendi* does not directly name, but which are substantially, notoriously, the authors whom St. Pius X and the theologians who helped him in the redaction of the Encyclical had in mind: Laberthonnière, Loisy, Le Roy, and Blondel in particular. Blondel's case even made some noise, and everyone knows that Ernesto Bonaiuti, the Italian modernist *par excellence*, while in the seminary secretly got hold of a copy of the French philosopher's *L'Action* because it was a book forbidden by the Church and intently read by all those who were avid for novelties.

Among all these modernist philosophers we find common philosophical principles that we are now in a position to understand. We should now be able to grasp the philosophical and cultural essence of modernism, its underlying structure.

Laberthonnière,³ if we schematize the meaning of his thought, tells us, using categories that had been developed in modern thought, that *truth is only such in the measure that we recreate it*. If I open the Catechism of St. Pius X, I read that the principle mysteries of Christianity are: **1)** the unity and trinity of God; and **2)** the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Laberthonnière tells us: no, that's not right; I cannot simply receive from

the exterior a clear, absolutely limpid, dogmatic truth about which there can be no confusion even if we are faced with a mystery, but a mystery that is clearly stated; that is just not right. Rather, I must recreate in myself this truth, which amounts to saying that nothing can be true except that which I form in some way within myself, by reflecting, by reasoning, by listening to myself, by entering into myself, by *descending within myself*. Do you remember the idea of the Cabala: enter in oneself and discover God within? Here we encounter the same idea, in a certain sense. There is no value in the study and objective apprenticeship of dogma; there is only value in a truth that I construct, so to speak, interiorly, that I draw forth from myself. There is no clearer idea of what we mean by immanentism and subjectivism in theology.

Loisy⁴ in turn tells us that the essential of the Faith is not in dogmas, but in immediate and subjective religious experience of a purely spiritual type. There is a vague religious experience that must not necessarily be established or translated by dogmatic affirmations that my mind understands as clear ideas, but, precisely, must be an experience that is only authentic if it is immediate and subjective, true before all else on the existential plane. Note that it is difficult to resist an idea of this kind, for it is inevitably seductive. Indeed, it is clear to everyone that, for example, my feeling of love for a person is true if it is immediate and subjective, and if I really feel it. Indeed, how could I think that I loved someone if I did not feel what I say that I do?

There is indeed something comprehensible—that's obvious, things don't just spring out of nowhere by chance—in this modernist thesis, at least from the standpoint of psychology. But, on the basis of these premises, it lacks the kerygmatic, or proclamatory, dimension of the Christian Faith. The eyewitnesses of supernatural events, which the Apostles are first and foremost, announce to us these events at the same time as the words and the revelation given by the One who produced them and who is the protagonist; and I, *ex auditu*, by hearing this truth and by coming to the conclusion that the testimony is credible, as is the Church that transmits this testimony to me and provides me its correct interpretation, adhere to it, believe in it. Of course, this occurs through the influence

¹ This is not surprising, for it was there that the Revolution was born and where it was particularly furious, and thus where, if orthodoxy and Tradition have always been defended, the destructive force of the Revolution there has long been.

² It suffices to reread the history of the sanctuary of Lourdes, for example, in order to get an idea of the legal obstacles that the Masonic Republican government erected in its desire to prevent the Church from having the land. The anti-Catholic persecution was expressed in thousands of other acts and laws.

³ Lucien Laberthonnière [Oratorian] (1860-1932), *Essais de philosophie religieuse* (1903), *Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec* (1904), *Sur la voie du catholicisme* (1912), *Études sur Descartes* (1935), *Études de philosophie cartésienne et premiers écrits philosophiques* (1937).

⁴ Alfred Loisy (1857-1940), *L'Évangile et l'Église* (1902), *Autour d'un petit livre* (1903) (these are the two works from which were excerpted in large part the propositions or theses condemned in *Pascendi* and in the decree *Lamentabili*), *La religion d'Israël* (1901), *Le quatrième évangile* (1903), *La religion* (1917), *La discipline intellectuelle* (1919), *La morale humaine* (1923). Still unrivaled in finesse and profundity, see the critiques of Loisy's fanciful exegesis developed by G. Ricciotti in his *Life of Jesus*.

of grace and catechesis and my understanding of the teaching, but it must not be forgotten that the starting point is the proclamation, and that even the New Testament, as written document, follows and does not precede it (lest it be transformed into a sort of Lutheran-Calvinist “Koran”).

Would Christianity have come into being without an announcement, one would like to ask Laberthonnière and Loisy. But the answer is clear: No. Man had already had numerous religious experiences thousands of years before when he lived in the caves, where he painted bulls, arrows and men with their stylized bows, but *religious experience* does not signify Christianity. Christianity signifies God who becomes incarnate and speaks, who works miracles that testify that He can only really be God made man. I accept the things revealed by the Lord; thus there is an adherence of the mind, and not just feeling. If the hard nugget of Christianity is suppressed (that is to say, ultimately, if *apologetics* as the demonstration of the credibility and authenticity of the Christian Faith even in purely rational terms is suppressed), then everything crumbles, and no life of faith worthy of the name is possible any longer.

According to Le Roy,⁵ *the dogmas are merely symbols of moral exigencies*: the Faith is reduced to morality. This approach, which is in fact completely heretical, is based upon upon the philosophical principle represented by Bergson’s teaching on the immediacy of intuitive thought, which must have the absolute certitude of lived life: only what is living is true, a theme that had already been developing in German circles (with Simmel, for example) and which will erupt in the existentialism of Barth, Jaspers, and Heidegger. Only the praxis in which I am ensconced on the existential plane is true. A static truth, immobile, immutable, capable of preceding and transcending my reason, and to which my reason bends by faith, such a truth cannot be true. But immediacy, for whomever knows the weaknesses of Bergsonian and existentialist thought, is a *myth*, and we know that it is, on the contrary, eminently unstable.

On the basis of this reading of religion and the life of faith developed by modernism, it is impossible not to slip into the most extreme relativism and subjectivism on both the moral and the dogmatic levels, with all the consequences which it is unnecessary to develop here analytically, because, among other reasons, they can be reduced to the notion of the demolition of the Catholic Church (or self-demolition when it is carried out

by religious, and in particular by a more or less significant part of the teaching Church).⁶ Cornelio Fabro has made an insightful remark about modern atheism: either God is understood in the totality of His attributes, the attributes of the Christian God, or else philosophy falls into atheism. Obviously, this reasoning holds all the more true for theology. Thus when philosophy, for the sake of convenience or to better dialogue with the world or to be more politically correct, renounces a single attribute of the Christian God or a single article of its perennial doctrine, it slides inexorably towards atheism: modernism proves this all too clearly. Moreover, St. Thomas has already explained how the salvation and the integrity of the spiritual life of a person are compromised by the renunciation of the least part of the truths of Faith: to disbelieve a part of the *depositum* or to disbelieve all the *depositum* are two dimensions spiritually and morally equivalent. Today, it seems that one can say, think, or do anything while continuing to believe oneself to be Catholic.⁷ Many modernists ended up by losing the Faith, at least formally.

We cannot conclude this extremely brief summary of modernist thought without saying a

⁶ Apropos of efforts to destroy the Catholic Church, we know that Freemasonry is at the forefront. In this regard, a few interesting observations can be made concerning the most important and influential Italian modernist, Ernesto Bonaiuti [an excommunicated, defrocked priest, d. 1946–Ed.]. In 1904, his brother Alarico joined the *Veritas* Lodge of the Great Lodge of the Orient at Tunis, beginning an important career in Masonry. In 1920, Bonaiuti—the Grand Orient boasts of it, because the Freemasons quite openly publish their role in modern history—appointed a specialist in Masonic symbolism to head a review he had founded (information provided by the website of the Grand Orient of Italy). This does not necessarily mean that Bonaiuti was a Freemason (at least I do not have information on that score), but it is interesting to observe this curious family tie.

⁷ An episode I experienced recently will perhaps be instructive on this point. I had an occasion to talk with some people who believe themselves to be, I think, good Catholics, upon their return from an ecumenical study week organized by the Secretariat for Ecumenical Activities (SEA). Participants included Catholic theologians, rabbis, Protestant and Waldensian pastors, etc. At one point my interlocutors listed four “discoveries” they made during the session: Mary is not a virgin, priestly celibacy is a medieval invention introduced for reasons of power and inheritance, Jesus is only a man very beloved by God, the Trinity is a post-biblical notion invented by medieval theologians that has no relation to Scripture. Other ideas that emerged: in sexuality, there is nothing wrong (*sic!*); one must not speak of priests, but only of pastors; an atheist is someone who does not love, not someone who does not believe. Since the acts of the SEA are generally published, the following question arises: how is it that no authority in the Roman Curia has warned, excommunicated, or punished in some way the misdeeds of a congress organized by Catholics that allows people to adopt ideas such as those I have named? Confronted by error and heresy, the Authority’s silence risks signifying complicity and approbation, not to mention scandal for the faithful.

⁵ E. Le Roy (1870-1954), *Science et philosophie* (1899-1900); *Dogme et critique* (1907), *L’exigence idéaliste et le fait de l’évolution* (1927), *Le problème de Dieu* (1929).

word about Blondel.⁸ This philosopher develops and brings to its ultimate conclusions the *method of immanence* named and condemned by *Pascendi* several times. Blondel is the real grand master of numerous thinkers and theologians of the 20th century, and, in fact, he had an enormous, extraordinary influence. He also wrote under the pseudonym Bernard de Saily in the review *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, which was the most important French modernist publication. After the promulgation of *Pascendi*, he prudently retired, but his influence on the theological culture of the 20th century remained very great.

What is the essence of the method of immanence? Blondel carries out the following philosophical operation: since it is impossible to reach God by the classic ways of natural theology and through rational and universally rigorous demonstrations (one must not forget the climate of irrationality on the one hand, and on the other the scientific and anti-metaphysical bent of the philosophy of the late 19th century), it is necessary to show how religion, and in particular the Christian religion, is the only possible and fully satisfying response to the incessant struggle of man with himself, since as a subject endowed with will and acting in the world, man otherwise finds himself destined to a continual and irremediable failure. Action that is open and unceasingly renewed by man's will condemns the subject to a negative dialectic which cannot but be resolved in a complete opening to the supernatural, in a resolute yes to God. The Blondelian methodological critique consists, in short, in showing that, in the finite nature of man, there is a structural need for the infinite, that is to say the need for God. The inescapable ontological poverty of man gives testimony of his natural vocation to believe, and of his need for God as a need not temporally or culturally given, but inscribed in his essence at the deepest level.⁹

It is necessary to open oneself to the Faith because man, in his effort to will, in this negative dialectic of action, in this defeat that he endures repeatedly in his clash against the inertia and solidity of the world, cannot, by himself, satisfy the need for meaning of which his action itself is a witness. Man, at the extreme limit of his human

possibilities, opens himself to God as to something he finds, so to speak, naturally in conformity with his need for truth and plenitude. In this philosophical perspective, God becomes the answer to a need of man, God is born, is based upon, and is credible because He responds to my needs, these needs that I have explored and to the limits of which I have reached, when I knew how to descend into the play of my will and my desire. Such is the essential kernel of Blondel's thought.

Pascendi

It was at this juncture, against this thought, that the Encyclical *Pascendi* was written (preceded a few months earlier, it must not be forgotten, by the Decree *Lamentabili* of July 3, 1907, which is at least as important as the great encyclical). *Pascendi* was promptly attacked and accused by the most progressive element of the Catholic world, of being a reactionary text and of bringing to a dramatic halt the advance of Christian thought. In reality, we know that it is an extraordinary text, especially in regard to philosophy, because of the finesse with which it comprehends the essential methodology and metaphysics of modernism.

The first important notion developed in the encyclical underscores that the modernist attack against the Church is tragic because carried out with duplicity. Before, the heretic would leave the Church; today, he stays in the Church: the strategy has changed. The encyclical points out the action of a strategy that we might term "Gramscian," the conquest of cultural hegemony by a Bolshevik minority.¹⁰

¹⁰ We are using the category of *Bolshevism* to designate the systematic recourse to lying, violence, and deceit by a minority in the pursuit of gaining power. It should not be forgotten either that all the modern revolutions have always been revolutions led by disciplined minorities convinced of the legitimacy of the subversion of order, even against the overwhelming majority of the citizens, and this is manifestly verified for the first time with the Jacobin movement during the French Revolution (even though the *primum* was constituted by the revolutionary attempts of the Anabaptists during the 16th century and by Cromwell's Puritan Revolution in the 17th). A disorganized and passive majority has no chance of resisting an organized minority that acts cohesively with military discipline (cf. G. Mosca, *The Political Class* [Italian; Bari, 1966, 1994]). The strategy of the innovators during Vatican II respected this rule perfectly: the reforms, and in first place the liturgical reform, were certainly neither expected nor requested by the multitude of the faithful, who were on the contrary disconcerted, but were imposed by a minority of neo-modernist bishops, capable of steering the choices of the Council and of stirring up an artificial execration towards conservative priests, bishops, and theologians (cf. also G. Baget Bozzo, *The Antichrist* [Italian; Milan, 2001], a book that, except for a few heterodox opinions on the theme of the eternal pain of hell for the damned, grasps with great finesse and depth the "political" and cultural dynamics that engendered and guided the Council and the post-Council, underlining the aggressiveness of the Protestantizing modernist minority).

⁸ Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), *L'Action: Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique* (1893); *Lettres sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine en matière apologétique* (1896); *Histoire et Dogme* (1904).

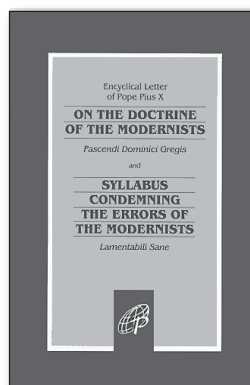
⁹ Let us remark that the theological problem posed by the *method of immanence* is the risk of an almost absolute continuity between the natural order and the supernatural order, that is to say, a confusion between the two orders. If this distinction is suppressed, then in a certain sense the very idea of Revelation is suppressed, and, consequently, faith *ex auditu*.

Today, says St. Pius X, the attack is coming from within: those who apostatize from the Catholic Faith stay in the Church.¹¹ Let us observe with what clarity and depth St. Pius X describes the modernists, understanding not only their ideology, but even the recesses of their psychology:

Let authority rebuke them as much as it pleases—they have their own conscience on their side and an intimate experience which tells them with certainty that what they deserve is not blame but praise. Then they reflect that, after all there is no progress without a battle and no battle without its victims, and victims they are willing to be like the prophets and Christ Himself. They have no bitterness in their hearts against the authority which uses them roughly, for after all it is only doing its duty as authority. Their sole grief is that it remains deaf to their warnings, because delay multiplies the obstacles which impede the progress of souls, but the hour will most surely come when further delay will be impossible, for if the laws of evolution may be checked for a while, they cannot be finally evaded. And thus they go their way, reprimands and condemnations notwithstanding, masking an incredible audacity under a mock semblance of humility. While they make a pretense of bowing their heads, their minds and hands are more boldly intent than ever on carrying out their purposes. And this policy they follow willingly and wittingly, both because it is part of their system that authority is to be stimulated but not dethroned, and because it is necessary for them to remain within the ranks of the Church in order that

they may gradually transform the collective conscience. And in saying this, they fail to perceive that they are avowing that the collective conscience is not with them, and that they have no right to claim to be its interpreters. It is thus, Venerable Brethren, that for the Modernists, whether as authors or propagandists, there is to be nothing stable, nothing immutable in the Church.¹²

St. Pius X quite rightly affirms that the snare is all the more insidious as it is laid within the interior of the Church. The modernists' strategy consists, by fair means or foul—by exerting constant pressure, by compromises, by vacillating between orthodoxy and violent heterodoxy—in pushing the Church “for its own good” to come to terms with the modern world, for, essentially, the advance of modernism depends on the failure of churchmen and the faithful to withstand the rising tide of a world that, alas, is the overthrow of *Christianitas*, of what was *Christianitas*.¹³



Pascendi Dominici Gregis

On the Doctrine of the Modernists (Pope St. Pius X, 1907)

The prophetic encyclical of Pius X which defined Modernism, cut it up, and let it hang out to dry. Modernists can't hide from this light.

77pp, STK# 5306. \$4.50

¹¹ When Hans Kung, after a long contention with Rome, was not excommunicated, but only received limited sanctions for what he said (he was suspended from his chair, but kept other assignments), he said that he was happy he could still consider himself a Catholic theologian. One cannot fail to see how serious this is, because if we must think that Kung is a Catholic by being a renowned theologian who has written important, totally heretical books, denying, for example, the divinity of Christ and the infallibility of the pope, then how can we be Catholics like Kung? How can we find ourselves with him in the Church? Who is right? the Catholics who believe what has always been taught by the Church, or Kung? The problem is significant, and not without gravity, for we cannot be at the same time (honest Catholics not having lost the Faith and Kung) Catholics and in the truth, on the basis of the principle of non-contradiction. Either Kung is wrong, or we are. But it is the Church that must rule, and not the simple faithful, or rather the faithful must also decide if the hierarchical Church does not, but this situation already presages a situation of extraordinary, almost unprecedented crisis. This coexistence, within the bosom of the Church, of every theological and doctrinal opinion, and especially of categorically opposite opinions, is a real drama, something of metaphysical proportions. On the assuredly heretical content of Kung's thought, cf. L. Jammarrone, *Hans Kung, Heretic* (Brescia, 1977). Professor Pasqualucci has written (*Politics and Religion*) that the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council is the most important event in the history of the 20th century. He is perfectly right, for the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ; consequently, what happens in the bosom of the Church has metaphysical, and not just temporal or sociological, implications. Cf. also Fr. Roger Calmel, *For a Theology of History* [French] (1967). Comparing the Kung case to the incredible persecution and defamation of Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X, as well as the sanctions levied against them, one cannot fail to conclude that today in the Church it would seem that *obedience to authority* (independently of what the authority does or says) is deemed a higher value than *obedience to the Truth*, which is to say, ultimately, than God Himself. Obviously, Authority was made and instituted for the Truth, and not the Truth for Authority.

¹² *Pascendi*, §§27-8 [English version and section numbers are from the Daughters of St. Paul edition—*Translator's note*.]

¹³ On the notion of the *Middle Ages* as ideologically conceived and inadequate to define medieval European society and history, cf. M. Tangheroni in his preface to Regine Pernoud's *Light of the Middle Ages* (1978). Today in particular, Catholic thought has been devastated by what I call a theological Stockholm Syndrome: one identifies with the aggressor, and in order to be heard and given space in the great daily newspapers, [certain Catholics], probably believing themselves to be of good faith and doing good, say exactly the things the aggressor wants to hear, the things which the enemies of Christ wish to see affirmed by the Church. A typical case is that of Cardinal Martini, who was “invented” as...leader of the progressive party by a cold calculation of the lay leftist press (and thus by the circles of power and authority behind this press), both Italian and European, with interviews and continual articles in the daily newspapers (for example, *La Repubblica*, founded by the journalist E. Scalfari, related to a family with a long Masonic tradition), with great importance attached to his heterodox assertions in the domains of doctrine and morals, and his seduction by the continual reference—in the clearly lay and anti-Catholic press—to his person as “papabile.” It is clear that only genuine holiness could enable a prelate to resist this incessant media courting by the enemies of Christ! (*Continued on p.24.*)

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The outcome of modernism, according to *Pascendi*, is agnosticism.¹⁴ Indeed, according to St. Pius X, the negation of natural theology and the credibility of Christianity, and the method of *vital immanence* are the source of a radical crisis, if not the loss of faith. Let us list the essential aspects of the new, heretical theology developed by modernism as it appears in the encyclical: the conscience is designated as the place where God is found, without external revelation, but only by following one's desire and feeling; Christian doctrine is said to spring from listening to myself and my desires, and to be coherent with my needs, of which it must become a reflection. It excludes every possibility of regulating my life on the basis of immutable and objective criteria of good and evil, or of too precise dogmatic theses, which would imply an authentic faith and humility before mystery. Religion, in us as in Jesus Christ, is the spontaneous fruit of nature. Jesus slowly and gradually came to understand who He was, He did not have all at once divine knowledge, and, finally, He is no longer authentically thought of as true God.

The list of modernist heresies goes on: dogma must evolve; it must be adapted to the *vital sentiment* of the believer; all religions are in some sense true, they have a fund of truth because everything is rooted in a profound need and in man's religious sentiment (it means thus the fall of *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*); science and faith must be separated, but in case of conflict, faith must defer to science. The principle of faith is immanent

in man; this principle is God, and thus God is immanent in man; consequently, without there being a need for an explicit act of faith, every man can be considered to be a believer.¹⁵ Naturally, there should be democracy in the Church; the papacy and the episcopacy must be rethought, and authority weakened and reviewed. There must be, besides, separation between Church and State in the name of a lay vision of politics (naturally, the fruit of the French Revolution). Everything must be historicized, beginning with dogmas, to adapt them to the comprehension of new times and new historical conditions. In the domain of Christianity, it is necessary to distinguish between the Christ of faith and the historical Jesus. The modernists, moreover, following the analysis of *Pascendi*, demand the priority of the active virtues over the passive virtues, falling into the already condemned heresy of Americanism. They also call for the reform and simplification of the liturgy; the suppression of numerous devotions and practices of popular piety; the reform—in reality, the suppression—of the Holy Office and of the Congregation of the Index; a poor Church; prelates and bishops without external signs of honor, the abolition of the celibacy of priests, the decentralization of power and democracy in the Church with the involvement of the laity in the choice of pastors and bishops. Before this flood of errors, St. Pius X defines modernism as “the synthesis of all heresies,” and thus a royal road to atheism: “Undoubtedly, were anyone to attempt the task of collecting together all the errors that have been broached against the Faith and to concentrate into one the sap and substance of them all, he could not succeed in doing better than the Modernists have done.”¹⁶

Considering this tide of errors condemned by *Pascendi*, one is tempted to wonder if it is really a century-old encyclical or a current document. Today, indeed, we are faced with the same errors, even more temerarily, radically, and openly affirmed, and this even by illustrious representatives of the teaching Church, the episcopacy. The

(Continued from p.23) But beyond the seduction of the weakest and most fragile elements of the episcopacy—or those most inclined to adhere to heretical positions—one must also take into account the unbelievable pressure, direct and indirect, on whomever is faithful to Tradition: the *conspiracy of silence* (of which St. Pius X speaks with boundless holiness) towards those who are orthodox, the faithful, those who do not yield to the perverse demolition of traditional doctrine; the insulting of those who stand fast, and at the same time, the seduction of whoever begins to bend and begins to speak as the world wants. Let us cite how *Pascendi* describes the strategy against faithful churchmen: “...there is little reason to wonder that the Modernists vent all their bitterness and hatred on Catholics who zealously fight the battles of the Church. There is no species of insult which they do not heap upon them, but their usual course is to charge them with ignorance or obstinacy. When an adversary rises up against them with an erudition and force that render them redoubtable, they seek to make a conspiracy of silence around him to nullify the effects of his attack. This policy towards Catholics is the more invidious in that they befall with admiration which knows no bounds the writers who range themselves on their side, hailing their works, exuding novelty in every page, with a chorus of applause. For them the scholarship of a writer is in direct proportion to the recklessness of his attacks on antiquity, and of his efforts to undermine tradition and the ecclesiastical magisterium. When one of their number falls under the condemnations of the Church the rest of them, to the disgust of good Catholics, gather round him, loudly and publicly applaud him, and hold him up in veneration as almost a martyr for truth” (§42).

¹⁴ We are now paraphrasing and summarizing the most important notions set forth in the encyclical.

¹⁵ This modernist thesis opens the door to immanentism and to the anthropocentrism of Karl Rahner; it is already *anonymous Christianity*, for if God, by virtue of the incarnation of Christ, is immanent in man (“he united himself in some way to every man,” as the celebrated conciliar passage puts it!), every man, even without knowing it, is anonymously Christian, thus not excluded from salvation, and all are saved without need of the sacraments, faith, morality, or conformity of their lives to our Lord Jesus Christ. And if all are saved, it is no longer necessary for the Catholic Church to be missionary, for the Catholic Church is only an enlightened avant-garde, the avant-garde of the “pneumatic,” of those persons who possess the full gnosis, and who must bring it to others, though without too much haste or decisiveness, lest their naturally Christian sentiment be wounded.

¹⁶ *Pascendi*, §39.

situation is thus worse because of the scope of the contagion.

Pascendi is the prophetic photograph (for holiness is often accompanied by this capacity to see the evil before it becomes apparent, this capacity to see while it is still in the bud all its horror, as if it had already brought forth its tragic consequences) of all that we find today in *Jesus*, the *Famiglia Cristiana*, *Il Regno*, in *Concilium*, at Bose, in parish bulletins, in the Catholic dailies, and alas, also in the most important pontifical and magisterial documents. In the Church today, we find precisely all the theological and doctrinal distortions advocated by modernism. And we are not speaking of the fact that, if we were to analyze in detail the Decree *Lamentabili*, and were we to consider the 65 propositions condemned and anathematized by it, we would find an exact representation of a great part of current theology and doctrinal visions. *Pascendi* would appear to be a document dated not 1907, but 2005. The modernists, today as yesterday—I take the modernist to signify the perfect incarnation of the type of man who slides into heresy—think of themselves as the only *enlightened ones*, the Gramscian minority that acts on the *collective conscience* of the inert, manipulable, anonymous collective, subject to a sort of continual theological rape (we are thinking of the new liturgy which, in socio-political terms, was imposed by the equivalent of a terroristic, bloody coup d'état). In the space of 30 or 40 years, the modernist revolution in the Church took place, the Church's 1789, a revolution that imposes, by means of the theological Koran of the *politically correct*, the rights of man and the appeal for a peace such as the world gives, without there being any possibility of refutation of or even of dialogue about its heterodox theses and its veritable heresies, its perverse and diabolical will to destroy the Church of Christ.

But where a revolution has taken place, there should be counterrevolutionaries, recusants and reactionaries who do not understand the new spirit traversing the present. Thus, in the "Conciliar" Church (this strange elastic and amorphous entity that has the curious pretension of being "new"), there is a term to designate those who refuse the Church of Vatican II: *fundamentalists*. Moreover, we know that the French Vendéans were called brigands, as were the Bourbons, and that all those who opposed the Bolsheviks were labeled *kulaks*. Well, we have *kulaks* in the Church: they are the priests and faithful of the Society of Saint Pius X. There is no totalitarian power, even in the domain of the Faith, where there is not an absolute

enemy, and we know that the absolute enemy must be destroyed, he cannot be talked with; I can dialogue with everybody, but not to someone who denies that one can dialogue with everybody.

What is the reason for all this? Why have we this crisis of modernism that has been present from the time of St. Pius X? *Pascendi* does not fail to give us a precise, profound answer:

They are possessed by the empty desire of having their names upon the lips of the public, and they know they would never succeed in this were they to say only what has always been said by all men.¹⁷

These are only a few lines, but they say everything. This is exactly what we see today in the theological domain: no one can fail to be original if he wants to be taken for somebody; but we know that in reality, nothing has happened in the history of civilization, nor even in history as such, that hasn't been born of a desire to be faithful to tradition, to that which has always been considered true. We know, in sum, that all the great revolutions—true, profound, constructive—are born of dreams of fidelity. St. Thomas, the "dumb ox," certainly did not seek to be original: in his teaching, he had a precise syllabus of *questiones* to respect, about which he had to speak. What is true for culture is also true for holiness: the saint does not want to be original, but only to be humbly faithful to Christ; holiness, which is the greatest manifestation of the spiritual integrity of a person, only arises from a complete renunciation of all purely human and carnal originality.

In the history of Christianity, greatness arises from dreams of fidelity that become—because grace works like that—mysteriously fecund and capable of newness, but the newness is never willed for its own sake. A supreme example of this principle is given by the reform of the Roman Missal effected by St. Pius V. Nothing is more typical of Catholicism (when it is healthy, and not vitiated by Protestant and modernist influences) than a genuine hatred of, a spontaneous hostility toward, any change, in no matter what area, that might have been introduced out of the love of novelty for its own sake, so much so that certain gestures proper to the liturgy have been conserved even though their practical meaning has disappeared.

It is the *modern revolution*, beginning with Luther and Calvin, then Cromwell and the Puritan

¹⁷ *Pascendi*, §43.


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Revolution, that is animated by a gnostic desire to destroy the present because it does not manage to see its splendor, beauty, and grandeur; because it no longer has eyes or heart to comprehend the centuries of toil it took to build it. The rebellion of the modernists at the time of St. Pius X, as today, arises from pride, from self-love pushed to the contempt of God; it arises from the triumph of the flesh over the spirit. One cannot, after all, please God and the world at the same time.

And yet, faced with the scenario of ruin that meets the eyes of anyone who looks at the Church today, a Church in agony that advances by stumbling continually as she makes her way to the Calvary reserved for her, reasons for hope are not lacking. The first of all is the fact that the Mass of all time continues to be celebrated the world over (and this definition is already a seal of truth). Today, of course, not all understand the importance of this Mass: its beauty is too great for this adulterous and perverse generation to understand; it is a ray of light too intense and profound in the obscurity of time, at the hour of darkness, for the world to appreciate it. Our world, indeed, no longer knows how to love beautiful things, things full of silence, peace, heaven, light, truth. Life must act in us in the depths so that we can become truly capable of this; it will talk almost a miracle. Nevertheless I think of Dostoevsky's line: "Beauty will save the world." Even after contemplating this harsh and severe tableau, one cannot fail to have confidence in the incredible treasure of the holy Mass that the priests of the Society also keep for us, with a humble, reserved love and also with an old-fashioned kindness; a treasure that cannot be dilapidated,

that cannot be forgotten; a standard, ultimately, that cannot be lowered, that will never be lowered. And it little matters, really, if today it is torn and offended by so many sacrilegious hands, and if so few persons still know how to love it devoutly and with a sincere filial love. 

Translated exclusively for Angelus Press from *Courrier de Rome*, the French version of *SiSiNoNo*, January 2006. This lecture was presented by Prof. D'Amico at the Eleventh Congress of Catholic Studies held at Rimini, Italy (Oct. 25-26, 2003) on the theme: "The Modern World in the Light of the Magisterium of St. Pius X." *DICI* called this lecture "a masterly synthesis on the philosophic genesis of modernism."

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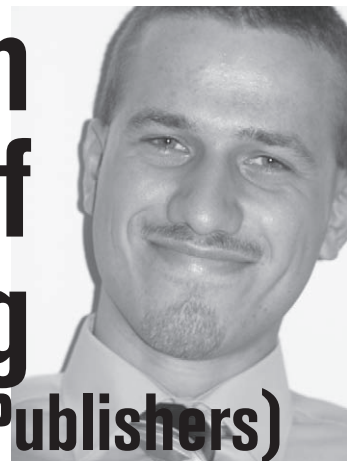
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Interview with Mr. Paul Karl, Founder of Patrona Bavaria Verlag (PBV-Patron of Bavaria Publishers)



Mr. Paul Karl is the founder of Patrona Bavaria Verlag, the latest traditional Catholic publishing house to be established. As their first publication, they translated and printed copies of Angelus Press's *Mother's Little Helper* and *Listen, Son*. We asked Mr. Karl about his new apostolate, located in Regensburg, Germany.

For our English-speaking audience, we ought to first point out that PBV is a German publisher. What is the "lay of the land" of German traditional Catholic publishing?

There are only a handful of Christian publishing houses which offer good Catholic books. Before founding PBV, there was just one German Catholic publisher which is exclusively traditional and totally orthodox, namely Sarto Buch, which is the publishing arm of the German District of the Society of Saint Pius X.

When was PBV founded?

The very first thoughts of founding a new publishing house came up last October. In these early stages it was merely a possibility. My wife and I weren't sure if we should do it. After considering the pro's and con's very carefully, I officially founded PBV on March 22, 2006.

Why another traditional Catholic publisher in Germany?

I founded it for several reasons, but certainly not to compete with Sarto Buch and the other publishers which print some good titles. I have lots of ideas and titles in the works. There is no lack of excellent Catholic books to publish. The German faithful are starving for good books and I want to help meet that need without duplicating in any way the work of others. To work with non-traditional publishers, one would be forced to compromise, so PBV must have some independence. We will not compromise on the integrity of the Faith in our books.

I also want to send the message that everybody is appointed to work for our good Lord and therefore He gave all of us special abilities and skills. If you have such talents, use them for the apostolate! Also,



1% of our monthly profit goes towards Masses for the holy souls in purgatory.

I am curious about the name you chose: Patron of Bavaria Press, which refers to Our Lady, who is the Patroness of Bavaria. If you are trying to reach all German speakers, why use a name specific to one German-speaking region, even going so far as to having the blue and white of Bavaria on the top of your website? Are you concerned that this “regionalism” might alienate German speaking Catholics from other areas?

The devotion to our “Patrona Bavariae” has a long tradition in Bavaria, where PBV is located. It is natural to put our publishing operations under her patronage. Bavaria itself was once the most Catholic part of Germany, and the amazing thing is that many Germans, especially in the north, still think that Bavaria is very Catholic. Compared to other regions, it is the most Catholic, although the Faith has been hit hard here since the Council, just as it has been in every part of the world. When Protestantism threatened to take over all of Germany and beyond, there was only one bastion of Catholicism left in Germany: Bavaria. With great efforts and heroism, our Bavarian ancestors fought Protestantism successfully and stopped them from taking over Bavaria and Austria. This, in turn, prevented other European nations such as Italy from becoming Protestant. In commemoration of our Catholic Bavarians, my greatest dream is to be simply a helping hand in restoring our holy Mother Church in all German-speaking nations. I would hope that in the mind of the world, Bavaria will once again come to mean, “The revolt against Our Lord stops here!”

You chose *Mother’s Little Helper* and *Listen, Son*, both well known to American traditionalists, as your first two titles. Why?

We started with nothing more than a notebook and a mixture of idealism, optimism, and fear of bureaucracy. We needed to start with something small so as to learn the entire publishing process more easily: translation, design, pre-press, publication, printing, the legal establishment of the company, marketing, *etc.* And all this with the few euros we had! Those booklets were just right. Furthermore, my wife and I were rather surprised at its good Christian quality. There is nothing comparable in the German book market. In other words, it was high time to give Christian parents good literature in order to help them teach their children the “facts of life” in a Christian manner, rather than the perverse secular means that are otherwise used.

You have mentioned your wife twice thus far. What does she do to assist the PBV apostolate?

She helps me with all the normal duties of a small publishing house: buying, selling, shipping,

phoning, *etc.* I do these things as well and in addition to typesetting and corresponding with the legal authorities—Germany has a serious problem with bureaucracy! Her English is very good and so are her translations, if I may say so! We share a common phrase in English and German—that the wife is one’s “better half.” It is so true! This work we do on behalf of Our Lord has brought us much closer together.

On your website (<http://www.patrona-bavaria-verlag.de>), you quote the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, and his now famous statement, “the dictatorship of relativism.” How do you think a publishing house can best fight this battle?

The absolute essential is integrity. I’ll give you an example. The largest “Christian” publisher in Germany, Weltbild Verlag, belongs to the German Catholic bishops. You would get sick if you took a look at their offerings. They sell *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown! You cannot fight “the dictatorship of relativism” on the one hand and then sell anti-Catholic books on the other. Even in these strange times people are still asking the right questions about God, and it is our duty to answer their questions with good Catholic literature.

As an aside, Pope Benedict is the first German Pope in 482 years (Pope Adrian VI reigned briefly from 1522-23). He is the tenth German Pope. The other eight all ruled in the 10th and 11th centuries. So for all intents and purposes, he is the first German Pope in a thousand years. Do you think this will increase the fervor of German Catholics?

I wished it would be so, but I am doubtful. There was much hope after the election of our Holy Father Benedict XVI. Some said, “The crisis within the Church is now over” and “It’s going to be all better now.” These voices are all gone. But it seems to me that there has been some effect in increasing piety for traditionalists. Well, at least it increased the fervor of my wife and me. It makes a Bavarian very proud to have a Holy Father who was born in Bavaria and who lived here for a long time. Benedict XVI still owns a house just two kilometers from our publishing house in Regensburg-Pentling, and his parents are buried in a Catholic cemetery there.

I think it is very significant that you say on your website, “Our main focus will first of all be the family, which is the smallest and most fundamental unit of society.” Would you please elaborate on this important principle?

The crisis of our society is a crisis of our families. As a Bavarian State police officer, I see many broken homes—far too many! And sadly, even my parents are divorced. I know the consequences when a family has lost the Faith or has no faith at all and what this leads

to. I personally believe that if we succeed in focusing our apostolate on the family first and make them true faithful of our Savior, Jesus Christ, all other problems of society—with its political and economic effects—will be solved.

Would you say this is similar to the “threefold reign of the Sacred Heart”: first, in one’s own soul, then in the family, then in society?

Exactly! I know entire families which converted simply because one of its members became a true Catholic. In other words, we have to concentrate our efforts on the few Catholics who are left to make their faith stronger. They will then restore or bring the Faith into their families. And these families will gain other ones for our Good Shepherd. Going further step by step with God’s help and His blessings, we will be able to reach all people of our society one day in order to build a new one which puts God in the center of its life instead of keeping Him outside like it is today!

This being the case, do you have plans to publish books on the Church’s Social Doctrine? It seems to be a logical extension of this idea.

Yes, of course. I’m planning several projects relating to the Christian education of children, modesty in dress, Catholic political and economic order, *etc.* But the absolute highlight will be a German translation of the catechism *My Catholic Faith*, updated and newly illustrated.

Since you are not publishing polemical works regarding the new Mass, religious liberty, *etc.*, do you hope to influence Catholics outside traditional circles? Have you had any success doing that so far?

That is what PBV is all about! All traditional Catholics of SSPX, FSSP, *etc.*, are very very important to us, but there are still some Catholics with good hearts outside traditional circles. I want to reach them, especially the young. It is too early to say anything about our success in this matter. But it seems it’s going to work. Recently, www.kreuz.net (a conservative German Catholic website) ran a review of *Hör mal, mein Sohn* (*Listen, Son*) and *Mama’s kleiner Helfer* (*Mother’s Little Helper*) and many orders came from people who definitely don’t belong to Tradition. Interestingly, I received an e-mail from a Catholic principal of a Protestant school. He was looking for good literature on sex education presented in a genuinely Christian fashion. He was happy to find our booklets on the Internet.

Your books are filled with colorful original illustrations by Petra Eschenlohr. Why go to the extra expense of commissioning original works of art for your books?

The purpose of this art is to make the booklets more interesting to the customer. These pictures are

really eye-catching, and people sometimes buy a book only because of its pictures. It is odd, but it is so.

Is this approach working?

It depends. Elderly people tell me it is too modern for them. But the younger ones love it!

You mentioned that you are a police officer. Do you see these two roles (Catholic publisher and civil servant) as complementary?

Yes! By helping to bring criminals to justice, I am doing something for the common good in a practical way. I get to practice the *corporal* works of mercy by protecting and helping those, particularly the poor and weak, who can’t help and protect themselves. But as a police officer I can also see behind the scenes and know exactly what’s wrong with our society. In that way I want to help those people who are seeking the truth with good literature (the instruction of the ignorant is an important *spiritual* work of mercy) in order to convert and save their souls, and, consequently, they will become better citizens.

But the Faith is not primarily for good citizenship. It is for the salvation of souls, first. To put religion exclusively at the service of “good citizenship” is an error.

Yes, a typical Protestant error. The salvation of souls is our goal, from which many good things flow. To invert this order is naturalism, and you will end up with nothing in the end.

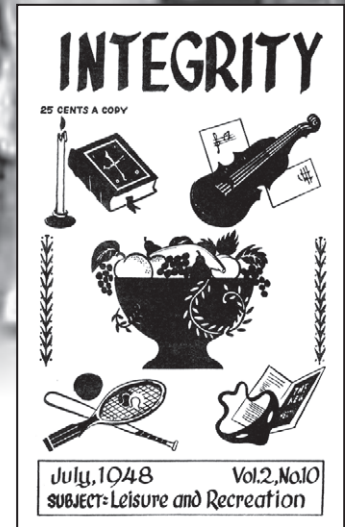
And what would you like to say to traditional Catholics who wish to live integral Catholic lives, who wish to be Catholic all the time, not just on Sundays?

Never feel ashamed to be Catholic! You may lose a brother or a friend of yours because of your faith, but believe me, you’ll find another one—a Catholic one. I know what I’m speaking about. Concentrate on your own community. Work to get rid of anything anti-Catholic, and make your home a temple of the Holy Ghost! Never forget: You know what you have, you know what you are, you know what Our Lord wants, and you know what your mission is: So fulfill your duty!

Thank you, Mr. Karl, for your time, and be assured of our prayers for the success of this important work for German-speaking Catholics.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. We appreciate your prayers, and may God bless *The Angelus* and all your readers! ☩

Exclusive interview granted to Christopher McCann, Director of Operations and Marketing for Angelus Press. Patrona Bavaria Verlag can be found on the web at <http://www.patrona-bavaria-verlag.de/>.



MODERN & DANCING CHRISTIANITY

LEONARD AUSTIN



SAD PSALMS

When Christ was King, and Mary Queen,

The people sang in chorus.

But now, in this unhappy reign,

We have our songs sung for us.

In an attempt to restore our recreational life to some basis of sanity we come face to face with a dual problem. On the one hand Puritanism lays its heavy hand on our legitimate gaiety and exuberance at being alive in God's wonderful world. On the other hand paganism leads us blindly into her temple of pleasure, and bids us follow her on her excursions after new sensations, contemptuous of the innocent merriment of simple folk.

To the pagans, pleasure is the motive of existence and the substance of their dreams. They have built up their world of gilded joy in dance palaces, cocktail bars, have invaded the sports world and have made it increasingly difficult for modest people to enjoy their free time. In their ceaseless pursuit of that elusive phenomenon which they call happiness, they are willing to pay any price, will labor ever harder to obtain the money that will enable them to plunge deeper and deeper into the giddy stream of pleasure.

The puritans are much less bother for they keep to their rigid isolation, fearing that contact with a generous smile and a quick pulse might shatter their walls of predestination. The ubiquitous pagans case their way into our lives with bland assurance. Their positive assumption that their life of superficial intensity is an integral part of the "American way of life," that an economy built

on more luxuries and unlimited leisure is the one to be shaped for the United States has lured too many of our fellow-citizens. It is these bemused creatures who set the standard over most of the world as to how we are to enjoy ourselves. The motion picture industry and the radio are almost exclusively in their hands, and these industries are in turn supported by the millions of passive individuals who, drained of any capacity to entertain themselves, pour huge sums into the coffers of the professional purveyors of joy. These neo-pagans have so influenced the lives of the masses that it is considered the "American way" to pay a fabulous price for tickets to the World Series or the Rose Bowl game, and they have succeeded furthermore in convincing our youth that Saturday night is no fun unless it is spent in a large dance hall or night club, listlessly moving around the floor to the lascivious swing of a hot band. Any attempt to show these victims of the mass hoax that there is anything at all different and still fun, is the most difficult task facing those who are endeavoring to bring reason into the leisure time of the people.

In the Middle Ages, the great centuries of the Church, dances were intimately connected with the liturgy. In the Roman Ritual there are prayers and litanies for all the great fundamental acts of life and the great cosmic procession of the world as marked by the liturgical calendar. These calendar feasts had their secular as well as their sacred observances. Both were intimately connected; each had its own particular rites and symbolic designs, but sprang from the same fundamental source: the honor and glory of God.

The very idea of dancing had a sacred and mystic meaning to the early Christians, who meditated profoundly on the text, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced" (Mt. 11:17). Origen prayed that above all things there may be made operative in us the mystery "of the stars dancing in heaven for the salvation of the universe." St. Basil described the angels dancing in heaven, and later the author of the *Dieta Salutis*, which is supposed to have influenced Dante in assigning so large a part to dancing in the *Paradiso*, described dancing as the occupation of the inmates of heaven, and Christ as the leader of the dance.

Puritanism crushed dancing in many parts of the world and was the onset of a developing urbanism against the old ruralism. It made no distinction between good and evil, nor paused to consider what would come when dancing went. Remy de Gourmont remarks that the tavern conquered the dance, and alcohol replaced the violin.

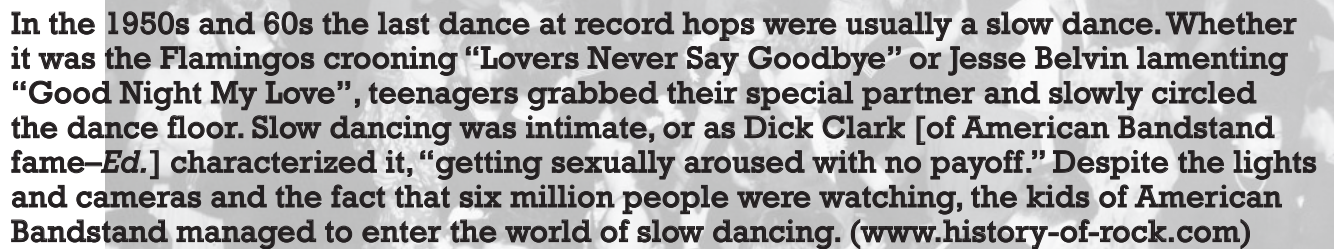
The complete separation of recreation from the organic life of a community and from an integral

part of the Christian way of life began in the early nineteenth century when a reaction against Puritanism stirred within the wealthy bourgeoisie. Not much over 100 years ago [This article was penned in 1948—*Ed.*] the waltz mania swept the world. People had forgotten the old dances and communal celebrations of their fathers, or if they had remembered them, despised them as the bucolic merry-makings of oafish peasants. The waltz captivated the newly-rich commercial classes, and was soon to be followed by ever more fads and fancies—the polka craze, the gavotte fad, the fascination with exotic and meaningless steps and rhythms. This has continued down to our own day with the current craze for the rhumba, samba, and so on, *ad nauseam*.

Our great-grandfathers were really at fault. They allowed themselves to be deceived by the disintegrating forces at work in the world, in their lighter moments as well as in their serious hours of work and worship. They followed each dance fad with renewed intensity. Now parents look with distaste upon the capers of their young and speak of the "good old days" of the waltz. If the norm of recreation is to be "Is it Christian?" then many of the leisure-time activities of our parents should come under scrutiny. The waltz was the choreographic expression of the "Age of Reason and Enlightenment," and was, in its own way, as dangerous as any of the modern forms. No dance could be as intoxicating, as emotionally upsetting as a good old-fashioned waltz played at the breathless speed so beloved of our grandparents. These members of the older generation sigh for the return of the waltz but completely ignore the infinitely more beautiful and symbolic peasant dances of their ancestors.

The waltz had an added danger in its sentimentality. Sentimentality is the unique phenomenon of our time, and a dangerous one. It tends to upset the individual's emotional stability, even whole masses. A distinguished German scientist announced a few years ago that it was his people's devotion to the "Trinity of Sentimentality," Wagner, Brahms, and the waltz, that left them emotionally unstable and thus easy prey for the crude buffetings of militarists and the savage creed of a psychopathic paper-hanger.

The sentimental era has reached America. Will it, too, be a prelude to militarism, regimentation, and cruelty? The current fad of "sweet" music is sentimentality at its basest. Swing music, although emotionally disturbing, at least has vitality and spirit. Divorced from the accompanying jungle rhythms of the swing band, the "jitter-bug" is true



In the 1950s and 60s the last dance at record hops were usually a slow dance. Whether it was the Flamingos crooning “Lovers Never Say Goodbye” or Jesse Belvin lamenting “Good Night My Love”, teenagers grabbed their special partner and slowly circled the dance floor. Slow dancing was intimate, or as Dick Clark [of American Bandstand fame—Ed.] characterized it, “getting sexually aroused with no payoff.” Despite the lights and cameras and the fact that six million people were watching, the kids of American Bandstand managed to enter the world of slow dancing. (www.history-of-rock.com)

folk dance, expressive of the time it spanned: nervous, vulgar, and self-conscious. Swing could be done with restraint and even coldly. The criticisms aimed now at swing and “jitter-bug” are rather empty, for this febrile exhibition of the leisure moments of a people at war is now passing from the scene. But what will take its place? Something worse? The sticky harmonies of “sweet” music are the cries of a people confused, disillusioned and the sluggish steps that pace the listless beat is the step of a people bored, insecure, and inhibited.

Are there any dances suitable for Christians? We need only to turn to our own rich recreational heritage: the ceremonial, communal dance-dramas of our own Catholic culture, the dances that are inherent art-forms fabricated by our own Catholic ancestors; the delightful, simple, and very often incredibly beautiful celebrations of the important periods of life; of weddings and baptisms, of saints’ days, of the change of seasons, of the occupations. Among primitive peoples to dance was to pray. It is still so among many races in Africa, Asia, and the aborigines of North and South America. Dancing is the primitive expression alike of religion and love, and is intimately connected with all human tradition of war, labor, pleasure, and education. Modern man is the inheritor of a thousand years of Christian culture, he is a creature made to the image and likeness of God, heir to the kingdom of heaven. Can’t we find better vehicles of emotional expression than immoral rhythms, formless dances, realistic drama?

The vexing problem of dancing, of all recreation, needs to be examined under the microscopic sights of the perennial philosophy. [The “perennial philosophy” here referred to is Thomism, and not more recent aberrations which used the same phrase—Ed.] The enthusiasts for a return to the “old” must be wary that they do not become confused in their search for Christian entertainment. Folk dances can be clumsy, inartistic, vulgar. And so it is reasonable to assume that many ballroom dances of a more recent date may be decorous and dignified. With an inexhaustible store of rich choreographic treasure bequeathed us by our Catholic ancestors, there is no need for us to hesitate over the question whether it is better to dance a waltz or a fox-trot, or whether it is really wrong to “cut a rug.” Applying the basic Christian rules of the

good, the true, and the beautiful to the dance as we apply them to literature, painting, and the drama orders the process of investigation.

In an individualistic culture such as ours, whatever has been handed down is a “superstition,” not merely in the proper and literal sense of the word, but in the bad sense that survivals date from an epoch before the “wisdom that was born with us”; because whatever we do not understand we fear or dislike. The “emancipation of the artist” and our deliberate breaking with tradition are only special cases of our rejection of the perennial philosophy about which all the traditional arts were grouped in such a fashion as to satisfy the needs of the soul and the body together, in which case all the arts without exception, including the art of leisure and of enjoyment, were applied arts.

The only things worthy of our serious consideration are those that have to do with God. If we are able to agree on this fundamental point, it is obvious that we ought by every means to avoid innovation in the types of our music and dancing and that to introduce changes in the forms of arts for aesthetic reasons, that is, to please ourselves or because our feelings are too much for us and must find an outlet, is nothing but a sort of slavery to our sensations.

What is needed in our Catholic world in America, and sorely needed, are trained recreation leaders with the apostolic spirit, with a sense of joy and peace, with a knowledge of Catholic history and culture, who can find their way along the Christian way of life; who have discrimination and judgment and the courage to use a firm hand; who have the poise to steer a middle course between paganism and puritanism, and above all a thorough knowledge and love of the Church’s liturgy. Where these are to come from it is impossible to state, for no Catholic college, university, or preparatory school has departments of recreation. It is ironic and somewhat ridiculous that we should need trained leaders to teach our fellow Christians how to play, but that is only one more proof, if more were needed, of the disorientation of modern Catholics from their true course along the Christian way of life. ☩

Reprinted from the July 1948 issue of *Integrity* magazine themed “Leisure and Recreation.” Edited by Angelus Press.

Fifteen Minutes with Fr. de Chivré:



The Grace of Marriage



To speak to you of grace in the heart of two spouses is to show you that marriage takes its starting point in a love which is decided and proven. It explains why so many marriages are a disaster: as they walked out of the church, many couples were not decided and so have not proven themselves, since in order to prove you have to be decided.

Love begins in the very roots of human nature. Marriage proves that it is destined to become the pre-eminent reason for the home as well as the continuity of that home. Someone coined the lovely expression which I find to be so true: *love is always a beginning that begins again*. This is what gives love its character at once so untranslatable and inexhaustible. Love

is not something acquired once and for all, stabilized in a kind of engraving that we sit back and admire: “Souvenir of our engagement; Souvenir of our marriage,” an engraving that never changes. Nothing compromises two spouses like a love that does not change. This may scandalize you: if you want to love each other more and more, love has to change, but getting better and better. Love is an existence that is nourished in order to discover what was not yet a part of the love you swore to each other, just as one discovers, in the roots of a tree that one has planted, as it slowly grows, the leaves, the flowers, the scents one did not expect to receive.

You see that the range of discoveries stretches out indefinitely and in apparent contradiction with your notions at the beginning. “I didn’t know you were like that when I married you.” You must not be afraid to speak of the dangers inscribed in these contradictions, nor of the disenchantment or the diminution of the first feelings toward each other which now prove insufficient, because grace is telling you that you have to give more.

God very clearly carves away at two spouses exactly the way He carves away at a priest who, on the morning of his ordination, espoused the strictly supernatural life and who did not suspect for a moment all that God would send him in the way of exigencies of fidelity to that life; and the more he is faithful to it, the more he realizes that he was not mistaken.

Such is the law of love: to be threatened in its duration by the unexpected exercise of manifestations which are provoked by the evolution of the home. The problem consists in this: is their conscience prepared for that evolution? I mention, for example, at random: the birth of children, age, professional situations, unexpected crises, deaths in the family. Love manifests itself in situations beyond the easy beginnings, and that is fortunate. It manifests itself through positions which at first seem impossible to maintain and which the tempter knows how to twist to make them look unendurable: “Obviously you never really knew him, or her”; “Obviously this is not what you thought it would be”; “Obviously the circumstances which have just arisen prove that your wife, prove that your husband, is far inferior to what you expected.”

The fact is that the tempter—and never forget it—the tempter is *counterlove*. He is the missionary of hate and separation. He is a very patient missionary; he knows very well what he is undertaking for the benefit of his nefarious influence over the children, if he manages to whisper the two spouses into opposition, even subtle opposition.

It is the degree of your love that makes you a target for counterlove. And it is a struggle, it is a combat, and at the same time it is beauty. For it is in

this struggle that you will be recompensed for the “*I do*” you pronounced on your wedding day.

When he attains the parents, the tempter demolishes in advance the supernatural balance of the children’s future. It is for this reason that I want to insist on the quality of your intimate sanctification which will, without your even intending, guarantee the balance and peace of your children. And the tempter receives his salary of division between the spouses in the human, social disasters which he knows will disconcert both the husband and the wife to the point of making them become *counterlove*, like him.

And we are all trapped in a strange alternative of resemblance: God creates man in His image and His likeness; and, by sin, Satan fashioned man in his image and his likeness. We have to choose. We are all caught up in a resemblance, and it is that resemblance which will determine your quality as a Christian and at the same time your quality as a husband or a wife.

I have to make you understand that two spouses always have a heart that cries out, after having had a heart that sings. For, after having sung, they realize that something more is lacking, something better. So they groan, they sigh, they complain. But they still have a heart, and I have to tell them, gently, without wounding them, that the grace which knew how to make them sing on their wedding day will know very well, like a good doctor, how to draw near to them again when it hears them cry out and only leave them when it has retaught them how to listen to hope. We always have to remain positive in the midst of these catastrophes—and, sometimes, God permits them as the occasion for us to emerge into an extraordinary love.

It is vital that husband and wife learn never to judge a situation by the sole testimony of their aching heart. The fact that it is aching means that it has lost or does not contain the reserves of the first songs of affection which you perhaps murmured to each other. There is something that has been lost: What do you have to do? You have to teach your heart to rediscover those reserves by consulting the great doctor of painful situations: cool-headedness. Dig out the little health that is left, languishing deep in the heart of each one of you, in order to breathe into each one of you the knowledge of life, the sense of remedies, grace: that is, the very angle from which the God of love looks at those calvaries which are the most repugnant to any love that remains merely emotional.

You have to realize that your power for loving develops alongside your existence, in parallel with existence itself, which is to say that it ages, and this aging is meant, under the influence of grace, to manifest the youth of God. The state of grace is a beginning of eternity. The manner of considering one’s sufferings of soul and heart, the manner of considering them in prayer or adoration in the

simplicity of a confession, is already to return to the youth of God; it is to rediscover your resemblance to God and to lose your resemblance to the devil.

What does grace come to do in the heart of a man, in the heart of a woman, united indefectibly the one to the other? Satan wants to damn them indefectibly and God, by the sacrament of marriage, wants to save you indefectibly.

I know the case of a young, good-hearted man, married for years to an absolute witch of a wife. His parents, his friends, were continually telling him: "Why don't you just separate; it's unlivable." He always gave the only answer our grandfathers and grandmothers knew how to give: "I have received the sacrament of marriage to hold on until the end. And it is in holding on until the end that I will find happiness." And he found it. He had earned it with that particular sense of honor proper to a Christian: "I have the Faith; I believe in the fecundity of the Faith in a sincere conscience; it is out of the question for me to give up. I do not judge the situation of a Christian marriage in the light of merely human reasons, or commercial, or worldly, or family reasons; I judge it in the light of grace." You see that grace steps in to remind the spouses of this indefectible character of a situation which was freely willed, letting it open out more and more into the most beautiful of all things, for there is nothing more beautiful than a fidelity that has cost dearly.

I am trying to bring you out of that horrible diminution of the mind which reduces everything to questions of volume, measurement, immediacy, temporality, because it has lost the sense of *being* and is always preoccupied with the sense of *having*. That is what gets us every time: it is the "ME, thinking," who has taken the place of the "GOD willing." What will save the world, or the world will be lost, is the philosophy of God in human nature. The nature of beauty is precisely to be threatened. All beauty is threatened: in museums, the beauty of paintings is threatened by humidity, by profanation, by theft, fire. And it is the beautiful role of beauty to be threatened so that we become keenly aware that the threat will provoke a spontaneous reaction: before a work of art which is about to go up in flames, to rescue it.

Grace works that way when there are crises in a marriage, and there have to be in order for you to understand that the beauty which is threatened in your heart, in what is most precious, is in fact threatened so that you might have the quality of stepping beyond what you have by rescuing it; by rushing in as a man rushes into a burning building, however he can, with whatever he can grab, to preserve a thing of beauty. For when beauty disappears, the whole world suffers. We are all sick to death of beings and of things for lack of beauty. Beauty is disinterested existence. The law of

love is to dare to fashion the beauty of a home by disinterestedness.

You see how the fact of loving each other necessarily distances you from all interested calculation, from all immediate obsession with the easy solution. Grace nourishes in your heart the sense of beauty, a beauty engaged by you to adorn your existence with all that it emanates in the way of quality, sentiment of admiration, comfort and joy. It is the treasure of a marriage. I would like to see your marriages participate more and more in sacramental beauty. Just as the work of a master is the treasure of the museum: they watch over it and the slightest little scratch cries out for the help of restoration. Above all things, rescue beauty.

This is the activity which God asks of you, alongside each other, in making you realize that in the beginning of your marriage, everything appeared to you to be charming, and it was true. Everything appeared to you to be charming, because it was new, original, unexpected. Necessarily, along came the laws of existence, and the course of events, the banality of the day to day. But what is the law of grace? It is to communicate to you the eternal youth of God. Its role is always to make things new: to turn monotony into difference; to turn routine into enthusiasm; to turn impatience into a smile; to turn suffering into you supporting one another. The law of grace is to forbid love to grow old. A marriage that is raised up like that opens out into an indefectible beauty expressing something of God. Grace should not be something alongside your marriage. You have to accord it a respectful compenetration, free and human, not pretentious or sanctimonious, but a supernaturalized life. For the role of grace is to restore for you your qualities of expression.

What rescues love? It is when the man and the woman, finding themselves before each other, discover in each other an expression which they had not found there the day before; when they always see appearing a new life, a new existence, a new attitude, a new kindness, a new grandeur, a new courtesy. Then are they aware that, with this spiritualized attitude of love, they are always in the youth of their state.

It is not a day-dream. It remains indispensable to conserve a precise and living awareness that all of this implicates situations that have been freely willed. Grace pushes toward the fidelity of your "*I do*," but the liberty of each one assumes the responsibility for chiseling that "*I do*" deeper and deeper, not with fatality but with application. After that, whatever may be the nature of the difficult moments in a marriage, the function of grace is always to make the spouses consider that difficulty as a real fact whose composition must, above all, never be fled in order supposedly to "resolve the

problem.” Three quarters of all modern problems, in marriage or outside marriage, never cease to become more complex, to grow more serious, to be nourished, because each one is determined to deny the painful composition of the problem. So they grab at any possible solution. They treat problems as though they were fleeing a temptation. On the contrary, grace asks us very specifically not to flee the composition of a marriage difficulty, because it is precisely the composition that we have to understand. Grace is like God: it looks evil and good straight in the face. It is in the nature of grace to triumph over the tempting character of cowardice by introducing the problem of the divine point of view, whose role is to transfigure the situation, not by making it disappear but by elevating it. The time it needs to bear the weight on your shoulders—the time it needs, all the way to the end. After that, the reconstruction begins.

Grace gives a new meaning, whose job is to “add.” God is always positive and real. God is not abstract; He is astonishingly concrete. He always seeks to give you an opportunity to add unexpected beauty to a beauty bathed in tears. Think of all the crystal we could manufacture with our tears, all the jewels which He puts us in a position to forge. Unexpected beauty, because up until now we had never been pushed to manufacture happiness out of the material unhappiness of difficulty, the psychological unhappiness of a personality conflict, the social unhappiness of an unexpected trial, the intimate unhappiness of a secret temptation. The “painting” catches fire, to set off your rescue mechanism, thanks to the permanence of an understanding of the beauty of your home: manufacture the beautiful gesture of preservation of your heart, the beautiful gesture of peacemaking on the ruins of ill-humor; the beautiful gesture of comfort before the faltering of a passing weariness. In photography, the negatives condition the positives: if there were no negatives, there would be no positives. With God, the method is identical. He began with the positive of your engagement but then, since He dreams of something magnificent for you, He continues with the positive of indefectible fidelity—a fidelity certain of constructing the inappreciable beauty of the solidity of the home out of the series of accidental negatives. It employs them in a way that makes you want to draw out the positives, before the tabernacle, on your knees with your rosary, with the sacraments, with grace. Why is everyone leaving their post of combat? Because no one wants to be present before the tabernacle, to draw the positive from an attitude.

Then your hearts acquire a form of reasoning identical to God’s: not to deny the negative but to deny it the right not to produce the positive. You never have the right, in a difficulty between spouses,

to announce that the difficulty cannot produce a positive. In doing so you would betray love; you would betray your “*I do*”; you would betray your initial trust; you would prove that you did not know how to love.

It is only when the obstacle appears that the runner winds himself up with all the force of his muscles to jump over it. And in jumping over it he becomes aware that he had been preparing his muscles for years and years. He is happy: he did not run away; he jumped. When you have conquered a difficulty, you give rise to admiration: “I do not want to leave you.” And the two spouses rediscover each other. In this “performance” of love, the spouses rediscover each other, reunited, welded again to one another by the victory. This goes beyond the joys of their engagement. You must not deny your difficult moments the right to prepare a triumph: you do not refuse wintertime the right to prepare the charms of spring. A life, a love, are always a succession of trials, which is the source of love’s inexhaustible vitality. With God, everything always ends in a better *reality* and in the indefectible.

What is the job of the grace of marriage? The grace of marriage is responsible, in each one of you, for making you understand that the *inexhaustible* conditions your happiness and that, in every occurrence, its goal is to reveal to you the virtuous *inexhaustible* of a situation, even the most painful. Its goal is to show you that it is useless to go seeking happiness, without ever finding it, in the variable, in the new pasted onto the old, in the ephemeral replacing the permanent, as though three or four copies of a masterpiece could replace the renovation of the masterpiece itself, watched over with love.

Certain couples imagine that they need to spend their time pasting the situation back together with make-believe, and it breaks again the week after. You have to weld back together even the broken pieces with grace, which is *inexhaustible*. The reason you have to keep re-welding is that the quality of your love depends on the degree of moral energy it uses to carve out its features, more and more accentuated, more and more expressive. You can tell, as life goes by, the couples who are forging themselves to be more and more unshakable: you admire them, you envy them. You have to have the sincerity to admit that this expression, which is the reward of patience, of strength, and of perseverance, is incompatible with the modern variability of sentiments. A divorced couple is forever deprived of valid expression: you want to find happiness, you want to find a “valid” expression, whereas you have profaned forever your primary capacities of expression. Rather than seeking, in the first difficulty, how to make it express what it contains, you go on to ask a second difficulty to express for you what it does not contain. We are so used to

what is false, we no longer know what depth of profanation of love is contained in divorce. We no longer know what it means to love. Love becomes for us a question of corporeal juxtaposition, that is all. A divorced couple is incapable of participating in the plenitude of love. Affection includes intellectual and moral reserves just as important as the reserves of sentiment. And that is the role of grace: preservation of those reserves.

For grace understands the mentality of God, who dared to love us even to the disfiguring of His human appearance in the most atrocious way on Calvary, to prove to us that, in the most atrocious upheavals of a home, there remains the perspective of Easter morning which awaits the recompense. If you have the patience to remain at your Good Friday, God will not deceive you.

We no longer have the intellectual strength to allow God that splendor of authority over us which is grace. On Calvary, God signed His book of love, He put His own initials of indefectibility upon the decision taken, signed with the blood shed without thought of return or regret. He signed it for Easter morning; He signed it for better or for worse. That is what love is.

When two spouses bind themselves to one another in this way, they can never again be unhappy: they teach one another admiration, they become irresistible in their common affirmation. For in all love there is valor: the valor which is not afraid to cry, to offer, to carry, to endure, as representing the initials of our intelligence signing the value of the promises given, by the value of positive and repeated fidelities, through the negative of the trials. Then the home is founded on solid rock. No one will get the better of it. Jesus has told us: the storms may blow; if it is built on sand, everything will crumble away. But if it is built on the rock, Jesus is there. He is the rock. The spouses who have reached that point may be separated by the events of life, but they are indefectibly united until death.

I still call to mind the touching scene of an old and dear couple walking home after Mass. Leaning like a child on the arm of her husband, the dear wife trotted softly along, melting in the manly but already aged presence of her faithful husband. Everyone turned to look at them, everyone envied them: they represented unity. They had spent their life living “as a threesome.” Their love was not going to fade away; it was not going to break. It was so beautiful that no one said a word. You had the impression that three persons were there together. The unity obtained after years of victories over the character of each one of them, affection always dominating the difficulties. You could almost see them surrounded by an escort of years, strongly bound together and successful; human years, no doubt, but years of grace, surrounded by an escort of implored graces, pouring down at the moment they were needed, to maintain the indefectible promise of the first day; of years of liberty voluntarily hitched to the same plow; of years of hands joined together and the one for the other; of years of faith in God nourished by faith in one another. It was like the living testimony of successful

love. Whence came this singular beauty? It came from the depths of their nuptial blessing, welling constantly into their daily lives. When one thinks of the innumerable nuptial blessings that have been profaned, one thinks of the unhappiness of men overflowing with the pretension of being happy without grace. Love as a threesome—God with you.

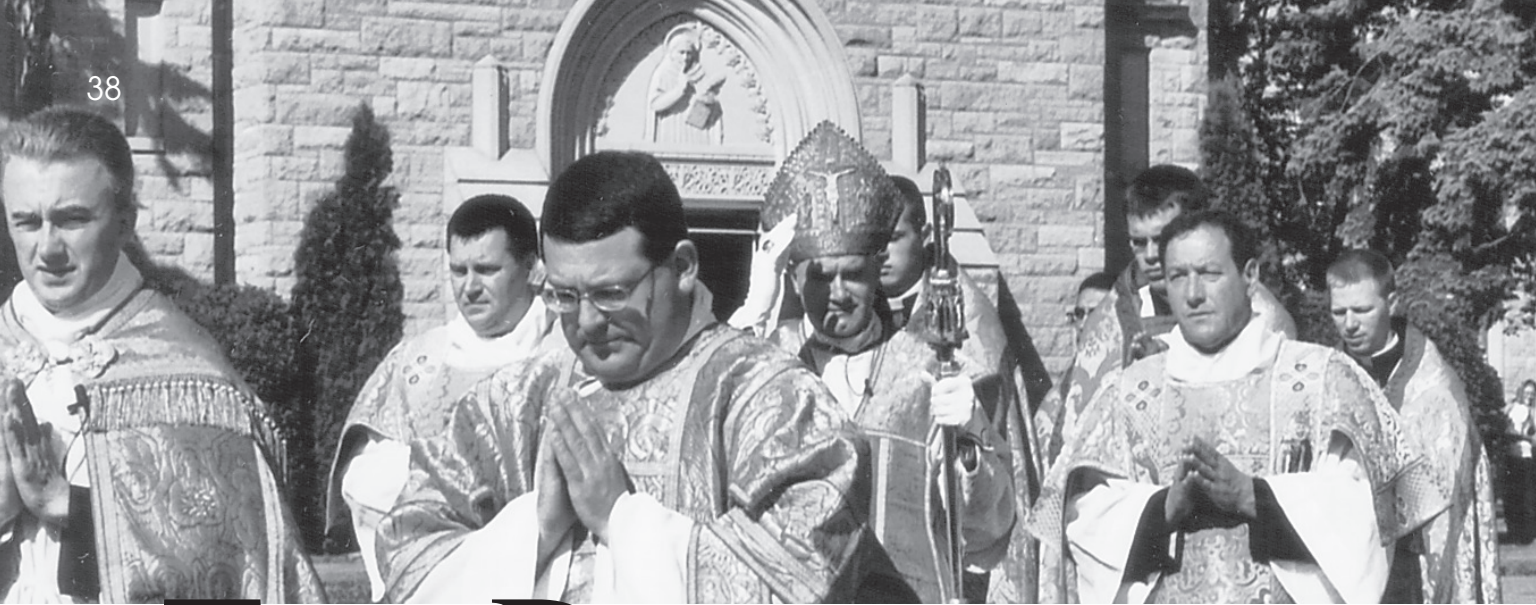
I speak to you in this way because I draw near many homes, because I am aware of many trials, and because I encounter a great deal of happiness in all those who are married “as a threesome.” The recompense of that spiritual life is manifest in the character of peace which accompanies the life of a home built in homage to that love.

And I conclude by showing you the advantage for your children, if you live your married life “as a threesome.” Start with a principle: the most beautiful gift you can ever give your children in the home is an atmosphere of peace. For the physiology of the child is so fragile that, if it is perpetually exposed to being upset by psychological tornadoes, the child ends up suffering from the mental unbalance which we so deplore today. The child needs to draw near father and mother as one draws near an oasis of peace. Nothing can take the place of peace. The moment a child breathes an atmosphere of peace, he encounters opportunities for love of God: “My peace I leave with you.”

You see your responsibility: to maintain, for your children, the peace which will engender trust, which will engender liberating confidences, and the need to remain in the home, and the joy of welcoming to the home friends chosen in function of the qualities they sense there. Without realizing it, we educate our children in the measure in which we allow grace to educate us. Exteriorism is a heresy nobody mentions. By it I mean the habit of seeking solutions from bookstores and doctors and psychologists. If only we would start by discovering within ourselves our treasure of love, which would be a treasure of peace. How many times would you hear God Himself say to you, in the secret of your conscience: “*Pax tibi*—Peace be with you” in recompense for your love.

The solution of your happiness is not external. It is first internal. When, temporally speaking, your happiness may seem to you to be compromised, you have to remember that, temporally speaking, you are invited to enter into the eternity of God to oppose to that temporal the eternity of love. I have tried to draw as near as possible to the secret of your heart to allow you to raise it to the level of the spiritual life. All love is growth, all growth is happiness. Your happiness is with God. ☪

Translated exclusively for Angelus Press from *Carnets Spirituels*, No.1, June 2004, pp.33-44. Fr. Bernard-Marie de Chivré, O.P. (say: Sheave-ray) was ordained in 1930. He was an ardent Thomist, student of Scripture, retreat master, and friend of Archbishop Lefebvre. He died in 1984.



THE DANGERS OF “POSITIVE THINKING”

Letter from St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary

May 11, 2006

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Man tries to confront the difficulties of life by listening to the sirens' voices that announce better days to come or by defending illusory humanitarian ideals. He consoles himself by thinking that man is good, because Rousseau said so and because this dark nonsense has become the new creed of our century!

Faith, hope, and charity—today lost—are now replaced by the revolutionary doctrines of Rousseau, by optimism and humanitarianism. The Revolution itself is, in fact, a religious matter, despite those who want to see in it only a secularistic notion of human life. This new religion finds its most adequate expression in the concept of “positive thinking.”

This expression is so absurd that it makes us smile—after all, thought is not negative or positive, it is true or false. We should not smile, however, because this linguistic error, voluntarily committed, is a cunning snare that traps man into

an erroneous and dangerous system that takes him away from reality. This concept of positive thought forces man to judge things not in virtue of their veracity or falseness but to imagine them as he wishes them to be according to his passions.

In this error we perceive the stench of Masonic delusions. By means of positive thought, man is insidiously subjected to the revolutionary ideals that demand his being essentially cut off from God, from cradle to grave. Reality is, in fact, a tangible proof of the existence of God and of His constant intervention in our world. The man who returns to the land, to the natural order, and respects it comes into contact with God and takes Him as the standard for his own judgments.

Freemasonry wants to prevent at all costs the possibility that man, in contact with reality, might return to God. On the contrary, it encourages the idea that modern man must free himself from any supervision and worry no more about acting according to a higher, established, hierarchical order that exceeds and explains man himself.

Man, praised as the equal of God, should subject himself to nothing else but his own laws. His intelligence ceases to be that invaluable faculty that enables him to discover the truth and to subject himself to it by taking it as his rule of life. Instead it becomes itself the source of truth!

Such a theory is truly ridiculous. Those who have created it know it very well. They are conscious that they cannot propose it so crudely without starting a healthy and vital reaction that would result in an immense burst of laughter. Thus, they hide their nonsense under the disguise of positive thought.

What is this new concept, since, in fact, we can affirm that every thought is, in itself, positive? What does this expression, “positive thought,” mean? To grasp this purposely vague concept, it is better to remind you here of that unhappy formula that is becoming each day more and more common: “Be positive! You see everything too pessimistically!” It seems therefore that it is simply a question of being optimistic regarding everything and in spite of everything.

Let us gloss over this annoying and pedantic mania of the modern world, over this penchant for inventing new words and for reducing language to a long sequence of disgraceful onomatopoeias. Let us be positive—in the true sense of the word—and consider the subtle and mortal trap concealed in this duality of “optimism-pessimism.” Its explanation will allow us to understand the role of this positive thought so popular nowadays.

Let us say it clearly from the start: optimism and pessimism are anti-Christian notions. The Catholic is placed, because of his faith, on a higher plane: he is a man of hope. The judgments he passes on all events exceed infinitely the human level, because he knows that, behind the mirror of appearances, an intense drama is being played that will decide his eternal happiness or misfortune. The notions of optimism or pessimism impede man from rising to the supernatural level.

This rejection of the supernatural profoundly mutilates man, who is daily confronted with misery, starting with his own. Hope, a daughter of Faith, enables us to stand upright in the midst of so much wreckage and to keep sufficient lucidity to admire the plan of God, which is still carried out in the midst of so much vileness. If, on the other hand, we are locked up in this

dualism of optimism and pessimism that closes for us the horizon of the supernatural world, we will rapidly sink into melancholy—worse yet, into despair, the antechamber of Hell.

For this reason we condemn “positive thought.” This concept is dangerous for our souls. It places us into a world where not only is God absent, but where man has become god. Deceived by the false dualism of optimism and pessimism, modern man throws himself wholeheartedly upon this expedient concept of positive thought, like a famished dog on a meatless bone, in order to forget that there is no horizon in this artificial world.

Against all these errors, we want to return to reality, the only thing that will allow us to recuperate our common sense. We refuse to be fooled by this modern concept of positive thought. Being “positive” matters little to us. On the other hand, we are extremely interested in discovering what is true, in order to live it with our whole heart.

In Christo Sacerdote et Maria,

Y. le Roux
Fr. Yves le Roux

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. Photographs taken at the ordination ceremony in Winona, Minnesota, June 23, 2006. Fr. Le Roux is on the far left of the photograph on p.40, and center, looking towards the camera, in the photograph below.





F R . D I D I E R B O N N E T E R R E

ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE AND THE REFORMS

Twenty-five years ago, the Society's French publishing house, then called Fideliter, published its first book, *The Liturgical Movement* by Fr. Didier Bonneterre. It became a bestseller and was translated into several languages.¹ We asked Fr. Bonneterre to commemorate this anniversary.

Pope Pius XII's Reform

During this centenary celebration of Archbishop Lefebvre's birth, I would like to focus on the way in which our founder responded to the various liturgical reforms he lived through. The plural is important: his resistance was clearly manifested when Pope Paul VI imposed upon the Catholic universe his *Novus Ordo Missae*. It is interesting to look over the years that preceded the Archbishop's *non possumus*,² and to remark that the Iron Bishop was open to reforms in the anteconciliar period, and that he hoped the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on liturgical reform would not result in the catastrophe he nonetheless feared.

Archbishop Lefebvre was a priest and bishop during the time when the liturgical movement was in full swing. Pius XI had just celebrated the first "dialogue" Mass when the young Fr. Marcel Lefebvre was ordained in 1929. It was with joy that the young Levite saw the implementation of the active participation of the faithful in the Mass from which, according to St. Pius X's desire, they would drink in the true Christian spirit.

Fr. Marcel Lefebvre was consecrated bishop on September 18, 1947, by Cardinal Liénart. On November 20th of the same year, Pope Pius XII wrote the Encyclical *Mediator Dei*, in which he gave the right orientation to the Church's liturgical renewal, encouraging its genuine aspects and warning against dangerous innovations. Nonetheless, beyond this

document of capital importance, Pius XII inaugurated a general reform of the liturgy by creating, on May 18, 1948, the Pontifical Commission for Liturgical Reform.

Archbishop Lefebvre's keen pastoral sense made him appreciate the shortening of the Eucharistic fast (from midnight to three hours) in 1953. Even better, the permission to celebrate Mass in the evening was to be authorized on March 19, 1957. Meanwhile, the long-awaited reform of the Holy Week liturgy was introduced. In 1951 the Paschal Vigil was restored to its real time—evening, not 9 o'clock in the morning.

The year 1955 saw the general reform of the Sacred Triduum, a reform adapted to the needs of the time, and which was intended to encourage the faithful's participation in this summit of the liturgical year, but from which they had long been absent. The same year also saw a simplification of the rubrics, and a first draft of the reform of the breviary. This first big effort of reform was concluded in 1958 by the regulation of active participation and its degrees, as well as rules on sacred music.

Pope John XXIII, who desired to confide to his inspired Council responsibility for the complete reform of the liturgy, nevertheless knew how to bring to completion the works initiated by his predecessor. Archbishop Lefebvre had desired the abridgment of the breviary, as did the great majority of the bishops. On July 25, 1960, the *Motu Proprio Rubricarum Instructum* was published, and took effect January 1, 1961: it was the reform of the breviary and of the

Roman missal. It was at this reform, result of the 1948 commission, that Archbishop Lefebvre was later to halt.

A Bishop in the Maelstrom

Vatican Council II opened October 11, 1962. On the 22nd of October, the preparatory schema on the liturgy, so dreaded by the Prefect of the Congregation of Rites, Cardinal Cicognani, was presented. It was to be adopted by 2,151 votes to 4! Archbishop Lefebvre signed it, but he expressed his thoughts to the Holy Ghost Fathers on March 25, 1963. In his letter, he manifested all the interest that he had in the liturgical movement, which he rightly called “liturgical renewal”:

...we should find deep rejoicing on seeing in our contemporaries a great desire to live by the liturgy and a new reverence for this incomparable source of the Spirit of God.

Nonetheless, in the same letter, the Archbishop’s vigilance is equally manifested in this sentence, which sums up the entire drama of the reform that issued from Vatican II:

Would it not be to undervalue the liturgy to reduce it to such a function and no longer regard it in the light of public worship and the praise of God?

He underscores the divine character of the liturgy before defending the universal character of the Latin language:

It cannot be denied that the Faith comes to us in terms of the wording of liturgical prayer: “*Lex orandi, lex credendi.*” A single language guards the expression of the Faith from the linguistic adaptations of the centuries, and thus the Faith itself.

The Archbishop states the ultimate end of the liturgy, which is union with God. In the conclusion he acquiesces to the adoption of the vernacular language for the first part of the Mass, and, finally, adaptation of missals that will allow the faithful to gain a greater understanding of the liturgy.³

Unfortunately, Pope Paul VI was not to take into account any of these prudent considerations, and was to entrust the application of the Constitution on the Liturgy to Cardinal Lercaro and Fr. Bugnini, who hurried the Congregation of Rites, which found itself with nothing else to do than to keep quiet and applaud.

A first flurry of reforms occurred in 1964-65: it was still the Tridentine missal, but the rite and the rubrics had been reformed. The Psalm *Judica me* at the foot of the altar and the last Gospel were suppressed, and the first part of the Mass was celebrated from the sedilia as in a pontifical Mass. Archbishop Lefebvre felt obliged to submit to this reform. It remained in vigor at Ecône until 1974.

Meanwhile, Archbishop Lefebvre, alerted by the trial “normative Mass” and by the “Brief Critical Examination” of the *Novus Ordo* presented by

Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci [also known as *The Ottaviani Intervention*], refused to celebrate the New Mass. He saw in the two Masses the opposition of two theologies and two conceptions of the priesthood, as he was to say in March 1971 to the faithful priests of Barcelona.

Diminishing or blurring in any way the expression of our faith in these realities, which constitute the very essence of the sacrifice bequeathed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, can lead to the most disastrous consequences, the sacrifice of the Mass being the heart, the soul, the mystical fountain of the Church.

This spirituality of the priesthood that flows from the Mass was to be developed by Ecône’s founder throughout his talks to the seminarians and the faithful worldwide until his death in 1991. It is to the credit of Fr. Patrick Troadec, FSSPX, to have collected and edited all these documents for our time and to have published them as *La Messe de Toujours*.⁴

I shall conclude on a note of optimism and encouragement for our intransigent fidelity. Archbishop Lefebvre’s *non possumus*, reiterated more and more tragically from 1976 to 1988, obliged the Roman authorities to draw back. A breach had opened in the Conciliar fortress. This fact has not been sufficiently grasped. The Mass conceded by the 1984 indult, the application of which was supposed to be broadened by the *motu proprio* of 1988, is not the reformed Mass of 1964-65, but the antecconciliar Mass of 1960-61. It behooves us to draw out the conclusions that flow from this fact in a theological dialogue with the Roman authorities about the authority of the Second Vatican Council and the allegedly irreformable character of its decisions.

The future will confirm, in God’s own good time, that the true and the good always triumph over lies and abuses of power. ☩

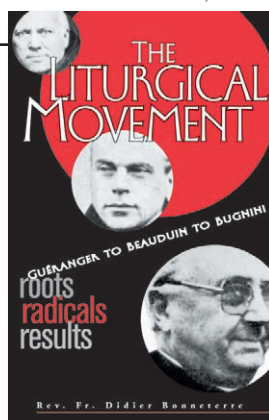
Translated from *Fideliter*, No. 170, March-April 2006, pp.45-47. Fr. Didier Bonnetterre, author of *The Liturgical Movement* (published by Angelus Press in 2002), was ordained at Ecône in 1977. He is currently prior of St. Denis’s in Paris.

¹ The English version was published by Angelus Press in 2002.

² A Latin expression meaning, “We cannot.”

³ This letter was published in *A Bishop Speaks* (Una Voce Scotland, 1976).—Ed.

⁴ Clovis Publications, 2005.



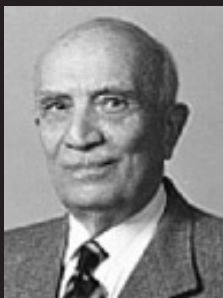
The Liturgical Movement

Rev. Fr. Didier Bonnetterre

The liturgical movement was off to a good start with Dom Gueranger and the monks of Solesmes, but before long, it went woefully off-course. How? Why? Who were the key players? What was the principal error of these liturgical radicals? See how the New Mass had already been conceived well before Vatican II.

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It's Not About Persons; It's About Principles



(1908-99) Former Prime Minister of Italy
and a professor of Economic History at the
Catholic University of Milan, Italy.

A CATECHISM OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

A M I N T O R E F A N F A N I

Part IX

With another installment, *The Angelus* continues the serialization of the book *Catechism of Catholic Social Teaching* by Amintore Fanfani (translated by Fr. Henry J. Yannone, The Newman Press, 1960), which will run monthly until its conclusion. He was the author of articles and books on economics, including *Catholicism, Protestantism, and Capitalism*, available from Angelus Press for \$14.95.

HEADING THREE: THE STATE AND THE CITIZEN

CHAPTER 5. Nature, Ends, and Powers of the State

64) Is there a form of government that is good for all States?

Human wisdom is free to select the form of government that is more in accord with the historical necessities of each individual people, provided that the rights of the human person, the common good, the origin and the use of power are properly preserved. Today, the democratic form seems to be such.

Pope Leo XIII: No one of the several forms of government is in itself condemned, insofar as none of them contains anything contrary to Catholic doctrine, and all of them are capable, if wisely and justly managed, of insuring the welfare of the State. (*Immortals Dei*, §18)

Pope Leo XIII: But in matters merely political, as for instance the best form of government, and this or that system of administration, a difference of opinion is lawful. (*Immortale Dei*, §23)

Pope Leo XIII: Again, it is not of itself wrong to prefer a democratic form of government, if only the Catholic doctrine be maintained as to the origin and exercise of power. Of the various forms of government, the Church does not reject any that are fitted to procure the welfare of the subject. (*Libertas*, §32)

Pope Pius XII: It is scarcely necessary to recall that according to the teaching of the Church, "it is not forbidden to prefer temperate, popular forms of government, without prejudice, however, to Catholic teaching on the origin and use of authority....The Church does not disapprove of any of the various forms of government provided they be *per se* capable of securing the good of the citizens."...Our action shows clearly that the interest and solicitude of the Church looks not so much to its external structure and organization, as to the individual himself who, far from being the object and, as it were, a merely passive element in the social order, is in fact, and must be and continue to be, its subject, its foundation, and its end. A healthy and true democracy responding also to the social tone proper to the charity of the Church, can be realized in monarchies as well as republics. (*Christmas Message*, 1944)

65) Under what conditions can a genuinely democratic form of government satisfy present-day needs?

It is possible to establish a genuinely democratic form of government according to present-day needs if: **1)** the people organized in a State control its own organs and concur to the formation of the will of the community through capable representatives, endowed with high moral sense; **2)** if the authority has effective power, limited only by the respect for the will of the people and by moral laws; **3)** if the rulers fulfill their duties with full awareness of their high mission; **4)** if all citizens have a moral maturity enlightened by the light of Christian truths.

Pope Pius XII: The citizens must not be compelled to obey without being heard....The State is, and should in practice be, the organic and organizing unity of a real people....

The State...should be entrusted with the power to command with real and effective authority....Only a clear appreciation of the purpose assigned by God to every human society, joined to a deep sense of the exalted duties of social activity, can put those in power in a position to fulfill their own obligations in the legislative, judicial, and executive order with that objectivity, impartiality, loyalty, generosity, and integrity without which a democratic government would find it hard to command the respect and the support of the better section of the people....

The center of a democracy normally set up resides in this popular assembly....The question of high moral standards, practical ability, and intellectual capacity of parliamentary deputies is for every people living under a democratic regime a question of life and death, of prosperity and decadence, of soundness or perpetual unrest....

A sound democracy, based on the immutable principles of the natural law and revealed truth, will resolutely turn its back on such corruption as gives to the state legislature

an unchecked and unlimited power, and moreover, makes the democratic regime, notwithstanding an outward show to the contrary, purely and simply a form of absolutism.

This form of [democratic] government makes exalted claims on the moral maturity of the individual citizen; a moral maturity to which he could never hope to attain fully and securely if the light from the Cave of Bethlehem did not illumine the dark path along which the peoples are going forward through the stormy present towards a future which they hope will be more serene. (*Christmas Message*, 1944)

66) Are there any forms of government unsuited for the State, as the instrument through which the common good is attained?

Forms of government based on atheism, or forms which subordinate the right of the individual to the power of the State, or which foster only the material welfare to which every other aspect of life is sacrificed, or leave the common good to the outcome of a competition between various egotistic aims or to the will of a tyrant ruler are unsuited for a State conceived according to Christian principles.

Pope Pius XI: In the Communistic commonwealth morality and law would be nothing but a derivation of the existing economic order, purely earthly in origin and unstable in character. In a word, the Communists claim to inaugurate a new era and a new civilization which is the result of blind evolutionary forces culminating in a "humanity without God." (*Divini Redemptoris*, §12)

Pope Pius XI: [It is not a prerogative of the State to be a] subjective totalitarianism in which every aspect of the life of the individual is subordinated to the State and made dependent upon the State (*a fortiori* if the citizen is made to depend exclusively or principally upon the State). This would mean that the citizen is made to depend upon the State for everything that is or could be necessary to human life, particularly to man's individual life, to the life of his family, to his spiritual and supernatural life. (*Dobbiamo Inrattenerla*)

Pope Pius XI: Socialism, on the contrary, entirely ignorant of and unconcerned about this sublime end both of individuals and of society, affirms that human society was instituted merely for the sake of material advantages.... The socialists argue that economic production...must necessarily be carried on collectively, and that because of this necessity men must surrender and submit themselves wholly to society so far as the production of wealth is concerned. Indeed, the possession of the greatest possible amount of temporal goods is esteemed so highly, that man's higher goods, not excepting liberty, must, they claim, be subordinated and even sacrificed to the exigencies of the most efficient production....Society, therefore, as the socialist conceives it, is, on the one hand, impossible and unthinkable without the use of compulsion of the most excessive kind; on the other, it fosters a false liberty, since in such a scheme no place is found for true social authority, which is not based on temporal and material advantages,

but descends from God alone, the Creator and last end of all things. (*Quadragesimo Anno*, §§118, 119)

Pope Pius XI: Free competition has killed itself. Economic domination has taken the place of untrammelled trade. Unbridled ambition for domination has succeeded the desire for gain; the whole economic life has become hard, cruel, and relentless in a ghastly way....The State, which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed. (*Quadragesimo Anno*, §109)

Pope Pius XI: Taught by bitter experience, they are more aggressive in opposing the concentration of dictatorial power that cannot be censured or touched, and call for a system of government more in keeping with the dignity and liberty of the citizens. (Christmas Message, 1944)

Pope Pius XII: Totalitarianism...grants to the civil power an unwarranted scope, determining and fixing, both in regard to form and content, every sphere of activity and so confining every legitimate individual life, whether personal, local, or professional, within a mechanical unity or collectivity conceived in terms of nation, race, or class.

Equally unsatisfactory in regard to the same vital requirements is that conception of the civil power which may be styled "authoritarian," for this shuts out citizens from any effective share or influence in the formation of the social will. It consequently splits the nation into two categories, that of rulers and that of ruled, whose relations to each other are reduced to a purely mechanical kind, governed by force, or else based upon purely biological considerations. (Allocation to the Auditors and Other Officials of the Sacred Roman Rota, October 2, 1945)

67) Are there any guarantees against the arbitrary exercise of power on the part of the State?


The imitation by human laws of those which are eternal, the respect of a clear juridical order, protected by an independent juridical power, the duty on the part of the State to repair the damage done to private citizens by its action, the control by those ruled over those ruling them, constitute effective guarantees against the arbitrary exercise of power on the part of the State.

Pope Leo XIII: The liberty of those who are in authority does not consist in the power to lay unreasonable and capricious commands upon their subjects...but instead the binding force of human laws lies in the fact that they are to be regarded as applications of the eternal law, and are incapable of sanctioning anything which is not contained in the eternal law, as in the principle of all law. (*Libertas*, §7)

Pope Pius XII: That social life, such as God willed it, may attain its scope, it needs a juridical order to support it from without, to defend and protect it. The function of this juridical order is not to dominate but to serve, to help the development and increase of society's vitality in the rich multiplicity of its ends, leading all the individual energies to their perfection in peaceful competition, and defending them with appropriate and honest means against all that may militate against those who only by this means can be held within the noble discipline of social life. (Christmas Message, 1942)

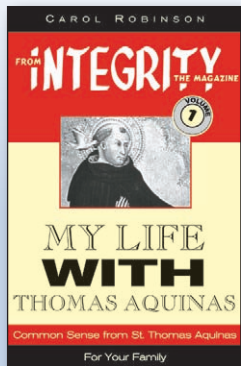
Pope Pius XII: The juridical order has, besides, the high and difficult scope of insuring harmonious relations both between individuals and between societies, and within these. This scope will be reached if legislators will abstain from following those perilous theories and practices, so harmful to communities and to their spirit of union, which derive their origin and promulgation from false postulates. Among such postulates we must count the juridical positivism which attributes a deceptive majesty to the setting up of purely human laws, and which leaves the way open for a fatal divorce of law from morality....There is, besides, the conception which claims for particular nations or classes, the juridical instinct as the final imperative and the norm from which there is no appeal; finally, there are those various theories which, differing among themselves, and deriving from opposite ideologies, agree in considering the State, or a group which represents it, as an absolute and supreme entity, exempt from central control and from criticism even when its theoretical and practical postulates result in, and offend by, their open denial of essential tenets of the human Christian conscience. (Christmas Message, 1942)

Pope Pius XII: The relations of man to man, of the individual to society, to authority, to civil duties, the relations of society and of authority to the individual, should be placed on a firm juridic footing and be guarded, when the need arises, by the authority of the courts. This supposes: **1)** a tribunal and a judge who take their directions from a clearly formulated and defined right; **2)** clear juridical norms which may not be overturned by unwarranted appeals to a supposed popular sentiment or by merely utilitarian considerations; **3)** the recognition of the principle that even the State and the functionaries and organizations depending on it are obliged to repair and to withdraw measures which are harmful to the liberty, property, honor, progress, and health of the individuals. (Christmas Message, 1942)

Pope Pius XII: Had there been the possibility of censuring and correcting the actions of public authority, the world would not have been dragged into the vortex of a disastrous war...and...to avoid for the future the repetition of such a catastrophe, we must vest efficient guarantees in the people itself. (Christmas Message, 1944) 

(To be continued.)

INTEGRITY Magazine was a monthly periodical founded in 1946 by Ed Willock, Carol Robinson and others with the specific purpose of examining the relationship between the Catholic Faith and life in the modern world. To the editors and writers of Integrity, there was a gigantic gap between the Faith professed by Catholics and how they lived their lives. This is the essence of liberalism—to compartmentalize one's Faith so that it does not influence your entire outlook on life. The problem is essentially no different today. Actually, it is much worse. **INTEGRITY** took its inspiration from the time honored principles of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas. Far from being a rarefied intellectual journal, it was imminently practical, easy to read, illustrated with poignant cartoons and proved a sure guide to thousands of Catholics until it discontinued publication in 1956. Angelus Press has collected the best articles from **INTEGRITY** into the three volumes below. You will not be disappointed.



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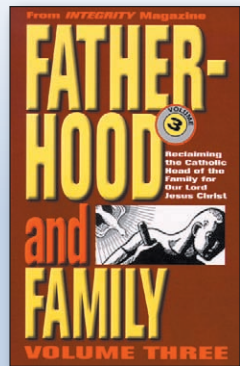


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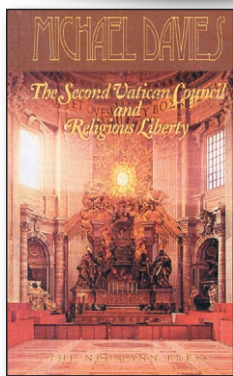
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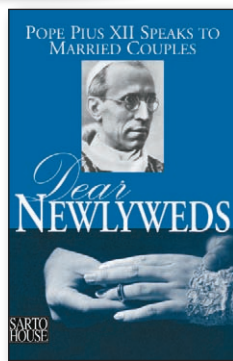


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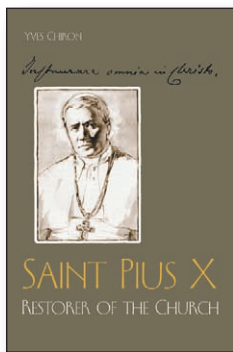


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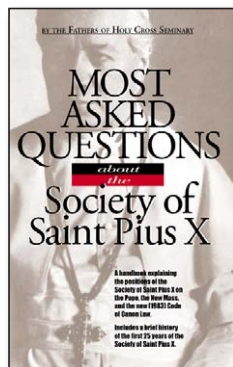
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The Crisis in the Church is not fun. None of us wants the current situation we are in, but God has His reasons... "to them that love God, all things work together unto good" (Rom. 8:28). One of these reasons is summed up in the Latin phrase "*Crescit sub pondere Virtus*" (virtue grows out of adversity). We have the opportunity to "step up to the plate" ourselves AND the privilege of living among saints. How many of us met this great man? Were confirmed by him? Received the Body of Christ from his hands? Received his blessing? How fortunate we are! Dr. White says, "But allow me to share a comment made to me once by the late Fr. Malachi Martin, 'Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer are the two great saints of the modern Church. Once this catastrophe ends they will be instantly canonized.'"

What now would be the state of us,
But for this unicorn?
And what would be the fate of us,
Poor sinners, lost, forlorn?
Oh, may he lead us on and up,
Unworthy though we be,
Into the Father's kingdom,
To dwell eternally!

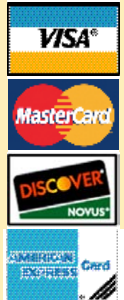
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