

# Sì sì 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)

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“I SHALL HARDEN PHARAO’S HEART” (EX. 7:3)

## THE BLINDNESS OF CATHOLICS

PART 2

### AND THE SOCIAL KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

#### “Russia Will Spread Her Errors in the World”: The *Ostpolitik* of John XXIII and the Principle of the New Concordats

The ground covered in the two preceding articles [see the May 2009 issue of *The Angelus*] enabled us to appreciate the growing rift separating the way of Divine mercy and the way taken by Vatican diplomacy. Not that the two ways are irreconcilable in theory, but when man thinks his prudence superior to the proven prudence of her who is called *Virgo prudentissima*, then the two ways have parted. And they clearly lead to different outcomes. Heaven’s way would have led to a stable (though not definitive, as that will come only in Paradise) peace founded on the rights of God and His holy Mother; men’s way has, on the contrary, led to the construction of an unstable peace threatening to collapse at any moment, a peace like the menacing atmosphere that precedes a violent storm.

With the pontificate of John XXIII, the utopia of a peace outside the order established by God became a reality.

#### The New Tack of the Vatican’s *Ostpolitik*: John XXIII

With the accession of John XXIII there appeared a tendency to a different understanding of the Communist phenomenon even in those places where it had become the regime; and at the same time there was a growing awareness of the depth of the developing changes which were subsequently to affect the politics of the Holy See. But we think that one development of utmost importance was Pope Roncalli’s idea that international peace should be a priority for the Church.<sup>1</sup>

In our opinion, the capital error of John XXIII’s *Ostpolitik* is contained in this new priority. International peace is surely a value in behalf of which the Church has always deployed her diplomatic arms; however, it is a value subordinate to the rights of God and the Church. This hierarchy of values was literally subverted by John XXIII, as we shall see in our three-point analysis of the three key points of his politics in dealing with the Eastern European countries: **1)** The Metz Accord, **2)** Vatican II, and **3)** the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*.

following pope, Paul VI, was to approve fully. During the Council several petitions were rejected, or rather—what is worse—allowed to sink into oblivion: Bishop Sigaud’s petition, signed by 213 Fathers, for a schema on Catholic social doctrine and the condemnation of Marxism, socialism, and Communism; a second petition by the same bishop signed by 510 prelates to obtain the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as the Virgin had requested at Fatima; and a letter drafted by Msgr. Carli with 332 signatures (ultimately 454) demanding the condemnation of Communism.

The last initiative met with unbelievable obstruction.

Archbishop Lefebvre submitted the petition and the 332 original signatures in person at the Council Secretariat on November 9 when there was sufficient time for it to be considered. He was given a receipt acknowledging that the document had been received.

The result? On November 13 the new version of the schema made no reference to the wishes of the petition. Communism was still not named. Thus, Bishop Carli made a protest on the same day to the Council Presidency and lodged a complaint with the administrative tribunal. Moreover, he decided to make the request once more in the form of an amendment, and at the same time proposed a debate specifically on the topic....on November 15, the vigorous protest of Archbishop Sigaud shook the Council. But it was all in vain.

Nevertheless, Cardinal Tisserant ordered an inquiry that revealed...that the petition had unfortunately been “lost” in a drawer. In fact Msgr. Achille Glorieux, secretary for the relevant commission, received the petition but had not passed it on to the commission. Archbishop Garrone apologized publicly for Msgr. Glorieux’s “forgetfulness,” but there was nothing that could be done. Time had been made for a paragraph on Communism to be added, but it had now passed.<sup>6</sup>

And so the Council, which ought to have been pastoral, attentive to mankind and contemporary society, scandalously did not mention Communism:

Communism was undoubtedly the most imposing, long-lasting, overwhelming historical phenomenon of the 20th century; and yet the Council, which had proposed a Constitution on the Church and the Modern World, does not speak of it. By midcentury, Communism...had caused the deaths of tens of millions, the victims of mass terror and the most inhuman repression; and the Council does not speak of it. Communism...had in practice imposed atheism on its subject populations...; and the Council, which expatiated on the case of atheists, does not speak of it. During the years the ecumenical assembly was sitting, the Communist prisons were still places of unspeakable sufferings and humiliations inflicted on numerous “witnesses of the Faith” (bishops, priests, convinced laymen believing in Christ); and the Council does not speak of it.<sup>7</sup>

## The Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*

On April 11, 1963, while the Council was in session, John XXIII published the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, which “will prove to be a precious source for the elaboration of the document *Gaudium et Spes*”; and indeed this encyclical determined the Council’s

## The Metz Accord

In 1959 John XXIII announced to the world his intention to convoke an ecumenical council. He made known his desire that representatives of other Christian confessions also participate in this council. The extension of this “invitation” to the Orthodox Church certainly could not exclude the Patriarchate of Moscow, which constitutes the largest part of the Orthodox world. It immediately became evident that this involved the problem of relations with the Soviet State. The ambassador of the Russian Orthodox Church—and thus of the Communist party, since according to Article 126 of the USSR Constitution promulgated by Stalin in 1936, all professional and social organizations, including those of a religious character, were directed and controlled by the party<sup>2</sup>—was Msgr. Nikodim. In 1962 he obtained a meeting at Metz with Cardinal Tisserant. News of the meeting was only made known the following year thanks to a conference Msgr. Schmitt, the bishop of Metz, granted to journalists:

It was at Metz that Cardinal Tisserant met with Msgr. Nikodim, the archbishop charged with the Russian Church’s exterior relations, and it was there that the message taken by Msgr. Willebrands to Moscow was prepared. Msgr. Nikodim, who had come to Paris in the first fortnight of the month of August [1962] had made known his desire to meet with the Cardinal....Msgr. Nikodim agreed to someone’s going to Moscow to bring an invitation [to participate in the Council] on condition that guarantees be given concerning the Council’s apolitical attitude.<sup>3</sup>

The significance of these guarantees as to the apolitical attitude of the Council is obvious: Communism must not be mentioned, as indeed happened; the arrangement was confirmed for us by Fr. Wenger:

During the French bishops’ meeting at St-Louis, Cardinal Feltn made a confidential intervention. The Pope asked him to tell the bishops that he did not want any political allusions in their interventions....They should not talk about Communism either.<sup>4</sup>

## Vatican Council II

During the Council, the order not to talk about Communism was followed to the letter. John XXIII prepared the ground with his famous opening discourse, in which he announced that the Church would no longer use the arm of severity, and that she preferred the remedy of mercy: “We are to understand that, emerging from the mist of a nebulous strategy, the point was to initiate the particular policy of a sudden ban on open anti-Communism.”<sup>5</sup> And indeed, from that moment on, every attempt to obtain the Council’s condemnation of Communism was thwarted by recourse to the orientation the Pope desired to impart to the ecumenical assembly, an orientation the

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line of conduct in regard to Communism, which line of conduct was, as we have seen, one of scandalous silence.

*Pacem in Terris* literally overturned *Divini Redemptoris* of Pius XI, especially by the principles posited in paragraphs 158-160:

§158: It is always perfectly justifiable to distinguish between error as such and the person who falls into error—even in the case of men who err regarding the truth or are led astray as a result of their inadequate knowledge, in matters either of religion or of the highest ethical standards.

The principle is correct, but dangerously incomplete. Cardinal Biffi writes:

While reflecting upon this statement, I was unable to forget that the historical wisdom of the Church has never reduced the condemnation of error to a pure and ineffectual abstraction. The Christian people must be warned and defended against someone sowing error without our ceasing to seek that person's true good....In this regard, Jesus gave the heads of the Church a precise directive: someone who gives scandal by his conduct and teaching and does not allow himself to be persuaded either by personal admonitions nor by the more solemn reprobation of the *ecclesia*, 'let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican' (Mt. 18:17); thus foreseeing and prescribing the institution of excommunication.<sup>8</sup>

§159: Again it is perfectly legitimate to make a clear distinction between a false philosophy of the nature, origin and purpose of men and the world, and economic, social, cultural, and political undertakings, even when such undertakings draw their origin and inspiration from that philosophy. True, the philosophic formula does not change once it has been set down in precise terms, but the undertakings clearly cannot avoid being influenced to a certain extent by the changing conditions in which they have to operate. Besides, who can deny the possible existence of good and commendable elements in these undertakings, elements which do indeed conform to the dictates of right reason, and are an expression of man's lawful aspirations?

With this we have the contrary of common sense and the statements of Pius XI: given the intrinsic wrongness of Communism, no one may collaborate with it in anything whatsoever.

§160: It may sometimes happen, therefore, that meetings arranged for some practical end—though hitherto they were thought to be altogether useless—may in fact be fruitful at the present time, or at least offer prospects of success.

Behold the Church caught in the Bolshevik snare: Lenin and Company expected no more. John XXIII misunderstood the true nature of Communism, which—as we have seen—completely resides, not in its theory, but in its praxis; the first is at the service of the second, and not the reverse. Reality is but matter and dialectical movement. Madiran profoundly perceived the problem:

The Church is not expected to align her doctrine with Marxism-Leninism, but only to stop keeping the faithful from joint action with the Communist party: thus she needs must refrain from opposing Communism; and since she cannot avoid criticizing it when she speaks of it, she need only and she needs must stop speaking of it.<sup>9</sup>

The Communist objective is to push the Church to silence and Catholics to collaboration, even partial. The Church thereby finds herself co-opted in the Communist cause.

## Open Doors to International Communism

The Catholic hierarchy opted for the non-condemnation of Communism by its refusal to consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart as by its rejection during the Council of the proposal to condemn Communism. Presented with these more than conciliatory choices, the Communists agreed to change their tone, but certainly not to change their objectives. To the contrary, the groundwork for implementing Marxist dialectic at the beginning of the 1980s was readier than ever. The Italian deputy Longo, Togliatti's successor, clearly depicted the Italian Communist party's strategy:

We affirm that we are not in favor of an effectively and absolutely secular State: that, as we are against the confessional State, we are also against atheism of the State; that we are for the absolute respect of religious freedom, of freedom of conscience, for believers and non-believers, Christians and non-Christians. We are thus against the State's attributing any kind of privilege to an ideology, a religious belief, or a cultural and artistic current to the detriment of the others.<sup>10</sup>

The State atheism practised in the Soviet Union was nothing else than the momentary antithesis to oppose the confessional Catholic State (the thesis); just as the persecution that flowed from it served as the "bait" to draw the Holy See into dealings and induce it to accept a solution that would ultimately be the abandonment of the Catholic social order, because this order, and only it, was radically opposed to the integral Communist revolution. The Concordat from the Catholic perspective constituted an impassable barrier to the achievement of the real revolution. Gramsci clearly understood this when he wrote:

The concordats essentially attack the autonomous and sovereign nature of the modern State. Does the State gain in return? Yes, but it gains it on its own territory in matters concerning its own subjects....the capitulation of the State consists in its accepting in fact the tutelage of an external sovereignty whose superiority it recognizes in practice.<sup>11</sup>

In the "classic" concordat, the State recognizes the Catholic Church in itself, with its superior mission, and it recognizes its indirect authority over the civil power. The Catholic Church thus has a juridical importance, and in virtue of this importance coherent laws are promulgated. It was thus necessary to eliminate this "juridical obstruction" but without falling into the error of declaring an open war on the Church. The solution takes shape in the principle of the secular State; in it, the Church is taken into account as a phenomenon in

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that it exists *de facto*, as other ideologies, confessions, *etc.*, also exist. It may enjoy a greater respect inasmuch as Catholicism is a religion belonging to the historical roots of a nation, or because it is still (somewhat...) professed by the majority of the citizens of the State. It matters little. The point is that the Church is no longer considered for what it is in truth. Senator Mancion, who in 1984 was the head of the Christian Democrats in the Italian Senate, explicitly stated about the new concordat signed by Cardinal Casaroli and Craxi: “as several acknowledged legal experts, we understand the Catholic religion as the religion of the majority of the Italian people, and not as the religion of State”<sup>12</sup>—a statement of phenomenological importance. Such is the fundamental principle the men of the Church will adopt henceforth; it is not only a question of a pragmatic agreement seeking to obtain as much as possible in a particularly unfavorable situation. No; it is a question of revolution in principle, as the vice-president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, Msgr. Fagiolo, admitted at the time:

We are obliged to recognize that it was no longer possible to maintain or to make others maintain the principle according to which the Catholic religion is the sole religion of the Italian State. Honestly, this principle could no longer be defended.<sup>13</sup>

The foundations upon which Christian society was built up for centuries and the rampart that had defended it from arrogant political power were definitively suppressed. The way was clear for International Communism, which could more freely “spread its errors in the world.”

## “They Shut Their Eyes”

Blindness: such is the terrible consequence for those who refuse the grace of God. There is not much more to add: the Church’s doctrine on the social kingship of Jesus Christ, the only true solution to the manifold evils that afflict our society, is before the eyes of any who have eyes to see. The “first” Maritain wrote in 1927:

Political modernism seeks the separation of Church and State in opposition to the teaching of the Church on the social kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ. Political modernism would limit God’s relationship

This doctrine is unchangeable. It may have been presented under different aspects: it has not altered in essentials throughout the centuries....Anyone paying sufficient attention to the substance of things underlying the various incidents of history, will perceive that one same teaching is imparted by Boniface VIII in the Bull *Unam Sanctam* and by Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Immortale Dei*.<sup>14</sup>

The idea of the secular State, however it may be declined, has never been accepted by the Church; it has been, however, the instrument willed by Communism for the annihilation of the Catholic State and Christian society. And the events prove it day after day.

Though they have eyes, they cannot see, and though they have ears, they cannot hear or understand....You will listen and listen, but for you there is no understanding; you will watch and watch, but for you there is no perceiving. The heart of this people has become dull, their ears are slow to listen, and they keep their eyes shut, so that they may never see with those eyes, or hear with those ears, or understand with that heart, and turn back to me, and win healing from me. (Mt. 13:14 [Knox version])

But that is not the Lord’s only saying, for He told Sister Lucy: “It will never be too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary.” The faults committed can still be repaired; the Holy Father, in union with all the bishops, can still publicly and explicitly consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. ☩

Translated from *Courrier de Rome*, December 2008, pp.5-7.

<sup>1</sup> G. Barberini, *The Holy See’s Ostpolitik: A Long and Wearing Dialogue* [Italian] (Bologna, 2007), p.56.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jean Madiran, *La vieillesse du monde: Essai sur le communisme* (Jarzé, 1975), p. 5ff.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Madiran, *L’accord de Metz, ou pourquoi notre Mère fut muette* (Versailles, 2006), pp.28-29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre*, tr. Brian Sudlow (2002; Kansas City: Angelus Press, 2004), p.301.

<sup>7</sup> Giacomo Biffi, *Memories and Digressions of an Italian Cardinal* [Italian] (Sienna, 2007), pp.184-185.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.179.

<sup>9</sup> Madiran, *L’accord de Metz*, p.26.

<sup>10</sup> L. Longo, “Summary of the Introduction to the XIth National Congress of the PCI” in R. De Mattei, *Catholic Italy and the New Concordat* [Italian] (Rome, 1985), p.131.

<sup>11</sup> A. Gramsci, *Notebooks from Prison, 1929-1935* [Italian], C. 16, §11.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in De Mattei, *Catholic Italy*, p.105.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96

<sup>14</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Primauté du spirituel* (Paris, 1927), pp.28-29. [English version: *The Things That Are Not Caesar’s*, tr. J. F. Scanlan (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1930), p.13.]

# Political Modernism: The Negation of the Kingship of Jesus Christ

with men to individual members of humanity. The Church, to the contrary, teaches that man, by nature a social animal, must, among other duties, offer public worship to God, and that society (a union of many

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families), a “moral creature” of God, owes Him public worship and adoration. Unfortunately, Vatican II (in *Dignitatis Humanae*) denied the social dimension of the confessional Catholic State. The last trip of Pope Benedict XVI to the United States (April 2008) was the epitome of this error, for he presented as the ideal and model separation between the State and the true religion.

## The Cause of the Evil Enveloping the Modern World: *Laicism*

On December 11, 1925, Pius XI promulgated the Encyclical *Quas Primas* on the social reign of our Lord Jesus Christ; this document brought the social kingship of Christ into the universal liturgy (Feast of Christ the King) and into the category of truths declared by the ecclesiastical Magisterium.

I. On March 24, 1960, the Italian episcopate, under the presidency of Cardinal Siri, wrote an interesting Pastoral Letter on “Laicism” which well explained its nature and malice. Etymologically, the Greek word *laòs*, whence comes the word *laicism*, designates the faithful and, in the language of the New Testament, the Christian and the saint; but the term *laicism* in the 19th century, as the suffix “ism” denotes, took on a purely negative anticlerical and antireligious connotation. *Laicism*, in effect, is “a complex state of mind...however it is possible to discern a constant line...a mentality of systematic and alarmist opposition to any influence that might be exercised over men and institutions by the Catholic religion and hierarchy” (Pastoral Letter on *Laicism*).

Laicism can be either radical or moderate: it is radical when it completely abstracts from Revelation and grace; it is moderate when it considers the Faith as something private and individual in such wise that the Church ought not to intervene in public life. Moderate laicism is also anti-Catholic: it is Liberal Catholicism, which Pius IX judged more dangerous than the “Paris Commune.”

One of the causes of laicism may be “the shortcomings of some members of the clergy, whose attitude of excessive authoritarianism and distrust of the laity...can lead to reciprocal defiance and opposition” (*ibid.*). Priests, to the contrary, should instruct the laity, give them spiritual direction, and provide them with the means of grace, and the laity should then bring Jesus and the spirit of the Church into their social circles and workplaces.

St. Pius X reiterated that in order to restore all things in Christ—“*instaurare omnia in Christo*” [Eph. 1:10]—it was necessary to have good laymen who, in a collaboration subordinate to the clergy, would carry the Gospel into secularized society and rechristianize the world. *L’Ami du Clergé* of January 20, 1921, reported a dialogue between St. Pius X and a group of cardinals:

“What is most needed today,” asked the Pope, “for the salvation of society?”

“Founding Catholic schools?” answered one.

“No.”

“Building churches,” replied another.

“Not that either.”

“Promoting vocations,” said a third.

“No,” replied St. Pius X. “What is most needed today is that every parish should have a group of laymen who are very virtuous, well-informed, resolute, and real apostles.”

## Christ Is King

Christ is king, Pope Pius XI states, and then asks what the nature of His kingship is. As God, the Son is consubstantial with the Father; He is king of the universe like the Father and the Holy Ghost. As man, He is king by birthright, His humanity belonging to the person of the divine Word (the hypostatic union); He is king by acquired right, having redeemed the human race from sin with His blood. Consequently, Christ as man also has power over all creatures, which must adore and obey Him. This royalty residing in Christ’s human nature is the subject of Pius XI’s encyclical.

As king, Christ has a primacy of honor, or excellence, and of domination. He thus possesses the triple power legislative (He promulgates the Ten Commandments), judicial (particular and universal judgment), and executive (He rewards and punishes in this life and in the next).

In Holy Scripture, the kingship of Christ is announced several times in both the Old and the New Testament. In the New Testament, the Angel of the Annunciation tells Mary: “And his reign will have no end”; and on Good Friday Jesus tells Pilate, who asked “Are you then a king?” “I am.”

Christ’s reign is by nature essentially and principally *spiritual*, but without excluding its extension to *temporal* things; it is also *social* and not only *individual*. The kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ is principally spiritual: He governs souls and leads them towards Paradise. Yet “whoever would take from Christ, God and man, power over all things temporal would be sorely mistaken,” wrote St. Pius X.

As God, He has an absolute right over all created things. But Christ did not and does not desire to exercise His kingship over things temporal; He leaves it to human authority. He communicates this power in the same terms to the Church in the person of the Pope: direct and exercised power in matters spiritual; direct but unexercised power in things temporal, which the Pope, like Christ, leaves to princes, only exercising his power insofar as temporal things hamper or hinder man in the pursuit of his final spiritual end (*ratione peccati*).<sup>1</sup>

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The reign of our Lord Jesus Christ is not only a reign over individuals but also over society. Society is a grouping of families and individuals by natural right, and as Christ is the king of individuals, He is also the king of nations, which owe Him their adoration and submission. The State, moreover, must co-operate with the Church by means of good laws so that its citizens may attain eternal happiness, in keeping with the proper subordination of ends: the temporal good is inferior to the spiritual good, thus it is subordinate to it.

The negation of the social kingship of Christ has catastrophic consequences because it leads to anarchy and totalitarianism. If authority does not come from God but man, the question arises: why should some men obey and others command? This is the principle of revolution and anarchy. In another connection, if the citizens refuse to obey an authority which they perceive as purely human, the State has no other means than force to compel obedience—and that is totalitarianism. But if the principle that authority comes from God is widely accepted, the citizens will be more obedient because they realize that by obeying human authorities, they obey God; and the leaders, in turn, will be more just, seeing in the kingship of Christ the model they must strive to imitate.

The failure to take into account Christ's kingship results in the destruction of civil society by making it alternate between anarchy and the police state, which, in order to make its authority respected, must inspire terror and crush all opposition.

## Humanity Needs Christ the King

The world, in disarray after World War I, was looking for a king of peace. In 1925, the Pope pointed him out to everyone, saying: Jesus Christ is the *Princeps pacifer*.

All men need someone to govern or guide them (a *rector* or *rex*, from *regere*, that is, to direct someone towards a goal) just as a ship needs someone to steer it (helm = *gubernaculum*; helmsman = *gubernator*). This king is Christ, and men must be disposed to observe His laws and commands in order to make their way to port, that is, the Law that, if observed with the help of grace, will lead them to heaven. If men, being free, refuse, they will be bereft of their final end, which is eternal life.

Moreover, man is a social animal, and every society needs an authority to maintain its unity and to govern it towards its end: *ubi non est gubernator, populus corrue*t. The world that issued from the First World War felt the need of a guide to shelter it from the consequences of that massacre and looked for a king; the Pope showed Him to it, but the world did not want Christ to reign over it, and so there was a second world war even more terrible, at the end of which the

last "empire" still standing in Europe, encircled on the east and the west, was the Roman Church with Pope Pius XII for pastor, who once more pointed out the only remedy to so many evils: a return to Christ the King. The world again did not want to obey, and so we find ourselves on the brink of a terrifying era of chaos, disorder, and anarchy.

## Christ the King of Minds and Hearts

The king of minds is Christ, who alone reveals the fulness of truth. He is also the king of hearts because He is the infinite Sovereign Good, the only one capable of satisfying the infinite aspirations of the human soul. Man has need of a king of his intellect to enlighten him and lead him to the gate of truth and to keep him from erring. That king is Christ, who said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"; and who warned us: "Neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, Christ" (Mt. 23:10).

Man is also made to love, but he can find no creature able to satisfy his heart's desires. St. Augustine said: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee." This is something we experience daily. But our heart is also "*pravum et inscrutabile*," as Jeremias teaches (17:9), and it can turn its back on God and prefer to Him creatures whom he shall have to leave one day whether he wishes or not.

That is why the human heart (*nutantia corda*, the liturgy says) needs a remedy from a doctor; a sure guide, to be preserved from procrastination. Only Jesus, true God and true Man, has the power to heal our reluctant hearts, and He tells us: "Come to me, all you that labour and are burdened; I will give you rest....learn from me; I am gentle and humble of heart; and you shall find rest for your souls" (Mt. 11:28-29). Such is the only true remedy for the evils afflicting man and threatening to make him lose his way.

## How to Restore the Social Reign of Christ

Cardinal Pie wrote a great deal on the social kingship of Christ, and gave wise advice for restoring it. Let us listen to his counsel.

The faithful must make Christ reign in their minds and then in their hearts (*nihil volitum nisi praecognitum*) by religious instruction: "The only hope of social regeneration depends on the study of our religion.... The first step towards a return to peace and happiness will be the return to the knowledge of Christianity."<sup>3</sup>

Letting one's mind drift away from truth and becoming indifferent to it is, according to Cardinal Pie, the crime God will punish the most severely and the most justly. The religious instruction of the faithful will be solid and nourish in them an integral faith which confesses not only the divinity and the humanity

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of Jesus Christ, but also His social kingship. The Catholic, if he wishes to be such fully, must believe that Jesus has the right to reign over social institutions. The faithful will manifest their integral faith especially by practising the Catholic Faith without human respect: “The Christian religion is a public religion, and the faithful have a duty to practise it publicly, whence the duty to offer to Christ the public worship of the Church.”<sup>4</sup>

We must not be ashamed of Christ in front of men, and we must not give in if the culture in which we live and work is anti-Christian; this would be an aggravating, not mitigating, circumstance, for in the general apostasy in which we live, we must declare our faith out loud and be an example. If anyone is ashamed of Jesus before men, then Jesus will be ashamed of him when He comes to judge the living and the dead: “Since today the God of heaven and earth has become unpopular and you stand a fair chance of being despised like Him by a corrupt generation, you consider yourselves free from any public duty towards Him.... On the contrary! If we are faithful to Him, we shall reign with Him; if we disown Him, He will disown us.”<sup>5</sup>

Priests must devote their lives to the cause of the social reign of Christ. Since the first obstacle to its restoration is religious ignorance, “the priest’s principal duty is to instruct.... it is his mission.... If the priest is a man of doctrine, this program will be carried out; he must know how to give to the faithful and to magistrates the Church’s complete teaching on the social kingship of Christ.”<sup>6</sup>

But who will realize and put into practice the doctrinal teaching given by priests, the Cardinal wonders; and he answers: the intellectual class and the ruling class.

## The Common Duties of Intellectuals and Rulers

The laity, who are neither “laicists” nor anticlericalists since the word “lay” designates the faithful who do not belong to the clergy, must have a solid, complete, and superior instruction: “They should follow a course of Thomist philosophy, natural ethics, Catholic social doctrine, and ecclesiastical public law; so doing, the nation will be transformed.”<sup>7</sup>

Teachers, who have the delicate mission of forming the intellects and moral conscience of youth, have the particular duty of teaching them the principles of Christianity and the necessity of the social kingship of Jesus Christ, in opposition to the intellectuals of the Enlightenment, who took advantage of their role to create a vacuum round Christ, to discredit the Church and the clergy, thus estranging the masses from Jesus.

It is also necessary that public officials take part officially and *sincerely* in the Church’s public worship. The return en masse of the people to the liturgy and the Christian life will never be able to

happen if the intellectual and political leadership does not give the example: the intellectual elite [*le savoir*] must give a completely Catholic teaching, and the political elite [*le pouvoir*] must strive to realize in the political domain an integrally Christian platform.

We must not forget what St. Pius X said:

Civilization is not something yet to be found, nor is the New City to be built on hazy notions; it has been in existence and still is: it is Christian civilization, it is the Catholic City. It has only to be set up and restored continually against the unremitting attacks of insane dreamers, rebels and miscreants.<sup>8</sup>

Leo XIII described Christian society, or medieval Christendom, in these terms:

There was once a time when States were governed by the philosophy of the Gospel. Then it was that the power and divine virtue of Christian wisdom had diffused itself throughout the laws, institutions, and morals of the people.... Then, too, the religion instituted by Jesus Christ... flourished everywhere, by the favour of princes and the legitimate protection of magistrates; and Church and State were happily united in concord and friendly interchange of good offices. The State, constituted in this wise, bore fruits important beyond all expectation, whose remembrance is still, and always will be, in renown, witnessed to as they are by countless proofs which can never be blotted out or ever obscured by any craft of any enemies.<sup>9</sup>

St. Pius X averred:

“To restore all things in Christ” has always been the Church’s motto.... “To restore all things”—not in any haphazard fashion, but “in Christ”.... “To restore all things in Christ” includes not only what properly pertains to the divine mission of the Church, namely, leading souls to God, but also what We have already explained as flowing from that divine mission, namely, Christian civilization in each and every one of the elements composing it.<sup>10</sup>

To restore all things in Christ, above all it is necessary to know the doctrine of Jesus Christ, not by reading the great books destined for intellectuals, but by reading a little book that, beneath a humble aspect, contains all the wisdom dispersed in the great books: the Catechism.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, Pope Pius XII observed:

There is a whole world to be rebuilt from its very foundations, the universal order to be re-established. The material order, the intellectual order, the moral order, the social order, and the international order: everything has to be remade and restored in a constant, regular movement. The rebirth and continuation of the tranquility of order, which is peace, the only true peace, can only happen on condition that human society be made to rest upon Christ, and so regather, recapitulate, and reconjugate everything in Him: *instaurare omnia in Christo*.<sup>12</sup>

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## The Peril Hanging over Humanity

The world is becoming more and more dechristianized. Today there no longer exists a single nation in which Christ reigns publicly; indeed, everything is being done to efface every trace of His reign. Humanly speaking, the contest is unequal. If anyone should entertain the thought of winning by purely human means, let him heed what St. Pius X teaches:

There are many, We are well aware, who, in their yearning for peace, that is for the tranquility of order, band themselves into societies and parties, which they style parties of order. Hope and labor lost. For there is but one party of order capable of restoring peace in the midst of all this turmoil, and that is the party of God.<sup>13</sup>

But the arm of God has not lost its strength, and “*omnia quaecumque voluit, fecit*,” even though the enemy of the Christian social order has been advancing in giant steps from Renaissance humanism to the present day, reaching its apex in Italy with the *Risorgimento* and becoming a mass phenomenon with Christian Democracy. This enemy is admirably described by St. Pius X:

He is everywhere and amongst all; he knows how to be violent or sly. Throughout the course of recent centuries, he has attempted to achieve the intellectual, moral, and social disaggregation of the unity in the mysterious organism of Christ. He desiderated nature without grace; reason without faith; freedom without authority, and sometimes authority without freedom. This enemy takes a more and more concrete form, and his lack of basic principles leaves one flabbergasted: Christ, yes; the Church, no. Then: God, yes; Christ, no. Finally the impious cry: God is dead; and even, God never existed. And now comes the attempt to construct a global framework on foundations...which are the very ones chiefly responsible

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for the menace imperilling humanity: an economy without God, law without God, politics without God.<sup>14</sup> ☒

Translated from *Courrier de Rome*, January 2009, pp.1-4.

<sup>1</sup> P. Parente, A. Piolanti, S. Garofalo, *Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Rome: Studium, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. T. de Saint-Just, *La royauté sociale de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Chiré-en-Montreuil: Ed. de Chiré, 1988), pp.23-42; J. de Monléon, O.S.B., *Le Christ Roi* (Paris: Téqui, 1933); F. Sarda y Salvany, *Le libéralisme est un péché* (Paris: Nouvelle Aurore, 1975), pp. 239-245; J. Ousset, *Pour qu'Il Règne* (Paris: Office, 1970), pp.11-30.

<sup>3</sup> H. Oudin and J. Leday, *Oeuvres sacerdotales* (Paris, 1891), I, 137.

<sup>4</sup> Saint-Just, p. 87.

<sup>5</sup> L. Pie, *Instruction pastorale sur l'obligation de confesser publiquement la foi chrétienne* (Lent 1874) (Paris: H. Oudin-J. Ledday, 1891).

<sup>6</sup> Saint-Just, p. 94.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.103

<sup>8</sup> Letter on the Sillon “Our Apostolic Mandate,” August 25, 1910.

<sup>9</sup> *Immortale Dei*, November 1, 1885.

<sup>10</sup> Encyclical *Il Fermo Proposito*, June 11, 1905.

<sup>11</sup> Allocution to Tuscan Pilgrims, October 12, 1908.

<sup>12</sup> Exhortation to the Faithful of Rome, February 10, 1952.

<sup>13</sup> *E Supremi Apostolatus*, October 4, 1903, §7.

<sup>14</sup> *Nel contemplare*.