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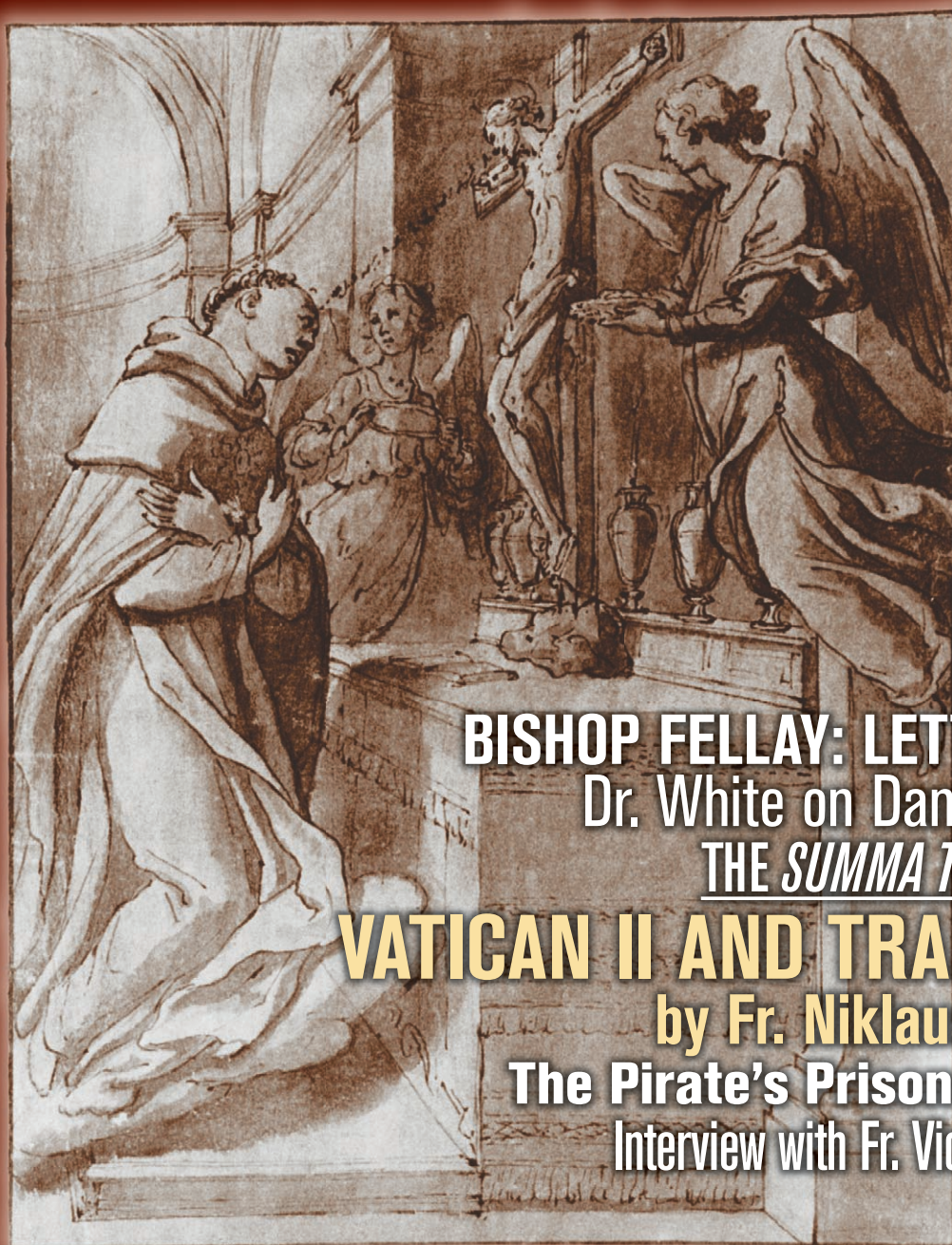
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ANGELUS

A JOURNAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION



INSIDE

BISHOP FELLAY: LETTER #76

Dr. White on Dante **PART 3**

THE SUMMA THEOLOGIAE

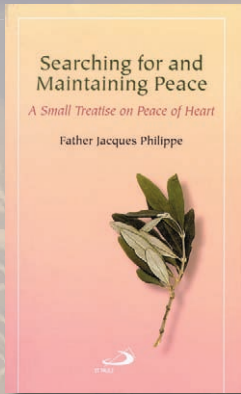
VATICAN II AND TRADITION

by Fr. Niklaus Pfluger

The Pirate's Prisoner **PART 4**

Interview with Fr. Vicente Griego

SPIRITUAL BOOKS



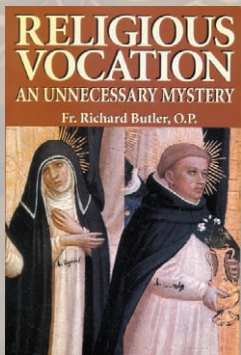
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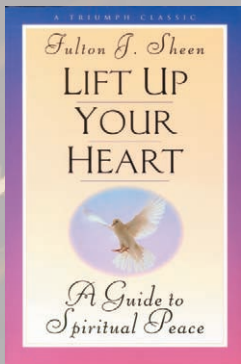


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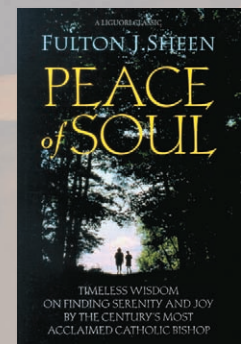


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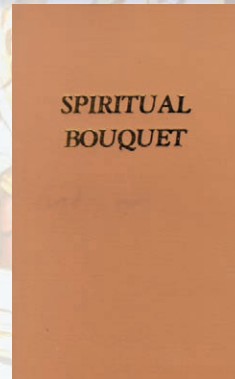


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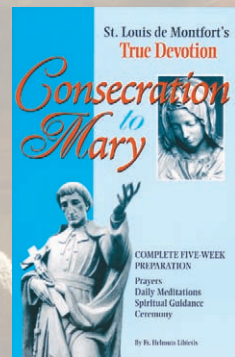
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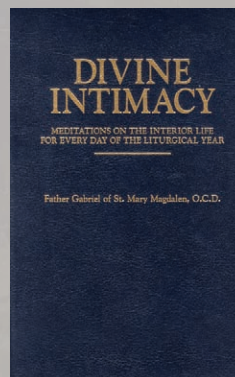
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—Pope St. Pius X

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"Instaurare omnia in Christo — To restore all things in Christ."
 Motto of Pope St. Pius X

Contents

2 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Fr. Markus Heggenberger, FSSPX

3 LETTER TO FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS, #76

Bishop Bernard Fellay, FSSPX

5 VATICAN II AND TRADITION

Interview with Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, FSSPX

14 THE AUTHORITY OF VATICAN II QUESTIONED PART 7

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

17 THE SUMMA THEOLOGIAE

Fr. Albert, O.P.



An introduction to the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas.

22 DANTE'S INFERNO: READING AND COMMENTARY PART 3

Dr. David Allen White

28 THE PIRATE'S PRISONER PART 4

Fr. Joseph Spillmann, S.J.

32 THE LORD'S PRAYER PART 3

Fr. Thomas Jatzkowski, FSSPX

35 INTERVIEW WITH FR. GRIEGO, FSSPX

DICI

37 CHURCH AND WORLD



Chartres to Paris Traditional Pilgrimage 2010

41 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Fr. Peter Scott, FSSPX

43 THE LAST WORD

Fr. Régis de Cacqueray, FSSPX

ON OUR COVER: Lodovico Buti, *St. Thomas Aquinas before the crucifix*, c.1600.

Letter from the Editor

The scope of the Second Vatican Council was discussed in recent issues of *The Angelus*. Beyond liturgical scandals and abuses, there is a doctrinal question which needs to be answered and which is more important than the liturgical question. This doctrinal issue has often been used by those who are in favor of changes and want to clear out the Church of the “old style.” They invoke the authority of this ecumenical council in order to give their concerns an apparently “traditional” legitimacy. After all, you do not want to disobey a council of the Church!

They forget, however, two things.

First, it is true that obedience is a virtue. But we are talking of obedience with intelligence, not of *blind* obedience. You have to obey the legitimate authority not only with your body, but with your mind as well. Should you be aware of a major problem in what is asked of you, you have the right and the duty to investigate and to resolve your doubts.

An illustration of this principle is the obedience of a multitude of martyrs, who made it very clear that they wanted to be loyal citizens; they were, in fact, loyal subjects of the Roman emperor, for example, even if he was a pagan. But they also made it clear that they could not follow him when he overstepped the powers given to him by God. A ruler always has more power than his subjects, but those powers are not without limits, because he has them for the purpose of the common good. This is not a question of political systems, but a question of serving others and serving the whole without corruption. Corruption has its own forms in any institution; political systems are not an exception.

Secondly, although it is true that a council of the Church is one of the highest authorities in doctrinal questions for a Catholic, it is also true that there were councils which have been questioned by ecclesiastical authorities afterwards. The term which was used for this phenomenon was “latrocinium,” meaning “robber council.” Well known is the use of this term for the second Council of Ephesus in 449. What happened in this case was that the voice of the papal legate was not heard; the legate Hosius could hardly escape from the hostile assembly. St. Leo I, who was the ruling pope, therefore called the synod a “robber council” and annulled all its decisions.

Whether this expression “latrocinium” can be used for the Second Vatican Council is up to others to

decide, but Church history shows that the possibility exists. Did we not recently see the publication of a book by one of the well-known Roman theologians, Msgr. Gherardini, with the title *The Ecumenical Vatican Council II: A Much Needed Discussion* (*The Angelus*, June 2010, p. 34)? The author is not even one of the ill-famed and despised members of the SSPX!

On the other hand there is a Catholic establishment, mostly represented by the bishops of the wealthy—though dying—Western countries (like the US, France, and Germany), declaring that there is no way to touch Vatican II. A recent example of this kind of “defending Vatican II” comes from Eberhard Schockenhoff, professor of moral theology at the University of Freiburg, Germany. He wrote in the April 2010 issue of the Jesuit magazine *Stimmen der Zeit* that the real disagreement between the Church of Rome and the “Lefebvrist” does not concern the Mass in Latin, but the teaching of Vatican II, especially on ecclesiology and on freedom of conscience and religion. He is right about his analysis of the “real disagreement,” but he is wrong in his judgment about the value of Vatican II.

A Benedictine expressed essentially the same concerns, but in a more popular and comprehensive way, about the Catholic theology before Vatican II: “In order to remind you of what is at stake and of what we have to lose,” he began his conference against the traditional Benedictines of Bellaigue (and Silver City), “the Council said good-bye to unreflecting obedience, the outdated address of *Reverend Father*, and the unapproachable distance of the priest....The royal priesthood of all Christians received back its dignity as a mystery of the Church....” And so on.

The latest and most striking development in the question of Vatican II is the fact that the latest ecumenical council not only did unprecedented damage to the doctrine of the Church, but to good morals in the Church as well. Every day it becomes clearer that the root of the crisis in the Catholic Church is of a twofold nature: a doctrinal and a moral one. Not a lot of imagination is needed to figure out in what this moral crisis consists. A certain commentator was right when he wrote in his headline: “Time to sack trendy Bishops and to restore the Faith.”

Instaurare Omnia in Christo,
FR. MARKUS HEGGENBERGER



Letter #76 to Friends and Benefactors from Bishop Bernard Fellay, Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The Church's situation increasingly resembles a sea that is agitated in all directions. We see waves and more waves, which seem to be about to capsize the bark of Peter and drag it into the endless abyss. Since the Second Vatican Council, it seems that a wave has been trying to carry off everything into the deep, leaving only a heap of ruins, a spiritual desert, that the popes themselves have called an apostasy. We do not want to describe this harsh reality again; we have already so often done, and all of you can see that it is so. Still, to us it seems useful to comment somewhat on the events of the past months; I want to speak about the surprisingly violent and particularly well-orchestrated blows that have been dealt to the Church and the Supreme Pontiff. Why such violent attacks?

To return to our metaphor, it seems that for some time now, more or less since the beginning of the pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI, a new wave has appeared which is much more modest than the first, yet persistent enough that it is noticeable nevertheless. Contrary to all expectations, this wave seems to be going in the opposite direction compared to the first. The indications are sufficiently varied and numerous, that we can state that this new movement of reform or renewal is quite real. We can see this especially with the younger generations, who are plainly frustrated by the spiritual ineffectiveness of the Vatican II reforms. Considering the very harsh and bitter reproaches leveled by the progressives against Benedict XVI, it is certain that they see in the very person of the present pope one of the most vigorous causes of this incipient renewal. In fact, even if we find the pope's initiatives rather timid, they run deep and are contrary to the

agenda of the revolutionary, left-leaning world, both inside and outside of the Church, and this is true at several levels.

The resulting irritation of the progressives and of the world is sensed initially in questions concerning morality. Specifically, the Left and the liberals have been irritated despite the pope's well-pondered words about the use of condoms in dealing with AIDS in Africa. As for the life of the Church, the restoration of the Mass of All Ages to its rightful place in 2007, and then two years later the rescinding of the degrading punishment aimed at disqualifying us, provoked the rage of liberals and progressives of all stripes. Moreover, the felicitous plan of a Year for Priests, restoring the priest to a place of honor, recalling his important and indispensable role in the salvation of souls, and proposing the holy Curé of Ars as a model, is not only an invitation to the Christian people to pray for their priests, but also a call to make use of the Sacrament of Penance, which had completely sunk into oblivion in broad sectors of the Church, and also to foster Eucharistic devotion, calling to mind in particular the importance of adoring Our Lord in the Sacred Host, a clear sign of the reality of the real and substantial presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The appointment of bishops who are distinctly more conservative, some of whom were already celebrating the Tridentine Mass before, is another positive development. We could cite also, as an undeniable example of the reality of this little wave of opposition, the *Letter to the Catholics of Ireland* inviting them to repentance, confession, and spiritual exercises and asking also for the adoration of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Even though people in our circles rightly think that these [papal] efforts are still insufficient to stop

the decay and the crisis of the Church—especially in view of certain acts along the regrettable line of his predecessor, such as the visits to the synagogue and the Protestant church—in Modernist circles however, the hour has come to report to their battle stations! The big wave is attacking the very little one with unexpected violence. It is not surprising that the meeting of these two ill-matched waves should cause a lot of backwash and turbulence and give rise to an extremely confused situation in which it is quite difficult to tell and predict which of the two will win the day. This, however, is something new that deserves to be commented. It is not a question of giving in to thoughtless enthusiasm or believing that the crisis is over. On the contrary, the aging forces that see their gains, which they thought were definitive, being called into question, will no doubt put up a large-scale battle to try to save this dream of modernity which is starting to fall apart. It is very important to remain in this regard as realistic as possible about what is happening. Although we rejoice over all the good that is being done in the Church and the world, we nevertheless have no illusions about the seriousness of the present situation.

What should we expect to see in the coming years? Peace in the Church, or war? The victory of good and its long-awaited return, or a new tempest? Will the little wave manage to grow enough to prevail someday? The assurance that the promise of Our Lady of Fatima will be fulfilled—“in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph”—does not necessarily or directly resolve our question, because it is still quite possible that we will have to first pass through an even greater tribulation before the long-awaited triumph occurs...

A terrific challenge is also intended by our rosary crusade. We would not want to diminish in the least the joy over the announcement of the extraordinary result of our Rosary Crusade. We boldly asked you one year ago for twelve million rosaries so as to crown our dear Heavenly Mother, the Mother of God, as if with an equal number of stars, and to surround with a magnificent crown of praise that Mother, who to the enemies of God appears “terrible as an army set in battle array” (Cant. 6:3). You responded so generously that we can now bring to Rome a spiritual bouquet of more than nineteen million rosaries, not counting all those not directly affiliated with our priories and chapels who joined in our campaign.

Surely it is no accident that when Pius XII declared the dogma of the Assumption, he decided to change the Introit of the Feast on August 15 to the passage from the Apocalypse that salutes the great sign that appeared in heaven. This excerpt from the Apocalypse ushers in the description of one of the most terrible wars that are set forth in that sacred book: the great dragon, who with his tail will sweep away a third of the stars, comes to wage battle with the great Woman (see Apoc. 12). Is this whole passage intended for our time? We can easily believe it, while avoiding a literal or overly specific application of those mysterious and prophetic descriptions. We have absolutely no doubt that all

our prayers are important, and even of very great importance at this moment in history at which we find ourselves. However, we think that we should warn you also and encourage you in these circumstances of the history of the Church.

Your great generosity shows, without the slightest doubt, your very real devotion and your love for our Holy Mother, the Roman Catholic Church, for the Successor of Saint Peter, and for the hierarchy, even though we have much to suffer from it. God is stronger than evil—good will be victorious, but perhaps not with all the pomp that you would like.

Now we must convince the authorities to accomplish the famous consecration of Russia that they say has already been made; we must recall the present relevance of what Our Lady of Fatima said, even though in the year 2000 there was manifestly an attempt to turn a new leaf and not to return to the subject again. It seems inevitable that the difficulties and obstacles will multiply so as to prevent the realization of what we are asking. That doesn’t matter; we count much more on God than on men, just as we expect from acts as simple as the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary surprising results for the Church and the world, results surpassing anything that we can imagine. It is foolishness in the sight of men, but it is really a reflection of what Saint Paul already preached to his age: what men regard as wise is foolishness in God’s sight, whereas God’s wisdom is considered absurd foolishness by the wise of this world (cf. I Cor. 1:20).

As we bring to the attention of the Holy Father your remarkable efforts, along with the reason for these prayers, thus hoping to contribute, in our way, to the good of the Church, we ask you to please continue those same efforts. According to the example that Our Lord Himself invites us to follow in his very moving exhortation to prayer: “Ask, and you shall receive,” let us ask, indeed insisting on much (cf. Mt. 7:7-11). Although we do not doubt that our prayers will be answered, our persistence and perseverance must be proportioned to the magnitude of what we are asking.

Let us remember also that the essential element of the Fatima message is not just the consecration of Russia, but above all devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May all these prayers and sacrifices lead us to increase and deepen our special devotion to the Heart of the Mother of God. For, through it God wants to be moved.

As the month of May begins, the month of Mary, may we all find ourselves even more reliant on her maternal protection; this is our fondest wish. Thanking you for your truly great generosity, we ask Our Lady to deign to bless you with the Child Jesus.

+ Bernard Fellay

+ Bernard Fellay
Superior General

FR. NIKLAUS PFLUGER

Vatican II & Tradition: The Second Vatican Council in Question



This conference was given by Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, first assistant to Bishop Fellay, at Manitoba University in Winnipeg, Canada, on March 30, 2010. He was invited to address a crowd of non-traditionalists about the Second Vatican Council.

Introduction

Not every valid council in the history of the Church has been a fruitful one; in the last analysis, many of them have been a waste of time. Despite all the good to be found in the texts it produced, the last word about the historical value of Vatican Council II (two) has yet to be spoken.¹

Vatican II was an assembly of nearly all the Catholic bishops at the Vatican between 1962 and 1965. From then to now, this council, its documents, and their interpretation have influenced the Catholic Church, and thus also the societies in which the Catholic Church has at least some degree of influence. I want to speak about: **1)** how this council affected the so-called “Catholic world”; **2)** about the rupture with and through the Council; a new theology against the “old doctrine”; **3)** about its new self-image, and finally about some problematic documents. We don’t speak here about religion as something abstract, something in an ivory tower. Religion is here considered as something real, something that matters in everyday life.

A missed occasion: The unaccomplished promise to answer the modern questions

If we look simply at statistics we realize that the percentage of Catholics who practise their religion has tremendously decreased in the last 40 years. There has been no other period of time in world history in which the religious practice of a single religion has decreased so much without any pressure from the outside than that within the Catholic religion between 1965 and 1985. The decrease of religious practice is a phenomenon that can be recognized worldwide. Together with this collapse of religious practice there developed a change in political thinking. People who stopped practising their faith changed their positions concerning abortion, euthanasia, gay marriage, and so on. A good example is Spain, where, at the end of the '60s, about 90 percent of the people attended Sunday Mass in comparison to a few percent now, as in all the countries of Europe. Spain now has one of Europe’s most liberal laws on abortion and gay marriage; it has also one of the lowest birth rates in Europe, while it was one of Europe’s most conservative societies in the '60s. The impact of

Catholic practice on such matters is scientifically proven, as you surely know. It is quite the same in Quebec, Portugal, or Italy.

If we agree about these facts—they're obvious—we can look for the reasons. My answer is that Vatican II is the main reason for this development. Vatican II is the main cause for the collapse of religious practice and thus for the swing to leftist, liberal positions in our Western societies.

Why do I think so? First, I say it is the "main cause" because there are other causes as well. In the 1950s, the Western world saw an economic boom which brought wealth to the majority of people. "Wealth to everybody" was a slogan of the German Christian Democrats. Societies changed from agricultural to industrial. People moved from the countryside to the cities. The children, even from the country, had access to higher education. The world changed, and people had big hopes for the future. It was a period of unclouded optimism. This affected Catholic people a lot, even more than the French Revolution; Catholicism was strong among simple people, outside the cities, without higher education. Among the intellectual elite, the spirit was rationalist, atheist, and mostly liberal. For the intellectual elite at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century it was clear: "God is dead."

In the 20th century things began to change. The better thinkers among the educated people realized the weaknesses of modern ideologies. Both communism and fascism led to moral catastrophes. Perhaps communism had some attraction for the academic youth in the 1920s; it was over when the Iron Curtain came down across Europe. Fascism lost what was left of its false glamour in Auschwitz. So there was a new interest in Catholicism among the educated since the '50s, but the sociological base remained in the rural population. And this population was caught by modernization in the 1950s. The youth attended universities; they left their villages, went into new professions, and changed their lifestyle by taking up a social career. In this process, the religion of their parents belonged to the world they left, the world from which they desired to free themselves. In a time when the children of the liberal bourgeoisie discovered the Catholic Faith, the children of the Catholic farmers lost this faith, becoming one with them. It's paradoxical.

This is one reason for the decline in religious practice. But it is not the significant one. The significance is inside Catholicism. Why? Why not compare the decline in religious practice in the Catholic Church with other Christian confessions and with other religions? Take a look at the Protestant communities within the USA. Here we had the same starting point: religion was strong

in the rural areas, in the so-called "Bible Belt," away from the liberal coasts and the big cities. The younger people tried to emancipate themselves from the lifestyle of their parents, and also from their values. It was the Vietnam War which gave the pretext for this movement of protest and emancipation. The burning of the "Stars and Stripes" was the symbol of this protest. Sexual promiscuity, rock music, the "spirit" of Woodstock, were part of life for these young people. Sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll, but surely not Jesus Christ, confession, and Sunday Mass. So far, there was no difference between Catholics and Protestants. But at the end of the '60s, and in the beginning of the '70s, this brave new world of flower power and marijuana began to lose its innocence. People didn't just smoke marijuana any more; they moved to cocaine and heroin. They became addicted and some very popular rock stars died. The political movement became more radical. It wasn't "flower power" any longer; it was hard, dirty, ugly, and uncomfortable. Anyone who didn't want to understand nevertheless woke up at least when AIDS arrived in the early '80s.

If you look at the Protestant communities in the USA, you realize that they increased in correlation to this development. When the hippie wave went away, when the party was over and the headache came, the Americans went back to their religion. In 1980 Ronald Reagan became president, and he was the first president since the 1950s who preferred a religious rhetoric. He was backed by the new Christian movement, the Christian Coalition and so on. There are some statistics about these Protestant groups. They all show the same thing: that those groups which were strict in their teaching and morals had success, while those which had tried to adapt the spirit of "flower power," sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll did not. There is a significant movement from so-called "liberal" Protestant communities like the Episcopal Church towards conservative groups, which we call "evangelical." In politics you see it in the pro-life-movement: even senators from the Democrats called President Obama for a guarantee that no public money from his health care plan be used for abortion. And he gave it. There is no way to make politics against the religious majority in today's USA.

It is quite similar in the Islamic world. Until the Islamic revolution in 1979, young, urban people tried to be like their counterparts in the West, similar in style, morals, and atheism. The Arabs fought the Israelis not for religion, but for national ideology. But since the '80s, things have changed completely. Religion became the most important political issue in the Islamic countries. Either Islamic parties are in charge, or the secular governments are confronted

If we agree about these facts—they're obvious—we can look for the reasons. My answer is that Vatican II is the main reason for this development. Vatican II is the main cause for the collapse of religious practice and thus for the swing to leftist, liberal positions in our Western societies.



with strong Islamic opposition movements and try to overcome them by religious politics.

Now compare this to Catholic countries. There, a religious renaissance did not happen. Why not? Because the Church had changed. The Catholic Church had adapted to the spirit of the '60s. And when the former "flower-power" kids realized how primitive this spirit was, there was no church which correlated with this insight. So the flower-power kids in Catholic countries became nihilists, cynics, but not Christians. They stayed agnostic, not to protest against religion, but because the (Catholic) religion did not affect them. They have no religion, but they know that they should have one. A very left-wing German philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, formulated it very well: "There is a consciousness for the missing."

Why doesn't Catholicism affect these people? You have two possible ways to answer this question: First, that the Catholic religion is something stupid, outdated, or nonsensical. If you choose this answer you must explain why evangelical Christianity in the USA or Islam is doing as well as it is. The other possible answer is to say that the Church is in bad shape.

The Catholic religion is still the answer to the questions of life. I believe that the Catholic Faith is the only way to heaven. This is true at all times, under all lifestyles, be it that of a farmer in the Middle Ages, a merchant in renaissance Venice, or a student in today's Winnipeg. If you prefer this answer you may ask what the reason is for the current situation in the Church. All churchmen, both on the right and the left, answer that Vatican II is the road map for today's ecclesiastical politics.

The Way to the Council

We spoke about the change in Western society in the 1950s. The Church had to find an answer to the new challenges. The first attempt to do so was under Pope Pius XII, who modernized the Church in a very clever way. He used new techniques, but didn't forget the risks and negative developments which social change brought with it. In all, he remained

strictly within Catholic doctrine. This Pope was very successful in his time. Most of the Western European governments were run by Christian Democrats during that time; he had a big influence on the academic debate in the '50s. He was surely the most powerful pope of modern times.

Unfortunately, many of Pius's reforms were not adopted by the local churchmen in their everyday work. The Church had grown cold. Both priests and lay people were self-satisfied. They did not realize the social change which was in progress. Some proposed a Council. Pius XII was very sceptical; there was a lack of competent and orthodox theologians; he knew the risk of how such an assembly could get out of control.

His successor John XXIII was brave or naive enough—decide on your own—to call for a Council. He was one-sidedly optimistic. Modern theologians² began to speak about a necessary reform of the Church. They didn't understand by "reform" a true reform of hearts and minds, a true interior conversion and renewal. They were determined to change the structure of the Church and its doctrine: a true revolution.

So Vatican II began. Pope John XXIII gave the starting shot with his "*aggiornamento*"—to live and teach according to the times. "We have to update the Church," he said, "to the new living conditions in the modern world, making us acceptable to modern man."³ A completely wrong and a particularly naive illusion was expressed in the longest document of Vatican II, "*Gaudium et spes*."⁴ Forty years later, Pope John Paul II would speak about "the silent apostasy..."

The Roman curia prepared documents for the Council which followed the spirit of Pius XII's reforms, profoundly rooted in Catholic doctrine. Unfortunately, a group of bishops—foremost from France, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands—called for further reforms. They led the way and combined their subversion with theological positions which were in contradiction to the Catholic doctrine of Pius XII. This group strove that the prepared documents be rejected. Instead of these documents new schemas were made.⁵

The first concerned the liturgy.⁶ The Roman liturgy was in Latin. There were different reasons for that. One is uniformity throughout the world, which manifests the unity of Christians. Another is that Latin is a language which doesn't change anymore, so it is timeless. But the language is not the most important element of a rite. The order of the Catholic rite in its structure comes out of the third century and was finally defined in the 16th century. Like a "dogma" of Catholic liturgy is the known sentence: "*Lex orandi est lex credendi*"—The way we pray is the way we believe. All liturgical rites, prayers, chants, ceremonies, which make up even the whole liturgical year are a perfect expression of the faith; the liturgy, *i.e.* the Catholic ritual reflects the Catholic Faith. On the other hand, this saying expresses that any change of the prayers in any rite or liturgy will necessarily change the faith or the doctrine expressed in the liturgy.

The most complete and unmitigated expression of the Catholic faith is the Mass, "the Mass of all time,"⁷ because the Church believes "*quod semper, quod ab omnibus, quod ubique*"⁸—what has been believed always, by everyone, everywhere.

What's the Catholic teaching about the Mass? There are sacrifices in all religions. But the idea of sacrifice has been realized in a unique and decisive way in the immolation of Christ on the Cross. The agonizing and bloody death of Christ is an exterior act whereby His interior oblation is expressed. "He offered Himself because He willed to do so." He offered Himself to suffering and death of His own free will. It is love, expressed in obedience, that is, in the total offering of His human will to the divine will, which gave value to His bloody immolation on the Cross. His act of offering is of itself an expiation, the perfect reparation for the sin of mankind. Jesus accomplishes the sacrifice in the name of all men—"*propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem.*"⁹ He is the Priest of mankind in the most rigorous sense.

The Mass is a sacrifice only because of its relation to the sacrifice of the Cross. The Council of Trent says: it is the same sacrifice because it is the same Priest, the same Victim, offered in another manner; at the Mass, this same sacrifice is offered in a sacramental and symbolic way. The Mass is the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Cross in so far as the latter continues to exist. The Mass makes the Cross present once again. That is why the Council makes it clear that the Mass possesses all the virtue of the sacrifice of the Cross and applies its fruits to us. Christ Himself is contained in the Eucharist, exercising this power and applying it here and now to all those who share in the Eucharist. Christ died for everyone, but to be saved and justified we have to believe in His redemption and salvation; we have to accept the power of His sacrifice. That's the

reason why we have to believe in the Faith and to attend Holy Mass.

The Council gives the starting point for a New Liturgy, a New Mass, a New Faith

Is it a coincidence that the first document in Vatican II—as we said—speaks about liturgical reform, about a liturgy updated to modern times? Or inversely, why create a new Mass? By the way, it's plain and simply false to say that the Council didn't want a new Mass; that the *Novus Ordo Missae*, the Mass of Pope Paul VI, was a posterior creation, not the idea of Vatican II. That's wrong. It is the Mass of the Council; the Council wanted the new Mass. Archbishop Annibale Bugnini was appointed in 1964 to create the *Novus Ordo Missae*, the New Rite of Mass. Nineteen sixty-four was during the Council! In the commission elaborating the new Mass there were six Protestant theologians among the Catholic experts. You understand the Protestants gave their opinions.

Again, why a new Mass? Now, more than 40 years later, we can objectively notice that the ideas of the Council are conveyed by the New Rite of Mass. That was the best way to spread all the novelties like ecumenism, religious liberty, liberalism, collegiality, and so forth. But already at that time, during the Council, there existed a main idea, a guiding-light: Bugnini's objective for the new Mass was to "remove everything which could be even the shadow of a stumbling block for our separated brethren or could cause them any displeasure."¹⁰ We can quote also what Jean Guittou said.¹¹ What is the displeasure for the Protestants? Sacrifice!

To put it in a nutshell: What is the Protestant theology about the Mass? The Mass of Martin Luther is the so-called "German Mass." Andreas Karlstadt,¹² Luther's friend, wanted to de-catholicize the Mass. In 1521, at Christmas, he celebrated the German Mass in secular clothes and gave communion under both species; he used the vernacular. The next day, Karlstadt got engaged. After that many monks and nuns left their cloisters. Why such a violent alteration of the "Mass"? Behind it we find the Protestant theology about the Mass: There is no longer a sacrifice (expressed rather with the meal, both species, in the vernacular) or any priesthood (secular clothes, marriage).

The new Mass was to be like the Protestant mass. When the new Mass started, the faithful saw a protestant Mass. Archbishop Lefebvre gave a set of conferences entitled "The Mass of Luther." Why? The new Mass is not only a Protestant mass; the theology of the new Mass goes further; in fact we have a new theology. With the concept of the Paschal mystery there is no longer a sacrifice; the

Andreas Karlstadt, Luther's friend, wanted to de-catholicize the Mass. In 1521, at Christmas, he celebrated the German Mass in secular clothes and gave communion under both species; he used the vernacular.



Redemption is reduced to only one day—the *paschal mystery*.¹³ And with the theory of universal salvation, everybody is “saved and justified.”¹⁴ Everybody goes to heaven. The basis for this new theology is the concept of the “anonymous Christianity” and “anonymous Christians” by Karl Rahner, the most important Catholic theologian on Vatican II. With his “new theology” the Church no longer needs any mission, any conversion, any apostolate; the Church is no longer the unique “Ark of the Covenant,” but merely one way between other ways, churches, and religions. Because everybody is already redeemed (and justified), nobody understands the necessity of the Sacrifice. Consequently, we need a new Mass! With the New Theology, you cannot understand the old Mass, the meaning of expiation or the remission of sins.¹⁵

And consequently, immediately after the Council, the Catholic Mass, the so-called “old Mass” was condemned. In 1967, the *Missa normativa*—a test or trial Mass—was presented by Annibale Bugnini, secretary to the Congregation for Divine Worship on the occasion of a bishops’ synod in Rome. Most of the bishops rejected the project because it did not correspond to what the majority of bishops at the Council desired. But the Pope and all the reformers wanted a completely new Mass. On April 3, 1969, the New Mass was imposed by Paul VI. Priests were not to say any other Mass than the *Missa normativa*. In May 1976, on the occasion of a consistory, Paul VI demanded that henceforth only the New Mass be celebrated. A low resistance to the New Mass started. Only in Spain was an opposition formed: Over 1,000 priests from Spain appealed to Rome: “Let us keep the Mass!” Bugnini’s answer: “The Mass is abrogated forever!”

So I accuse Vatican II for being the reason for the loss of faith within the Church. Cardinal Ratzinger, who is now Pope Benedict XVI, once pointed out that the “destruction of liturgy” is the main reason for today’s crisis in the Church. And when he was named Pope he did the right thing: he allowed the celebration of the Mass in the pre-Vatican II rite.¹⁶ But as long as the majority of priests and local bishops prefer the Vatican II rite, as

long as in the seminaries and Sunday sermons and catechism the Mass is not really explained, the crisis will remain. It is very easy to destroy the Faith, but it is hard to rebuild it.

I bring such attention to the liturgy since it is the most relevant change Vatican II brought about. It affects all of the faithful. And you can explain, by this, the whole Council. Under these conditions and this road map the Council published documents which were ambiguous. It was clear that a change, a reform was intended, but the documents remained unclear as to how these reforms should be realized. For both the faithful and the clergy, the old doctrine lost its validity. An uncontrolled change began; everyone felt responsible for making a new religion and putting the old aside. In the name of the Council one could justify the greatest nonsense, such as the destruction of church interiors, usually into a wretched style, or the different new teachings. The wish to break with one’s roots was exaggerated with an obsession to change everything in church. The result was a complete change in the every-day practice of parishes.

This change prevented a Catholic renaissance once the optimism of the ’60s had gone, when the party was over and the people looked for stable values. The Church which such searchers found was highly-influenced by the wrong ideas of the 1960s and hence couldn’t convince those who had just turned away from these ideas.

Vatican II against the Catholic Tradition: Our Reproaches against the Council

I. The break with the past

First of all, it’s not a question of conservatism; it’s a question of truth. He who is Catholic is conservative and up to date (progressive, if you want!) at the same time. To the Catholic belongs a conservative spirit, the preservation, and, just as well, the development of all the richness of what

we have to preserve, the richness of Tradition as a whole. In fact, that's true progress.

We do not deplore that in the Council and in the "post-conciliar era" (the time after the Council with all the liturgical and theological reforms) something new has happened, because "the father of the house brings new and old from his treasure" (Mt. 13:52). We deplore only that this new treasure is wrong. We do not deplore that a train departed, we deplore that it has gone in the wrong direction. We say, the train has to go back again, so that it can then go in the right direction.¹⁷

True progress is a development of what has been received and, hence, includes preservation. Conservatism and progress are dimensions of the ecclesiastical existence which enclose themselves and cause each other. The Catholic does not search for the truth, like the Council document "*Gaudium et spes*" says (Article 16). Such thinking is a direct attack against the truth (the truth is Jesus Christ Himself.) It's incorrect and wrong. In fact, it looks in the already revealed truth for deepening and enlargement. Clearly that fatal mistake of the Council is found in the encyclical "*Ut unum sint*" (Art. 33) of John Paul II, where he says: "In the understanding of the council the ecumenical dialogue has the character of a common search for the truth."

2. The traditional self-image of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church and she alone is founded by God. Christ said to Peter "And I say to you: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18). Therefore, the Catholic Church taught in all ages that it is exclusively identical with the Church of Jesus Christ; briefly: The Catholic Church is the Church of Jesus Christ. This equation founds the Catholic claim to absoluteness; she alone is a means of salvation which is expressed in the dogma: "*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—outside the Church there is no salvation."

From this traditional self-image of the Church follows the true ecumenism which was represented in the Church by all Christian ages up to the Second Vatican Council. Pius XI explains in his encyclical *Mortalium Animos*: "The union of Christians can only be promoted by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it."¹⁸

The Council presents a completely different self-image of the Catholic Church. The Council witnessed a formidable about-turn which Paul VI described as follows: "It is possible to say that the bishops as a whole set themselves to learn and to listen, and many were surprised how in four years

their point of view changed and broadened, how they sometimes accepted what before the Council they would have judged unacceptable or too rash [!]."¹⁹

By the way, the Second Vatican Council, in contrast to Vatican I and to the Council of Trent, was only a pastoral council, *i.e.*, we don't have a strict obligation to accept any of the new ideas it proposed.

Now we will state some central points, which were, for the bishops, "unacceptable before the Council," using the mode of expression of Pope Paul VI.

3. A new self-image of the Catholic Church: Ecumenism

As everyone knows, the Council wanted to change the relation of the Catholic Church to the world and to other religions. However, the traditional self-image of the Church stood in the way of this intention, which is why they departed from it. The focus of the Catholic self-image is the continual doctrine of the Church, according to which the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church is one and the same. The Council wanted to revise this doctrine, and decided against it in order to be able to realize the ecumenism of the Council! Therefore, one no longer said that the Catholic Church "is" the Church of Christ [*est*], but that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church [*subsistit in*]. With the turning away from "*est*" the Council carried out a serious break with the traditional doctrine of the Church.

This turning away from the traditional self-image of the Catholic Church opened the door to the ecumenism which the Council introduced in contradiction to the traditional doctrine. The consequence is a new claim of salvation for all the other confessions and religions; from now on they are ways to salvation; from now on they are true churches.

With the awarding of a mediation of salvation to other communities (the Protestants included), the Council abandons the truth about the Catholic Church and teaches that no "church" has the full truth, but only elements of the truth.

4. A new relationship to non-Christian religions

The turning away of the pastoral council from the traditional self-image of the Church entailed not only a basic change of the relation of the Church to other Christian communities, but also a basic change of the attitude toward non-Christian religions, which is explained in the Decree *Nostra Aetate*. The high esteem for non-Christian religions

With the awarding of a mediation of salvation to other communities (the Protestants included), the Council abandons the truth about the Catholic Church and teaches that no “church” has the full truth, but only elements of the truth.



which is expressed in this pastoral council document is incompatible with traditional teaching, according to which these religions are aberrations. Therefore, Jesus Christ Himself and the Church have directed a global mission to save all from sin and error.

The Catholic Church taught that these non-Christian religions have a number of natural truths (to respect the elderly, to help those who are in misery, to be wise in one’s behavior, prudent in one’s actions, *etc.*). Secondly, those religions sometimes have elements, which are remnants of the primitive revelation of God. And finally, sometimes they have taken elements from the Catholic Church (for example, Islam, which confesses one, unique God, takes this belief from the Christian religion).²⁰

But on the other hand, these non-Christian religions not only do not lead to salvation, but very often are in themselves obstacles to finding the truth, systems of resistance to the Holy Ghost.

Such a misguided sympathy of Vatican II toward the other religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, *etc.*) leads necessarily not only to religious indifferentism, but to a destruction of the supernatural order. There is no longer any concern for faith and sanctifying grace; it is replaced by campaigns against racism, by manifestations for peace in the world, taking care of the environment, developing technology, social progress, *etc.*²¹ “Apostleship does not mean to make Muslims or Buddhists into Christians, but to make them better Muslims and better Buddhists” was a slogan of a popular German theologian.

Concerning the other religions, the Council used words which are on the very limits of Catholic thinking. If you take the Bible, one thing is clear: the rejection of pagan religions. But the Council finds many warm words for pagan religions in the sense that these religions can do a lot for conserving peace on earth and other strictly secular problems. This was misunderstood as an acceptance of other religions even in religious aspects, in such a way that all religions are valuable even for salvation, that they are just different ways—maybe not as powerful as Catholicism is—but valuable in God’s plan.

Here the Church did a lot to support this misunderstanding, which is a clear attack on the basis of Christianity and the First Commandment. In 1986, Pope John Paul II invited leaders of nearly all non-Christian religions to Assisi, an Italian town, for common prayer for peace. He gave them Catholic chapels for their religious ceremonies. So there was a statue of Buddha, for instance, on a Catholic altar, on the tabernacle, and the cross was taken away. One must understand this as an acceptance of Buddhism as another way to God. But if anything goes, why remain Catholic? People lost their Catholic minds. They lost their trust in the promise of salvation, which Christ has given to the Christians and only to the Christians in John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me.”

The change of direction of the Council in this area led greatly to the breakdown of the apostolate and was replaced by interreligious dialogue. Such behavior is very far from the apostolic order of Christ: “Go ye unto all nations and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised, will be saved: he who does not believe, will be condemned” (Mk. 16:15-16).

5. A new relationship to the world: the Council’s Declaration on Religious Liberty, “Dignitatis humanae”

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and throughout all, and in us all.”²² The Catholic doctrine up to Vatican II on the question of religious liberty says that there is only one God, one Redeemer, and one Church. This God, this Redeemer, and this Church must be recognized by every creature, each and every individual, and also by social bodies: families, schools, States.²³ They have to recognize Our Lord, basing their constitutions, laws, and their lives on Him. This means that all countries, especially those with a majority of Catholic citizens, should officially recognize Our Lord and His Church as the only true religion, and put limits to the public manifestations of other religions.

With *Dignitatis Humanae* we have an inversion of values. The Truth, who is a person, Jesus Christ, has no longer the right to reign in parliaments, governments, and constitutions, in courts and schools. He has to be silent; He is put on the same level with other religions, opinions, and errors. The pastoral Council asked and demanded that no religion should be hindered from spreading its errors, that every religion is to be treated with equality before the law. "This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom" (No. 2). So, religious freedom would be a natural right. "This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in religious matters no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs" (No. 2). We agree because nobody can be forced to embrace the Faith. Faith is an interior act. What is new follows: "Nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly" (No. 2).

The consequence is an unlimited freedom even of choice in moral matters (abortion, euthanasia, etc.). With the Council's religious liberty, anyone can have the right to act against the law of God, or, if you want, the unlimited freedom of conscience is more important than God's will or law. The old doctrine taught: a State can only tolerate evil. Our Lord said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me" (Jn. 14:6). "I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (Jn. 18:37). "Pilate answered: 'What is truth?'" (Jn. 18:38). The Council teaches that governments have chosen Barabbas.

What is the problem with true religious liberty? Liberties are only for individuals, not the State. Freedom is given to the single human being. Those who have freedom also have this human dignity. The State has no human dignity. The State is committed to save and protect this dignity of each citizen, on the one hand. But it is also committed to the eternal order of things on the other hand. A State can't love; the State is not free. It's the single person who is free. The State is committed to truth and justice. And God is true.

That sounds very academic, doesn't it? Maybe it was so in the 1960s. But it is not any longer. In Switzerland, my home country, the people have decided in a referendum to forbid the construction of minarets, which are the towers of mosques from which the muezzin calls the Muslims to prayer. In France, President Sarkozy plans to abolish the burka, a sack under which extreme Muslims hide their wives and daughters, not because they're ugly, but to discriminate against them. All over Europe the courts are tackled with the problems of the wearing of the head scarf by Muslim women

in public buildings, of Muslim parents who are not willing to allow their children to go swimming in school, and so on. The Western countries are confronted with the aggressive claims of other religions, especially Islam. These States have found that religious liberty in the sense of Vatican II is not possible; there must be limits.

In the 1960s those questions were not of interest. But now we have to ask ourselves who we are. *Who Are We?* is, by the way, a book by Samuel Huntington, who best described the rise of religion at the end of the Cold War as the "Clash of Civilizations." When the book came into debate in the '90s, most Western politicians and intellectuals, who had learned that God is dead and hence, were focused on secular questions such as social discrepancies, tried to ignore Huntington's analysis. After 9/11 things changed. Religion is a reality, and it influences public life. The Western world has seen a fundamental cultural change since the 1960s.

This was caused in large part by the collapse of the biggest religious institution in the West, the Catholic Church. Because the majority of people here were Catholic, and the majority of Catholics lost their faith, our politics and our societies lost their orientation. Now we are faced with the question of how to answer the claims Islam is making. So we must ask ourselves who we are. Are we just consumers? What are our principles? I'm sure that no one who tries to answer this question can do it without considering Christianity. So after some decades of godlessness we will see the return of Jesus Christ. To prepare for this it is important to understand how the Catholic Church could have come into such a crisis.

There is no way to the Father but by Jesus Christ. That is not really clear to today's Catholics, be they clergy or laymen. So we have a lack in basic Catholic consciousness. But people who don't know what is Catholic can't act in a Catholic way. They can't vote for Catholic positions because they don't know what the Catholic position is and so on. "The Faith is evaporating," said Pope Benedict XVI in 2009, and he is right. In the short period after Vatican II, the Faith has evaporated in nearly every aspect. And thus Catholic positions in politics, about abortion, gay-marriage, the value of a family, sex education in school, and so on, have gone away.

So I ask you to do two things: First, take religion into consideration when analyzing politics and the history of recent decades. Religion influences people a lot, and people make politics. My thesis is: the developments of the last 40 years and today's politics are only to be understood when taking the collapse of Catholicism into consideration.

Secondly, research the influence Vatican II has had on this development. My thesis from the beginning was: Vatican II is not the only, but the

Just a word of what I expect in the upcoming years: The Pope will make clear that Vatican II has never propagated a break and a rupture with the doctrine of all Christian centuries. He will reject the wrong interpretation which has made Vatican II to be the basis of a new religion.



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main cause for the collapse of the Church. Don't stop with this thesis. Go further and investigate how Vatican II caused the collapse, and in which ways. I gave you some ideas. To understand such a religious crisis is important in a time when religion obviously is back in business. And as in the West it will be the Christian religion which will dominate—otherwise the West wouldn't be the West any longer—it is necessary to research the developments within Christianity.

At last, I want to speak to you as a priest: God will come back. The renaissance of both religion and its institution, the Church, can be taken as a certitude. Maybe today it is still a bit avant-garde to promote a Catholic standpoint, but shouldn't young academics and universities always be avant-garde? The time is right for this, as the Church is in a deep crisis, unfortunately. So, as you know in the financial market, they say: buy when the price is low. The Catholic Church is surely a "blue chip," and now, at the end of the period of Vatican II, the price is low, but expectations and potentials are high.

Just a word of what I expect in the upcoming years: The Pope will make clear that Vatican II has never propagated a break and a rupture with the doctrine of all Christian centuries. He will reject the wrong interpretation²⁴ which has made Vatican II to be the basis of a new religion. He will defeat the spirit of the 1960s, at least 30 years too late; but what are 30 years for the Church? Catholicism will become popular at first among the educated people, who are searching for the sense of life. The ordinary people are fallen into brutal hedonism; unfortunately, you can't build a society on alcohol, sex, and consumption. Ernest Hello (1828-85), a French writer and philosopher, said: "The only true problem is that we aren't saints." The importance of religion will increase, and it won't be the religion of Vatican II, but that of all time.

Thank you very much. ☑

¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), p. 378.

² Cf. Franz Schmidberger, *Time Bombs of the Second Vatican Council* (Kansas City: Angelus Press, 2005), p. 5.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*: "The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time..."; Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, December 7, 1965.

⁵ Ralph Wiltgen, *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber* (1967).

⁶ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, December 4, 1963.

⁷ As Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre habitually said.

⁸ The famous saying of St. Vincent of Lerins.

⁹ The Credo: "For us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven."

¹⁰ *Osservatore Romano*, March 19, 1965.

¹¹ Jean Guitton, an old friend of Paul VI, related in 1993, "that the pope wanted, in full awareness, to remove from the Mass what could displease the Protestants." Max Thurian, one of the six experts said: "Nothing in the new Mass can really displease a Protestant." In: *Katechismus der Krise der Kirche* by Fr. Matthias Gaudron (Rex Regum, 1997), p. 93. Cf. Just as quote, *ibid.*, p. 106.

¹² Andreas Rudolph-Bodenstein, or Andreas Rudolph-Bodenstein von Karlstadt, often simply called "Karlstadt" (1482-1541), was a 16th-century German Protestant reformer.

¹³ Cardinal Wojtyła, *Sign of Contradiction* [French edition quoted] (1977; Communio-Fayard, 1979), pp. 31, 119.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ A few years ago, statistics in Germany showed that 95 percent of practising Catholics believe the Catholic Mass and the Protestant Supper are the same!

¹⁶ Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum*, July 7, 2007.

¹⁷ Fr. Hans Milch, cited in *Das Konzil muss auf den Prüfstand: Der Standpunkt der Actio Spes Unica zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*.

Paragraph 10.

¹⁹ Jean Guitton, *The Pope Speaks: Dialogues of Paul VI with Jean Guitton* (1967; New York: Meredith Press, 1968), p. 215.

²⁰ Cf. Schmidberger, *Time Bombs*, p. 16.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Eph. 4:5-6.

²³ Cf. Schmidberger, *Time Bombs*, p. 23.

²⁴ He promotes the so-called "hermeneutic of continuity." See the address to the Curia on December 22, 2005.

ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE

THE AUTHORITY OF VATICAN II QUESTIONED

PART 7



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“I Accuse the Council”

***I Accuse the Council:* Archbishop Lefebvre talks about the publication of his interventions during the Council. These documents bear witness to the Catholic reaction in face of the enemy's infiltration into the Church of Vatican II—Conferences of 18 and 27 August, 1976.—Fr. Gleize**

These documents will clearly show that the liberal and modernist orientations appeared and had a preponderant influence thanks to a veritable plot by the cardinals from the Rhine region, unfortunately supported by Paul VI. The equivocations and ambiguities of this pastoral council contained the poison that spread throughout the Church by the enactment and application of conciliar reforms. From the Council was born a new reformed Church which His Excellency Bishop Benelli himself calls “the conciliar Church.” To really understand and measure the noxiousness of this Council it is necessary to study it in light of the pontifical documents putting the bishops, clergy, and faithful on their guard against the conspiracy of the Church's enemies furthered by means of liberalism and modernism going back nearly two centuries. It is also necessary to be conversant with the documents of the Church's adversaries and especially those of the secret societies preparing this council for more than a century. Lastly, it will be very instructive to follow the reactions of Protestants, Masons, and liberal Catholics during and after the Council. The conclusion we must reach, especially after the immense disaster the Church has undergone since the Council, is that this event, ruinous for the Catholic Church and Christian civilization, was not directed and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Why the title *I Accuse the Council*? Because we are justified in stating, from arguments based on both internal

and external criticism, that the spirit that dominated the Council and inspired so many ambiguous and equivocal and even frankly erroneous documents is not the Holy Spirit, but the spirit of the modern world—a liberal, Teilhardian, modernist spirit opposed to the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ....It is therefore essential to demythologize this Council, which was intended to be pastoral because of their instinctive aversion to dogma and to facilitate the official introduction of liberal ideas into a Church document. But once the operation was over, they dogmatize the Council; they compare it to Nicaea and claim that it is just like the others, if not superior!

Gradually one's eyes open upon an astounding conspiracy that has been in the works for a long time. This discovery obliges one to wonder what was the role of the pope in all this work, what was his responsibility. In truth, it seems overwhelming, in spite of the desire to exonerate him of this dreadful betrayal of the Church. But if we leave to God and to future true successors of Peter to judge these things, it is only too true that the Council was diverted from its end by a group of conspirators and that it is impossible for us to join this conspiracy even if there were very many satisfactory texts from the Council. For the good texts served to gain acceptance for the equivocal, loaded, booby-trapped ones. We have only one solution left: to abandon these dangerous witnesses and to cleave firmly to Tradition, or to the Church's official magisterium of twenty centuries.

Results of the "Hot Summer"

Excerpt from a homily given at Ecône on September 19, 1976. After ordinations at Ecône (June 29) and the Mass at Lille (August 29), Archbishop Lefebvre drew the conclusions from this attitude dictated to him by the extraordinary situation created in the Church by the Second Vatican Council. Henceforth, faithful Catholics are obliged to choose between the new theology of the conciliar popes and the teaching of all their predecessors.—Fr. Gleize

The good Lord gave us the pope, He gave us the successor of Peter, and that is what you are studying in your courses, from the Apostles through the Fathers of the Church, through all the acts of the popes, the Sovereign Pontiffs. You are learning the doctrine of the Church, the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, the revelation our Lord Jesus Christ made to us. You love to pore over all the texts of the Sovereign Pontiffs and thus you are learning to know the mind of the Holy Spirit through all the texts of

the popes and the councils they presided over and ratified.

And, precisely, this is what creates the drama in our day. You pore over these books you have in the library that teach you the doctrine of the Sovereign Pontiffs, which is of a marvelous unity, a perfect continuity, of an immutability, if I may say, in substance and in form, but which develops in some way. For even if the deposit of faith was completed after the last of the Apostles, the popes have the charge to explain this deposit to us, to tell us what this deposit consists of. They have done this in the solemn definitions, in the *Credo*. And once these solemn definitions have been given, they remain for ever. They become irreformable. And this is precisely what creates the drama in our day. You have knowledge of all the papal doctrine after having studied these books, these magnificent texts of all of the Church's doctrine, by seeing the popes refer to one another, in some way, in order to attach themselves to Tradition. They are always saying: "As our Predecessors have said; as the Fathers of the Church have said; as the Church has always believed; as the Church has always said in her liturgy; as the Church has always done." They always refer to Tradition, to what has always been done, in order to confirm and to support what they say.

And now in our time general confusion reigns. It is a great mystery, a mystery of Providence. The good Lord has allowed this incredible trial for the Church. A sort of cloud envelops Rome and the Sovereign Pontiff; doubt enters into souls, into every conscience. Errors of every kind arise everywhere, even coming from the mouths of bishops, the mouths of the Episcopal commissions, coming from the deeds being done everywhere; things that are absolutely contrary, precisely, to everything that you have learned, to all that all the popes have done....And now it would seem that things that were condemned by the popes become admissible. It is necessary therefore to choose, to choose between what they would teach now in the catechisms and in the current practice of the Church, between that and what the popes have always taught. This is what I said to the Holy Father when I had the opportunity to see him recently. I told him: Most Holy Father, we are torn. We would like to be at your knees and to receive all your words and to be entirely submissive. We have only one desire, and that is to receive your words and to admit them, but unfortunately we are obliged to observe that the orientation taken by the Church currently is in contradiction with what your predecessors said. And so we are obliged to choose. It is a drama for us: to choose between the Church of today, the orientation of the Church today, and what the Church has taught for two thousand years.

What can we do? We can only refer to two thousand years of Tradition. It is not possible to separate ourselves from the Church. That would be to create a schism. Separate ourselves from the Church of two thousand years! There are the schismatics. That is the drama we are living at present. And for us, I will say, even without judging persons, leaving that in the mystery of God, of the Providence of God who will judge all things (later this age will be judged), we see the errors that are taught currently, the practices contrary to the Tradition of the Church of all ages, things that are contrary to our faith. We must say no. We cannot accept what goes against our faith—whoever may teach it to us. Even if it were an angel from heaven, said St. Paul, we cannot abandon our faith. And that is why we hold

fast to the Church's Tradition; because, by remaining faithful to what the Church has always taught for two thousand years, we are sure and certain not to be mistaken. Let us leave to God the judgment of the men and things of our time. The good Lord will judge. He cannot fail to resolve this trial of the Church one day. We must pray. And I think that these days we must pray in a special way. 📌

(To be continued.)

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IOTA UNUM

42. THE BREAKING OF THE COUNCIL'S LEGAL FRAMEWORK, CONTINUED.

Cardinal Liénart's action was regarded by the press as a *coup* by which the Bishop of Lille "deflected the course of the council and made history." [*Figaro*, 9 December 1976. The account of events we have given is based on Liénart's own memoirs, published posthumously in 1976 under the title *Vatican II*, by the faculty of theology at Lille. It agrees with the account given by Fr. Wiltgen, S.V.D., in *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber*, Paris 1975 (translation of the American edition of 1966), p.17, which however says nothing about the illegality of the Frenchman's action.]

All observers recognize his action as a genuinely decisive point in the course of the ecumenical council; one of those points at which history is concentrated for a moment, and whence great consequences flow. Liénart himself interprets the event in his memoirs as a charismatic inspiration, conscious (at least a posteriori) of the effects of his intervention, and keen to exclude the idea that it might have been premeditated or prearranged: *Je n'ai parlé que parce que je me suis trouvé contraint de le faire par une force supérieure en laquelle je dois reconnaître celle de l'Esprit Saint.* ["I only spoke because I felt constrained to do so by a higher force, in which I feel obliged to recognize that of the Holy Spirit."] Thus, according to John XXIII, the council was called by command of the Holy Spirit, and the council which John prepared was then promptly turned on its head by the same Holy Spirit,

working through a French cardinal. We now have an open confession of this repudiation of the council as originally conceived, from Fr. Chenu, one of the spokesmen of the modernizing school. [I.C.I., No.577, 15

August 1982, p.41.] The eminent Dominican, and his brother in the order Fr. Congar, were upset by their reading of the preparatory commission's texts, which appeared to them to be abstract, antiquated and foreign to the inspirations of contemporary humanity, and they took action to get the council to go beyond this restricted compass, and to open itself to the world's requirements,

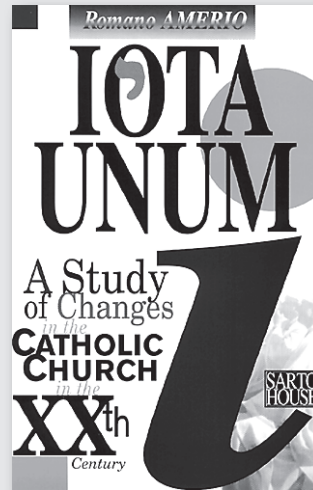
by persuading it to proclaim a new orientation in a message addressed to humanity at large. Fr. Chenu says the message implied a severe criticism of the content and the spirit of the work of the official preparatory commission. ["Implied a severe criticism of the content and the spirit of the work of the official preparatory commission."]

The text to be put forward in council was approved by John XXIII, and by Cardinals Liénart, Garrone, Frings, Döpfner, Alfrink, Montini and Léger. It

emphasized the following points: that the modern world desires the Gospel, that all civilizations contain a hidden urge towards Christ, that the human race constitutes a single fraternal whole

beyond the bounds of frontiers, governments and religions, and that the Church struggles for peace, development and human dignity. The text, which was entrusted to Cardinal Liénart, was subsequently altered in some parts, without relieving it of its original anthropocentric and worldly character; but the alterations were not liked by those who had promoted the document in the first place. It was passed by two thousand five hundred Fathers on 20 October. Fr. Chenu's

statement about the effect of the document is significant: *Le message saisit efficacement l'opinion publique par son existence même. Les pistes ouvertes furent presque toujours suivies par les délibérations et les orientations du Concile.* ["The message managed to seize public attention by its very existence. The paths opened up were almost always followed in the deliberations and orientations of the council."]—**Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum*, pp.85-86. [Available from Angelus Press. Price: \$23.95]**



FR. ALBERT, O.P.

Summa Theologiae



The *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas is justly one of the famous works of Christendom. Yet this book, meant for beginners in the ages of Faith, can seem overwhelming today. We give here an introduction to the *Summa* by Fr. Albert, a son of St. Dominic, in the hope of making this important work more accessible to modern readers.

Since a teacher of Catholic truth must not only teach those who are advanced but has the duty to instruct beginners, as the Apostle says: “As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat” (I Cor. 3:1-2), our aim in this work is to teach those things that pertain to the Christian religion in a manner that is fitting for the instruction of beginners.

With these words St. Thomas Aquinas opens his masterpiece, the *Summa Theologiae*, the greatest theological treatise ever written. One of the main reasons of this greatness consists precisely in the fact that its author perfectly succeeded in his aim of proposing all of Christian doctrine “in a manner that is fitting for the instruction of beginners” (*secundum quod congruit ad eruditionem incipientium*). As Cardinal Cajetan (1469-1534), the greatest of St. Thomas’ commentators, remarks:

This work is not said to be fitting for beginners because of its facility, or because it is a superficial or summary or introductory treatise, but because of its omission of the repetition of superfluous things and the very beautiful order it constructs; for, as will appear, all the difficulties of theology, and according to what is essential to them, are treated here with clarity.¹

The *Summa* is fit “for the instruction of beginners,” then, not because it is easy or superficial, but because of its order, brevity, and clarity. St. Thomas wrote it, as he goes on to say himself in his prologue, because he realized that those who were beginners in this science were “much impeded” by the confusion and repetition of the books then in use and especially because “those things necessary for them in order to understand were not presented in the order necessary to learn them but rather as was required by the commentary of some book or the occasion of some disputed question.” To help these poor beginners, then, out of the charity of his heart, the great teacher stoops down to them and explains everything to them from the beginning in order and as simply and briefly as the subject matter will permit (*secundum quod materia patietur*).

The result of this effort is the marvellous book entitled *Summa Theologiae*. Written in full maturity, and for the purpose we have just seen, the work gave its author the occasion to summarize and crystallize his own thought. Fr. Walter Farrell remarks on the wonderful brevity and simplicity occasioned by the concern of the author to simplify things for “beginners.”

Here, in the full fruit of great genius, there is an economy of word and concept that is deceiving: a few lines of the *Summa* often equal pages of an earlier work and yet leave us puzzled as to what has been omitted. Frequently the

¹ *Commentarium in Praemio*.

marvel is not what has been so well said but what has been so well left unsaid.²

What we propose to do is share with “beginners” some of the Christian wisdom contained in this book, without a doubt one of the most important books ever written. True, it is not an easy book, but several things about it are easy. First, there is this clarity of style, fruit of the charitable resolution to make things as easy as possible for beginners. Secondly, the subject matter: the Catholic faith. As we shall presently see, the subject of the *sacra doctrina* which the *Summa* teaches is God as He is revealed to us by faith, in so far as we can investigate this revelation with our reason. Now God reveals His truth, not to the wise and prudent but to the little ones, as Our Lord Himself declares: “I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to little ones” (Mt. 11:25).

As every priest knows, it is not at all necessarily the intellectual and learned people who understand the Faith best; often it seems just the opposite. The first principles of the *sacra doctrina* (St. Thomas’ word for what we call theology) come from faith, so anyone with faith can learn it and anyone who doesn’t have the Faith can’t.³ It must be added as well that the more charity one has, the better one understands the truths of the faith because the more one then receives the gifts of the Holy Ghost which give us a certain experimental knowledge of God.

Nevertheless, it is true that *sacred doctrine* does require a certain exercise of the intelligence and the understanding of philosophy, since it consists, precisely, in the application of our intelligence to what we believe. In the *Summa*, however, St. Thomas spells out these philosophical principles in the simplest form possible for beginners in a way that makes them seem easy (always, however, *secundum quod materia patietur*). Even if this facility is somewhat deceptive,⁴ it makes the *Summa* by far the most approachable of all theological treatises and enables it to be read, with a certain guidance, by any educated Catholic who loves his faith and wants to understand it better. We hope, with the help of St.

Thomas and his great Patroness, Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, to make you experience the truth of this.

Like Dante’s *Divine Comedy*,⁵ which begins with a preliminary *Canto* that introduces the three grand sections of his monumental work, St. Thomas prefaces his great three-part summary of Christian doctrine with a preliminary question whose purpose is to explain precisely what the science he is going to explore treats of. Similarly, Aristotle in *his* great work, the *Metaphysics*, begins by investigating in what precisely consists the subject of the science of metaphysics that he wants to discuss.⁶ So St. Thomas begins this first question, saying: “To place our purpose within proper limits, we first endeavour to investigate the nature and extent of this sacred doctrine.”

True to the form he will follow throughout the *Summa*, St. Thomas then lists the different points he will treat in discussing the question he has enunciated, points which are called “articles” because they are like articulations of the question, similar to the articulations present in any body. Thus these articles are the key points necessary for the understanding of the question posed, around which the whole subject discussed turns. It is precisely in his pinpointing of these nerve centers, as it were, of the subject he treats, and the order in which he places them in his discussion of it, that the genius of St. Thomas lies.

Obviously, then, the understanding of these key questions and their order will be very important for us in trying to explain the meaning of St. Thomas’ text. Fortunately another great commentator of St. Thomas, John of St. Thomas (1589-1664), wrote a whole treatise where he traces out this marvellous order in the *Summa*.⁷ On this first question he writes: “In the very first and introductory question, he considers the science itself, explaining its necessity, dignity, specification, and mode of proceeding.”

The plan, then, of this first question, can be given as follows:

² Fr. Walter Farrell, O.P., *A Companion to the Summa* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1941), I, 8.

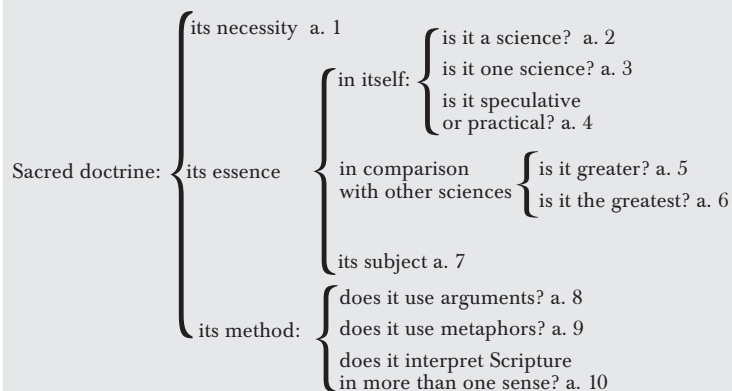
³ This is why no one who doesn’t have the faith can be a theologian, which drastically reduces the number of theologians in the Church today.

⁴ In the prologue to his commentary Cajetan speaks of this apparent facility and its deceptiveness: “The reason why we have endeavoured to take up this commentary is that the text of our Doctor hides a great depth of meaning, even though the arrangement and choice of his words, having nothing complicated about them, seem at first glance to attract the reader and promise a facility of meaning. But the reader then understands that what happens is very different from what he first thought; for the repeated lecture of this Author seems to augment rather than resolve the difficulty of understanding his meaning.”

⁵ Or rather it is Dante who imitates in this the *Summa*, which he admired very much and used as the theological basis of his poem.

⁶ Unfortunately this concern to specify precisely the object of the particular science one is pursuing is sorely lacking in modern times, particularly among some scientists who wander off into philosophical subjects and start speculating about them without knowing what they are doing nor what they are talking about. The classification of the sciences according to their objects belongs to the science of Logic, a science of which modern “scientists” are, generally, totally ignorant, to the great detriment of the intellectual climate of our age.

⁷ Ralph McInerny has published a translation of this work under the title *Introduction to the Summa Theologiae of Thomas Aquinas* (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2004).



Firstly, then, St. Thomas asks whether it is necessary that there be a *sacred doctrine*, that is, a teaching by revelation from God on top of what men can know by reason. He answers that it is necessary for two reasons: **1)** firstly, because God has given man a supernatural end, and so He must give us the supernatural knowledge that is necessary for us in order that we might direct ourselves towards that end; **2)** secondly, because even the natural truths about God, which are necessary for us as well, must be revealed to men by God since otherwise they would be known only “by a few, after a long time and with many errors.”⁸

Cajetan in his commentary here quotes and refutes an opinion of Duns Scotus, a Franciscan theologian (1265-1308), which was to be later taken up by the neo-modernist theologians in the 20th century, in particular by the Jesuit Henri de Lubac. According to Scotus the end God has given to man cannot be supernatural in the sense that man does not have an innate desire or natural potency for this end, because then this end would not be a beatitude for him. A dog, for example, has no natural potency for appreciating classical music, so listening to classical music cannot be his end, because it will not make him happy. Similarly, man must have a natural potency for the beatific vision or it could not be his final end. Therefore, says Scotus, this end is supernatural, not in the sense that man is not ordered towards it naturally, but simply in the sense that he cannot attain it naturally, but only by the supernatural help of God. He agrees with St. Thomas, then, that we need a supernatural knowledge given to us by God to show us this end and the way to attain it, but he maintains that man has a natural potency for it.

Innocent as this opinion might seem at first glance, it leads, nevertheless, directly to the new doctrine of Vatican II on ecumenism and the non-Christian religions. That is why it was condemned

by Pius XII in his encyclical *Humani Generis* in 1950 when it appeared in the writings of Henri de Lubac at that time. For if, indeed, man has a natural potency or desire for the vision of God, the distinction between the order of nature and the order of grace is blurred and all religions end up being considered to be more or less on the same level, for they all express this same inner desire to see God. Certainly some are considered to be better than others, to be more true or more efficacious, but they are all in the same order.

In reality, however, this view is completely false. In reality, grace infinitely transcends nature, and thus the only true religion, the only one that can lead men to their last end, is the religion that gives men grace which elevates their intelligence and their wills to this supernatural level. All other religions just get in the way of this absolutely necessary shift to a higher order where alone salvation can be found. Cajetan’s reply to Scotus, then, is of the greatest interest to us today, for the modernists have come back to his same objection, saying that if the end fixed by God for man is not natural to man, then he will have no interest in it. We have here the germ of all the naturalism of Vatican II, from its desacralization of the liturgy to all its exaggerated concern about politics and human rights and “culture.”⁹

Cajetan responds by conceding that it is true that there must be a certain potency in man for the supernatural end God has fixed for him, but he says that this potency is not natural but “obediential.” It cannot be natural, he says, because this would confuse the orders of nature and grace. A natural potency cannot require a supernatural act to bring it to fruition, as Scotus, (and de Lubac) propose because there is no proportion between the two.¹⁰ There is only a potency which he calls “obediential,” which is, he explains, “the aptitude a thing has so that whatever God will have ordered be done in it.” Thus, he says, “the obediential potency to have faith and charity is in the nature of men because it is intellectual, but it is not in the nature of a lion to which this would be repugnant.” This doctrine preserves the absolute supernatural character of man’s last end while answering at the same time the objection against it.

St. Thomas then goes on to speak about what this “sacred doctrine” is exactly, showing that it is

⁹ This tendency at times goes to ridiculous lengths, as for example in the recent commemoration in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, of the 40th anniversary of the break-up of the Beatles!

¹⁰ As Garrigou-Lagrange explains very clearly in his commentary on this article: “The innate desire for the beatific vision would have to be efficacious. Otherwise God as the Author of nature would have given a natural inclination to an end to which as Author of nature He could not bring the creature, and thus there would be no proportion between agent and end.” Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *The One God* (St. Louis: Herder, 1943), p. 43.

⁸ The First Vatican Council made this teaching its own in the second chapter of its document on the faith (Denzinger-Schönmetzer 3005).

a specific science that is simultaneously speculative and practical. It is a science even though it proceeds from principles that it doesn't know (since its principles are articles of faith which are not known but *believed*) because it receives these principles from a superior science, the science of God and the blessed in heaven. Similarly music is a science subordinated to a superior science, because its principles come from the science of arithmetic. A musician's art is completely based on the laws of harmony that are purely arithmetical, but a musician doesn't need to know arithmetic to be a musician: he simply accepts these principles and works with them. "Thus," says St. Thomas, "just as music believes the principles given to it by arithmetic, so does sacred doctrine believe the principles revealed to it by God."¹¹

This science is specifically one, because even though it treats of many diverse things (God, angels, human acts, and even historical events), it regards all of them from one particular angle, namely that they are all revealed by God and are ordered to Him as to their principle and their end. Thus, says St. Thomas, using homely examples as he often does to get across his idea, "a man, an ass, and a rock agree in the one precise formality of being colored, and color is the formal object of sight." Similarly the formal object of sacred doctrine is what is revealed by God, no matter what it is, and it is from this that it receives its unity. "So that in this way, he goes on, sacred doctrine is, as it were, a certain stamp of the divine science, which, one and simple, embraces everything."¹²

For this same reason sacred doctrine extends to what is speculative and what is practical at the same time "just as God too," says St. Thomas, "knows Himself and what He does by the same science." Being "a certain stamp of the divine science" which is both speculative and practical, sacred doctrine will necessarily be so as well. This point is very important, and unfortunately has often been forgotten by theologians who made a too strict division between dogmatic theology, which deals

with what we are to believe, and moral theology, which deals with what we have to do. As we shall see, one of the great qualities of the *Summa* is the intimate union it maintains between these two elements, union which is founded precisely on this union of the speculative and practical knowledge in sacred doctrine.¹³

In the next two articles St. Thomas considers sacred doctrine in comparison to other sciences. First, he shows that it is superior to them because, in so far as it is speculative, it treats of what is highest, namely, the things of God that transcend human reason, and this with the absolute certitude that comes from the divine light, and, in so far as it is practical, it treats of man's ultimate end, to which all other acts are directed, namely, eternal bliss. Secondly, he shows that it is, in the strictest sense of the word, a wisdom, which is the highest of the sciences since it treats of the highest cause of all things. Sacred doctrine does this because it treats of God, the cause of absolutely everything, and in the highest possible way, since it treats of Him not only in so far as He is knowable through the creatures He has made but also as He is known to Himself alone.¹⁴ This is because, again, it participates in the knowledge God has of Himself and communicates to us by revelation.¹⁵

This leads to the final article in the section on the essence of sacred doctrine which determines the subject of this science which is God considered, specifies Cajetan, "according to what He is in Himself."¹⁶ This again follows from the key principle of this whole first question, namely, that the formal object of sacred doctrine, what it is primarily and fundamentally about, is what God has revealed about Himself. Thus it follows that it is primarily and fundamentally about God Himself as He knows Himself, and so "according to what He is in Himself" and not just according to what He is known to be by the creatures He made. This shows

¹³ St. Thomas gives the advantage, nevertheless, to the speculative aspect of this science "because it is more concerned with divine things than with human acts which it treats inasmuch as man is ordained by them to the perfect knowledge of God, in which consists eternal bliss." We see appear here what has been called the "intellectualism" of St. Thomas, as well as his decided emphasis on God rather than man. As he says in this same article, justifying his position that sacred doctrine is not primarily about the works men have to do: "Sacred doctrine is principally about God of whom rather men are the work."

¹⁴ "*Etiam quantum ad id quod notum est sibi solo de seipso.*"

¹⁵ The commentary of Cajetan here is too perspicacious to omit: "Note with regard to those things that are naturally hidden to us about God, that just as they are more proper to Him in the order of knowledge, so are they more proper in the order of being. And that is why the science which treats in God the things which are known to God alone is the science of God according to those things that are proper to God. And since it is in these proper things that are found the primary and supreme foundations of divine causality, therefore this science is said to treat in the most proper way of God in so far as He is the highest cause."

¹⁶ *Sub ratione propriae quidditatis.*

¹¹ Cajetan points out here, nonetheless, that there is a difference between what we believe by faith and what we assent to because of what our reason deduces from the principles of faith. It is only the latter that is properly the object of sacred doctrine strictly speaking, which is what distinguishes it from faith, as we will see later.

¹² *Ut sic sacra doctrina sit velut quaedam impressio divinae scientiae, quae est una et simplex omnium.* Cajetan finely remarks the difference here between this sacred doctrine and infused science, as for example, if God were to infuse into someone's mind the science of geometry. In the latter case the divine light would not be the formal object of the science even though it would be the efficient cause by which the intellect would attain that object: the mind would know geometry, just as anyone else does, he would just know it miraculously by a divine illumination. In sacred doctrine, however, it is the divine light itself which is the formal cause of the knowledge and not just its efficient cause: one knows what God knows, as He knows it, because He knows it, here by faith (because He said it and we believe Him) and in heaven by vision.

the properly infinite depth of sacred doctrine, for what God is in Himself infinitely surpasses what He is revealed to be by His creatures because, great as His creation is, it only gives a vague idea of what He really is, His being infinitely surpasses any finite thing He has made or could make.¹⁷


The last three articles of this first question treat of the method used by this science of sacred doctrine. The first article explains that sacred doctrine uses arguments not, however, to prove its principles, which come from faith, but rather to argue from these revealed principles to other truths.¹⁸ Here we have, in fact, the precise object of sacred doctrine strictly speaking, which is not divine revealed truth itself, which is the object of the virtue of faith, but rather the truth that our reason can conclude from this divinely revealed truth. Cajetan neatly explains this distinction in his commentary on the second article about sacred doctrine being a science:

In Holy Scripture demonstrations are contained in a virtual manner and by the deduction of conclusions from the articles of faith another habitus is generated. Nor is it true (as Scotus says) that we give our assent to all these truths (that is to revealed truths and those taught by theology) equally and in the same way. For we do not assent to the articles of faith because of something else; but we assent to the conclusions, about which alone is this science (of sacred doctrine) because of the articles. (c) Articles of faith are proposed to us to be simply believed, other things as to be deduced from the articles, therefore we do not give our assent in the same way to the principles and the conclusions (c) for faith is about the principles and science about the conclusions.

Faith, then, and sacred doctrine (the science that we call theology) are clearly distinct. The object of faith is what has been revealed (the “*revelatum*,” whether it be explicitly or implicitly) whereas the object of theology is what is deduced by reason from these revealed truths (the “*revelabile*,” that is, what is revealed only *virtually* in the principles, in so far as it can be deduced from these principles). What has been revealed, even implicitly, can be defined as a

dogma of faith, for it is assented to by the virtue of faith ; what has only been virtually revealed cannot be so defined because it has not been revealed but is a conclusion of reason from what has been revealed.¹⁹

The following article explains that sacred doctrine uses metaphors to teach men divine things because it is natural to men to come to the knowledge of spiritual realities through material things since all of their knowledge comes through the senses.²⁰ Metaphors are especially useful because this doctrine is intended for all men, even those who are unlearned, so it must be presented in such a way that at least by figurative images they might understand something about higher things. “Also,” St. Thomas adds, “this hiding of the truth by figures is itself useful in order to exercise the studious and avoid the ridicule of the infidels of whom it is said: ‘Do not give what is holy to dogs’ (Mt. 8).”

The final article shows how Sacred Scripture, unlike merely human writings, has more than one sense. This is possible because God, who is its author, can not only signify things by words, as men do when they write, but also by the things he signifies by words he can signify yet other things. What is signified by the words is what is called the literal sense, what is signified by the things signified by the words is the spiritual sense. For example, when Moses in the book of Genesis says that Abraham has two sons, that is the literal sense: but when St. Paul tells us that these two sons, Ismael and Isaac, signify the Old and the New testaments, he reveals to us the spiritual sense of Moses’ text. [This spiritual sense is itself divided into: **1**) the allegorical sense, when the Old Testament prefigures the New, as in the example just given; **2**) the anagogical sense, when present things represent eternal, heavenly things (as Jerusalem, for example, is a figure of heaven); **3**) the moral sense, when Christ’s actions, or the signs that prefigure Him, show us how we must act (for example, the patience of Job, which is a figure of that of Christ, is a model of patience for us).] 

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¹⁷ In the prologue to the fourth book of his *Summa Contra Gentiles* where, after treating of God philosophically, he begins to treat of Him theologically, St. Thomas gives a beautiful exposition of this cleavage between philosophical doctrine and theology by commenting on a verse of the Book of Job: “Behold, these things have been said about His ways in a partial way, and since we have barely heard a little drop of His words, who will be able to behold the thunder of His greatness?” (Job 26:14). The things said “in a partial way” is the philosophical knowledge about God, the “little drop of His words barely heard” is the knowledge we have about Him by faith in His revelation, and the “thunder of His greatness” is the knowledge the blessed have of Him in heaven.

¹⁸ “As, for example, the Apostle, in 1 Cor. 15, argues from the resurrection of Christ to prove the resurrection of all men.” This sort of use of argument does not take away the merit of faith but rather submits natural reason to it as a servant. Thus St. Thomas writes: “Since grace does not abolish nature but perfects it, natural reason must serve the faith, just as the natural inclination of the will serves charity. Thus the Apostle says in II Cor. 10: ‘Bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ.’”

¹⁹ This is what is meant when theologians speak about a doctrine, for example, the mediation of all graces by Our Lady, as being “definable.” It means that it is implicitly revealed, and so can be an object of faith. An example of a truth only virtually revealed would be the fact that Our Lord has an agent intellect. This follows from the fact that He has a true human nature, but it is not formally revealed, even implicitly. It is not a dogma of faith but what is termed a “theological conclusion.”

²⁰ He quotes here Dionysius the Areopagite, who says: “It is impossible for the ray of divine light to reach us if it not be surrounded with a variety of sacred veils.”



“Dante and Shakespeare divide the world between them; there is no third.”

–*T.S. Eliot*

DANTE

DANTE'S *INFERNO*: READING AND COMMENTARY

PART 3

D R . D A V I D A L L E N W H I T E

Trying to discuss the *Inferno* in the space of an article is like trying to climb Mt. Everest in 20 minutes. Because this is so, it's best to begin with an analysis of how to approach literature. When you pick up a book, what do you do? How do you begin? Obviously, let's assume that the first thing to recognize is that any piece of literature proceeds from a specific time and place. It was written by real human beings. It is easy to say the names Dante and Shakespeare and forget that they were real men, blessed with unique talents or gifts, struggling in the real world as writers, who sat down first with blank paper, as any of us do. Any writer starts by facing a blank page.

Dante turned blank paper into *The Divine Comedy*. Shakespeare turned the same into *Hamlet*. It is remarkable what they were able to do, but the process of writing was the same. It's important to remember that they were real men living in a real time. Thus, the first thing we must do is give ourselves some time to understand who the writer is before launching into a work. It is good to get a little background. You don't need to read a whole biography, but it's easy enough to consult a compendium. There are certain things you need to know.

Let me give you a few quick examples. I am not going to provide a complete life of Dante for you. I will, however, tell you about a few facts which are very important to know if you want to grasp the fullness of *The Divine Comedy*. First, Dante was born

in 1265; he died in 1321. These are the years that define the life of the man. Why is this significant? It tells us he was a medieval, a man of the Middle Ages. This tells us things which help us when we look at the work.

What are these things? He was a medieval, an Italian, and a Catholic. His Catholicism is essential to understanding him. It's just as important as knowing, for instance, that Nathaniel Hawthorne's background was Puritan and that religious outlook permeated his writing. We have to define authors in a context. Of course, I have to caution you when reading background material. Much of what is written today is unreliable. As a rule of thumb, and there are exceptions on both sides, I say to look for something written before 1960.

Dante comes from a specific and well-constituted worldview. It is important to understand that modern man, educated in modern schools, goes out at night, looks at the night sky, and defines his world differently than the medievals. They are looking at the same stars, but not the same "thing." Modern man first sees a scientific universe; he sees named stars at such-and-such light years away in specific galaxies or solar systems. There is a feeling of understanding due to modern science. And I think it's fair to say that, for many moderns, there is a feeling of insignificance; what are we compared to the universe? It is all big, dark, and empty; there's nothing out there but matter: gases, rocks, planets. Everything seems accidental. So the average modern

man goes inside to drink, watch TV, and eat junk food to escape this harsh reality.

Medieval man, looking at the same night sky, would first see complete order. This is not from the viewpoint of science, but that of God. There were the nine spheres which made music as they moved, but they were all created by a Creator with a specific order. It was full and rich, not empty. Medieval man knew his place; he did not consider himself insignificant since he was a son of God, created for a specific purpose, playing an integral part in the created order. As a result, he would go to Mass and raise his family, and concern himself with whether there would be enough potatoes or whether the Plague would come around that year. He had real fears, but not the empty angst of modern man.

I emphasize this order because Dante reflects it in the poem. As he descends into the *Inferno*, he structures Hell in a specific way. This imaginative creation is very interesting; to a large degree, Dante has defined our conception of Hell in his writing. We take many of our visions of Hell from the *Inferno*: the torture, stench, pains, and suffering of Hell are all given order by Dante. The *Inferno* is ordered in circles just as there are spheres in the heavens. And Hell is an ordered place because it is a creation of God. As Dante and Virgil descend through the *Inferno*, they observe this logical and reasonable realm. This is a reflection of the medieval mind.

Further, as a Catholic, Dante's main narrative in the work is the soul's movement to God. Dante knew why we are here and where we are going. This is the basis of the *Comedy*. This is why the whole work ends at the top of the *Paradiso*, in the outer circle where we glimpse the Godhead. It is an astonishing moment. But it is the logical end of the work since that is the end of the purpose of the existence of the soul. We cannot understand this without some sense of the Faith.

He was not writing just to write; he was writing to tell a specific story. In fact, Dante said quite openly at some point, in a letter to a Northern Italian nobleman and patron, Can Grande della Scala, who took Dante in when the poet was exiled:

The subject of the whole work, then, taken merely in the literal sense is "the state of the soul after death straightforwardly affirmed," for the development of the whole work hinges on and about that. But if, indeed, the work is taken allegorically, its subject is: "Man, as by good or ill deserts, in the exercise of his free choice, he becomes liable to rewarding or punishing Justice."

Thus, the work is about the justice of God. God either rewards or punishes based on man's free choice. You will notice in the *Inferno* that none of the souls there have been *sent* to Hell; they have all *chosen* Hell.

There are also some historical circumstances which make *The Divine Comedy* more understandable.

Dante lived in a troubled and difficult historical period in Italy. There were very strong city-states at war during this time. Within the individual city-states there was also turmoil and disruption. Political questions and problems loomed large.

Dante was born in Florence, the city he loved. He is probably the most famous Florentine in history. Yet, born in 1265, he was exiled in 1301 and never allowed to return. There is a painting in the great Duomo in Florence where Dante is holding *The Divine Comedy* with Florence behind him, gates closed. He was sent on an embassy to the Pope, and while he was gone, there was a change of government; the new government forbade his return. He spent the last 21 years of his life in exile, a pilgrim, a wandering soul who could not find rest in his native city. This fact influences the work.

Thus he writes *The Divine Comedy* from the perspective of the pilgrim soul. Dante the Pilgrim, the character in the book, wanders throughout the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* because Dante the poet knew what it meant to be a wanderer.

You cannot read *The Divine Comedy* without knowing this fact: in 1274, when Dante was nine years old, he was invited to a May Day party at the home of an Italian nobleman named Folco Portinari. He went to the party and saw the eight-year-old daughter of Folco named Beatrice. He instantly fell in love. This is his own description; we must take him at his own word. He never really got to know her. She married someone else. They had very little contact. And yet he held the image of that beauty. It became for Dante the symbol of all that is good, pure, and virtuous in this world. In one sense, it is fascinating; Dante married another woman named Gemma Donati. Yet we never hear of her; she is not mentioned in the work. Throughout the work, the vision of the woman he adores is Beatrice. (You can imagine how happy his wife must have been!) Curiously, for much of the time Dante was in exile, his wife mainly stayed in Florence. Eventually the family went with him, but they were separated for a great period of time.

There is something else going on here regarding the question of literary tradition. Dante was not here inventing something out of whole cloth. There have never been many original minds. Dante took something and adapted it. He was writing after the time of the chivalric romances in which the knight chose a lady whom he loved and in whom he saw all that was good, pure, and noble. He may indeed marry someone else, but that was merely domestic life, not the higher ideal vision. We are talking about the literary tradition of the Arthurian romances. Remember Lancelot chooses Guinevere as his inspiration even though she is married to someone else. Dante is writing in this tradition.

Of course, Dante is writing in many traditions. He is also writing out of the epic tradition. He knew Homer and respected him and Virgil. He had studied them thoroughly. He knew the *Iliad* and *Aeneid*. He follows the rules of the epic in *The Divine Comedy*. An epic begins in the middle of the story. How does the *Inferno* begin? The very first line of the poem:

Midway along the journey of our life
I woke to find myself in a dark wood...

It is a signal. This beginning is in the middle of things, *in media res*. Every epic has a hero. Dante himself will be the hero here, going on a long journey of discovery. He is a kind of knight, a warrior fighting different kinds of monsters. *The Inferno* is mainly popular today for its great monsters. An epic must also have a descent into Hell; here, it is obvious. There must be “extended epic similes,” comparisons that go on and on. There are dozens of them in Dante. So *The Divine Comedy* is part chivalric romance, part epic.

Dante was writing out of the popular literary forms of his day. Further, he is proving himself as part of the Western tradition. There is a great moment in the first circle of Hell, reserved for the classical souls who were good men that lived before the Incarnation and thus did not know Christ. The first circle of Hell is, on a natural level, a very pleasant place to be. Dante and Virgil there visit Homer, Ovid, and others. They tell Dante they are glad to meet him and treat him as an equal. This is probably the most glorious example of arrogance in all of literature. As Dante is writing it, he is basically saying: “These classical authors are my buddies; and, further, they recognize how good I am.” Is this pride? It’s difficult to say. Is it proud to be aware of your own greatness? He was one of the greatest poets ever, and he knew it. He was as great as Homer and Virgil. Indeed, we have added him to the list. I don’t think it is pride but if it is, then much of that pride is wrung out of him as he makes his journey. (In the *Purgatorio* when he visits the souls being punished for pride, he suggests that he himself will one day spend time in that place.)

We begin to see, as we go through the work, that we have a personal confession of Dante. In a curious way, it is in the tradition of St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, for Dante is telling us about the mistakes he has made. Thus, it is logical that we begin with a descent into Hell, the place of vice, error, and sin. It is one of the glories of literature: Dante, without having to sin himself, reacts to it, is tempted by it, and comes to understand it. He moves on without being able to escape it completely, for he remains human, but his understanding is deepened. This is why context is important.

Finally, we must understand the title *The Divine Comedy*. Even the simplest titles are often great clues. *The Divine Comedy* tells us much about the work. The great epics tended to be serious; the great Greek and Roman poets wrote tragedies. Dante wrote a comedy and, in fact, he himself simply called his work the *Commedia*. This does not mean that it includes lots of jokes. (It does include much that is humorous, and there are moments of low comedy funnier than much of what you find in modern farce.) Overall, though, comedy means structure, meaning even though the work is serious the journey does not end in destruction, pity, fear, or loss. It will end with reconciliation or a vision of glory or joy. I won’t say it’s a happy ending in the modern sense of the word, but it does reflect happiness in an Aristotelian or Thomistic sense, for the journey ends with a vision of the greatest good.

We thus know where we are going as we read through it. The title tells us. The comedy in this case, however, is a divine one. It is thus a spiritual journey, not one in this world. We will, however, recognize things from this world as we go through it.

It was also written in what would be the vulgar tongue for Dante. The great classical writers wrote in the classical languages. Even Dante wrote many of his serious prose works in Latin. He wrote poems in Latin. When he got to this work, however, because he aimed at a wider audience, he decided to write in Italian, thereby establishing Italian as a literary language. It was a common language, written for the people, not for literary eloquence. Dante proved what could be done with the vernacular. In that sense, although the work is tied to many traditions, it is also a very experimental work. He climbed on the shoulders of the giants who went before him, but he also created something new.

You need to spend some time with any work before you dive in. Some sense of background is crucial. Some guidelines, however, are also necessary. Here are some clues for reading. First, it is a complex work. Do not be intimidated by it. The first time through is like meeting for the first time someone who will become a good friend. Don’t try to understand everything in the first reading. The first time through, just try to get a grasp of the basics: what is going on, where are we going, and what is happening. What’s the story? Where do we start? Where do we end? Whom do we meet?

As you come back to the work, as with any great work, it continues to open up. It offers you more and more, the way a good friend does. Why are old friends the best friends? We haven’t worn them out; on the contrary, we’ve spent so much time with them that we discover more facets of them. It is the movement from simple understanding to complex understanding to real appreciation and deep love. This is what real friendship is about. It’s what a good

marriage should be. It's the same with a great work of literature.

Here is Dante, again from the letter to Can Grande della Scala, explaining how to look at the work. He says that the meaning of the work is not simple:

The meaning of this work is not simple for we obtain one meaning from the letter of it, and another from that which the letter signifies; and the first is called literal, but the other allegorical or mystical. And to make this matter of treatment clearer, it may be studied in the verse: "When Israel came out of Egypt and the House of Jacob from among a strange people, Judah was his sanctuary and Israel his dominion." For if we regard the letter alone, what is set before us is the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt in the days of Moses; if the allegory, our redemption wrought by Christ; if the moral sense, we are shown the conversion of the soul from the grief and wretchedness of sin to the state of grace; if the anagogical, we are shown the departure of the holy soul from the thralldom of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory. And although these mystical meanings are called by various names, they may all be called in general allegorical, since they differ from the literal and historical.

The first thing you must then do is read it for the literal sense. What do the words themselves mean? We must start with the words themselves. But we must also know the overall structure of the work before we begin. For instance, Dante is obsessed with the number three. It's easy enough to know why: Dante the poet honors the Trinity throughout the whole work. Thus, the design of the work uses threes. Most obviously, the poem is split into three parts. It is not a single work. He divides the after-life into three realms: the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*.

The whole thing is made up of 100 cantos. After an introductory canto, there are 33 cantos for each section. He then designs the verse form of the poem as the tercet, in Italian *terzina*. The stanzas are all three lines each. The rhymes link together: ABA, BCB, CDC, DED, *etc.* Thus, everything links together. But you will notice this use of threes everywhere in the work. Even at the very end, during the final vision of God, there are three interconnecting globes of light. Right from the start, he's leading us to the final vision of God as the Trinity.

Here is something essential: there are two Dantes in this work. There is Dante the poet, the man writing the poem, looking backward, telling us something that happened to him. He gives us the date. *The Divine Comedy* begins on the eve of Good Friday, 1300. It covers three days. It ends on Easter Sunday. He makes this journey through Hell, up Mount Purgatory, and through Heaven in three days. Dante the storyteller tells us about something that happened to him; in fact, Dante the poet started

writing the poem after 1300. He finished it just before his death in 1321.

At the same time, the main character is named Dante. He is his own principal character and he is looking back on himself. So we have Dante the poet and Dante the pilgrim. Dante the poet knows things and often portrays Dante the pilgrim critically. The man who begins the journey is not the man who is writing the poem. Dante the pilgrim who begins the journey has much to learn. We get it almost instantly.

Midway along the journey of our life
I woke to find myself in a dark wood,
for I had wandered off from the straight path.

Notice where we begin. He assumes he is halfway through his life. (He would die earlier than he thought.) But he uses the plural in the first line. It is the journey we all take. The words suggest that all of our lives are a journey. The second line, however, returns to the singular. Now Dante is telling us his personal perspective of the journey that we all take. We see he had been sleeping for he awakens in a dark wood. The dark wood is a poetic image which calls up a primal fear in almost all of us. This is why so many fairy tales involve children being lost in a dark wood. Dante is a grown-up, but a child spiritually and emotionally. The sense of wandering harkens back to the reality of free will and choice.

How hard it is to tell what it was like,
this wood of wilderness, savage and stubborn
(the thought of it brings back all my old fears),

a bitter place! Death could scarce be bitterer.

He's terrified. He wants to get out of there. Further, he's at a hill. He looks up and sees a mountain. He decides to try to get out of the woods by climbing up the mountain, but his path is blocked by three savage beasts: a leopard, a lion, and a she-wolf. These beasts won't let him pass. They've been interpreted a thousand ways; you can choose an intelligent commentary. He is told he'll be stuck there until the greyhound comes to save him, but he doesn't understand what that means. Then we realize that the story hasn't really started yet: it begins when Virgil appears.

Virgil tells Dante not to worry, that he has come to guide him. We then find out that the real action of the poem has begun earlier, in Heaven. The Blessed Mother went to Santa Lucia and told her to find Beatrice since Dante needed help. (Three women, a healing parallel to the three beasts.) So Dante hasn't been abandoned. Beatrice goes to Virgil in the First Circle of Hell. In the Second Canto, Virgil explains how she got there:

I am Beatrice, who urges you to go;
I come from where I long most to return;
Love moved me, as it moves me now to speak.



I am Beatrice, who urges you to go;
I come from where I long most to return;
Love moved me, as it moves me now to speak.

Even here, free will remains.

When I return to stand before my Lord,
I'll sing your praises to Him many times.
And then she spoke no more.

These little moments are exquisite. The poem is filled with them. Dante is not telling us by commentary how to interpret these moments; he is letting us realize the scene imaginatively. It is beautifully done. One of the problems with *The Divine Comedy* is that the verse is so simple, and moves so quickly because of the interlocking tercets, that a reader can almost read it too quickly.

If you want to read it with a medieval mind, remember that we lack the patience of those who came before us. They loved long stories and would savor them slowly. We have to slow down to appreciate the richness of what is being presented to us. It is absurd to eat lobster bisque at the same rate you would eat a McDonald's burger. The latter, at best, may simply fuel you for a few hours; the former is something to savor slowly. Dante is lobster bisque. Savor it slowly.

Why Virgil? Many commentators point out that Virgil guides Dante through Hell and Purgatory, while Beatrice guides him through Heaven. That is only partially accurate. There is actually a third guide who takes him through to the heights Paradise. The number three again.) But why is Virgil the first guide? Why the classical world? Virgil, to the medievals, represented reason. He was the Roman poet of reason. The Greeks had grand

passions that at times were depicted as going out of control, hence the greatness of Greek tragedy. Virgil, however, was reasonable. In order to get out of the dark wood, the first thing to do is to exercise reason. Virgil is thus the guide.

He is a poet, however, not a philosopher. This implies that an awakening of the heart is also necessary. Thus, to move forward, we must begin with human feeling that is deeply and profoundly understood. Hence, we have Virgil, a great poet and man of nature and reason. Sometimes we know people who have lost their way and are wandering; a purely natural means may be their first help. It may be a friendship, a human connection, or a piece of music, an emotional connection. These things won't get us all the way to our final destination, but they may start the process.

Curiously, at this point, Beatrice cannot come to the pilgrim Dante. He is not yet ready for the grace she represents. Grace is prior to nature, and it perfects nature, but we must start with nature. We must use reason to get ourselves out of the fixes we have managed to get ourselves into. Hence, Virgil is the guide. Yet there are things Dante the pilgrim understands which Virgil does not. In Canto Three, we enter the vestibule to Hell itself and hear the screams of anguish from below. It's a great and terrifying scene. First we see the inscription above the gate:

I AM THE WAY INTO THE DOLEFUL CITY,
I AM THE WAY INTO ETERNAL GRIEF,
I AM THE WAY TO A FORSAKEN RACE.

JUSTICE IT WAS THAT MOVED MY GREAT CREATOR;
DIVINE OMNIPOTENCE CREATED ME,
AND HIGHEST WISDOM JOINED WITH PRIMAL LOVE.

BEFORE ME NOTHING BUT ETERNAL THINGS
WERE MADE, AND I SHALL LAST ETERNALLY.
ABANDON EVERY HOPE, ALL YOU WHO ENTER.

A fine inscription. We know we are on our way to Hell. Notice it begins with “I.” We are obsessed with the self; this is how Hell announces itself. But it acknowledges that it did not create itself. The Gate of Hell itself announces the Trinity. The last line is, of course, famous: Hell lacks hope because there is no getting out. We hear the shrieks for the first time.

Hell is unbearably noisy. It is intolerable cacophony. It is astonishing how much noise is involved in Hell. Dorothy Sayers, one of the famous translators of the work in English, comments, in her Introduction, about the noise of Hell:

...the sighs and wailing, the howls of Cerebrus, yells of the hoarders and spendthrifts, the splashing and bubbling of the streams, the shrieks of the Furies, the sibilant voices of the suicides, sizzling like green wood on the fire, the thunder of the cataract, the sniffing and blowing of the flatterers, the quarrels and shouts of the *Malebranche*, the confused roar of the speaking flames, the teeth of the traitors, chattering like storks: all the hideous, intolerable clamor of Hell.

She was obviously a creative writer herself. Hell is a noisy place. If you want an example of how hellish the modern world has become, consider the noise. The noise prevents us from thinking; it confuses us. In Hell, all of the senses are assaulted. I won't go into detail about the stench. It suffices to say that it stinks. It is awful. There are moments the two wayfarers cannot continue descending because of the putrid flames coming from below. Virgil and the pilgrim Dante hesitate just so the nose can adjust. Poetry is sensuous; it impacts the senses. Few have done it better than Dante.

Dante is making this journey to learn. As he descends, he is confused and tricked. These damned souls are good at deceit. Let us look at the most famous of all the encounters, in Canto Five. It is the meeting with Francesca da Rimini. We are in the circle of the lustful. All the lustful souls are flying about endlessly like birds; they had been animalistic, hence their punishment resembles their sin. (Dante uses a device called *contrapasso*; it means something like the law of Divine retribution. The punishment fits the crime. As you sinned, so are you punished.) Having become animal-like by obeying their lower passions, they forever fly around like birds. It is not grand animalism, though; it reminds one of Shakespeare's phrase “sparrows...are lecherous.”

Francesca and Paolo stop to talk to Dante. Paolo never says a word. The woman does all the talking. Paolo, however, gasps and moans and sighs while she is talking; he listens to her for all eternity. She lays it on with a trowel; she insults Paolo while talking about their great love. Simultaneously, she

attempts to seduce the pilgrim. This is her story, the story of a married woman with her husband's brother, as they read about the adulterous love of Lancelot and Guinevere:

One day we read, to pass the time away,
of Lancelot, how he had fallen in love;
we were alone, innocent of suspicion.

Time and again our eyes were brought together
by the book we read; our faces flushed and paled.
To the moment of one line alone we yielded:

it was when we read about those longed-for lips
now being kissed by such a famous lover,
that this one (who shall never leave my side)

then kissed my mouth, and trembled as he did.
Our Galehot was that book and he who wrote it.
That day we read no further.” And all the while

the one of the two spirits spoke these words,
the other wept, in such a way that pity
blurred my senses; I swooned as though to die,

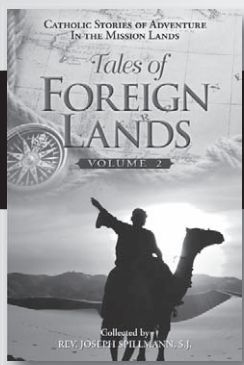
and fell to Hell's floor as a body, dead, falls.

What has happened? She has seduced him just as she seduced Paolo. Dante the pilgrim feels sorry for them, as most readers do. What we have here, however, is God's justice. As the pilgrim continues to descend, he will learn to look at all these sins in the face and understand that the sins are his own (and our own). Dante comes upon this scene of seduction and is seduced by it; he is filled with sympathy. Having made that mistake, he loses consciousness, reason. He himself falls. Virgil revives him and will not abandon him. Dante the pilgrim learns the lesson and moves on, but he will keep making mistakes throughout his journey.

The pilgrim is all of us. He is man going through the world. The pilgrim is tempted by sin all the way through Hell. He has much to learn, just as we do. We encounter sins in our journey, fall, and find death; yet we also have the hope of being revived and restored. 📖

(To be continued.)

Dr. David Allen White taught World Literature at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, for the better part of three decades. He gave many seminars at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, Minnesota, including one on which this article is based. He is the author of *The Mouth of the Lion* and *The Horn of the Unicorn*. All quotes from *The Divine Comedy* are taken from Mark Musa's translation, published by Penguin Books. Illustrations by Gustave Doré.



Catholic Stories of Adventure in the Mission Lands

Tales of Foreign Lands

FR. JOSEPH SPILLMANN, S.J.

The Pirate's Prisoner

(From *Tales of Foreign Lands*, Volume 2)

Continued from the February 2010 issue.



XI Padre Louis and Brother Francis

Padre Louis Guerin, the French priest from Tunis, had returned from his unsuccessful trip to the desert. Brother Francis greeted him at the door as he entered, but at once read the sad news of the trip written clearly upon his saddened countenance. After the evening meal the Brother asked Padre Louis to give a clear account of all that happened on the journey.

“Well, Brother Francis,” began Padre Louis, “the world really brings forth bad men, much worse than one cares to believe. I think that, unless God gives us extraordinary help, we will never be able to bring the boy back to his parents. We rode seven or eight days through the desert before we came to the pirate’s home. Believe me, Brother, had it not been an errand of Christian charity, I would have seriously regretted ever having left Tunis. To do business with pirates is no fun, to be sure. I entrusted myself very earnestly to the care of God and the Blessed Virgin, hoping that they would bring me safely, with the boy, out of that treacherous nest.”

“Can imagine! Can imagine!” Brother Francis interrupted; “have also prayed many a rosary since you left for the success of your dangerous trip.”

“Then I rode to the leader of our caravan and said politely, ‘Salaam, Habib, can you read?’—‘Yes, sir,’ the old Turk lazily murmured. Thereupon I drew out the papers which I had received from our consul and the dey of Tunis and held them before his eyes. ‘See here, Habib,’ said I, ‘here’s a chance for a hundred piasters for you.’ Then you should have seen, Brother, how the old fellow opened his eyes, when he heard something about money. ‘Now then,’ I continued, ‘a hundred piasters for a small service. At the pirate’s home on the oasis of the desert there is a small boy; we must have him!’—‘Dead or alive, sir?’—‘Alive, of course; if he is dead, you shall receive nothing!’—‘Very well; then you shall have him alive; as sure as my name is Habib!’

“Hardly had we reached the oasis, when the clever Turk was already busy at work. At the very first glance at the manager of the pirate’s household, he let out a cry of surprise; then he calmed himself and assumed an expression of authority: ‘Zaki, in the name of the Mighty, hand over to us the little boy whom your master holds captive here!’

‘Oho,’ laughed the renegade sarcastically; ‘you seem to understand that sort of commanding quite well, but until you produce the necessary warrants, I can be of no service to you.’

“Habib had not at all expected such a bold reply and became a bit unnerved; at first he wavered and faltered for words, then motioned to me to come closer. As I had heard the whole conversation, I immediately took the official letters from my pocket and showed them to Achmed’s manager. Well, Brother, I really can not say which of us received the greater shock, he or I. At the first glance I recognized in Zaki the renegade fisher-boy. For him naturally it was not very pleasant to meet face to face with a Frenchman. It did not take him long, however, to recover from his fright, and he denied, with unblushing countenance, that the boy could be found anywhere on the desert estate.

“That is just what I had feared. Certainly the captive was so well concealed that even the most thorough searching would not bring one to his hiding-place. Habib, for his part, did not care to go through this slow process and was impatient for quicker results. He wanted the hundred piasters and wanted them surely and quickly. Without any further questioning, he ordered his men to count out twenty-five stinging blows upon the bare soles of the stubborn slave-master. The cries and threats of the hardened victim were of no avail, and even my intercession brought no mercy. After the punishment had been dealt out, the Turk once more demanded that the boy be handed over without any

further delay. He was about to measure out a second dose to the crying and whimpering renegade, when I finally moved him and his men to search the whole house to see whether the boy was really there or not.

“While they were thus busy searching the premises, I sat down alongside of the unfortunate youth, whose feet were still smarting from the stinging blows, and demanded that he tell me all that he knew about the boy. In vain I repeatedly increased my offer of gold until it reached the desirable sum of three hundred zechins. In spite of all, he adhered to his first answer, that Francesco was not to be found in the desert. His master had come and taken him away. Most likely he had long since been sold to some merchant for a pleasing profit.

“Then I attempted to give a little religious consolation to the poorest of the poor souls; I urged him to flee with us, since God’s merciful providence offered him such a propitious opportunity. Then you should have seen how the perverted Christian revolted against human as well as divine kindness. Yet I did not allow myself to be discouraged in my holy duty to care for one of the most lost of lost sheep. So I reminded him of the happy days of his early youth; that he surely had a pious mother who so tenderly soothed his trifling sorrows; further than this I did not get. ‘I am damned; I am cursed!’ he shrieked. ‘I have murdered my mother!’ Just then Habib and his men came out of the house. Raging anger glared from the eyes of the Turk as he rushed upon the renegade, swinging his clenched fists threateningly. ‘You wretch!’ he shouted. ‘With these hands I will tear you to shreds if you do not give up the boy you are holding here!’ Trembling with fear, Zaki hid himself behind me. The raging officer surely would have inflicted some injury upon the poor unfortunate, had I not used all my power of conviction to make clear to him that the boy was no longer here in the desert. Only with great difficulty could I persuade him to believe that the boy was now in Tunis, that there he would have a better chance of earning his hundred piasters.

“So we rode away again. Pray earnestly, Brother; perhaps we shall still be successful in finding some trace of the boy; in the meantime, may God and His holy guardian angel take him under their mighty protection. Good night, Brother Francis. Tomorrow we will have to be up very early to visit Don Isidore and bring him Holy Communion.”

“Wait, Padre Louis,” called the Brother. “Your story was so interesting. I almost forgot to tell you of the good news. The consul sent for you this noon about 2 o’clock and wished to inform you that the ransom money for the strange priest has arrived. How could I have forgotten to tell you about it! Yes, yes, one naturally grows old and forgetful.”

“Brother, let us say the *Te Deum* for the great favor that has been granted us. Tomorrow before break of day we will bring the happy priest the good news of his restored freedom. Good night.”

Before the sun made his appearance for the new day, Don Isidore was already freed from the bondage of slavery of old Mulad. His first steps were directed to the chapel of the French consul, there to present from the bottom of his heart an offering of thanksgiving at the altar. A few minutes later he sat together with Padre Louis and Brother Francis in secret conference. Eagerly the three discussed ways and plans of how they might gain new information over the fate of the stolen boy.

“It is already some weeks back,” began Don Isidore, “when I was walking with my former master through the streets of the city, just a little before dusk of evening. As we came near the great gate, we met a caravan of about twelve men entering the city. At the head of this little band I thought I noticed the same pirate who dragged us here as slaves. But, since I believed that little Francesco had long since been sold to other merchants, I had no reason to suspect that he could be among the passing travelers, and therefore took no interest in the presence of that detestable being. The riders had already passed us when suddenly my attention was attracted by a suppressed cry which sounded like that of a child. I looked back quickly, but all that I saw was one of the sturdy slaves who was using all his strength to force something back that was trying to leap from the basket that hung on the side of one of the camels. When I saw that, I became suspicious and cried out loudly, ‘Cecco! Cecco!’ However, I received no answer.

“So, in spite of all, the child may possibly still be here in the city,” thought Padre Louis. “And if that be the case, we must have him at any cost; but how? That is the important question for solution. I think the best thing for me to do is to go immediately to the consul and ask him for his protection and support.”

“But beware of using force,” added Don Isidore; “that angry pirate would not hesitate to kill the child rather than to be forced to hand him over alive.”

“Then we must accomplish our work with money and bribery.”

“Perhaps that would be the safest plan.”

“No, no,” cried Brother Francis; “the honest money of Christians shall never be thrown before these unbelieving dogs for the shameful deed they have perpetrated; I hope to be able to find a better plan.”

“And that would be?” asked Padre Louis.

“Well, your Reverence knows the old shear-sharpener, Elias. He’s an honest soul; only heaven knows what storms have swept him here upon our shores. He is a good Christian, and what is still more

in our favor, he is as clever as seven Turks. If he can not bring the boy back to us, then the very last thread of hope is broken. If you have no objection, I will bring the man here right now to complete our plans; you will see, with him in our services we will be able to accomplish something.”

“Agreed, Brother. Bring him here as soon as you can find him. God grant that you are not deceived.”

XII

A Clever Daring

It was not long before Brother Francis returned with Elias Rabbath-Sader, the shear-sharpener.

“Come a little closer, Elias, and make yourself comfortable,” began the French priest. “How do you find things in Tunis? Is your business doing well?”

“Thank you, Reverend Father; a free lance like myself can knock his way through life very easily; but do not take it amiss if I make bold to say that you have called me here for other purposes than to show your interests in my welfare and business. Speak freely; if there is any service that I can render, you may count upon me. I have not yet forgotten what your predecessor did for me, at the time when my sore knees kept me mercifully from my business.”

“Say, Brother Francis,” interrupted Padre Louis, “haven’t you told this man anything of your plan yet?”

“No, your Reverence; I chose to wait with that until we were in private and greater safety; on the public streets one can never be too careful. If it is expedient now, I will unfold to you the plans that I have arranged after much thought and study. You undoubtedly know the old pirate Achmed, Elias?”

“If it is the same one that lives in that massive stone house near the great gate, I should know him well.”

“The very man! Good! You see, some months ago the old rascal stole a little boy far away from here, from the Island of Sicily, if you know where that lies in the sea. You can imagine what the poor child had to suffer since that time. Ask, if you wish, that old gentleman over there, Don Isidore, who has just been mercifully liberated from the cruelties of the old robber. However, our good Padre Louis—the Lord bless the good man for his corporal work of mercy—rode to the desert some time ago, with the caravan of the dey of Tunis, for we thought that the pirate had taken the child to his oasis in the desert for greater safety. I never would have had the courage to do it. We were not far from the right tracks, but alas, when Padre Louis arrived at the oasis, the nest had already been emptied. In short, we never had a chance to come face to face with

the boy. Now, I thought, Elias, that you know every house and hut in the whole city; how would it be if you started a little search for the boy?"

"If it would not entail any disadvantage for the good of your business, I would suggest that you place your stand, for the future, in front of Achmed's house," added Padre Louis.

"Good! Father, when there is a question of a good deed for a friend, what difference does it make to a poor old man whether he has a few more or less tinkling coins to disturb his poverty? You can rest assured that not a single soul shall enter or leave the house without being checked off on my memory. As far as it is in my power, the child shall soon be free; but you, good men, must in the meantime use your power of prayer, that our work may reach a successful end."

"If you gain any information, report to us immediately."

"Certainly, good Father," he answered; "you can count on me."

With these words the alliance was made, and the plans for a desperate attempt began to unfold their course. Brother Francis took their new partner into the kitchen, where he offered some refreshments. The old shear-sharpener ate heartily, and after showing his appreciation for this small courtesy, started out with awakened enthusiasm to begin his work.

Three days had already passed and still no trace of Francesco had been found. Again Padre Louis, Don Isidore, and Brother Francis sat in conference, and were speaking of the sad fate of the little boy. "May God and His guardian angel be generous to the little child; I hardly dare to hope that he will ever see his parents again," thought Padre Louis.

"Nor can I see further hope," added Don Isidore. "Much as it grieves me to be obliged to depart without the boy, I cannot do differently. Who knows whether I could get a ship so soon again, that would take me home safely. So the matter stands settled, we must part today; day after tomorrow, in the evening, I hope to be back home again."

The last hours before dusk passed slowly. The good Brother would not take his hands from his rosary; it was Saturday, and how could the Mother of God let a single prayer go unheard?

The darkness of night made the deserted streets still more desolate, when suddenly old Elias dashed into the room where the three men were sitting and, breathless, gasped in broken tones: "Good men, this thing makes me desperate. Today, or perhaps never, we must accomplish our work; but I cannot find a suitable man who can help me in this work of daring!"

"What's up? Calm yourself, Elias, and speak more clearly; I do not understand the meaning of your words," warned Padre Louis.

"Everything is practically prepared. I had already been close to the boy, when just at the opportune moment some ill-fated star led this young Hares Abuchakra between us, and my chances were spoiled. My presence here has not yet been suspected, but I need another sturdy man to help me, in case some unwelcome visitor would call on us, to render him harmless until we have finished our work."

"That sounds dangerous," said Padre Louis.

"Yes, certainly, very dangerous; really enough to lead one to despair, as truly as my name is Elias."

"Ahem, could you perhaps use me? I am hardened, indeed, with the weight of many years upon my shoulders; but still I have a powerful fist against any Turk that would dare to lay hands on me," chorused in Brother Francis with determination.

"If you would only take care of the boy. I would manage to handle any other intruder who dared to interrupt our work."

"I am sorry, good Elias, but I can hardly allow Brother to go along with you. But I know what I will do, I will ask the consul to place one of his men at your service and to choose one who is young and strong."

"And if he is a weakling in courage, Reverend Father, and is unwilling to do the work, he might break loose in the sight of danger and leave me flat in the opportune moment. Rather allow me to take the Brother as my partner in this difficult adventure. Achmed would not dare to report to the dey of the city; he would endanger the safety of his own head and treasure. You will see, we will bring the boy along back with us. You can quietly go ahead with all the preparations so that, tonight yet, we can place him on board the ship, which will quit the harbor of Tunis tomorrow before daybreak."

"Be assured, Padre Louis, and let the two go about their work," entreated Don Isidore. "Were I not a priest, I would not hesitate to go along myself; but, alas, you know that it is not becoming for the servants of the Lord to mingle in this deed of robbery."

"Go, then, in the name of God; may the Lord bless and protect you; but one thing you must promise me: do not unnecessarily cause any one an injury."

"Certainly not."

...to be continued.



“THE LORD’S PRAYER”

Part 3 of 10

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Our Father
who art in heaven,
- 3) hallowed be
Thy name;**
- 4) Thy kingdom come;
- 5) Thy will be done,
on earth as it is
in heaven!
- 6) Give us this day
our daily bread
- 7) and forgive us
our trespasses,
- 8) as we forgive those
who trespass
against us,
- 9) and lead us not into
temptation, but
deliver us from evil.
- 10) Amen.

The First Request: “Hallowed Be Thy Name”

Modern man worships other gods than the Christian God of creation, self-created gods like the god of sports, the god of the belly, the god of technology, the god of health and wellness, and the god of self-realization and careers. These gods seem to be so pervasive that they either totally dominate our thinking or lead to a new type of exposure to the world and laziness. The sense of wonder at the beauty of God’s creation, however, is lost to modern man. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (d. 322 B.C.) sees in the act of wonder the beginning of philosophy, even the initial spark of knowledge and the approach to hitherto unrecognized and new truths as opposed to mere opinions and assumptions. This philosophical ability to marvel is sometimes an important requirement for praying well the phrase “Hallowed be Thy name.” Instead, modern man is entirely occupied by the spellbinding achievements of modern technologies. Modern man cannot, like the Apostle Thomas, kneel and pray: “My Lord and my God!” (Jn. 20:28).

Our secular age is marked by the loss of sanctity. Who would be willing and able to engage in a discussion about sanctity? The understanding of what sanctity means seems to be lost. It has to be rediscovered. This loss has become worse since the innovations of Vatican II, the profanations of the liturgy being only one example. The Protestant Walter Kempowski (d. 2007), an important contemporary author, shows a surprising sense of the loss of the sacred when he writes:

The empty churches. I think one would have to imagine certain churches—emptied by iconoclasts and whitewashed—with altars from the museums, as they could be seen before the Reformation. One would have to...have low masses said according to the old rite. People should be able to candidly watch it. Then they might perhaps realize what has been destroyed.¹

That the first of the seven petitions of the Our Father expresses the sanctification of God’s name is not by accident. It is both the representation of the order of being, and at the same time a lesson in the education of men about God, not to see ourselves as the center

of the world. If our Lord Jesus Christ had not taught us the Our Father, we would probably think first of ourselves and our well-being. The pedagogy of God is important here because the attention and view of the petitioner is lifted up.

Why do we pray “hallowed be Thy name”? Precisely because of the ignorance of God, because of how few are sanctifying God’s name, because of the idolatry of created things that take the place of God in the world, because of the deification of man by the dethronement of God. In this first request of the Lord’s Prayer we thus pray that the name of God may become apparent to more and more people. In the understanding of the ancients and the Old Testament, a name always provides a description of what a thing is. A name is not randomly given, as we are used to today. In order to pray to God, we have to know His name. The first petition in the Lord’s Prayer brings us back to the true order of being in which we should seek first God’s glory and only afterwards our welfare. “Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mt. 6:33)!

The first three petitions are centered around God: “Hallowed be Thy name! Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done!” God’s Name, God’s kingdom, and God’s will are the highest in the order of being, and must therefore also assume that rank in our prayers. When we pray “hallowed be Thy name,” like the angels sing “Holy, holy, holy” in praise to God’s majesty (Is. 6:2-3, Apoc. 4:8), we acknowledge the sanctity of God as a property which was His from eternity. God’s holiness does not need our respect, but we nevertheless owe the sanctification of His Name to God the Creator by reason of the order of being. We tend to see sanctity only under the aspect of a certain inaccessibility of the majesty of God. God’s name is not only mysterious; there should be, for the children of God, even a kind of a familiarity and personal inclination towards the heavenly Father. The holiness of God should not separate us from our heavenly Father, but on the contrary, bring us closer to God. The children of God share in the inheritance of God, and thus in His holiness.

While the salutation of the Lord’s Prayer reaches the heavenly Father with a certain familiarity, the first petition has a grateful reply: “Hallowed be Thy name.” This is entirely consistent with the first and major purpose of all creatures—the glorification of God. Sanctification means separation from this world and devotion to God.

What characteristics does the Name of God have?

One of the greatest teachers of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), concisely describes the name of God by four attributes: He is wonderful,

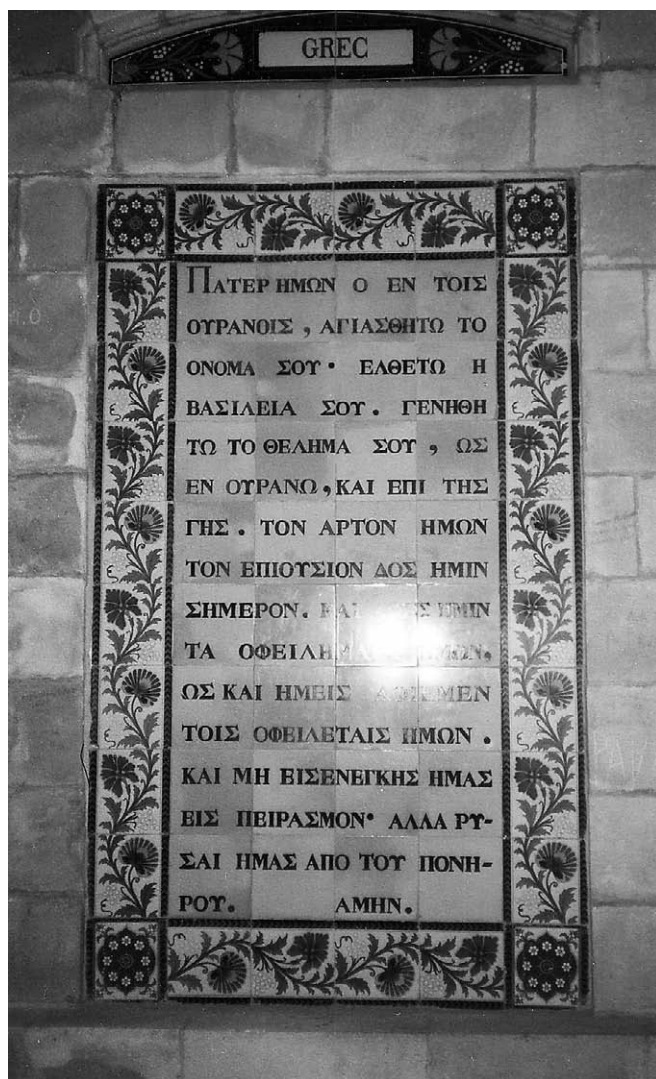
amiable, adorable, and ineffable (see *Comp. Theol.* II. p. cp. 8).

The name of God is wonderful because God has wrought so many miracles and is still performing them. “In my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them...” (Mark 16:17f.).

God is amiable since we have the prospect of obtaining salvation: “Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

God’s name alone is adorable and not that of any other creature: “...in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth” (Phil. 2:10).

God’s name is ineffable because of the inadequacy of human descriptions and terms. The description of the name of God by attributes of creatures will always be a mere imitation of the





divine and will not adequately express the divinity of God.

The prohibition of abusing the name of God in the Decalogue

The Ten Commandments contain the order “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” (Ex. 20:7). Because God is holy, we must keep His name holy. The necessary respect and reverence for God is not limited to the private sphere, but affects social and public life. Man may use the name of God only to praise and glorify God.

How do we sanctify the name of God?

To say it positively, we sanctify the name of God in the best way if we perform our prayers and live our life in the knowledge of God’s presence. Regular prayer and short prayers during work are important tools for us to live in the presence of God and thus for the sanctification of God’s name.

Given the advanced de-Christianization of the formerly Christian West we could almost pray “Hallowed be Thy name” despite the profanity which has so much darkened the holiness of God’s name all over the world.

We are able to sanctify the name of God when, by our lives and through our prayers, we give God the glory and prove our love in an unaffected and sincere attitude, which confesses its own weaknesses and sins in the sight of God with a contrite heart. For example, do we think of the name of God when we make the sign of the cross?

That the name of God is sanctified depends on our life and our prayer:

We pray that God sanctify His name, He who saves and consecrates by His Holiness creation altogether...This is the name which brings salvation to the lost world. But we ask that the name of God be sanctified through our life. If we do what is right, the name of God is praised; if we act badly, He will be blasphemed according to the word of the apostle: “...the name of God through you is blasphemed among the Gentiles” (Rom. 2:24; Ez. 36:20-22). We therefore ask to be worthy of as much holiness in our souls as the name of our God is holy.²

Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us exactly how we can best glorify our heavenly Father: We are to bear much fruit, and seriously begin to imitate Christ:


“In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples” (Jn. 15:8). St. Paul reminds us not to bring shame on the name of God, which we received in baptism: “The name of God through you is blasphemed among the Gentiles” (Rom. 2:24).

The necessary daily sanctification

In his remarks about this specific petition in the Our Father, St. Cyprian emphasizes that God cannot perfect His holiness, but we are dealing with our sanctification, which we received in baptism and continue to receive in the sacraments. In order not to violate and deface the sanctity of God by our sins, we have to cleanse ourselves repeatedly in the sacrament of confession. During our whole life we must strive for our sanctification:

From whom could God be sanctified? Because he himself has said, “You shall be holy unto me, because I the Lord am holy” (Lev. 20:26), we ask that we who are sanctified in baptism will have the strength to continue what we have begun to be. For this we pray every day, because we need to sanctify ourselves daily, so that we, who sin daily, wash away our sins by continuously cleansing ourselves from them....We pray that this sanctification remains in us.³

Summary: The words “Hallowed be Thy name” warn him who prays to keep in mind the holiness of God and the gift of sanctity which he received in baptism. With every sin the child of God violates and obscures the holiness of God. The desire for the sanctification of God’s name must find its proper and ardent expression in the celebration of the liturgy. When changes and profanations are done in the liturgical life, the splendor and glory of the holiness of God is rudely damaged.

Let us try to permanently sanctify our lives, not just on Sundays, but in everyday life, by putting ourselves time and again in the presence of God and by saying from time to time a brief prayer. 

(To be continued.)

Fr. Thomas Jatzkowski, FSSPX, was ordained in 2004, and is currently prior of St. Teresa of Avila Priory, Hamburg, Germany.

¹ Walter Kempowski, *Hamit*, quoted in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 16, 2006, p. 36.

² St. Peter Chrysologus, serm. 71.

³ St. Cyprian, *Dom. orat.* 12.

AUSTRALIA: A Seminary “Down Under”



For more than 20 years, the Australian seminary of the Society of St. Pius X, Holy Cross, has been training and ordaining priests coming mainly from Asia and Oceania. So that you can get to know it better, *DICI* interviewed its rector, Fr. Vicente Griego.

When was the seminary founded?

Holy Cross Seminary was established in 1988 at a site in Queensland, and shortly thereafter the seminary moved to Lake Bathurst in New South Wales, outside of Goulburn, where it presently is located, about two hours' drive southeast of Sydney. Goulburn was the first city in Australia established inland and played a significant role in the region's sheep and wool industry.

Why in Australia?

Australia (picturesque but arid) was chosen to host a seminary of the Society for varied reasons. Located in an English-speaking country and in the Southern Hemisphere, the country seemed fitting to accommodate vocations from not only Australia but “neighboring” countries in the Pacific region. Indeed, at the time of the foundation of Holy Cross Seminary, there were numerous candidates from Australia and a budding apostolate in the Philippines.

What is the condition of Tradition in Australia? And what about the Catholic religion?

Concerning the state of Catholicism in Australia, the percentage of Catholics in a country whose population is 22 million, is around

25 percent. The Society has about 2,000 faithful throughout the country.

Where exactly is the seminary? Could you give us a description of the surroundings?

The seminary is located in the midst of farm land used primarily for sheep and cattle raising, and in fact was a Christian Brothers' agricultural school before its purchase by the Society. A number of livestock and crops are grown despite the scant rainfall. The terrain is hilly with a not too distant range of small mountains. Huge pastures for livestock grazing are interrupted at various times of the year by the bright yellow flowers of canola or fields of oat or wheat grain. Recently one farmer had a large tract of land covered with turnips, which provided the sheep that grazed it with a rich diet and put many nutrients into the ground—an effort to better the poor soil in this area. Another graceful sight is the violet bloom that invades many fields—the weed called Parson's Curse—visually pretty for the passer-by on the highway, but detrimental to choice crops or pasture and unwanted by the farmer.

What is the profile of the seminarians? Where do they come from, from a geographical and spiritual point of view?

Since its foundation, Holy Cross Seminary has trained and ordained priests from Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, India, as well as from more distant lands, France and the United States of America. Historically, many of the seminarians coming from outside Australia have been new to Tradition when they enter, while the opposite is true of the Australian entrants.

What is the average number of seminarians per promotion? How many people are on the teaching staff?


At the moment, the average number of seminarians in each class is two to three—

notwithstanding the absence of any sixth-year seminarian, the total number of major seminarians is twelve! There are also six young men discerning their vocation in the pre-seminary, which essentially completes a secondary education in the seminary environment. Currently, there are six priests assigned to the seminary. Even though the number of seminarians is small, there are in fact nine years of schooling provided by the staff here, which includes three laymen. There are also five Brothers stationed here; they provide a valuable support in the seminary's community life as well as helping to maintain the old buildings and assist with the daily running of the seminary.

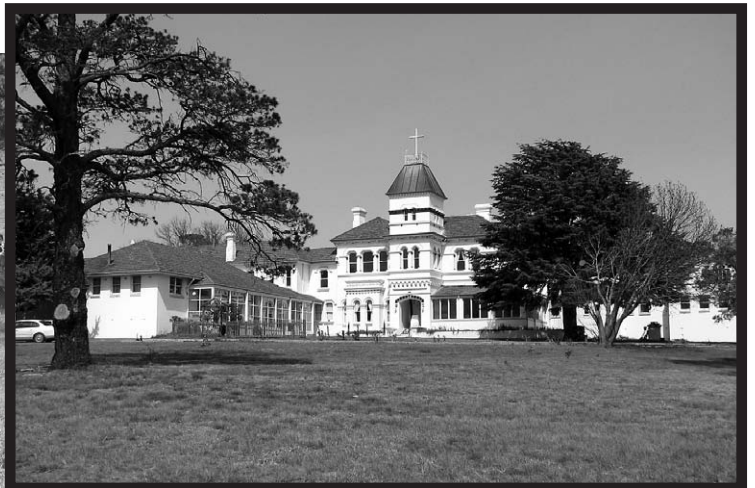
What languages are the courses in ?

English being the language of the country, most subjects are conducted in English. Courses in English are provided in the pre-seminary to better prepare seminarians who are not fluent in the language for the philosophical and theological studies that they will undertake later on.

When do ordinations take place ?

Holy Cross Seminary has sent numerous seminarians to the Society's seminaries in Switzerland and the United States after the completion of the philosophical studies. Of these, sixteen priests have been ordained over the years. Since Holy Cross Seminary began offering a six-year seminary curriculum in 2003, twelve priests have been ordained at Holy Cross. Priests ordained at Holy Cross have been assigned to Australia, the Philippines, the United States, France and Zimbabwe. Ordinations occur in late December, which is the beginning of the summer in Australia. 

Fr. Vicente Griego is the Rector of Holy Cross Seminary, a post he has held since 2008. More information can be found at www.holycrossseminary.com. Interview from *DICI*.





Discord within the College of Cardinals

On May 9, 2010, the Italian press revived the critical remarks made by the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn (on the left in the picture), against the Dean of the Sacred College, the Italian Angelo Sodano (on the right in the picture). The Austrian prelate reproached the former Secretary of State of the Holy See for having recently reduced to “idle chatter” the scandals of the pedophile priests, but also for having covered up the misdeeds of his predecessor in Vienna, Cardinal Hans Hermann Groër, in the mid-1990s.

In the midst of an informal meeting with the Austrian press last April 28, Cardinal Schönborn accused Cardinal Sodano of being guilty of a “grave offence” with respect to the victims of pedophile priests last April 4. At the beginning of the Easter Mass at the Vatican, the Dean of Cardinals had publicly informed Benedict XVI of the support of all the Church in the turmoil of the pedophile scandals, while asking him not “to let himself be influenced by the ‘idle chatter’ of the moment.”

According to the Catholic press agency of Austria, Kathpress, Cardinal Schönborn went further in accusing Cardinal Sodano, Secretary of State from 1991 to 2006, of being opposed to the creation 15 years ago of a Vatican investigatory commission on Cardinal Groër, who was then Archbishop of Vienna. At that time Cardinal Groër had been accused by a former seminarian of acts of pedophilia committed during the 1970s. He resigned his office in 1995 as soon as the first allegations of sexual abuse were made. He died in 2003.



Cardinal Christoph Schönborn

“For a long time, the principle of the Church was to forgive,” Cardinal Schönborn lamented, “but unfortunately this principle was misinterpreted in favour of the guilty and not of the victims.” During his meeting with the press, the Archbishop of Vienna also indicated that he would like to see an “urgent” reform of the Roman Curia.

The accusations brought by Cardinal Schönborn against the former Secretary of State are added to those recently published in the American press concerning Cardinal Sodano’s possible leniency with regard to the founder of the Legionaries of Christ, Fr. Marcial Maciel (1920-2008), also accused of sexual abuse. As of this printing, Cardinal Sodano has not answered any of these charges. For many Vaticanists, the recent attacks concentrated on the former Secretary of State of John Paul II and on several members of his entourage will not make any easier the acceleration of the beatification process of the Polish pope.

(Source: *DICI*)

Rise above Dialectics by Dialogue and Synthesis?

In a short press conference granted to some journalists on the airplane that took him to Portugal on May 11, Benedict XVI gave an answer to a question formulated by Fr. Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican Press Office, concerning the preaching of the Gospel in a country well on its way to an advanced secularization as is Portugal. The Sovereign Pontiff’s response runs along the same lines as his discourse to the Roman Curia on December 22, 2005, in which he congratulated himself on the new relations, established by Vatican II, between the Church and the modern States.

Fr. Lombardi: “What can one say to a Portugal, in the past profoundly Catholic and a messenger of the faith in the world, but now well on its way to a profound secularization, both in everyday life and on a legal and cultural level? How to announce the faith in a context that is indifferent and hostile to the Church?”

Benedict XVI: “We see that during these past centuries [from the 18th century up until our days] Portugal has always lived in a dialectic, which has today certainly become more radical and which has every appearance of sharing the current European spirit. This dialectic seems to me to be a challenge, but also a great opportunity. During these centuries of dialectics between illuminism, secularism and faith, there have always been those who wanted to create ties and to create a dialogue, but unfortunately the dominant tendency has been one of adversity and reciprocal exclusion.



“Today we see that this dialectic is actually a chance, and that we must find the synthesis and a profound and expanding dialogue. In the multicultural situation in which we all find ourselves, one can see that a purely rationalist European culture would not have a transcendent religious dimension, and would not be capable of establishing a dialogue with the great cultures of humanity, all of which possess this transcendent religious dimension, which is a dimension of the human being.

“...So I think that the duty and the mission of Europe in this situation are precisely to find this dialogue, to integrate the faith and modern rationality into a unique anthropological vision that completes the human being and thus

allows the human cultures to communicate. This is why I would say that the presence of secularism is normal, but the separation, the opposition between secularism and the culture of the faith is not normal, and we need to rise above it. The great challenge of our times is to make these two come together, in such a way that they may find their true identity. That, as I have said, is Europe’s mission and the human necessity of our point in history.”

Commentary: Benedict XVI thinks that the dialectical opposition between the Church and the world must be surpassed by a new synthesis. He sees here a challenge and even an opportunity. Already in December 2005, in his discourse to the Curia, he said that this has become possible thanks to the his-

torical evolution of the Church and of the modern States: “The opposition of the Church’s faith to a radical liberalism, ...had provoked the Church, in the 19th century, under Pius IX, to severe and radical condemnations of this spirit of modern times. Apparently, there was no possible room left for a positive and fruitful understanding, and the refusals of those who felt themselves to be the representatives of modern times were equally energetic. Since then, however, [between the 19th century and Vatican II], the modern era had also undergone some developments. It was realised that the American Revolution had offered a different model of the modern State from the one theorised by the radical tendencies that appeared in the second phase of the French Revolution.... Thus, the two parties began progressively to open up to each other. In the period between the two civil wars, and even more after WWII, the Catholic statesmen have shown that there could exist a modern lay State, which is nevertheless not neutral as regards its values, but which lives by drawing from the great ethical sources opened by Christianity. The Catholic social doctrine, which has developed little by little, has become an important model halfway between radical liberalism and the Marxist theory of the State....”

In his response to the journalists on May 11, Benedict XVI, contrary to what he said in 2005, declares that this dialectic has “today become more radical and has every appearance of sharing the current European spirit.” In spite of this, on May 12 at the Cultural Center of Belem, he invited the representatives of the world of culture and of different religions to dialogue with “the truths of others,” “an acquisition which the Church herself is in

150,000 Italians Express Their Support for the Pope

On May 16th, after having just recited the *Regina Caeli* prayer from the window of his apartments, the Pope thanked the faithful for coming with “enthusiasm” from all over Italy to give this “beautiful and spontaneous demonstration of faith and solidarity.” Benedict XVI also thanked them for their affection and their closeness to the Pope and the priests.

“The true enemy to be feared and to fight is sin, spiritual evil, which sometimes, unfortunately, also affects members of the Church,” Benedict XVI reminded them. “We Christians do not fear the world, even if we must protect ourselves from its seductions. . . On the other hand, we must fear sin and therefore we must be strongly rooted in God, united in goodness, in love and in service,” he added, speaking in front of this large crowd which he compared to the one he encountered several days before during his pilgrimage to Fatima.

Indeed, in spite of dubious weather, there were at least 150,000 people who came from all over Italy at the request of the National Consultative Council of Lay Associations with the support of the Italian Episcopal Conference. Families and students mixed with members of Catholic Action, the Community of Saint Egidio and the “Communion and Liberation” and Charismatic Renewal movements. A few days before in Portugal, the Pope had praised in an unusual way the role of the movements and new ecclesial communities as manifestations of a “new springtime” of the Church.

(Source: DICl)



the process of learning.” Likewise, on May 14 at Porto: “Today the Church is called to face new challenges and she is disposed to dialogue with the diverse cultures and religions, seeking to build up with all men of good will the peaceful cohabitation of the peoples.”

His speech on May 11 clarifies this synthesis that the Pope says is his wish: it consists in “integrating the modern faith and rationality into a unique anthropological vision.” The question is whether the Catholic faith can be integrated into modern rationality, in a unique anthropological vision, without being herself disintegrated. Romano Amerio answered that the marking character of the modern world (and the rationality that dwells in it) is “independence and aseity, the refusal of all dependence except the dependence on oneself.” Whence the challenge risks being transformed into an offense.

(Source: *DICI*)

The Legionaries of Christ under the Guardianship of Rome; Beatification of John Paul II Called into Question

On May 1 the Holy See announced the measures taken by Benedict XVI with regard to the congregation of the Legionaries of Christ, which was seriously affected by revelations concerning the double life of their founder, Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado (1920-2008). At the request of Rome, an investigation was conducted among the members of the community

from July 2009 to March 2010 by five bishops.

This investigation made it possible “to ascertain that the conduct of Father Marcial Maciel Degollado has given rise to serious consequences in the life and structure of the Legion, such as to require a process of profound re-evaluation.” Because he intends to “accompany” and “help” the Legionaries of Christ “along the path of purification that awaits them,” Benedict XVI decided to appoint a “Delegate” as well as a “commission to study the Constitutions” of that religious congregation, which numbers some 800 priests and 2,500 seminarians in 22 countries.

Speaking to the press on May 1, Fr. Lombardi confided that “The pope is taking this affair very seriously.” The determination of Benedict XVI confirms that the pope intends to bring this whole matter to light. It is even more impressive, since there is a significant risk that the affair could have consequences for the beatification process of John Paul II (1978-2005), who was especially attached to the Legionaries of Christ and to their founder. The American press recently reported that several close collaborators of the Polish pope, including Cardinals Angelo Sodano and Eduardo Martinez Somalo, as well as the Polish bishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, at that time the pope’s secretary, received money donated by Fr. Maciel so as to put an end to the investigations concerning him. According to the *National Catholic Reporter*, Cardinal Ratzinger refused the “offerings” of the Legionaries’ founder.

Time will tell whether or not these reports are verified. In any case, as early as January 6, 2009, the Swiss daily *Le Temps*, commenting on an article dated January 4

in the French newspaper *Le Monde*, questioned the discernment of John Paul II. In an opinion piece, Patricia Briel, who can hardly be suspected of sympathizing with Benedict XVI, whom she has rebuked for lifting the excommunications of the bishops of the Society of Saint Pius X, tells the reader that John Paul II, although he was a “great pope,” was, in her opinion, “sometimes completely lacking in discernment.” Fascinated by Fr. Maciel, John Paul II “had held him up as a model for youth in 1994. But the Mexican priest was the target, on several occasions during his lifetime, of serious accusations, which he always denied.

“It was necessary to wait until the death of John Paul II for Joseph Ratzinger to initiate an investigation at last, which would reveal, among other things, Maciel’s pedophilia.” The journalist underscores that the beatification process for John Paul II is moving “quickly,” no doubt too quickly. “Is there sufficient distance to establish a serious record on a candidate for sainthood?” “The breadth of the sexual scandals in the bosom of the Catholic Church should induce Benedict XVI to expect that a full light be shed on the stance taken by John Paul II in this episode. The law of silence has already resulted in too many victims and too much damage to the Church’s image,” Patricia Briel concludes.

(Source: *DICI*)



Chartres to Paris Traditional Pilgrimage 2010 (France)

Every year, the SSPX makes a pilgrimage around Pentecost. This year, the pilgrimage took place from May 22-24. It began with a Mass outside Chartres Cathedral and ended with Mass outside of Sacré-Coeur in Paris.

It is one of the largest pilgrimages run by the Society, attracting thousands of people all over the world every year. These include pilgrims from America, England, Australia, and other places. Most Districts organize their own chapters. By Pentecost Monday, in Paris, the crowd often counts as many as 10,000 people.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In elections, would it not be preferable to vote for the best candidate, rather than for the least unworthy?

Certainly it is a grave moral obligation for citizens to participate in elections and to vote for worthy and good candidates. An elector who would deliberately vote for a bad candidate without grave reason would commit a mortal sin. For every citizen has a grave moral obligation, in virtue of that kind of justice called legal by theologians, to contribute to the common good of his country by electing moral, upright, and capable men. The most normal thing would be to elect the best possible candidate. However, if there are several good candidates capable of performing the functions in question, there is no strict obligation to elect the person that one considers to be the best, since this is not strictly necessary for the common good.

However, it rarely, if ever, happens in modern politics that one has to choose between more than one moral, upstanding, and capable candidate. It is, in our pagan and godless society, our sad lot that the only choices are between candidates who all lack Catholic and moral principles to varying degrees. In such a case, it is not possible to even choose a good candidate, let alone the best one. A good candidate is one whose policies are good in every domain and department of public life, according to the philosophical principle that that which is good is wholly good, and that which has any defect at all is evil, evil being the lack of the good which is due. A politician who is opposed to government funding of Catholic educational institutions, without restricting their freedom in any way, cannot be called good. A politician who approves of abortion under any conditions, even limited to circumstances such as rape and incest, cannot be called good. A politician who approves or votes for civil laws in favor of civil divorce cannot be called good. Yet even the “best,” most conservative and religious, politicians follow these principles. Properly speaking, they cannot be called good.

Yet all acknowledge that such politicians have some integrity and uprightness about them, and that their taking of elected positions will do much good for society on account of other good policies that they have. While a Catholic could not hold to such defective policies himself, should he not be able to vote for those who do in order to avoid a greater evil? The same applies to pro-life politicians whose policies on other issues might be seriously defective. Can we not vote for them to do all in our power to stop the curse of abortion?

All agree that we can. We can indeed, in order to avoid a greater evil. This is possible because it is a case of material cooperation, rather than formal cooperation. We vote for them for the good that they do, not for the evil or defective policies that they might follow or feel that they are forced to embrace to get elected. The grave reason that justifies this material cooperation is the prevention of a worse, more decadent, more immoral, and even more dangerous candidate from being elected. In practice, in our modern democracies this is the reality. It is hardly ever a question of voting for the greater good, but rather for the lesser evil, for the less unworthy candidate. However, since it is usually a very difficult prudential decision to determine what is the lesser evil, and which candidate would do the least harm, and which candidate is for the common good for society, and since material cooperation is to be avoided if at all possible, it cannot generally be considered to be obligatory to vote for the lesser evil.

How can one say that the New Mass is “evil,” since sometimes the priest celebrates it reverently and the faithful assist piously?

All traditional-minded Catholics agree that the New Mass is not what it ought to be, namely that it is less perfect than the traditional Mass. All also agree that not all celebrants of the New Mass make a mockery of it, as do evil celebrants who use the Mass for sacrilegious or blasphemous purposes.

However, I believe that the principal difference of opinion with respect to the application of the term “evil” to the New Mass concerns the meaning of this word “evil.” Generally, we speak of evil as a moral characteristic of a person. In this sense it most certainly does not apply to those who strive to celebrate the New Mass with respect and reverence, who still believe in the Real Presence, and who try to make it a prayer as best they can. They are well-intentioned, but misled.

However, when we apply the term “evil” to the New Mass, we are speaking of evil as descriptive of a human action, not of the person who does it. Here it has the philosophical meaning of “evil,” namely the absence of the good that is due. An example in the physical order is the prescribing of a medication that is harmful and does not restore health as it ought to do. An example in the moral order is Robin Hood style charity—stealing from some persons in order to give to others. There is no

justice in such behavior, and it lacks the good that is necessary for the practice of virtue; for we cannot practice charity with other people's goods.

The same applies to the liturgy. Communion in the hand is an evil, in the circumstances of the present time, for the action of distributing Holy Communion in this fashion lacks the respect and reverence that is due to Our Lord really present in the Blessed Sacrament, regardless of the faith or good intentions of those who might administer it.


This can also be said of all the novelties and omissions in the ceremonies of the New Mass, and of the New Mass as a whole. It corrupts and undermines the Faith, for it does not adequately express the Church's faith in the fact that the Holy Mass is a true and propitiatory sacrifice. Furthermore, this complete expression of the Faith is essential to the Mass as a liturgical act. For it is a symbolic act, the very nature of which is to express completely the Church's Faith on this question. The elimination of this profession of Faith in the new rite, given the Protestant revolt of the 16th century, is a very grave absence, for at the very least it makes the faithful believe that this aspect of the Mass is no longer important. It is the absence of a good that is due to the Mass.

The gravity of these omissions can be understood only when all the aspects of the true Mass that are eliminated in the New Mass are put together side by side: *e.g.*, doing away with genuflections and kneeling, altar stones and altar cloths, Latin and the silent Canon, the holding together and purification of the priest's fingers, the limitation of touching the sacred vessels and hosts to the priest only, the double Confiteor, the Offertory prayers, and prayers mentioning such things as sin, judgment, hell, purgatory, the purification of the soul, and detachment from this earth. One could go on and on. It is when the whole picture is put together that the New Mass can be clearly seen to be radically defective in those things that are essential to the Mass. It is consequently evil, regardless of the good intentions of the celebrants and assistants.

This is the reason why no Catholic who is aware of all these defects in the New Mass has a right to assist at it, even to satisfy his Sunday obligation. To do so would be to participate in an evil act, one that is destroying the Church and the Faith. Since the end does not justify the means, this is never permissible. Furthermore, a person cannot be bound to do something evil in virtue of a precept of the Church. Catholics ought not to assist at Sunday Mass in their parishes on the justification that it is a reverently celebrated New Mass. It is still lacking

the profession of Faith essential to the Mass. It is still evil, harmful, and destructive to the Church. The presence of a few traditionally-minded Catholics is not going to make any difference to this, since the changes were never wanted by the faithful in the first place but were imposed from above. Attending the New Mass cannot possibly make something that is bad become good.

Some people ask why Sister Lucia attended the New Mass until her death. She had the problem of conscience of so many religious, bound by the vow of obedience to do what their superiors tell them. Although, objectively speaking, a person in such circumstances should refuse to assist at the New Mass, we certainly understand Sister Lucia's predicament, especially given the special revelations that she had received. She understood that, for one who receives such special graces, obedience is the only means to sanctification, and to avoiding illusion and diabolical deception. Hence her preference for obedience above everything else. After all, she was not a theologian, the Masses celebrated in her convent were very respectful, and the question of the Mass was not her concern but rather living the message of Our Lady of Fatima—namely prayer and penance.

It is certainly true that the evil that has come upon the Church since Vatican II is a chastisement for the absence of the supernatural spirit and for the failure to respond to the message of Fatima. However, this is not a reason for us to cooperate with this evil in any way, as does a person who goes to the New Mass, albeit unwillingly. Our duty is to stand up against the evil and refuse to compromise with it. 

Fr. Peter Scott was ordained by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988. After assignments as seminary professor, US District Superior, and Rector of Holy Cross Seminary in Goulburn, Australia, he is presently Headmaster of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy in Wilmot, Ontario, Canada. Those wishing answers may please send their questions to Q&A in care of Angelus Press, 2915 Forest Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109.

The Adulterous Union

“If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you” (Jn. 15:19). This warning addressed by our Lord to His disciples was undoubtedly one of the most sobering. He solemnly warned them that they should expect nothing from the world, and that their only hope was in Him. In fact, scarcely had God sent His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost when those who were zealous to announce Jesus Christ became the butt of the world’s reprobation. They were expelled from the synagogues, shunted from the forums, then condemned, beheaded or crucified. The emperor calumniated them and accused them of the worst misdeeds, notably of having set fire to Rome. As the faith spread, “the children of light” were executed, thrown to the lions or tossed on the pyres while “the children of darkness” booed, laughed, and jeered. In this way was the famous maxim of Tertullian accomplished: “The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.” On the sacrifice of those who preferred to die rather than deny revealed truth was the Church built. On the tombs of the first apostles was Christendom erected.

Since then, the world around us has never stopped denying God. It has demanded complete separation from the Church. On numerous occasions, it has put to death priests, who died by the thousands on prison ships in the Loire, in the penal colony of Guiana, or in the labor camps of the East. It has imposed legislation that gradually caused the disappearance of Christian morals as it strove to confine religion to the inmost privacy of individual consciences. To this end, for the last two centuries anti-Christian laws have been multiplied in order to despoil the Church, to undermine the holy institution of marriage, to kill unborn children, and to corrupt the souls of the inno-

cent. Faced with the menacing future then taking shape, Pope Pius IX had the perspicacity to brace souls, to warn them of the mounting danger: As far back as 1864, in the Syllabus, a catalogue of 80 contemporary errors, he firmly condemned the idea that “the Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization.” Then it was only the free-thinkers and liberals who lamented such a proscription and continued to wish to adapt the Church to the world that hated it and to pair the two Jerusalems, to make Saul the Persecutor dwell with the holy Apostle Paul.

How then should one not have been horrified when churchmen themselves, by means of Vatican II, ventured to desire to adapt the Church to the world, and to this world in particular, going so far as to make this accommodation its primary objective and to forsake the one it had pursued for two millennia, to wit, the salvation of souls. We can only subscribe to the tragic observation made by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1976 when he saw in this strange union between the institution founded by Christ and the realm of His enemy “an adulterous union.” For how was it possible to harmonize the Church with a world that desired to see the decline of Catholic influence, the relativization of the faith, and the blighting of morality if not by some of its ministers’ becoming comfortable with these frightful designs?

We know very well, unfortunately, that priests have fallen, far too many priests. Undoubtedly, there have always been such failures, but we reckon that their number has been augmented by the torment that has befallen the Church and left priests disoriented, having to bear the burden of celibacy with-



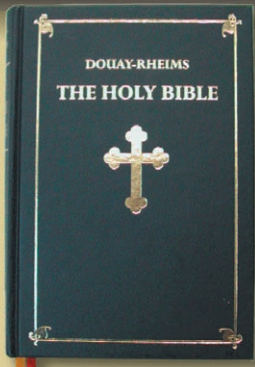
Fr. Régis de Cacqueray

out receiving the graces that would enable them to draw strength from the renewal of our Lord Jesus Christ’s sacrifice. We ought to have boundless compassion for the children who were their innocent victims, and we ought to do all we can to expiate these scandals, which are infinitely more serious because caused by persons consecrated to God.

But we reject the blasphemous lie that deludes people into believing that priests, by reason of their consecrated state, would constitute an “at risk” population. It is not we ourselves that matter nor the hostility to clerical garb these media campaigns incite. It is not our honor that is at stake, but the honor of our Lord Jesus Christ. They would like everyone to shun this religion whose angelic obligations, purportedly foolish and untenable, ultimately reduce its adherents, so they say, beneath the level of the beasts. Let us not allow ourselves to be troubled by this infernal disinformation! Let us expiate the sins that have been committed, but when these crimes are brought up, let us desire only to pray for the sanctification of priests or to become holy and saintly priests ourselves.

Fr. Régis de Cacqueray, FSSPX, is the district superior of France.

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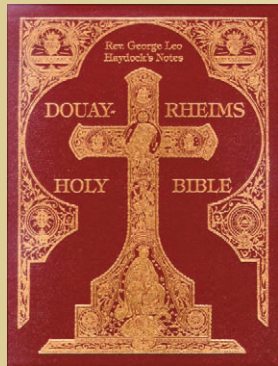
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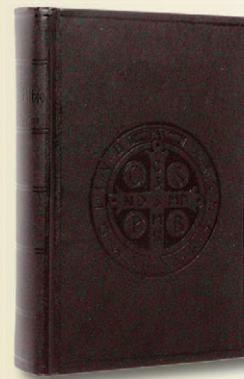
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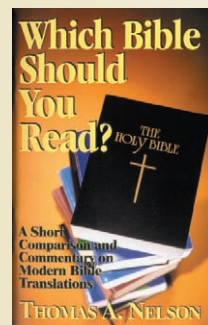


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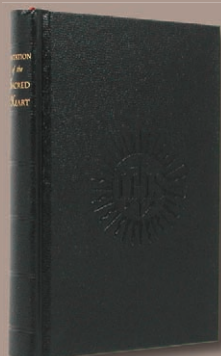
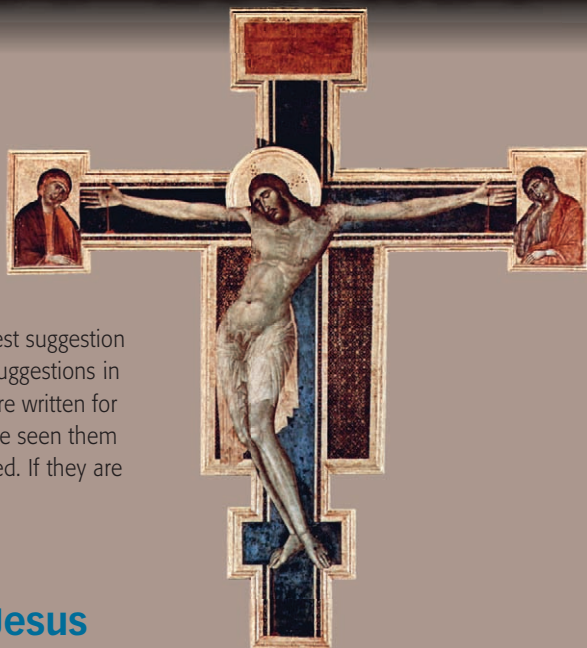


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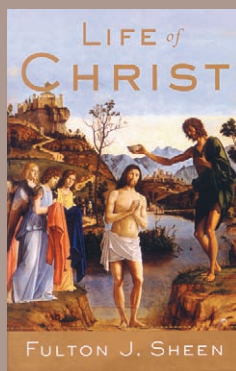
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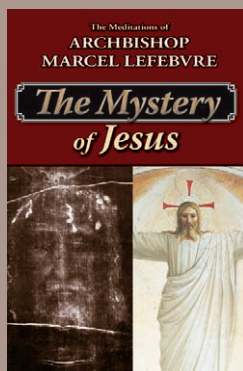


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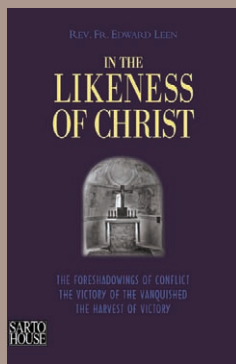
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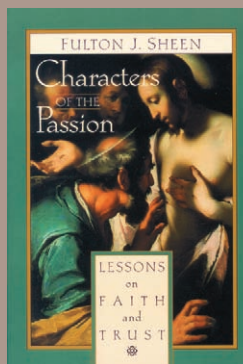
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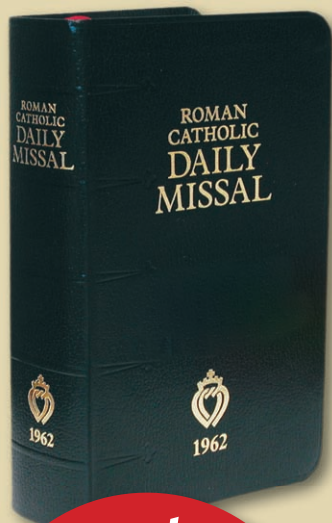
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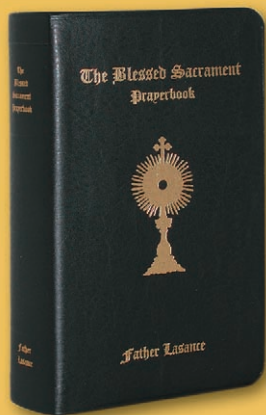
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