



S S P X



# The Angelus

"Instaurare omnia in Christo"

SSPX 50th Anniversary

The Origins of the SSPX

The Archbishop, the Society, and Rome

For the Love of the Church

“I had a glimpse of this task in a sort of dream in Dakar around 1958. It could very well be said that God prepared me for this task for a very long time. Blessed be God for His ineffable inspirations and for the immediate support from the many benefactors that this work received, and which even visibly (the benefactors as well) were brought by Providence. Did I save the Catholic priesthood, the Catholic Mass, and the Catholic Faith? Certain people attribute these wonderful things to me. But, you see, I am for nothing in this.”

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

A large, stylized graphic of the letters 'LM' in a serif font. The letters are white with a thin yellow outline. The 'L' is on the left and the 'M' is on the right, both with a classic, slightly decorative design.



# Letter from the Publisher

Dear Reader,

November 1, 1970, marked the birth of the Society of Saint Pius and the last great work of its founder, Archbishop Lefebvre. This year, then, we'll be celebrating throughout the traditionalist world the golden jubilee of this early event. Jubilee because, from its humble beginnings, it has brought forth generations of priests, religious, and lay folks who have flown the flag of Tradition in its fullness. A gilded and glorious jubilee which, despite the growing pains and battle wounds, has not lost its luster and sharpness.

In this magazine, articles illustrated with copious photos tell the memorable saga of the founder's mindset confronted with progressive authorities, of events prior to the foundation, and of the subsequent growth, attacks, and *de facto* vindication of the work of Tradition.

Certainly, in our traditional circles, this year's end will be marked by celebrations, conventions, and prayers. With this year's first issue, we wanted to anticipate the event by bringing the bigger picture of the Society, with its Swiss foundation and its inception in Europe. In a later issue, we'll concentrate on our own territory to see how God has blessed the American branch of the Archbishop's work.

There is little doubt in my mind that, after perusing this issue, most readers will be able to perceive God's Providence at work during the struggles, contradictions, and crosses, met throughout by the close collaborators of our founder. If not perfect, the growth and wide expansion of the SSPX tree and its satellite congregations has borne fruit in much patience. May these blessings be soon recognized by the highest authorities. No doubt, the entire Church will see a genuine revival the day Tradition is finally given pride of place in Rome again. Let this be our wish and our insistant prayer.

Fr. Jürgen Wegner  
Publisher

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# The Angelus

"Instaurare omnia in Christo"

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# The Origins

of the Society of Saint Pius X

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By Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

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Editor's Note: This article is based on extracts from the biography of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre by Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais. They attempt to capture the effort and mood of the Society of Saint Pius X's founder in the face of countless difficulties.

As Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers until 1968, Archbishop Lefebvre was already at work leading seminarians. Hence, he directed the 20 or so who knocked at his door towards his own *Alma Mater*, the French Seminary of Santa Chiara in Rome. Soon he realized that this option was not conducive to proper training any longer both at Santa Chiara and the adjacent Gregorian University, so he thought of other universities which could give a Thomistic formation.

In anguish, the seminarians became more insistent: "Your Grace, if you do not intervene, the priesthood will be closed off to us." The

Archbishop would later say: "I could not have imagined where that cry of distress would lead. With great sorrow we had to give in and look for other places, other universities." Two were still sound in what they taught: the Lateran and Fribourg. In 1967, he sent a group to Fr. Theodosius's society, sponsored by Cardinal Siri, who followed courses at the Lateran University. The following year, he sent some seminarians to Fribourg University, all the while staying at the Holy Ghost Fathers' priory. That was the situation until June 1968 when he resigned as Superior General.



## I. At the Crossroad

Archbishop Lefebvre found himself at a crossroads, at the retiring age of 63. However, the growing disintegration of the priesthood led him to form a plan to transmit the precious inheritance he had received at Rome from the hands of Frs. Le Floch, Voegtli, Frey, and Le Rohellec. When still an archbishop in Africa, he had a premonition of this work:

“...The dream was to transmit, before the progressive degradation of the priestly ideal, in all of its doctrinal purity and in all of its missionary charity, the Catholic Priesthood

Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop Adam of Sion



of Our Lord Jesus Christ, just as He conferred it on His apostles, just as the Roman Church always transmitted it until the middle of the 20th century.

“How should I carry out that which appeared then to me as the sole solution to revive the Church and Christianity? It was still a dream, but there appeared to me already the need, not only to confer the authentic priesthood, to teach not only the *sana doctrina* approved by the Church, but also to transmit the profound and unchanging spirit of the Catholic priesthood and of the Christian spirit essentially bound to the great prayer of Our Lord which His Sacrifice on the Cross expresses eternally.”

Ever since his return to Europe, one desire had gripped him more and more: to found an international seminary according to these principles. While supporting his seminarians of Rome and those of Fribourg, several candidates knocked at his door. By that time, end of 1968, he was virtually out of options for them. Fr. Theodosius said he did not want to take more than 10 seminarians, whom he meant to train as religious. In Fribourg, his seminarians were no longer wanted at the Holy Ghost priory. The Archbishop still said: “I had this conviction which nothing could shake, that to save and continue the Church, one had to train priests: holy priests and true priests.” By this overwhelming thought, he looked for houses in Fribourg whose university was certainly attractive and where the seminarians could really get good training.

## II. The Foundation at Fribourg

Fr. Aulagnier witnessed the decisive scene:

“There we were on Grand'rue in the library of our host, Professor Bernard Faÿ, an upstairs room in a grand house overlooking the Sarine. There were Fr. Marie-Dominique, O.P., Dom Bernard Kaul, Abbot of Hauterive, and Jean-François Braillard, who was the father of a young family and headed the Fribourg state education department. We were amazed to see these individuals exchanging reflections on the decline of the priesthood.”

Archbishop Lefebvre recalled: >

## Theme SSPX 50th Anniversary

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“They literally took me by the scruff of the neck and said: ‘Something must be done for these seminarians!’ It was useless my saying that I was 65 and retired, or that it was foolish to begin something that I could not continue if I should die within the next few years.... They wouldn’t have it. ‘Okay,’ I said to them, ‘I’ll go and see Bishop Charrière. If he says yes, that will be a sign of Providence.’

“His Excellency Bishop Charrière received me warmly and was enthusiastic about my projects. He willingly gave me permission to open this ‘orphanage’ for seminarians from all countries, especially South America. This happened on June 6, 1969, at 3 p.m. in the bishop’s residence at Fribourg. The seminary was born! Now we had to think about getting down to business.”

The “Saint Pius X Association for Priestly Training” was formed on July 2. The founder secured 12 rooms in the Foyer Don Bosco for the school year 1969-70, financed by generous benefactors. The only thing missing was someone to act as rector of the seminary, but none came forward whom he could trust. Thus, Providence decided that he, Archbishop Lefebvre, and no other, would be the rector of the seminary he was founding. He would be completely involved in the work.

On October 13, 1969, the “new boys” arrived at 106, Route de Marly, most of them in lay clothes. Apart from Pierre Piqué and Paul Aulagnier—both from Santa Chiara—there was the Swiss M. Doyon, the Argentinean E. Eraso, and J. Antier, R. Fillion, G. Monti, B. Pellaboef, and B. Tissier de Mallerais, all of whom were French. Archbishop Lefebvre himself welcomed them. Paul Aulagnier was already there, keeping his thoughts to himself: “I felt disappointed and worried. The nine students assembled for this first academic year did not seem reliable to me. It was far from the ideal that I had dreamed of: a breeding ground for young, Traditional Catholic Levites, spiritually pumped up and having no qualms.”

Then, the founder fell ill at Dijon at the end of the year, and was hospitalized in Fribourg, and unbeknownst to the community, he asked for extreme unction. The priest reassured him: “Now is not your time, your Grace!” At last, test results reassured the patient and his spiritual sons:

he was suffering from strongyles contracted in Africa and lodged in his liver. He wrote to a friend: “Providence has put me to the test with this illness for the last two and a half months. Doubtless, it is because suffering is essential to the works of God.”

Having been recently tried by illness, he was now beset by doubts: what was the use of carrying on with troops tried and trimmed, and without a reliable collaborator? However, thanks to the *Cité Catholique* and *The Knights of Our Lady*, seven solid recruits were acquired. With his customary simplicity, he stated his worries to the five remaining students: “I won’t conceal from you the anxiety that I feel at the thought of taking the decision to accept new seminarians with all the risks that could pose to their future. Will they be accepted in dioceses? Should we form a priestly society? I am putting my whole confidence in the holy providence of God.” He was encouraged at this time by Fr. Jean-Yves Cottard who was living at the French Seminary in Rome but who wanted to come to Fribourg to whom he replied: “No, wait: things are not going very well.”

The loyal support of the Fribourg committee certainly helped the Archbishop to persevere. Professor Faj who came to give talks about Freemasonry to the seminarians, District Judge Albert Volanthen and Fr. Philippe encouraged the project. Thus, the Archbishop set out once again to find an independent property for the four remaining Fribourg seminarians for the start of the school year in 1970. A suitable house on Route de la Vignettaz soon went up for auction, and on June 26 while the Archbishop prayed in the cathedral, the architect Antognini won the bidding for him. However, the Archbishop had found another house for the new students who would arrive that year: *Écône!*

### III. *Écône*

Archbishop Lefebvre was going to launch a project that was dear to his heart: a year of spiritual formation before beginning studies for the priesthood. Well before Fribourg in fact, Providence and Our Lady were preparing *Écône*





for him on this blessed plot of land in a corner of Valais.

In the autumn of 1967, Fr. Pierre Epiney had just accepted from his bishop the post of Riddes parish priest that had been refused by four other priests. He began by visiting his parish. He rang the doorbell at Écône, owned by the Canons of the Great St. Bernard, but there was no answer. He went into the deserted courtyard: on the left was the barn and on the right the kennels. In a flash, he saw in his mind's eye the courtyard of a large seminary full of seminarians. Very quickly he chased away the meaningless image and found himself again in the deserted courtyard. Canon Roserens who still maintained the property came down to greet him: "Here, it's all over, there's nothing left to do." Was that certain?

Everything began on Holy Thursday, 1968. Alphonse Pedroni, a daily Mass communicant from Valais, heard during a conversation in a cafe that the house of Écône was to be sold by

the Great St. Bernard Canons. He opened his heart to Gratien Rausis: "There are several buyers who have lots of money and one of them is a Communist group who want to blow up the chapel!"

"Alphonse," Gratien replied, "if it's only a question of money, we have to do something. But we cannot do that alone." He suggested that his brother Marcel join them, while Rausis put forward the names of Roger Lovey and Guy Genoud. On April 18, Roger Lovey wrote to the Provost: "Because of Écône's past, it means a lot to us. We could say that it has a religious vocation which we refuse to see abandoned without greater scrutiny."

On May 31, 1968, the feast of the Queenship of Mary, contracts were exchanged by the five friends and Canon Bernard Rausis. The Provost of St. Bernard, Monsignor Angelin Lovey, had said: "We will do you no favors." How were they to pay? They would borrow from the bank. >



The manager sought information: “But have you assets?”

“No,” replied Pedroni, “we don’t have any. You only need give us the loan: it’s for a religious work. You only have to lend us everything!”

Amazed, the bank manager gave them a loan for the entire sum.

Almost a year passed from May 1968 to Holy Week 1969 when Archbishop Lefebvre made his first visit to Écône. “I didn’t really think it was a good spot for a seminary since it was so far away from any major town, but it was very suitable for a novitiate.” On May 24, 1970 with Paul Aulagnier he returned to Écône for another visit and was welcomed with open arms by the five friends and Fr. Epiney. At the end of the meal, Alphonse Pedroni, who until then had remained mysteriously silent, opened his mouth to speak these words which proved to be prophetic: “Well, *Monseigneur*, I tell you: they’ll talk about this seminary of Écône throughout the world.”

The final decision to begin the renovations needed before the house could lodge seminarians was taken on June 24. The Archbishop promised to pay them a substantial sum by way of rent. By that time, he had secured the Bishop of Sion’s approval for a preparatory year at Écône.

## IV. The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X

How could priests, who were trained to fight for Christ the King, subsequently maintain the doctrinal purity and missionary charity of their calling if not by some rule of life? How could they be protected against the growing liberal corruption of the clergy if they returned to the diocese? Implicitly, if not explicitly, the “dream of Dakar” was in fact a plan for that society. He shared his idea in October 1969 with his seminarians:

“Let me offer you some considerations for the future: [we could] form a society, not of religious like Fr. Theodosius, but a society of seculars. Should we be scattered throughout dioceses or existing congregations? Or should we remain together, at least living in small groups?”

The seminarians were quite uncomfortable

with this proposal. Those who had been sent by their bishops or even already incardinated in their home dioceses considered that they were destined for those dioceses. The new students had no clear ideas on a topic that went beyond their present concern of becoming good priests. The Archbishop expected more of a response, if not more enthusiasm. After a few days of doubt—as we have related—he took heart again. On July 1, he went to Bishop Charrière’s residence in Fribourg and gave him a draft of the statutes of the Priestly Society: “I have been asked by some young priests and seminarians to found a society for secular priests. I have written these draft statutes in accordance with Canon Law.”

“I see nothing to object to in such a useful and timely initiative,” replied François Charrière.

“If you agree to the foundation, the year of spirituality will take place in Écône; Bishop Adam has already given his permission. During this year, candidates can prepare to join the Society—it is a novitiate by another name—although the seminarians will not be obliged to join. The Society will have its headquarters at Fribourg on Rue de la Vignettaz.”

After another meeting on August 18, trying again—as only he knew how—Marcel Lefebvre wrote to his colleague again on October 13, 1970, reminding him of their meetings and the statutes under consideration. Finally, on November 7, still awaiting a reply, Archbishop Lefebvre telephoned the bishop’s residence; he was worried since he knew that the auxiliary bishop, Pierre Mamie, was opposed to the foundation. Nevertheless, Bishop Charrière said eagerly: “Yes, Your Grace, come over straightaway.” After a brief conversation at the bishop’s residence, he said: “There’s no point in waiting any longer.” There was just time to go and say a prayer in the chapel while the document was being prepared. Then Bishop Charrière signed it. He was at the end of his episcopal career. Three months later he resigned. Archbishop Lefebvre had certainly put a little pressure on the bishop. However, he declared: “I’m absolutely delighted to see my wish so quickly fulfilled!” The document ruled that:

“The International Priestly Society of Saint Pius X is erected in our diocese as a ‘Pia Unio’ (pious union)...We approve and confirm the



Statutes, here joined, of the Society for a period of six years *ad experimentum*, which will be able to be renewed for a similar period by tacit approval; after which, the Society can be erected definitely in our diocese by the competent Roman Congregation....Done at Fribourg, in our palace, November 1, 1970, on the Feast of All Saints, François Charrière.”

The decree was deliberately predated by six days. Returning to Rue de la Vignettaz, Archbishop Lefebvre, who was obviously delighted, showed the letter to the seminarians, who passed it from one to another: they could not resist re-reading it, looking at the signature and checking the seal. Everything was in order. The Archbishop later said: “Was it not providential? That date of November 1, 1970, is to my mind an event of great importance in our history: it was the day that saw the official birth of the Society. It was the Church which brought it into the world that day. The Society is a work of the Church. For me, I would have been horrified at the thought of founding anything without the bishop’s approval. It had to be of the Church.”

As for the seminary whose legal existence was suggested by the statutes, in light of its preparatory year in Valais, its house in Fribourg, and the studies at the University, it could be considered as an appropriate training center needed by the institute even at its embryonic stage of clerical pious union.

## V. The Seminary of Saint Pius X moved to Écône

Archbishop Lefebvre commented:

“From November 1970 I had to think about the new school year in October 1971 and work out where we would lodge those who had finished the year of spirituality, which was to be at Fribourg in principle. Meanwhile, the university courses were no longer satisfactory; the students were becoming agitated, and Fr. Philippe said: ‘One day soon you will have to give the courses yourself.’

“Now, when I went to Écône, it was good to see how the young men benefited from a true and simple curriculum and from being in an

atmosphere of peace rather than dissent. They were also out in the Valais countryside where the people were still deeply religious. So, I thought to myself: why not put the seminary here?

“Then I consulted with His Eminence Cardinal Journet. He was categorical: ‘The university does not suit the majority of seminarians and does not encourage seminary discipline; if you have the choice, you must not hesitate. Send only a few students to the university to get degrees.’ Bishop Mamie understood what good could come from an independent seminary but thought that it would be difficult to set up...Lastly, my colleagues were unanimous: if it was going to provide training that was sound and solid in all respects, the seminary should be in Écône.”

The Diary of Écône notes on November 16 that at the end of a novena to St. Joseph, and “after a visit to the chapel,” the Archbishop decided to build the seminary at Écône. Bishop Adam’s permission was still needed... On December 26, 1970, Maître Lovey drove the Archbishop to the bishop’s residence in Sion, and stayed in the car while they went in. “Getting permission was a little more difficult” than for the year of spirituality,” said the Archbishop. At last, the Bishop of Sion gave in: “The last time, you asked me if you could use Écône for your pre-seminary, I accepted; but when you asked permission for a seminary, I objected that we already had three in the diocese. Now, this year, my seminary is at Fribourg and the Capuchins have closed theirs. So, I no longer have any objection.”

Archbishop Lefebvre was satisfied with his answer and got on with the work. Henceforth, things went very quickly. On February 3, the architect Ami Delaloye was commissioned. On February 15, 1971, he came to present his plans for the future St. Pius X wing, a first building providing accommodation, and his quotation: 1,500,000 Swiss francs. The Archbishop listened, saying nothing but thinking: “I need at least a third of that to begin without getting into debt; I don’t have it; I can’t go ahead.” Now, at that very moment, a telephone call from Fribourg informed him that a benefactor—Bishop Adrien Bressolles had just credited his account with a large amount of money. Providentially, it was just enough to get the project started!



# The Archbishop, the Society, and Rome

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By Bishop Bernard Fellay

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Editor's Note: The following recollections of Bishop Fellay were provided in response to a series of questions. As such, the impromptu character of his replies have been retained throughout.

If we look through the history of the relations between Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X on one hand, and the Vatican on the other, we will be struck by the fact that despite the various intensity of these relations during time, and the various aspects of it, Archbishop Lefebvre never changed his fundamental desire toward Rome.

## Rome is the Heart of the Church

Rome is the heart of the Church; we are Roman Catholic, and so in the midst of the battle,

Archbishop Lefebvre will repeat unceasingly that we are attached with our whole heart to eternal Rome. That unchanging Head of an unchanging Church, the very Church founded by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

From this Church, we expect everything, because from her, we have received all the treasures of our Faith, and of sanctifying grace. From this Church, at the first step of baptism, we have said we desired Faith, because it gives eternal life. From this Church and only her, we know we can and must receive the words which save, the discipline, commandments and sacraments which bring us to Heaven. But when



the established authorities in the Church start to depart from this path, we reject their pseudo-teaching, because it leads to damnation. This is not our judgment, but the infallible statement of Holy Mother Church throughout the centuries. “*Nihil novi nisi quod traditum est.*” Unless one keeps this Faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish. This attitude of the Society’s founder is very well explained and exposed in his declaration of November 24, 1974, right after the canonical visitation of the two visitors sent by Rome. So scandalous that they caused the writing of the famous declaration:

“We hold firmly with all our heart and with all our mind to Catholic Rome, guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the traditions necessary to the maintenance of this Faith, to eternal Rome, mistress of wisdom and truth. We refuse on the other hand, and have always refused, to follow the Rome of Neo-Modernist and Neo-Protestant tendencies, which became clearly manifest during the Second Vatican Council, and after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it.”

## The Stability of the Archbishop’s Position

It is very important to understand well that this distinction explains both the goal of the Archbishop in his relations with Rome and also the incredible stability of his position.

In fact, the double proposition of acceptance and rejection does correspond to the tragic reality we meet in the Church since Vatican II. And this distinction helped preserve Archbishop Lefebvre and the whole SSPX from two perils: either the danger of quitting the “modernized” Church or swallowing all its poison. The sedevacantists have gone the first path, rejecting all the popes from John XXIII to Francis.

The other position, that of the so-called “conservatives” who are troubled by the novelties that have appeared over the past 50 years, have preferred to deny the evidence and minimize the errors in the name of the infallibility of the Church or of the pope. They proceed in the wrongly applied spirit of St. Ignatius in his rule about *sentire cum ecclesia*: when the Church

says “white,” even if it seems to them that it is black, they say “white.”

So the goal of Archbishop Lefebvre in maintaining relations with Rome was always the expectation that the authorities would one day come back to the unchanging teaching and discipline of the Church. It was never to obtain only canonical recognition, though he would always consider this important, too—but less than losing the Faith! “I do not want to contribute to the destruction of the Church.”

The term conversion is appropriate to qualify this expectation of Archbishop Lefebvre. The certitude that the gates of Hell shall not prevail moved him even *contra spem in spem*, because the real head of the Catholic Church is and will always remain Our Lord Jesus Christ. We possess certitude of the truth of Our Lord’s words. And so we have the certitude of a coming back to “normal” one day, of the traditional Christian life in the Church. This crisis will come to an end. We just do not know when.

## Rome’s Initial Attitude

It is very interesting to follow the first steps of Archbishop Lefebvre which indicate also the attitude of the Roman authorities. On the side of Lefebvre, there is deference and respect. He will follow all the rules of establishing a new priestly fraternity.

On the side of Rome, especially, Cardinal John Wright, Prefect of the Clergy at the time, we see a lot of good consideration. This is also found among the bishops who granted the Archbishop permission to establish the first houses of the Society, in Fribourg, Écône, and Albano, which is close to Rome.

There is obviously still goodwill in the Church toward the newly founded Society. Things go so far that already in 1972, Rome starts the process to grant to the Society the “pontifical right,” that is make the SSPX no longer dependent on the local bishops, but directly on Rome. However, in 1974, probably due to the rapid development of the Society, and certainly due to unfounded accusations from certain French bishops, Rome will initiate a canonical visitation. The >

## Theme SSPX 50th Anniversary



Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Fr. Schmidberger and Fr. Lorans during the press conference before the consecration of bishops.

open controversy at the time was the Society's refusal to celebrate Pope Paul VI's new Mass. At least this is what the Archbishop was later told following the canonical visit; he never received the actual report.

This canonical visitation was the start of many hard years for Archbishop Lefebvre. In 1975 came the unjust suppression of the Society by Bishop Pierre Mamie of Fribourg. Then, like a chain reaction, came the Archbishop's unjust suspension *a divinis* in 1976.

We may certainly qualify this period as "aggressive" on the side of Rome. Pope Paul VI expects the total destruction of the Society, along with the transmission of all its goods and properties to Rome—the dissolution of the whole

work.

The audience in the autumn of 1976 with Paul VI will not bring peace back.

### Evolution of Rome's Attitude

We may divide in two the main phases of Rome's attitude towards the Society. The first, which lasted until the year 2000, was aggressive. Rome rejected this work of divine Providence and wanted its destruction. Then after 2000, a new attitude, desiring to keep the Society alive, but expecting acceptance of the novelties of the Council and the New Mass.

The first phase, 1974-2000, is still beset by



variations. The first moment is simply a will to destroy the Society's opposition to the novelties of the post-Vatican II era. Then, just before the consecrations of 1988, there is a new approach which is ready to allow the existence of some aspects of Traditional life by allowing the SSPX to live its own charisma. After the consecrations, there is a desire to separate the Society from the Church, with the excommunication of the bishops, and, without an explicit declaration of schism, a similar attitude towards all the Society's priests and the faithful who attended our chapels.

The election of Pope John Paul II does not bring much change, though some hope follows the audience with the Holy Father in 1978. But unfortunately, the pope left it to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Faith, Cardinal Seper, to deal with Archbishop Lefebvre. This will initiate a sort of process, where he is accused of attacking the Faith. It was the second time (after 1975) that a kind of tribunal had been established against Archbishop Lefebvre without his knowledge. This time, he escaped the trap by refusing to sign the document which would have started the process.

Following some years of relative calm, we see a new phase of discussions with Cardinal Ratzinger as the head of the Congregation for the Faith. But there will be no real conclusion either. Then comes the announcement of the meeting of all religions in Assisi in 1986, which weighed heavily on the Archbishop's decision to perform the episcopal consecrations in 1988. On June 29, 1987, the Archbishop announced the consecrations publicly. After this, there was a back and forth movement between Rome and himself, which will result in an Apostolic Visitation by Cardinal Cagnon, accompanied by Monsignor Perl, in November 1987.

Once again, neither the Archbishop nor the Society had access to the report from the Visitation; we only know that it was mainly praise for the work the SSPX had accomplished. This will lead to a period of discussions in the spring of 1988 to establish the conditions of the recognition of the Society as a work of the Church, including the possibility of one bishop.

On May 5, 1988, a protocol agreement is

even signed by Archbishop Lefebvre. But on the following day, because of the great distrust generated by the attitude of the Roman interlocutors, which did not show benevolence, the Archbishop requested something more: four bishops instead of one and with a fixed date of June 30, 1988 instead of leaving the matter "up in the air."

During this period, we see that the main request from Rome remains the acceptance of the Second Vatican Council and of the New Mass. About Vatican II, there is some opening: on the disputed points related to the Council, "only" a positive attitude is requested. On the New Mass, "only" acceptance of its validity is demanded.

We may notice at this moment already some interesting points: Rome's will to give a certain special status to the Society and even a bishop for the needs of the Society and its faithful, but at what price?

After the consecrations followed the excommunication of the bishops involved. And with this act by Rome, it again hardens its position toward the SSPX. For quite some years, official relations between the Society and Rome will be almost dead. Still a minimum connection was kept, with some visits to certain cardinals and also a desire for both sides to not cut ties entirely. So, Rome will never declare officially that the Society is in schism, for example.

## The Second Phase of Rome's Attitude

The second phase starts in the year 2000 and exists to this present day. We may say that things go better for Tradition, albeit rather slowly. That is to say, little by little, step by step, Tradition finds more and more a place in the Church, though it is still rejected by much of the hierarchy.

A serious opening in the relations between Rome and the Society would only come after the year 2000 Pilgrimage to Rome by the Society, preceded by a letter to the bishops of the Society by the newly-appointed Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos, then-head of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission.

At the very end of 2000, Cardinal Castrillon >







Hoyos would tell me that Pope John Paul II wants to find a solution for the Society. But given the harsh way which the Vatican treats the Fraternity of St. Peter at the time, we said that we need some proof of goodwill before trusting the Roman authorities.

The situation sees some serious progress, particularly under Pope Benedict XVI, who explicitly says that finding a solution for the Society is a priority of his pontificate. And so we see him issue the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* in 2007 and then, in 2009, rescind the decree of excommunication from 1988. The Society desired these two steps to be taken, and they helped stabilize relations between the SSPX and Rome.

After this, a serious and official round of discussions on Vatican II and the following reforms started to take place between representatives of the SSPX and delegates of the Congregation of the Faith. This lasted from 2009 until 2011.

In 2011 came the first clear proposal of giving to the Society a canonical status of importance in the Church, preferably a Personal Prelature, with a bishop as its head. There is also a first opening on legitimate questioning of certain points of Vatican II. But fundamentally, the baseline of these discussions remained the protocol agreement given to the Archbishop in 1987.

In 2012 as well as in 2017, the requirements from Rome remained the basic acceptance of the Second Vatican Council and of the New Mass. The wording may vary from one document to the other, but it is essentially the same.

Still, at the same time there is also an opening for more discussions. There is also an acceptance of the good work done by the Society. Even Pope Francis said to me, “You are Catholics” and much more normal relations start to be established on the practical level. We find public declarations from Monsignor Pozzo who clearly removes the accusation of schism. But the terminology “not in full communion” shows that there is still work to do towards the full reestablishment of Tradition in the Church.

For more than a decade, also, due to the fragmentation of our Mother, the Church, we are facing contradicting statements about us from the highest levels in the Vatican. From some there is praise and from others condemnation. This makes any concrete progress very difficult. Because, who in Rome will have the last word? The pope?

A letter from the prefect of the Congregation of the Faith, Cardinal Mueller in May 2017, gives the answer: If very interesting progress has been accomplished on paper with regard to a canonical structure, the major obstacle to canonical recognition remains the request to accept Vatican II and the legitimacy of the New Mass. It is as if our objections to the novelties since the Council tragically illustrated in recent developments such as the Amazon Synod and the “synodal path” in Germany, both of which destroy the Church, have no importance. We are back at the start, just like 20 years ago. But does not precisely the strong opposition of Cardinal Mueller to those recent events support the Society’s attitude and position?

## Concluding Thought

With this we understand more than ever that the real solution to the present crisis will not come through mere human and prudential efforts. The key remains in God’s hands and, keeping our eyes on Him, we reiterate our determined will to be faithful to the Faith of our Fathers, to all the treasures which have brought the glory of the Church, and which we have unworthily received.

We see our duty to transmit faithfully to the next generations what has made saints and brought salvation to the Church’s members during all the centuries. Our Lord Jesus Christ will save His Church, but He wants the cooperation of His instruments in His Mystical Body! He does not need us, but He wants us. As well said by St. Joan of Arc: “Men shall fight and God will give the victory.”

# For the Love of the Church

Excerpt from the Life of Marcel Lefebvre

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By Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

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To make a personal legacy, to single himself out, to see himself preferred to the pope...these are, according to his detractors, the desires and *modus operandi* of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. What are these in reality? Let us go through the stages of his life which were indeed varied and at the same time were animated by very simple considerations and impulsions.

## Marcel Lefebvre's First Desires

The desires of the young Marcel Lefebvre were before all things, very simple, he thus finished his high school studies at Tourcoing, in 1923. "It is true that I was always drawn to the altar, to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, that I went to serve it every day during the war, in 1915, at the risk of

my health. I left the house before the enforced curfew was lifted to be an acolyte for the dear Fr. Desmarchelier, my professor and confessor.

But the priesthood seemed extremely elevated to me; one had to be a saint to pursue it. I required the insistent words of Fr. Alphonsus, Trappist of the Abby of St. Sixtus in Belgium to aid my decision: "You, you will be a priest! You should become a priest!" And so, my father sent me to Rome, against my will, to the French seminary to study "the solid Roman doctrine, in Latin, under the gaze of the pope (Pius XI) at the Gregorian University."

How did I become a missionary?

"Oh, it was because of my older brother, Fr. Rene Lefebvre, who convinced me to follow him to Gabon. He bombarded me with letters! "What are you still doing in France? Second



vicar of Marais-de-Lomme. Look! See the bigger picture! Hurry here where we have plenty of catechumens, an army of catechists, and so few priests!" But myself? I wanted to be a simple little country priest with my little herd of sheep to take care of—a bit like the holy Cure of Ars! ...But to go a bit further into virgin territory, or to navigate across the desert...I didn't feel that I was destined for that.

But deep within myself I felt unsatisfied, even though I was otherwise perfectly happy. "Mama, I said to my mother, I will never be as happy as I am here with my parish ministry." But in Rome, I received the principles which opened larger perspectives; the dear Frs. Le Floch and Voegli communicated to us a great desire for the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ." The sacrifice of the priest for the social reign of Jesus Christ the King."

Thus, I said to myself, my life will be much more useful in Africa, working to convert pagans to the truth of Jesus Christ and His Church." "In Africa, I will give even more of myself." It was this conviction which made me into a missionary and a member of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. And in December of 1931, I left from Foucault at the port of Libreville, welcomed by my new bishop, Bishop Tardy, who said to me: "Ah, Fr. Lefebvre, I have just learned that you have a doctorate in philosophy and a doctorate in theology from the Gregorian University in Rome! So, I am going to appoint you to be a professor in my seminary!"

Oh, how I feared teaching more than anything else! I wanted to have a direct apostolate. But I needed to obey, obey. And for six years, with only two priests, we taught all the courses of both the minor and major seminary!

## Did I Enjoy the Formation of Young Africans?

Yes, indeed, by the grace of God! Who would have figured that, all of my life, I would be occupied with the formation of priests: in Gabon, in the seminary, then in the bush where one needed to discern vocations because there were those who were very good, then in Mortain in Normandy, where Bishop Le Hunsec, my superior

general called me in 1945 to direct the college of philosophy of the Spiritans. There, I was really at ease, in my place, with my African experience and the good principles that I received at Santa Chiara (the French seminary in Rome). And each morning, after Mass, driving my father's old car (who died in a concentration camp in 1944), I roamed through rural Normandy to collect butter, cheese, meat, vegetables, flour, milk...to feed those charged to me. Of course, the main goal was to inculcate the youth with the solid social doctrine of the Church. These youths who were infused with the virus of liberalism and Communism! You will remember the situation during the years of 1945–1947! But because I loved them, because I took care of their daily bread, found them blankets for their beds and glass panes to repair their windows broken by the war, well, I believed that they appreciated me. And I believe that I succeeded in passing along good principles: not my principles, oh no, but the principles of Our Lord and of the Church.

Likewise, in Dakar, I built a new seminary at Sebikotane—an oasis of greenery in the middle of the desert—and I gave my seminarians young professors, the Frs. Morvan, Fourmand and Bourdelet whom I appreciated very much and sent to Rome in order that they could study and obtain their university degrees. I often went to visit my seminary to encourage my future priests to acquire a genuine spiritual life...I hope that it wasn't all in vain!

Afterward came the Second Vatican Council—the crisis of the priesthood. One said to the seminarians: "Take this, it's the key to the seminary, you can leave in the evening and experience the world..." Or even, "You know, one day, you can get married; the Church will accept married priests." That is when many families came to see me in Paris at Rue Lhomond, where I was the Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers: "Your Excellency," they said, "Look at our son. He is 18 years old and wants to become a priest. But which seminary can we send him to? It's impossible! Do something for him!" This was between 1962–1967.

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# Theme SSPX 50th Anniversary

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## The Signs of Providence

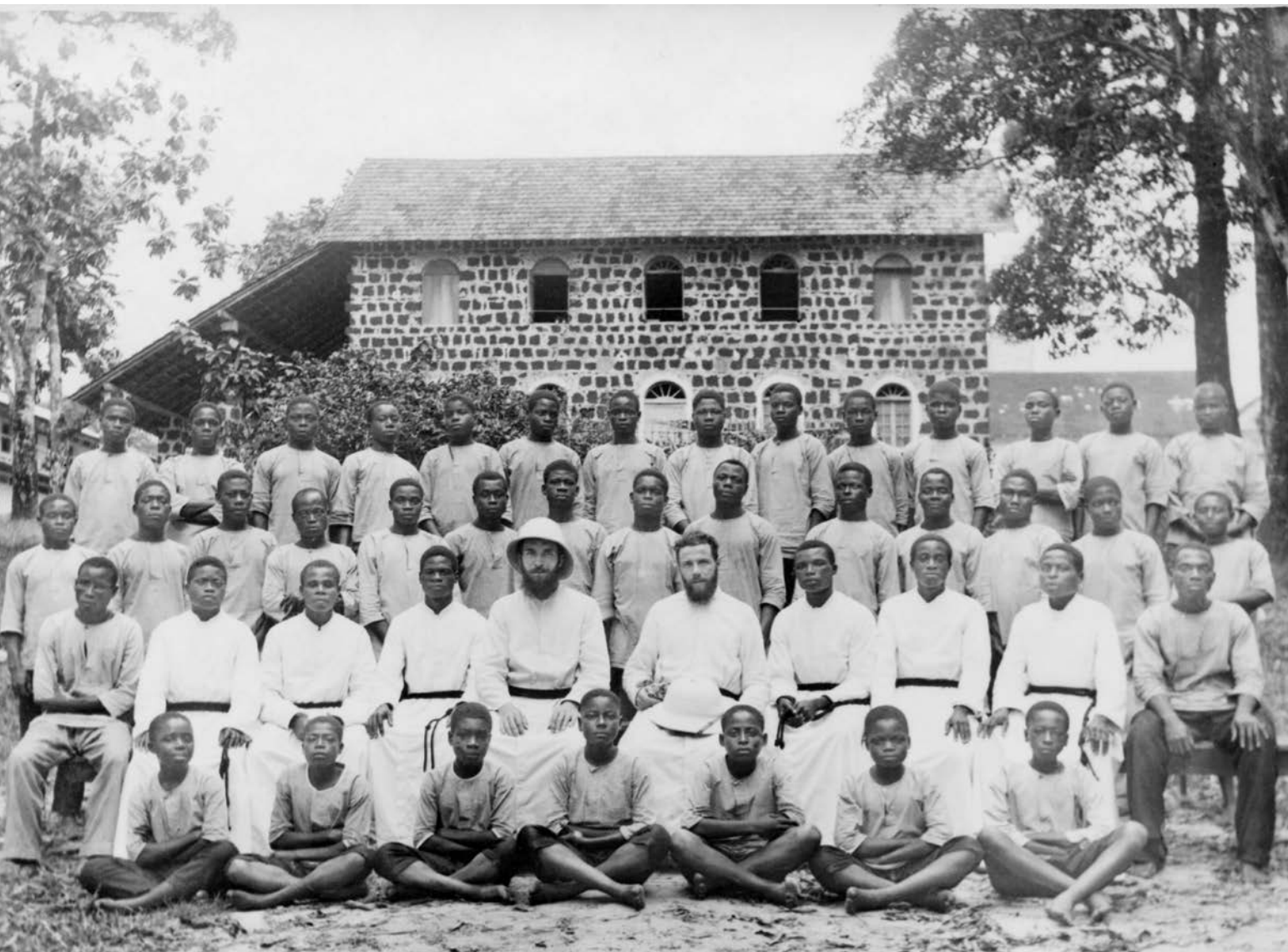
In the beginning, I said to myself: “I will send them to Rome, to my old seminary where they surely have kept the good traditions...but I concluded that the professors and even the rector I had appointed to this charge, Fr. Barq had turned Modernist, disciples or fans of Teilhard de Chardin, of Fr. Yves Congar, of Karl Rahner, *etc.*: all of these evil-doers who wanted to reinterpret the Gospel in a naturalistic and evolutionary manner. At the end of six years, after several unfruitful efforts here and there, I said to myself, “Why not send them to Fribourg in Switzerland to the university run by the Dominican Fathers which is still good?”

I didn't want to enroll them there myself

so I went to see the bishop of Fribourg, Bishop Francois Charrière, a friend of mine since Senegal: “Oh, he said to me, I wouldn't recommend my seminary, the doctrine is not solid there!” Go and visit the inter-diocesan seminary!” I went, therefore to “Salesianum” where the rector warned me, “But Excellency, there are no rules here! It isn't a seminary; it is a house of university students!” What could I do?

It is here that my friend Professor Bernard Fay, a historian of Freemasonry, and condemned to forced labor during the “Liberation” because he had searched the premises of the Grand Orient of France. He escaped from the Clinic of Angers, France and from there to Switzerland and was welcomed by Gonzague de Reynold, a

Fr. Marcel Lefebvre, missionary and teacher in the Seminary in Africa.





remarkable Swiss writer. Bernard Fay brought me to his home to stay with Fr. Marc Dominique Philippe, Dominican professor at the University of Fribourg, Dom Baron Karl, a Cistercian Father from Hauterive, and Mr. Braillard, Head of the department of education of the Fribourg Canton.

All these Fathers and men begged me: “Your Excellency, do something for these seminarians and for the two seminarians who accompanied me who were expelled from the French Seminary in Rome.” Fr. Phillippe on his knee, kissed my ring with effusion: “Yes, at the university your seminarians will support the professors who remain good.” I responded to him afflicted there upon the ground. “Alright, tomorrow I will return to see Bishop Charrière, and if he encourages me, that will be the providential sign that I should dive, in my retirement age, into this adventure!”

Truly, I was sluggish about it; I dragged my feet. Yet, at the same time, I felt imperiously and interiorly pushed to transmit to the future priests the heritage of Santa Chiara—the solid doctrine joined to the sanctity of the priest, the source of the sanctity of the priest.

The next day at the bishop’s residence: “Wonderful, Archbishop Lefebvre again! Very well, Your Excellency, find a house in Fribourg, put up your priestly candidates there, and they will follow the university classes!”

I found two apartments for rent at the house of Don Bosco of the Salesians and I asked the father N. to come and direct the household and that was that!

Or was it? No. Providence had something else in mind! At the last minute, this good Father whom I was counting on was a false friend: “Excellency,” he wrote to me, “I am not coming.”... “Alright,” I responded, “Don’t come!” Thus, I understood that I needed to involve myself personally down to the very foundations, and become the rector of the seminary, which I discretely named, “International Gathering of St. Pius X” and which Bishop Charrière approved with all his heart. The only thing left for me to do was to direct the rule of the seminary, inspired by the direction of Fr. Le Floch and Canon Law, and to receive the new candidates who arrived by divine Providence October 13, 1969, feast of Our Lady of Fatima, without me even realizing the

coincidence.

No, I never did anything by my own initiative; I was pushed or pulled by events. It happened that I found myself there at the right time to begin an adventure—but that I didn’t dare imagine that it would succeed!

Did I accomplish God’s will for me? I was forced to believe that God blessed my correspondence to His grace. We were going to have a combat for the Faith in order to “transmit the priesthood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in its doctrinal purity and missionary charity.” I had a glimpse of this task in a sort of dream in Dakar around 1958; it is only because those seminarians compelled me so that I would give myself to this sort of “mission.” It could very well be said that God prepared me for this task for a very long time. Blessed be God for His ineffable inspirations and for the immediate support from the many benefactors that this work received, and which even visibly (the benefactors as well) were brought by Providence.

All in all, I never did anything other than to follow Providence. And for this work, it required the blessing of the Church herself. I absolutely needed the permission and canonical authorization of my diocesan bishop who was Bishop Charrière. In summary, it was the just reward which the Fribourg and Swiss faithful made for my mission in Senegal! It is the charity of God overflowing in the hearts of so many faithful Catholics and so many young ardent people who accomplished everything.

Did I save the Catholic priesthood, the Catholic Mass, and the Catholic Faith? Certain people attribute these wonderful things to me. But, you see, I am for nothing in this.

Translated from the French by Associate Editor Miss Jane Carver

This is why we are doing this ceremony. Far be it from me to set myself up as pope! I am simply a bishop of the Catholic Church who is continuing to transmit Catholic doctrine. I think, and this will certainly not be too far off, that you will be able to engrave on my tombstone these words of St. Paul: "*Tradidi quod et accepi*—I have transmitted to you what I have received," nothing else. I am just the postman bringing you a letter. I did not write the letter, the message, this Word of God. God Himself wrote it; Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself gave it to us. As for us, we just handed it down, through these dear priests here present and through all those who have chosen to resist this wave of apostasy in the Church, by keeping the eternal Faith and giving it to the faithful. We are just carriers of this good news, of this Gospel which Our Lord Jesus Christ gave to us, as well as of the means of sanctification: the Holy Mass, the true Holy Mass, the true sacraments which truly give the spiritual life.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Sermon on the occasion of the Episcopal Consecrations







# Establishing the First District

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By Fr. Patrick Groche

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It was in 1976 that the first ordinations of the seminarians who had completed all their seminary studies at Écône took place. That year, Archbishop Lefebvre established the District of France for the Society. By that time, other seminarians had been ordained before us because they had already completed part of their seminary either in Rome or elsewhere, and finished their studies in Fribourg, Switzerland. This was the case for Frs. Aulagnier, Tissier de Mallerais, Post and also the Frs. Bolduc and Bernard Waltz, who are now deceased, and others...

The academic year of 1975-1976 had been draining for the Archbishop because Rome demanded the official closure of his seminary and, later on, the suspension *a divinis* was imposed on him by Pope Paul VI on the occasion of the priestly ordinations of June 29, 1976. This is when

Archbishop Lefebvre made Fr. Paul Aulagnier responsible for the foundation of the District of France. He thus became the first superior of the first district of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X. Just after my first Mass celebrated at Besançon on Sunday, September 4 (which was the Sunday following the famous Mass at Lille of Archbishop Lefebvre), I became Fr. Aulagnier's first District Treasurer.

## Organizing the District

Fr. Aulagnier organized the District of France from the centrally located Le Pointet, a house bought shortly before the ordinations of June 1976 by the Archbishop. This became our "first" retreat house of the Exercises of St. Ignatius.





Fr. Aulagnier loved the countryside and enjoyed watching the cows graze upon the green grass of Le Pointet. He traveled all over France with his tiny “204 Peugeot” car, with Br. Dominique, his usual chauffeur. “Fr. Paul” as the Archbishop called him, visited all of the French mission chapels. At that time, they existed under the title of Associations Law of 1905 [Editor’s note: The law of the separation of Church and State], which means that they were directed by laity who had refused, in a truly Catholic manner, the *Novus Ordo Missae* of Pope Paul VI.



Fr. Aulagnier took the opportunity to give lectures on our holy Traditional Mass vs. the *Novus Ordo*. These conferences were quite popular, and turned into illustrated booklets, were made available to people who had issues

after Vatican II. Catholic consciences of France and elsewhere had been awakened, especially since the ordinations of 1976, and the Mass of Lille which had been largely commented on by the secular media. The world had not foreseen such publicity over the return to Catholic Tradition advocated by Archbishop Lefebvre.

Thus, the first priests coming out of Écône in 1976 were going to be assigned to various priories: first and foremost, Suresnes, which the Archbishop had bought in 1972 and had turned into a bookstore and library, manned by Fr. Cottard. Suresnes, a suburb of Paris, was to become the District headquarters within a year. Then, there was Lanvallay in Brittany and the Abbey St. Michel in Brenne which was to be used shortly as a retreat house. Two years later, it was given to the SSPX Sisters, who had been founded in Albano, Italy. The Archbishop had bought Albano, with the canonical authorization of the Cardinal of Albano. He wanted to make it a formation house for the first three years of the seminary since Écône was becoming too small for all of the anticipated vocations. Above all, the Archbishop wanted his seminarians to discover Catholic Rome with its majestic basilicas and churches dedicated to the countless emerging martyrs of the Church. Archbishop Lefebvre wanted priests steeped in Roman Catholicism as he himself had been by his years as a seminarian at the French seminary in Rome, Santa Chiara.

Later that year, Fr. Aulagnier came to join me at Suresnes, which became the District House. Farewell cows and calves of Le Pointet. Such was the will of Archbishop Lefebvre, our founder, as Paris was obviously more suited for the District leadership.

## Establishing Catholic Schools

With the ordinations of 1978, Providence prepared our apostolate to the youth by establishing truly Catholic schools. Near Châteauroux, in Surins, the Traditional laity founded the school of St. Michel with a director who loved education and Catholic education but, alas, he was not the best financial manager. Consequently, when the school was on the

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## Theme SSPX 50th Anniversary

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brink of bankruptcy, the laity responsible for the administration of the school turned to Fr. Paul Aulagnier. Their solution was that the Society take over the direction of this boarding school, but, along with it, they would take on the heavy debt! “Fr. Paul” went to see the Archbishop in Écône who listened attentively to him. After having told him that it was possible to resume the administration of this school, he reminded Fr. Paul that this is not our [the Society’s] first goal, since the Society has as its primary goal the formation of priests. Fr. Paul’s main argument was that this school would no doubt be a nursery for vocations and future priests. Yes, but beware, said the Archbishop: “Failure is not allowed”—which sent a shiver down the spine of the priest in the face of the great responsibility of such an undertaking. And it is therefore Fr. Laurençon, ordained in Écône, June 1978, who was appointed by the Archbishop to be the director of our first school under the patronage of St. Michael.

Then, we acquired a second school, “Morning Star,” near Strasbourg, founded by Fr. Rohmer and his religious sister with their parents’ inheritance. Fr. Jacques Laguérie, also ordained in 1978, became the director of this new school.

### The District Grows

The first issue of the magazine *Fideliter* came out of Le Pointet press. It was highly prized by “Fr. Paul” who got it off the press thanks to the tireless efforts of Miss Orsier. The issue was brought to Écône and presented to Archbishop Lefebvre by Fr. Aulagnier. The Archbishop opened it, turned the pages, looked at it from every angle, scrutinized it and ended by encouraging “Fr. Paul” with a grin saying: “I hope it is not a still-born!” Today, we have exceeded 250 issues and *Fideliter* is thriving. To be honest, the Archbishop had funny ways of encouraging us...

Sr. Anne-Marie Simoulin, the Foundress and Superior of the Dominicans of Fanjeaux, wrote to the Archbishop regarding her foundation of boarding girls which admitted day boys at that time. The boys, however, had become too old for her young sisters to teach them. She had written in February 1981 asking him to take over the

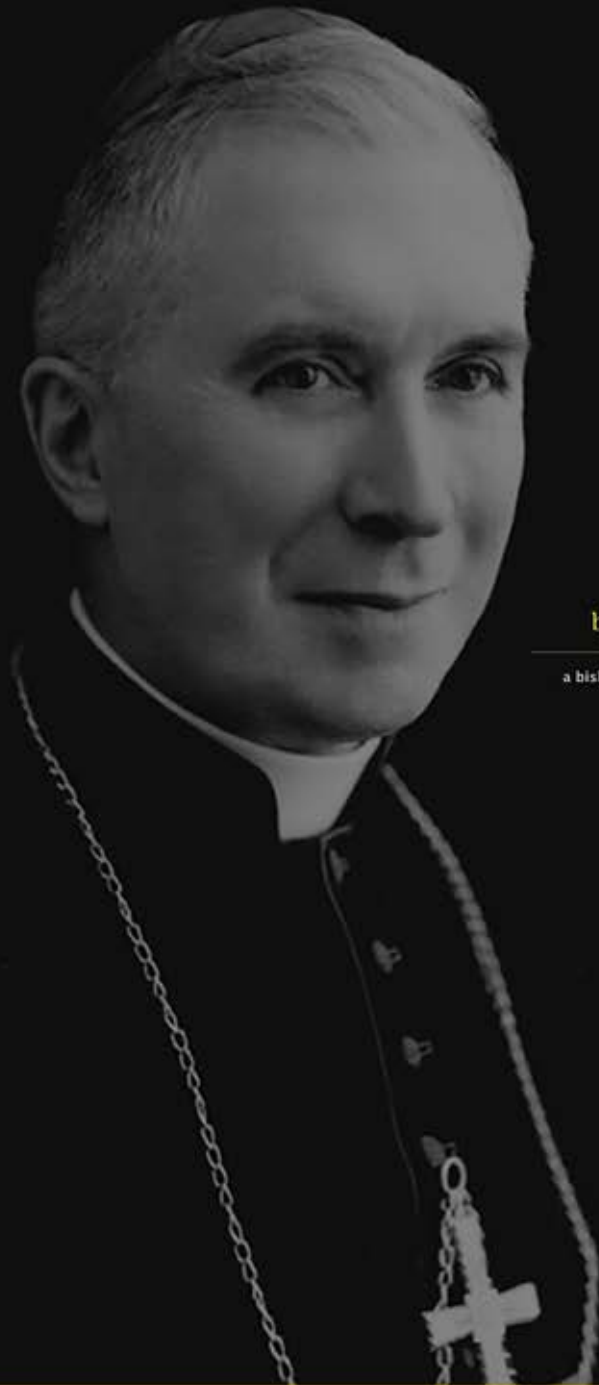
boys, but the beginning of the school year was in September. I won’t tell you the troubles that this caused us. But, with the help of Providence and St. Joseph, we were able to find and buy a large wine estate a few miles from Fanjeaux, find an architect, obtain the permit to build a school with boarding facilities, and also find a construction company that could finish the project in the short months that separated us from the beginning of the academic year. So, finally, with St. Joseph’s funds, St. Joseph des Carmes near Carcassonne was started in October.

Thus, in the first years, owing to the inexhaustive mission work of Fr. Aulagnier, we opened the priories of Lanvallay-Dinan, Marseilles, Unieux-St. Etienne, Bordeaux, Lyons, Dijon, Nantes, Croix-Lille. Along with them, we furnished them with primary schools held by our SSPX Sisters or our Oblate sisters. In Belgium bordering France, Sr. Marie Christiane, sister of Archbishop Lefebvre opened the first Carmel at Quievrain. I was involved also in helping her renovate the convent.

There is still much to be told about the beginning of the first SSPX District. Catholic France in the 1970’s enjoyed the support of priests and faithful who had held on strongly to Tradition until then. These aging Catholic priests and faithful friends counted on Archbishop Lefebvre and his work. Setting up this important District brought many joys and encouraging graces, along with its load of sorrows. After all, is this not the norm of things as the *Imitation* says: “The law of life on this earth is the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I wish to conclude with the beautiful encouragement from the Foundress of the Dakar Carmel. I visited her in August 1984, while I was preparing the future foundation in Gabon, Africa. Speaking of Archbishop Lefebvre who had brought them to Senegal, she said to me with all her religious simplicity, “Oh you know, everything that Archbishop Lefebvre undertakes, succeeds.” He himself responded to this compliment: “This happened thanks to the prayers of the Carmelites.”

This piece was translated from the French original by Associate Editor Miss Jane Carver.



Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

biography

a bishop for the Church

the man

we have believed in  
charity

doctrine

I have handed on that  
which I received

Visit the dedicated website on  
[marcellefebvre.info](http://marcellefebvre.info)

# Archbishop Lefebvre and Shakespeare

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By Andrew J. Clarendon

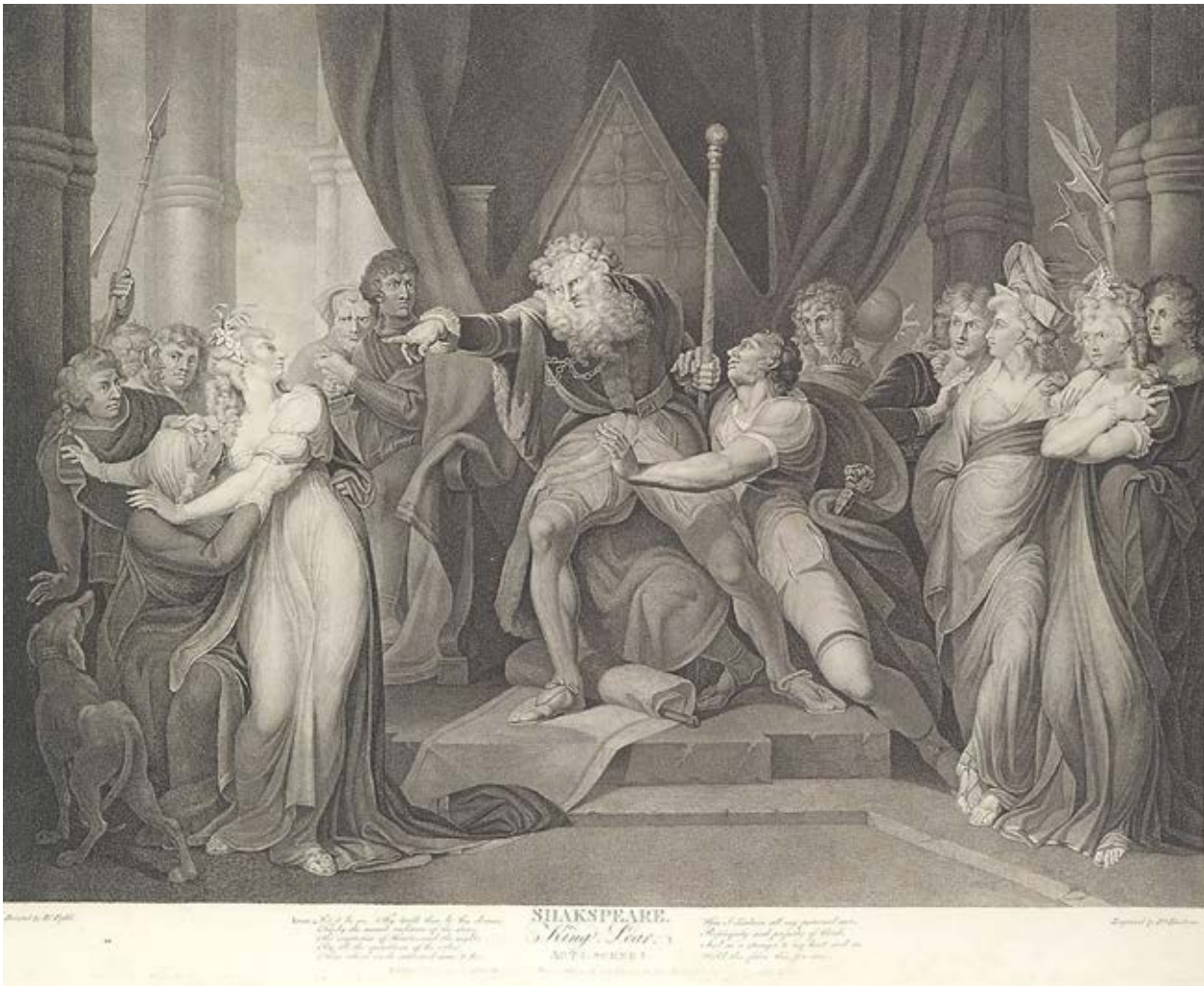
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In *Ideas Have Consequences*, Richard Weaver writes: “Evidently it is the poet’s unique command of language which gives him his ability to see the potencies in circumstances. He is the greatest teacher of cause and effect in human affairs; ...poets are the quickest to apprehend necessary truth.” Dealing in “the evocative power of words...[and] the mighty power of symbolism,” it is not surprising that a poet can teach profound truths even centuries after his death; at the highest level, poetic lessons have perennial value. Such is the power of inspiration that poets even seem to prophesize: one thinks of Virgil’s famous Fourth Eclogue, often called the Messianic because it reads like a foretelling of the coming of Christ. In English, the greatest poet is, of course, Shakespeare, whose plays, while presenting a certain plot with certain characters, nevertheless

express universal themes. The lessons conveyed can therefore be applied to other situations and can be useful in understanding the cause and effect in human affairs that Weaver identifies above. For this year’s celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Society of Saint Pius X, reviewing some themes in Shakespeare’s tragedy *King Lear* and his comedy *As You Like It* is a poetic, connatural way to further appreciate Archbishop Lefebvre’s stand for tradition and orthodoxy.

## The Bard’s Greatest Work

Generally regarded as his greatest work, Shakespeare’s tragedy *King Lear* involves a crisis of authority; the play is a study of how the



*King Lear Casting Out His Daughter Cordelia*, Richard Earlom (London 1743–1822 London)

mistaken decisions of the one in power can have disastrous consequences. All tragedies involve an error made by the tragic hero, a misstep that leads to profound suffering for the hero, those closest to him, and society at large. In *Lear*, this mistake is made in the very first scene: the king decides to abdicate by dividing his kingdom among his three daughters based on how well they flatter him. When the youngest daughter, Cordelia—whose name means “ideal heart”—refuses to participate in this charade, Lear angrily disowns her. As the scene progresses, only one member of the court dares to stand up to the king: the Earl of Kent. His words provide a template for loyal resistance to authority gone mad, a resistance in the spirit of Archbishop Lefebvre. Already angry with Cordelia’s refusal

to flatter him, when Kent speaks in her defense, Lear immediately threatens to punish anyone who stands in the way of his rash actions, saying “The bow is bent and drawn. Make from the shaft.” Kent’s answer is the essence of true loyalty: “Be Kent unmannerly / When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man? /...in thy best consideration check / This hideous rashness.” When the king is so fixated on his will as to threaten Kent’s life, the noble earl affirms his true loyalty: “My life I never held but as a pawn / To wage against thine enemies, nor fear to lose it, / Thy safety being motive.” In the face of losing everything, Kent demonstrates that the only way to really help Lear is to point out his mistake, to urge him to change course before anything irreparable is done. As Lear rages, Kent stands >

for the true good: “Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow / Upon the foul disease... / Or whilst I can vent clamor from my throat / I’ll tell thee thou dost evil.” The result is that Kent is banished on pain of death; it is only after a long period of suffering that Lear comes to realize that the earl, who he thought to be a traitor, is the most loyal subject in the realm. What is more, while Lear rejects Kent, the loyal subject does not reject his king. Disguising himself, he rejoins Lear later in the play to do what he can to help his sovereign. In a famous exchange, Kent says to Lear that “you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master... Authority.” Kent is one of the greatest symbols of loyalty in literature precisely because he resists the mistaken policies of his master while still recognizing him as the authority. The parallels to Archbishop Lefebvre and the traditional movement are obvious to anyone who recognizes the crisis: while still affirming the pope’s authority, the archbishop did not hesitate to resist the madness of discarding the Church’s traditional teachings even when most of the rest of the hierarchy was silent, even when it meant a sort of banishment.

### The Image of Exiled Tradition

An image of exiled tradition itself is found in the comedic analogue to *King Lear*, *As You Like It*. Set in the Forest of Arden in France—a thinly veiled reference to Ardennes, the region of northern France that was the center for English [Catholic] exiles,” as Clare Asquith puts it in *Shadowplay*, her excellent work on Shakespeare’s hidden Catholicism—the plot involves the exiled Duke Senior, whose younger brother Duke Frederick has usurped the crown. While Duke Frederick holds the court, young men flock to Duke Senior in the forest, a band of merry men like Robin Hood’s. Duke Senior’s opening speech, while recognizing his plight, nevertheless praises the hand of Providence: “Sweet are the uses of adversity /... And this our life, exempt from public haunt, / Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, / Sermons in stones, and good in everything.” Such do traditional Catholics feel. While “they have the

buildings, we have the Faith”; our exile has the sweetness to it that St. Paul mentioned to the Romans: “And we know that to them that love God, all things work together unto good.” In addition, the conclusion of Shakespeare’s comedy includes the hoped for ending: just as the new order under Duke Frederick comes to the forest to destroy Duke Senior and the old traditions once and for all, the tyrant meets “with an old religious man, / [And] after some question with him, [is] converted / Both from his enterprise and from the world.” As “men of great worth” continue to “resort to this forest” of traditional Catholicism, may there be a similar conversion of those in authority.

Fifty years into the heroic stand for tradition, the fight continues. The traditional Catholic movement is clearly one involving the youth: it is traditional and orthodox communities that have the vocations and families with children while the modern experiment is literally dying out. The next generation is poised to either receive and preserve what has been passed down or to be swept into the modernist current. Now, therefore, is the time to be reminded of why the pioneers of the traditional movement did what they did, resisting even Peter to the face. Shakespeare indicates that the end of crises involve suffering and conversion; with the current crisis in the Church still raging, these are central themes of the beginning of the next 50 years of the SSPX.

# The Last Mass of Padre Pio

The startling truths uncovered by this book will forever change the way Catholics view the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

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By **Alessandro Gnocchi and Mario Palmaro**



“Later, as an aged Capuchin friar, the mere thought of the liturgical reform, which would take effect in 1969, was sufficient to raise in him a holy horror. Throughout his life the holy friar had been obedient even unto martyrdom, but at this time the only request he dared to put forth to the authorities of the Church was to be exempted from the novelties of the impending liturgical reform.”

On September 23, 1968 after having borne the stigmata for exactly 50 years, the saintly Padre Pio died. This holy mystic spent his life as a living imitation of Christ and is the only priest in history to bear the stigmata. During his life, in spite of the physical pain he endured, Padre Pio continued to say his daily Mass. But part of his suffering was unknown. Padre Pio wrote a petition appealing directly to Pope Paul VI so as to obtain permission, from the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, to never be required to say the *Novus Ordo Missae*. The existence of this petition was kept secret from the public...until now.

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Around 10,000 faithful came to Fatima for the pilgrimage organized by the SSPX on August 19 and 20, 2017 for the centenary of the apparitions of Our Lady. Various pilgrimages and tours were organized, culminating in prayer at the feet of Our Lady, and a consecration of Russia by the three bishops of the SSPX.







# Why Is the SSPX Necessary?

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By Benjamin Bielinski

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As history looks back on the accomplishments of the Archbishop, many are quick to judge. His decision to start a priestly society, which began to take form in the early 1960s, is often criticized as egotistical, unnecessary, and disobedient. But this couldn't be further from the truth. His priestly society was founded with the support and approval of his local ordinary and the later episcopal ordinations, though questioned at the time, are now recognized as legitimate and free of any negative juridical effect as made clear by Benedict XVI through Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re in the decree "Remitting the Excommunication *latae sententiae* of the bishops of the Society of Saint Pius X." While this decree lifted the excommunications but imposed no additional changes, belief, or action on the part of the Society, some still question the actions

of the Archbishop. For even though Archbishop Lefebvre's actions were just and right the more frequently asked question is why?

## Motivations of the Archbishop

Why did he choose to act as he did at that specific time? Anyone who has read the works of the Archbishop will quickly understand that he did what he did to preserve the sacred priesthood and all that this holy office touches. Few realize that his actions were not the result of his own desires, but rather in response to the many requests he received from seminarians who were unable to find a traditional seminary that remained true to the teachings of Holy Mother Church. The 1960s were the culmination



The seminarians and professors at the beginning of the academic year in Écône, October 1971.

of changes that had been in motion for a long time and these changes attempted to alter what it meant to be a priest. In hindsight, we can now say these changes have resulted in the single most devastating reduction in the number of priests worldwide since the institution of the priesthood by Christ Himself. But if priests are so important, the seminaries that train them are equally so.

## Priestly Seminaries in the 1960s

It may be hard for some of us to accurately imagine a young man seeking to live out his priestly vocation in the 1960s as tradition was still visible in most Churches and cities. The rot that has eroded doctrine in the minds of so many today had not yet completely spread to the world at large but it bloomed in the houses of priestly formation. Sadly, the French seminary of the Congregation of Holy Ghost Fathers in Rome was no exception to this blight and by the 1960s it appears to be all but complete. The rector of the French seminary in Rome recalls a rebuke of Archbishop Lefebvre which took place in the spring of 1962.

“He took me to task for having told the bishops who were staying at the seminary that I was determined to train students to work for them in their dioceses, according to their directives and in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. He reminded me that the Holy Ghost Fathers, not the French bishops, had founded and were responsible for the French seminary.”

This was not an isolated incident and in fact mirrored what was rapidly taking place around the world as ecclesiastical leaders fell to the allure of modernism already prevalent in society. The Gregorian University in Rome founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1551 quickly altered its age-old requirement of teaching its courses in Latin. While many accepted the changes, a few voiced their concern:

“If the courses are no longer taught in Latin, the seminarians will not be able to understand their breviaries or the Church Fathers. They will no longer be able to read the commentators of St. Thomas, and the liturgy would not be able to remain in Latin. It would be a terrible impoverishment for the priests, who would be cut off definitely from the Church’s inheritance.”

Despite protests like this, the changes still took place and their implementation was rapid, >

# Theme SSPX 50th Anniversary

incisive, and radical, but Providence had other plans.

## Providential Timing

The timing was providential to begin this work as the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1968 were in the process of bringing their constitutions into conformity with the Second Vatican Council, during which they immediately requested that the Archbishop take an extended leave of absence. This was done as a result of the opposition he had already voiced against the Council and, consequently, he tendered his resignation. It is interesting to note that if the Holy Ghost Fathers hadn't rejected the Archbishop due to his adherence to the unchanging Catholic doctrine, he would not have been able to devote his later years to the creation and growth of a new Society whose sole purpose was to preserve that same doctrine. Also, if the liberal seminary rectors and professors allowed traditional seminarians to be ordained, there would have never been a reason for Society of Saint Pius X to exist, as those same seminarians would never have sought out the Archbishop. Both the Archbishop and seminarians found a new home on November 1, 1970 when the Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg approved and confirmed the constitutions and proceeds to the canonical foundation of the International Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in his diocese. This is the context for the creation of the Society. Both seminarians and bishop were rejected along with the traditional teachings of the Church. The needs of the seminarians and the blessing and approval of the local ordinary made it clear to the archbishop what he needed to do.

## Testimony of Seminarians over the Years

As seminaries around the world continued to worsen, the little Society began to see its first growth. One seminarian recalls the early years and his own impression of the Archbishop at that time.



"I joined the seminary during the hot summer of 1976, just when the Archbishop had been suspended by Pope Paul VI and had given his polemical sermon of Lille in late July. It was clear there was a war between two opposing positions, and that the Archbishop, for all his combative statements and attacks against the progressives, made total sense, whereas his detractors were simply snarling at his position and failing to refute his arguments against the new Mass, the new Catechism, *etc.* It was clear that the rug was being pulled out from under the Church and many of the younger priests were leaving their sacred duties to go back into the world—sorry times indeed."

The sentiments echoed in this eyewitness account illustrates how a tiny organization was successful precisely because it was dedicated to the preservation of the Catholic priesthood in its entirety without compromise. A recently ordained priest of the Society of Saint Pius X had this to say when asked this question.

*"Why did you choose to join the Society of Saint Pius X?"*

"A couple years after I entered the seminary,



I was asked that same question by a couple of diocesan seminarians who approached me at a Beethoven concert. They figured I was too young to be a priest and was wondering how I was wearing a cassock when they weren't allowed to. They asked me almost immediately, 'Why the SSPX?' I answered, 'Look, I can go into questions of doctrine and liturgy if you want, but quite frankly I entered the SSPX seminary because I want truth. Full and entire. The truths of the Faith, the truths of the priesthood, without any mixing or doubt, and to the best of my judgment the only place I can get that is in the Society.' They simply nodded and said, 'Makes sense.'

*"And why did the Archbishop found the Society of Saint Pius X?"*

His reply is crystal clear:

"The Archbishop founded the SSPX for the continuation and preservation of the Catholic priesthood and everything that pertains to it. This answer is significant because I am often asked why the Society still exists, as it does, since we can say the old Mass now without restriction. What people need to understand is that it's a much deeper problem that is far from being resolved."

## The Importance of Priestly Vocations

There are many things that can be said about the Archbishop and his actions but his intentions are clear and the results of his efforts are undeniable. He worked tirelessly to pass on what he had received and to preserve the eternal Catholic priesthood. He did this clearly because so much is contingent on the existence of priests. They are the lifeblood of the Church and should young men cease to pursue their God-given vocations, or be unable to fulfill them, we, the faithful, would be cut off from every sacramental resource meant to aid us on our path to Heaven—to say nothing of the worship due to God, which the *alter Christus* alone is capable of offering. The priest is a prism through which the grace of God is refracted into every corner of our lives. He is there at our birth to welcome us into the Church as we join the ranks of the Church

Militant and he is there at our death as we join the ranks of the Church Suffering, the Church Triumphant, or the damned. It is abundantly obvious that the existence of priests is vital to our survival as Catholics and the continuity of Holy Mother Church.

## What the Society of Saint Pius X Means to Catholics

Very few of us lived in a country where the priests were rounded up and the church doors were locked. But the fruits of Vatican II have been much the same as any socialist takeover. While it wasn't done in the name of Socialism but that of *Aggiornamento*, a very real consequence of Vatican II is that fewer and fewer people have access to a priest, sacraments, and the Mass. Last Sunday, we could have gone to our Church and found it locked. No confession, no holy water, no real presence in the tabernacle, and no Mass. What we have is a privilege and the privilege we now enjoy is a testimony to how the fidelity of one archbishop can change the course of history and affect the salvation of countless souls. This year is the 50th anniversary of the Society of Saint Pius X, what else can be said but, "God bless Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre." His undaunted courage lives on in the members of the Society he founded as its priestly members continue to carry the torch of Catholicism to the four corners of the globe.

# St. John's Use of Words

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By Pater Inutilis

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St. John would live to be the last witness of the Word made flesh who dwelt amongst us. His inspired writings would close that revelation which we call public and constitutes the object of Catholic Faith (*Lamentabili* #21). Recorded history had lost sight of him since St. Paul came to Jerusalem to explain "his gospel" before the apostles "James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars" (Gal. 2:9). Then, concerning the disciple whom Jesus loved, silence, for nearly half of a century. "As for St. John, during the lives of Peter and Paul, tradition leaves him in complete oblivion and makes no mention of him until the closing years of the first Christian century; but, as if to make up for this neglect, it displays him then in a role of incomparable majesty, dominating the end of the apostolic age, by his writings, and by the unanimous respect he

is invested withal" (*St. John and the Close of the Apostolic Age*, Abbé Fouard).

## The Foretelling of Our Lord

Our Lord had foretold of him, as well as for his brother James, "You shall indeed drink of the chalice that I drink of: and with the baptism wherewith I am baptized, you shall be baptized" (Mk. 10:39). No manner or time was foretold them, but martyrdom would befall. First of all the apostles, St. James the Greater by means of the sword under Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1 f.). Now, over half a century later, with the persecution of Domitian, had the time come for the second of "the sons of thunder?" (Mk 3:17). History tells us, after all, of his being hauled to Rome



to be done away with by having been cast into boiling oil; but to no avail. And so there he is, "...in the island, which is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus..." (Apoc. 1:9), an exile. And there it is that Our Lord will come to him in a vision (Apoc. 1:10 f.), with the injunction to write what he sees in a book (*ibid.*). This would be the Apocalypse, the first, chronologically, of St. John's writings.

Visions divinely given can indeed be of an external object, or imprinted directly on the imagination; or received directly by the intellect—ideas needing human speech and imagery to be conveyed to others: perhaps an impossible task ["I know a man...caught up to the third Heaven,...caught up into paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter" (II Cor. 12:2 f.)]. St. John's vision in chapter one, for example, of the Apocalypse was probably of the first or second kind; but others in this book were intellectual, not easy to communicate, needing (divinely inspired) imagery so to do. That would have been the case, for example, of what is related in chapter four: "After these things I looked, and behold a door was opened in Heaven, and the first voice which I heard, as it were, of a trumpet speaking with me, said: Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must be done hereafter..."; and the rest of the chapter will paint for us a picture of Heaven. How do we picture Heaven? Immensity by oceans, beauty by myriad colors, triumph by thrones and crowns, majesty by prostration. Numbers have their own signification, whether it be the "seven" or the "four and twenty" or the threefold ("Holy, holy, holy"). It is remarkable that when St. John wants to describe spiritual truth he chooses not the language of human wisdom, though he had spent many a decade now in the Hellenistic world, but the language of his fathers, notably the images made known by the prophets of the Old Testament while remaining very free in using their imagery.

## The Meaning of Numbers

Numbers in the Old Testament, and very much so for St. John, have a meaning quite

apart from their numerical signification. "Ten" and "twelve" and multiples thereof represent "wholeness." That is so ever since God gave Moses the "ten words" (Dt. 4:13; 10:4), *i.e.*, all the Law in 10 commandments, and chose the 12 sons of Jacob to be the patriarchs of His people, "the twelve tribes of Israel" (Gen. 49:28). These numbers may have their numerical signification, or their symbolic value, or both at the same time. Ignoring this, the Jehovah's Witnesses of today think only 144,000 will go to Heaven properly so called (Apoc. 14:1), as the Millenarists of old thought Christ would reign on earth with His saints for 1,000 years after His second coming and before the end of the world; whereas, as St. Augustine responded, if this does not refer to Heaven itself, then it refers to the whole Christian era, for "All power is given to me in Heaven and in earth...and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world"(Mt. 28:18 & 20). "It is the last hour" (I Jn. 2:18). Even more than 10 or 12, "7" is the number of "sacred >



wholeness”—and that ever since God rested on the seventh day after His work of creation (Gen. 2:2).

Here are but two instances of this: the sevenfold Spirit would descend upon the Christ (Is. 11:2) Who then left us 7 sacraments whereby we might receive the same Spirit. Those who do not understand that it may also be used only in a symbolic sense will, after having pardoned their brother not 7 times, but 70 times 7 times (Mt. 18:22), judge themselves exempt from pardoning him any further. Woe to him if he offends a 491st time! “Seven” is omnipresent in the Apocalypse, a book that shows us the completion of God’s work in time. What of “666”? So many offers here! There are those who point out that letters in Hebrew or Greek may have a numerical value; so what names in these languages give us this total? Nero is one, Diocletian another. Here’s one I like (with all thanks to the Seventh Day Adventists): on the Pope’s tiara is written VICARIUS FILII DEI. Now, those Latin letters which stand for a number in this title add up to...666. And so, the pope is the Antichrist! I think rather that, until particular events make it clear in their own time, we can stay with the general understanding: 6 is a number of “imperfection” falling short of 7; 3 is a divine number (of the Trinity): here taken by that mimic of God that is Satan, so it does stand for “the man of sin...whose coming is according to the working of Satan” (II Th. 2:3-10).

The author of the fourth Gospel is the same as that of the Apocalypse, with his penchant towards symbolism, but less so for numbers now. Even so, he is careful, for instance, to note the first seven days of Our Lord’s manifestation (Jn. 1:15, 29, 35, 43 & 2:1), and it would be typical of him to see some signification in the fact that it was at the seventh hour that the fever left the son of a certain ruler, or that there were seven disciples with Jesus when He confides the whole flock to Peter (Jn. 4:52 & 21:2). But there are other symbols Our Lord Himself uses for which John will have a predilection, as “light” (and so “night” and “day,” “seeing” and “blind,” and “darkness” too) and “water”; or those of John, as “Word” for the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Then again, there are those things human said also of the Godhead and rich in meaning, as “truth”

and “life”; we should not forget “Being” [“Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn. 8:58)] and “Charity” [for “God is charity” (I Jn. 4, 8 & 16)].

## How God Speaks of Himself

With this language, we have God speaking about Himself in our own tongue [“No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (Jn. 1:18)]. Human language uses the same term in quite different, but somehow related, senses. “To see,” for example, can be said of the eye or of the mind. Then again, of the mind left to its natural understanding, or enlightened by faith, or even by glory in the Beatific Vision. These are all very different things: but we understand that they all indicate some perception of an object. What, or how, remains very different. Divested of any imperfection proper to the creature, and understood “infinitely,” these tell us something of God Himself. St. John will use such a term as “see” in all these senses [of the eyes, *e.g.*, Jn. 1:29; of the natural mind 4:19; but enlightened by faith—8:56; or glory—17:24; and of God—5:19].

Two points could be made: firstly, that we name things with which we are familiar and then apply them in a different way to describe things unfamiliar. And so to God too. But, in the nature of things, perfections are said firstly of God, and then in a derived and participated sense of creatures. He is the first source of all. Secondly, even when used in one sense, the others are suggested. This was very much St. John’s understanding—and so how he is to be understood. For example, when he writes: “And after the morsel, Satan entered into him. And Jesus said to him: That which thou dost, do quickly... He therefore having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night” (Jn. 13, 27 & 30). We know the paschal meal had to be eaten after sunset and that it was night.

Why mention such a banal detail, if not that it suggests also Judas’s state of soul? His heart was black, we might say. St. John will see the First Cause behind and through all, and all as related to that same First Cause (The Holy Ghost’s gift of “knowledge” will have the same purpose).



# Crib to Cross

## Meditations on the Life of Christ For Beginners of All Ages

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“Meditation is a hard word. It generally implies the power of following our trains of reasoning, a power not ordinarily developed in early years. But the young can look and observe; they can watch a person’s actions and follow a simple narrative of his life, especially if truthfully and vividly set before their eyes”...“Where the heart is pure, and the imagination unsullied, the quick wit of childhood, raised and helped by grace, is easily interested in such a Person and life as that of Jesus.”—From the Preface

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The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

# The Offertory

Part One

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By Fr. Christopher Danel

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“The Offertory, Consecration, and Communion are the principal parts of Holy Mass: they are intimately connected with one another, but are not of equal significance. In the Oblation the Sacrifice is prepared, at the Consecration it is really accomplished, and during the Communion it is entirely concluded and finished.”—Monsignor Nicholas Gihl

## Introduction

In this article we examine the Offertory, presenting the work of Monsignor Nicholas Gihl in his fundamental liturgical commentary *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Dogmatically, Liturgically, and Ascetically Explained*. Monsignor Gihl was a priest of Freiburg in Breisgau whose work of liturgical research took place during the time frame spanning the pontificates of Popes Pius IX to Pius XI, including that of Pope St. Pius X. The early years of his work were contemporaneous with the

last years in the work of Dom Prosper Guéranger. (The English translation of his study appeared in 1902; the original is: Gihl, Nikolaus. *Messopfer dogmatisch, liturgisch und aszetisch erklärt*. Herder: Freiburg im Breisgau, 1877.)

## What is Offered, and Who

The words and the rite of the oblation before the Consecration relate to a twofold object namely, to the elements of bread and wine, and



also to Christ's Body and Blood. In the first place, the oblation (*oblatio*) relates to the Eucharistic elements: the bread and wine are withdrawn from common use, consecrated to God and previously sanctified, that they may be in a manner prepared and made fit for their unspeakably exalted destiny. We give up all claim to these earthly gifts and offer them to the Most High, with the intention and desire that He would change them in the course of the Sacrifice into the most holy Body and Blood of Christ. Accordingly, this portion of the Mass rite includes manifold petitions to the Most High, that He graciously accept and bless or consecrate the bread and wine offered.

Yet the Offertory has not exclusively for its object the mere elements of bread and wine, but also the real object of the sacrifice, the true and only sacrifice of the New Law, that is, the Body and Blood of Christ, which by Consecration take the place of the former substances of bread and wine, and thus become present on the altar. The Church, therefore, does not wait until the change of substance has taken place to offer to the divine Majesty the divine Victim; no, she already now offers the real Victim to the divine Majesty, regarding, as it were, the approaching Consecration of the sacrificial elements as if already passed. From the liturgical prayers of the Offertory, therefore, we may by no means conclude that the offering of the elements of bread and wine is a real sacrifice or constitutes a part of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Only Jesus Christ, present on our altars under both species as symbols of His death, is the perpetual sacrifice of the Catholic Church, our real and true sacrifice.

## The Offertorium

The Offertory is introduced by the kissing of the altar and the mutual salutation: *Dominus vobiscum, Et cum Spiritu tuo*. By these words priest and people reciprocally express the desire that the Lord would assist them by His grace. The nearer the moment of the sacrifice approaches, the more urgently do we require assistance from above. The *Oremus*, which the priest then says, relates not merely to the Offertory chant, but also

to the whole series of prayers that are said during the Offertory. All present are thereby exhorted to unite with the celebrant to pray and make the offering in silent reverence.

After this the priest recites an Antiphon, which in the Missal is called *Offertorium*. The antiphon, originally with Psalm chant, exists because from Apostolic times until about the 11th century, it accompanied a procession of offerings at the Offertory. Remains of these are the offerings are still seen in the offering of a lighted candle to the bishop when receiving Holy Orders, as well as the presentation of two large lighted candles, of two loaves and two small casks of wine at the Consecration of a bishop and at the Benediction of an abbot.

The *Offertorium* (antiphon) at present is a shorter or longer verse, generally taken from the Psalms, sometimes from the other books of Holy Scripture, and only a few are composed by the Church herself. As to its contents, it constantly changes during the course of the ecclesiastical year, and gives expression to the dominant thought of the celebration of the day or Mass, and has, therefore, precisely the same significance and purpose as have the foregoing Introit and Gradual chants.

## The Sacrificial Elements

In anticipation of considering the rites and prayers of the Offertory, we will consider the Eucharistic species in themselves and their preparation, that is, the remote preparation for the Offertory. Wheaten bread (*panis triticeus*) and wine of grapes (*vinum de vite*) are the two elements which are necessary for the accomplishment of the Eucharistic Sacrifice; hence they are frequently called the matter of the Holy Sacrifice. This does not say that bread and wine are offered in the same way that the Body and Blood of Christ in their real sense are offered. As on the Cross, so on the altar Jesus Christ alone is our Victim. Our Lord and Savior, at the first celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, consecrated bread and wine and prescribed the use of these elements for the accomplishment of the unbloody sacrifice in >

## Spirituality

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His Church for all future time. There are certainly some reasons which show the suitability of these sacrificial elements.

Ears of wheat and bunches of grapes represent nature in her entirety, which is in a manner offered to God in the oblations. The offering of bread and wine then symbolizes also the

donation of all created things as required of man. In the bread and wine, man offers himself and all that he is. It may then be inferred that the separate species of bread and wine are suited to represent the separation of the Blood from the Body of Christ, the painful death of Christ, Christ's bloody sacrifice on the Cross.





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## Valid and Licit Matter

The Church requires that the matter used for the Consecration be not only valid, but, moreover, that it be permissible (licit) and as far as possible perfect. The bread destined for the sacrificial action must have been made of pure

wheaten flour that has been mixed with natural water and baked in the fire; and that the bread be pure, whole and fresh. The sacrificial wine of the vine must have been pressed from ripe grapes, fully fermented, not soured, nor settled, nor artificially composed; as to the color and taste, it may be red or white, strong or light, naturally >



sweet or tart. With regard to the color, it is to be remarked that, although red wine symbolizes more perfectly than the white the Blood of Christ, still white wine is to be preferred, because in its use at the altar cleanliness can more easily be observed. Another prescription respecting the sacrificial elements is that the bread is required to be unleavened and the wine to be mixed with a little water.

## Unleavened Bread

It is a strict ordinance of the Church for the priests of the Latin rite to use unleavened bread for the Holy Sacrifice, while for the united Greeks it is as strictly enjoined, according to an old custom, to consecrate only leavened bread. There are more numerous and better reasons for the usage prevalent in the Latin Church; hence, the rite of the latter is to be preferred. These reasons are principally the following:

The first is the example of Christ at the institution of the Eucharist. It was the Pasch, so it is generally admitted that Christ consecrated unleavened bread. Although the words of the Lord to His apostles and their successors commanding them to do the same as He had done at the Last Supper may not have been a formal command to consecrate unleavened bread, still it is evident that in so grave and sacred a matter the example of Christ should not easily be departed from.

The second is that, in Sacred Scripture, leaven is usually employed in an evil sense. According to the counsel of the apostle (I Cor. 5:7-8) we must purge out the old leaven of sin and passion, of wickedness and wantonness, that we may be "a new paste, as we are unleavened" and be enabled, when thus sanctified, to partake of the immaculate Flesh of the Eucharistic Victim. Unleavened bread is therefore a symbol of purity. Unleavened bread is also different in appearance and taste from the daily bread that we eat; hence it is suitable by its appearance to indicate that under the Eucharistic veil no ordinary bread, but the true and living bread of Heaven is concealed.

## Wine and Water

To the sacrificial wine a small quantity of natural water must be added, according to apostolic ordinance and the strict discipline of the Church. As this co-mingling is a holy ceremony, it must take place at the altar before the Oblation and be made in the chalice itself. Even a drop fulfills the purpose. This mixture is so important and, therefore, so strictly prescribed, that it would never be allowed for a priest to begin the Holy Sacrifice, if he foresaw that no water could be procured. Profoundly significant are the reasons that favor the fitness of this ecclesiastical ordinance and practice:

The first is once again the example of the Savior. That the Lord at the institution of the Eucharist consecrated wine mixed with water is beyond a doubt. And in favor of this is the circumstance that the addition of water to the wine at the Paschal meal was a permanent and universally practiced custom. The ancient liturgies and holy Fathers are unanimous in asserting that the Savior mingled the Eucharistic chalice with water. Thus from the time of the apostles the Church has everywhere and at all times faithfully followed after the example of her divine Master, and has ever consecrated only wine mixed with water. She regarded it, as St. Cyprian writes in his letter to Caecilius, as proper that at the mixing and offering of the chalice of the Lord, she should observe the true tradition thereof, in order that at His glorious and triumphant return He may find us adhering strictly to that whereunto He had exhorted us, observing what He had taught and doing what He had done.

The second is that by these two elements, wine and water, the blood and water which flowed on the Cross from the wound in the side of Christ may be represented. The piercing and opening of the Heart of Jesus, with the stream of blood and water issuing therefrom, is a wonderful event and at the same time one full of mystical meaning.

The third is that the co-mingling of wine and water in the chalice refers also to that intimate, mystical relationship existing between Christ and His Church. The drops of water which have been poured into the chalice no longer exist



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of themselves, but they are diffused in and incorporated into the wine, partaking of its qualities. Similar is the union of the faithful with Christ: by virtue of this union a change takes place in them and they are made partakers of the divine nature.

Finally, our rite is calculated to symbolize, moreover, that mystery by which the divine and human natures are united together in one person, namely, the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. This mystery is the root and source of all and of every supernatural relation of man with God in time and eternity.

## Their Reverent Preparation

To the matter of the sacrifice, already before its oblation, are due the most scrupulous care and the greatest reverence, as is evident from their more remote preparation. Let us recall the epoch of the Middle Ages, so full of faith. Then it was that devout princes and princesses esteemed it high honor to be allowed to prepare and to provide the bread and wine for the Holy Sacrifice. In religious houses the preparation of the sacrificial bread was even accompanied with solemnity and with a kind of divine service. Thus was it prepared in the world-renowned Benedictine Abbey of Cluny. Grain after grain was selected, carefully washed, and carried in a special sack to the mill by one of the most exemplary monks. There he first washed the two mill-stones, covered them from top to bottom with cloths, robed himself in white, and then, with veiled face so that his eyes alone were uncovered, he began to grind the wheat. With similar care the sieve was then washed and the flour sifted. To prepare the bread from the flour was the duty of the highest official of the monastic church; two monks and a recently admitted brother shared the holy labor with him. Being well-washed and clothed in white garments, they baked the hosts in a blessed vessel. This edifying ceremony illustrates that it is very proper that persons consecrated to God prepare with all devotedness and reverence the bread for the Holy Sacrifice, regarding this preparation as a work of love and of conscience.

## Conclusion

Denis the Carthusian (†1471) wrote, “Think of Him *to whom* you make your offering, that is, God the Father, Omnipotent and Eternal; the contemplation of His goodness, love, mercy, munificence, and beneficence should make the soul ascend with vehement love, and the consideration of His majesty and equity should fill the soul with reverential fear and humility.”



# A Bishop for All Seasons

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By Fr. Dominique Bourmaud

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“In this Feast of All Saints, we contemplate those saints who teach us to remain in Tradition, to do that very thing they did to become saints. We are repeating the same rites, the same gestures; we recite the same prayers. We believe in the same perennial catechism which they believed in, and that is what made them get to Heaven”—Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, November 1, 1980

This sermon is hardly going to raise an eyebrow. Yet, this was pronounced by a man who had been ostracized as tearing the Church’s unity, and received the epithet of “rebel,” “disobedient” to the pope, and “another Luther” leading souls into schism and error.

## The Iron Bishop

When Archbishop Lefebvre and his close friends realized that things were becoming heated at the Vatican II Council, he urged on to keep flying the flag of Tradition against the odds in the face of a powerful Modernist faction leading the Church astray. Some of the good bishops, like Bishop Adam of Sion (where Écône is located) were so disgusted at the turn of events

that they refused to return to the next conciliar session. When later, the new Mass was being implemented, 6,000 Spanish priests begged the pope for the privilege of keeping the Mass of all times and were promptly silenced under the magic word “Obey!” Nothing was heard from them anymore. Few were those who resisted and kept business as usual regarding the Mass and catechism and preaching which they had always





performed. Many priests and bishops lamented the wind of revolution and its deleterious effects, but most were too tired, too weak, or too frightened by their local bishops or superiors to oppose the new trends.

Not so with the Archbishop and his friends of the first hour. In the years of the Vatican II Council (1962-1965), he met Bishop de Castro Mayer, who would be present alongside him in 1988 for the consecrations of the four Society of Saint Pius X bishops, and other colleagues. They set up a small group of active bishops, pompously called the *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, who endeavored to slow down the Modernist train which was going full speed by the time of the second session. He also was instrumental in getting the Ottaviani Intervention which gave a critical analysis of the *Novus Ordo Missae* and urged Pope Paul VI to abstain from implementing it, but to no avail. At the age of retirement, he was prompted by seminarians to guide them towards healthy universities, which ultimately led him to start his own seminary and priestly society.

It might be interesting to see through the man and pierce the secret of his resilience in the face of opposition. Many people have argued that “Lefebvre was a proud man and a rebel,” “hungry for publicity,” “a personal enemy of Pope Paul VI.” However, this caricature of the man does not stand scrutiny and whoever has ever met the Archbishop in ordinary settings can testify that he was the most affable and effaced person, welcoming, paternal, eager to listen, and in no way an exuberant zealot ready to contradict an opponent. Some of the early friends did not have his gentlemanly manners and were much more abrupt in their words and actions towards the legitimate authorities. They might have reacted firstly and fiercely, but the Archbishop, knowing the authoritative weight which he carried in conservative circles, moved more slowly and cautiously.

This prince of the Church who, in his early years, had wished to be a brother and felt unworthy of the grace of the priesthood, had spent his life in the service of the Church, filled with an immense love of the spirit of Rome—*Romanità*—under whose auspices he spent his seminary years at the French seminary of Santa

Chiara. He devoted much of his life to black Africa as a Holy Ghost missionary, whether at the seminary preparing priests, in the bush evangelizing souls and building missions, or in broad travels as the Apostolic Delegate and counselor of Pius XII in African matters. His life hardly complies with the profile of a renegade and rebel. It rather reflects one whose whole life was to carry to the ultimate the yoke of the religious vows, first of all, obedience to his superiors.

True, some of those who knew him as a missionary in Africa and, later on, Apostolic delegate in Africa, do mention that he was stubborn, yet amenably so. Perhaps this was his way of applying two important aspects of the Church of whom it was said that she was intransigent because she believed, and tolerant because she loved. And this seems to apply to the Archbishop. When it was a matter of principles, he was unbending under whatever conditions as the staunch Doctor of theology that he was. But, in matters which were not dealing with the faith or morals, he was humane and ready to forgive and forget. And one never had the impression that he was pulling his weight around his confreres or subordinates. He was not only affable, he was discreet and effaced, always giving his interlocutors the chance to express their views before making known his decision.

Another aspect of his personality is that he had his entries into the Roman Curia with trusted friends. For he had been broken into all the intricacies of the Roman diplomacy, which was a useful tool in the hands of one who would be the *de facto* Defender of Tradition. We saw how, through perseverance and his knowledge of the men, he was able to obtain the green light from Bishop Charrière of Fribourg and Bishop Adam of Sion for his foundations of Fribourg and Écône. We saw how eager he was to get support from authoritative friends in Rome as well as at the Fribourg university. He would seek advice from Bishop de Castro Mayer on the delicate question of attendance at the New Mass in case of necessity. So many various actions which indicate a consummate prudence on his part before making a difficult decision.

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## Neither Heretic nor Schismatic

The prelate of Écône was profoundly a man of the Church, who suffered from the unjust suppression of the Society and from the censorships and condemnations to which he was subjected: "I have to admit that these persecutions have been harsh, severe, and continuous, not only from those in Rome, but also from all the bishops who have adhered to the Council, who have adhered to the novelties and who consequently can no longer tolerate Tradition to be continued in their churches."

Earlier on in 1974, as he set up his international seminary in Fribourg, and later in Écône, he soon faced pressure and rejection. The French episcopate called it "a wildcat seminary," and pressured Roman authorities under Paul VI and Cardinal Villot, Secretary of State, to suppress this seminary which was becoming successful, and was casting umbrage over their progressive agenda and empty seminaries. Then came the accusation of schism and attack on the pope, then the official suppression of the Society of Saint Pius X in May 1975, the year of Reconciliation, and the suspension *a divinis* the following year.

Yet, what is remarkable is that, although he felt betrayed, the Archbishop never turned bitter against the hierarchy. He had anticipated the difficulties, when he took his stand for the Mass of all times and the serious seminary formation. He was going counter to what everyone else had been doing ever since the Council. They would never pardon him his overt opposition to Vatican II nor his loyalty to Tradition, with a capital "T."

And so, while weathering the storm, he always had his suitcase ready to go to Rome, to appeal in favor of all the conservative priests and lay folks, whose voice he was at the Curia. He did not need to use a polished or sophisticated language. He simply brought out the latest facts and betrayals of the progressist faction, along with the all too obvious loss of faith and vocations. And, by contrast, he plainly presented the good fruits of those who preserve the discipline, the catechism and the Mass of all times. As the gentleman he was, he kept always the serene and respectful tone he was wont to use before his superiors, knowing full well that, if the problems came from

the Roman authorities, Rome alone could solve the latest Church crisis, and he, a poor retired Archbishop, did not have the solution. In these ongoing skirmishes and disputes, he never forgot that his Society was a branch of the Church, a part of a whole.

## A Paradoxical Bishop

He was also a magnanimous and inventive soul, prompt to propose solutions so long as it was for the good of Tradition and favored the return of Rome to the treasure Providence willed to entrust to her. In 1978, he begged John Paul II to say but a word, a single word, as Successor of Peter, as Pastor of the universal Church, to the bishops of the entire world: "Let them be; We authorize the free exercise of what century-old Tradition has used for the sanctification of souls."

What difficulty would such an attitude present? None. The bishops would be astounded to recover within a few years' time a surge of devotion and sanctification that they thought lost forever. He sought to obtain a form of exemption along the lines either of a prelature or of an ordinariate. As early as April 1979, in a letter to John Paul II, he wrote: "Would it not be possible to grant us the status that already exists for the *nullius* prelatures such as the Canons of St. Maurice in Switzerland, who have a bishop at their head, or the Mission of France, whose Superior is also a bishop?"

In the face of the conciliar revolution, Archbishop Lefebvre laid down a categorical refusal to all that could represent a danger for the Catholic Faith, the Catholic cult, and Catholic life. He pursued through thick and thin the work of restoration that Providence had entrusted to him: founding seminaries, opening priories, schools, supporting families and encouraging many religious congregations. It would be hard to say that he was not up to the task when he was brought forward to the TV, the radio, and the world media. He was simply the same man of simple manner, never departing from his plain way of expressing his message of fidelity to Tradition, explaining how it seemed paradoxical to be condemned for doing what all great



churchmen and saints had always done, and after being blessed under Pius XII, being now treated as a leper. Could we not think that it was his profound prayer life, and his intimate conviction of being a Catholic witness of the truth? Did not this allow him to remain himself and keep in composure while being confronted with the most powerful Church authority and in the face of the modern media?

Archbishop Lefebvre was no absent-minded university teacher lost in the clouds. He was never so much at ease as when drawing plans and checking properties, engaging recruits and meeting people. In this, he certainly gave the full measure of his exceptional talents of wise administrator. People who knew the mettle of great men said that he had the caliber of CEO of an international Company like Nestlé. Organizing, foreseeing apostolic labor where it was needed, judging his men and intricate situations, he was the leader who trusted his collaborators, but who expected also their mutual trust and transparency. And as his little foundation quickly spread worldwide, he had to navigate through the countless administrative difficulties. Yet he was never so happy as when he returned to Écône surrounded by his cherished priests and seminarians, the flower of his Society.

## In the Wake of the Founder

The founder of Écône passed away on March 25, 1991, 28 years ago. Despite the prediction that Tradition would quickly disappear, the Society has pursued its activities and expanded steadily and organically. Meanwhile, his disciples have pulled up their sleeves and gone on with the priestly business of teaching young and old, especially in school settings, providing the sacraments to the living and burying the dead—nothing to glory about as such, but nothing lasting is glamorous or glorious. But the disciples were also going to be a sign of contradiction as they were simply doing Church business as usual in a revolutionary setting which, by then, had gnawed at the heart of the Church.

No doubt, the various generations of priests and Superior Generals lacked the aura of sanctity,

of wisdom and experience of the Archbishop... how could they? But, all in all, their humble speech as well as their foremost wish to work for the benefit of the Church as a whole, was seen by the rank and file as keeping the founder's goal. They too only wished "to enthrone again Tradition as Queen in Rome," to quote the third Superior General, Bishop Bernard Fellay.

On the other hand, the world at large and much of the main Church hierarchy saw with a suspicious eye what was running counter to the mainstream effort of going on with the business of Vatican II's *aggiornamento*. Clashes were inevitable at that junction and this went on for many decades. It seems as if our little Society has known a respite from the Roman Pontiffs in the last decade with the removal of the episcopal excommunications and the legalized liberation of the Mass of all times. Moreover, with the erratic present Pontificate, many bishops, surreptitiously no doubt, have become aware of the present decomposition of the Church. Some are finally looking deeper into the causes of all this, causes which Archbishop Lefebvre had denounced ever since the close of the Council: religious liberty, ecumenism, and collegiality.

All in all, we are not going to relive the past: the feeling of horror before traitors, the urgency and impetus of the first bastions of Tradition in the 60s and 70s will not be resurrected again. But what we Traditionalists need to be aware of is of the intensity of the evil within the Church walls. We need to flee like the plague the pervading indifference, cowardice before the repeated attacks from all sides, the mutism of dogs turned chameleons ready to placate their audience rather than defend Christ's reign and the Church's rights.





# The Deposit of the Faith

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By a Benedictine Monk

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St. Benedict in the last sentence of the Prologue of his Rule speaks of the gift of faith. “In fact, in as much as we progress in the religious life and in our faith, our heart is dilated and we run in the way of the Commandments of God filled with the ineffable sweetness of love.” The most precious treasure in our life is the gift of faith by which we possess true charity. Our Lord says ‘For where your treasure is, there is thy heart also.’ Our heart will grow in charity if we conserve our faith in all of its purity.”

Fifty years of the work of the Archbishop, founding the Society of Saint Pius X, has been like an echo of the words of St. Benedict. He handed on the deposit of faith to a generation of Catholics seeking to survive in the midst of one of the most terrible battles of the history of the Church. His faith permitted him to run in the

ways of God with great love. He chose to place on his episcopal coat of arms St. John’s words “... we have believed in charity.” This charity that comes from faith gave him and the Society of priests that he founded, the courage to stand up and refute the terrible errors of Vatican II. In his last years, the Archbishop chose to summarize his life’s activity by writing on his tombstone: “*Tradidi quod et accepi*”—“I have handed on that which I also have received.” He received the gift of faith from Our Lord through the apostolic line of bishops and he maintained it in all of its purity in order to hand it on to future generations, helping us all maintain our souls in true charity.

In 1974 amidst the general confusion of the post-conciliar reforms, the Archbishop made his courageous statement of faith:

“We adhere with our whole heart, with our



whole soul to Catholic Rome, guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the necessary traditions to maintain this Faith, to the eternal Rome, the mistress of wisdom and truth.

“We refuse however, and have always refused to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies, which manifested itself clearly in the Second Vatican Council and after the council in all of the reforms, which were a result of it.

“All these reforms, in fact, have contributed and still contribute to the demolition of the Church, to the ruin of the priesthood, to the annihilation of sacrifice and of the sacraments, to the disappearing of the religious life, to a naturalistic and Teilhardian teaching in the universities, in the seminaries, in catechism, a teaching brought forth from liberalism and from Protestantism so many times condemned by the solemn magisterium of the Church.

“No authority, not even the most elevated kind found in the hierarchy, can oblige us to abandon or diminish our Catholic Faith, so clearly expressed and professed by the magisterium of the Church during 19 centuries” (Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Nov. 21, 1974).

These words of Archbishop Lefebvre were certainly intended to defend the deposit of the faith that he was handing onto his seminarians and future priests of Écône. In order to be attached to truth of the Eternal Rome, we must be detached from errors of the neo-Modernist Rome. He mentions only the Teilhardian error in particular as if all the others were somehow involved in this one. Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was a Jesuit priest and also a paleontologist who believed that the universe must be subordinated to his theory of

evolution. He used, in a certain way, his prestige as a scientist to confirm the supposed veracity of his theories as a philosopher and theologian. Protected by a shield of a false science, he proposed a new faith “in the god of evolution” to the Catholic Church. His erroneous system of evolutionary change influenced many other theologians of his time to apply the obligatory theory of change to every aspect of the Church. He essentially denied original sin and proclaimed universal salvation for all mankind. One of his more famous proclamations of this false faith is found in the book entitled *The Future of Mankind*. He speaks of the case of an atheist and a Catholic making their way to eternity and how both will obviously be saved:

“Take the two extremes confronting us at this moment, the Marxist and the Christian, each a convinced believer in his own doctrine, but each, we must suppose, fundamentally inspired with an equal faith in man. Is it not incontestable... that despite all ideological differences, they will eventually in some manner, come together on the same summit? ...Followed to their conclusion the two paths must certainly end by coming together: for in the nature of things, everything that is faith must rise, and everything that rises must converge” (T. de Chardin, *Future of Mankind*, pp. 198-199).

Perhaps one of the greatest gifts that the Archbishop has left to the Church is the Society of Saint Pius X. This small group of Catholics has continued to hand on the deposit of the Faith to fellow Catholics for the past 50 years by fighting vigorously against this new, false faith of universal salvation and by thus preaching true charity.



FILLIAS





It is the blessed Virgin Agnes' feast, for today she was sanctified by shedding her innocent blood, and gave to Heaven her Heaven-claimed spirit.

She that was too young to be a bride was old enough to be a martyr, and that too in an age when men were faltering in faith, and even hoary heads grew wearied and denied our God.

Her parents trembled for their Agnes, and doubly did they thus defend the treasure of her purity; but her faith disdained a silent hiding-place, and unlocked its shelter-giving gate.

One would think it was a bride hurrying with glad smiles to give some new present to her Spouse; and so it was: she was bearing to Him the dowry of her martyrdom.

They would fain make her light a torch at the altar of some vile deity they came to: "The Virgins of Jesus," said Agnes, "are not wont to hold a torch like this."

"Its fire would quench one's faith; its flame would put out my light. Strike, strike me, and the stream of my blood shall extinguish these fires."

They strike her to the ground and as she falls, she gathers her robes around her, dreading, in the jealous purity of her soul, the insulting gaze of some lewd eye.

Alive to purity even in the act of death, she buries her face in her hands; and kneeling on the ground, she falls as purity would wish to fall.

Glory be to thee, O Lord! And glory to Thine Only Begotten Son, together with Thy Holy Spirit, for everlasting ages.

St. Ambrose

# Bl. Leonid Feodorov: First Exarch of the Russian Catholic Church, Bridgebuilder Between Rome and Moscow

Fr. Paul Mailleux, S.J.

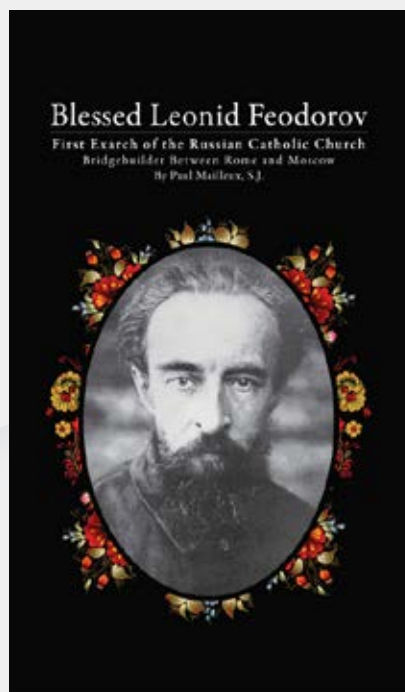
“The Holy Church will be very reluctant to allow a member of the Eastern Church to go over to the Latin Rite.”—Pope St. Pius X, spoken during a 1907 audience to the Russian Greek-Catholic priest Fr. Alexis Zerchanninov.

In the year 2017, Loreto Publications published a new edition of a book which sheds light upon the history and martyrology of what is by far the smallest of the Eastern Catholic Churches. Although the Russian Greek Catholic Church owes its very existence to Pope St. Pius X’s secret efforts to promote Reunion among the Orthodox, that it exists as a Church remains unknown even to Traditional Catholics who pray for Russia’s Conversion. To cure this unconscionable ignorance will be the purpose of this review.

According to Fr. Christopher Lawrence Zuger, “Vladimir (Volodymyr), Prince of Kiev, converted to Byzantine Christianity in 988 and subsequently introduced it as the State religion in Kiev, which determined the permanent orientation of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarussia toward Eastern Christianity. In 988, Byzantine Christianity was part of an unbroken and universal Catholic Church, in which Rome and Byzantium remained partners.”

Also, according to Fr. Zuger, “It is not possible to precisely date the separation of the Churches of Moscow, Kiev, and Rome. As was true in the Middle East, intercommunion continued on a local level for many years after the supposed “split” of 1054, and even after 1204. The drift was gradual, though anti-Latin Catholic feelings continued to deepen and intensify in the 14th century as the Russian Church (Byzantine Rite), strengthened its alignment with Constantinople.

“As early as 1207, Pope Innocent III asked the Kievan Government to unite with the Roman



Church. Dominican friars who came to minister to Latin Catholics in Kiev-Rus’ brought about enmity because of their attempts to Latinize the local Church and proclaim Roman supremacy. On the other hand, Archbishop Petro Akerovych of Rus’ took part in the Council of Lyons in 1247. Bishop candidates from the southwestern eparchies often went to the local Latin Catholic Archbishop to be ordained as bishops. The Latin Catholic residents—both clergy and laity—of Novgorod principality considered themselves and the Rus’ to be in full communion with each other until the Council of Florence in 1439.

“In 1441, Metropolitan Isidore of Kiev attempted to reunite the two Churches at Moscow; he was forced to flee for his life. From then on,



the Moscow Church was definitely non-Catholic, splitting from the Church of Kiev in 1461. The Mother Church of Kiev retained specifically Catholic leadership from 1458 until 1481, when Symon was installed as Metropolitan of Kiev and Rus' with the approbation of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

"In 1588, Constantinople yielded to Russian pressures and elevated Moscow to a Patriarchate, which confirmed the city's sense of being the Third Rome. Moscow became the first new Patriarchate since ancient times, surely a fulfillment of its destiny. By this time, the Schism between Rus' and Rome was complete. Indeed, many on both sides considered residents on the other side to be heretical."

Today, 30 holy persons are venerated as saints by both the Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches. From the time of Kievan Rus,' their number includes St. Olga and her grandson St. Vladimir, who is viewed as a Slavic Arthur or Charlemagne. Other Kievan saints include Boris and Gleb and Antony and Theodosius, who founded the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev. Twenty-one of these shared saints date from after the Sack of Constantinople by Latin Rite Crusaders in 1204. The most beloved of these is St. Sergei of Radonezh, who founded the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in the Moscow Province and who urged the Russian people to fight for their independence from the Mongol Horde. The list ends, of course, with the Russian Church's rejection of the Council of Florence.

On June 27, 2001, however, Leonid Feodorov, who had been appointed in 1917 as Exarch, or Administrator, of the Russian Greek Catholic Church, became the first ethnic Russian whom the Catholic Church has raised to the altar since the 15th century. Although six other Soviet-era martyrs and confessors of the Russian Greek Catholic Church will soon be joining him, Bl. Leonid's nearly successful efforts to convince Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow to reunite the Russian Orthodox Church to the Holy See make the Exarch a figure with special significance for Traditional Catholics. This is his story.

Leonid Ivanovich Feodorov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on November 4, 1879. While

his father's side of the family had only recently been liberated from serfdom, by the time of Leonid's birth his parents were solidly middle class and able to send their son to the same schools as the sons of the Russian nobility.

Although his widowed mother tried to instill in him a devotion to the Russian Orthodox Church, by the time Leonid was a teenager he had lost his faith in Christianity. The reading of Hindu and Buddhist *sutras* had caused him to become a nihilist who hoped for a career in the Tsarist officer class. Instead, the example of Fr. Constantine Smirnov, the Orthodox chaplain of Leonid's high school, brought him back to Christianity and made him decide to study for the priesthood in the Russian Orthodox Church.

Leonid's experiences in the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Academy, which more resembled a training college for civil servants than a Catholic seminary, nearly caused him to lose his Faith again. But then, the studying of the Councils and Fathers of the Church convinced him of the truth of Catholicism.

Leaving everything, he traveled to Rome in 1902 and was formally received into the Catholic Church at the Church of the Gesu. Although he had made a promise to the priest who received him that he would switch to the Latin Rite, Leonid soon realized that Pope St. Pius X did not wish him to do so. With the latter's permission, he chose to seek ordination as a Catholic priest of the Byzantine Rite. His ordination ultimately took place in Constantinople and was conducted by Metropolitan Mikhail Mirov of the Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church on Sunday March 26, 1911.

Upon the outbreak of war in 1914, Fr. Leonid returned to St. Petersburg only to have the Tsar's Governor General exile him to Siberia as a threat to "State Security." Obeying the Governor's decree, Fr. Leonid traveled to Tobolsk and remained there until riots in St. Petersburg forced the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in February 1917.

Meanwhile, the Provisional Government of the Russian Empire had also released Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, the Head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, from imprisonment in an Orthodox monastery for immoral priests in Suzdal. When the Metropolitan arrived in St. >

## Book Review

Petersburg, he decided to finally act upon the powers secretly delegated to him 10 years earlier by Pope St. Pius X.

In a Council of Byzantine Catholic priests and laity, the Metropolitan approved statutes and erected a Canonical Structure for what is now called the Russian Greek Catholic Church. He also appointed Fr. Leonid as the first Exarch, or Administrator, of all Russian Catholics of the Byzantine Rite. After the Council was concluded, the Metropolitan returned to his See in the Austro-Hungarian Crownland of Galicia.

At the same time, the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church, who had just been freed from the stifling power the House of Romanov had wielded over them, assembled and chose Bishop Tikhon Bellavin as the first Patriarch of Moscow since the 18th century.

For the first time since the 15th century, Orthodox Christians and Catholics of both Rites could openly practice their Faith without government interference or control. But it was not to last.

In October 1917, soldiers and sailors acting under the orders of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin attacked the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg and placed the ministers of the Provisional Government under arrest. Persecution of all religions began almost immediately.

Lenin viewed even the belief in a divinity to be “unutterable vileness,” and under his rule Christians of all denominations, practicing Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and even practitioners of seances found themselves treated as enemies of the State.

In the midst of this, Patriarch Tikhon, a man revered by Orthodox Christians, began to meet with Exarch Leonid Feodorov and openly discuss reunion between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Holy See. The Patriarch also urged the clergy and laity of the Russian Orthodox Church to meet with the Greek Catholics to discuss the same possibility.

Terrified of the possibility of their success, the Soviet State cracked down on both communions with a vengeance. Show trials resulted in the execution of the Orthodox bishop of St. Petersburg and many of the clergy and laity who

had participated in the discussions. Then, in a show trial that made headlines throughout the world, Exarch Leonid and the Latin Rite Hierarchy stood charged with counterrevolution. After defending the Catholic Faith before the kangaroo court as the whole world watched, Exarch Leonid Feodorov was sentenced to 10 years in the gulag.

Even while imprisoned in a concentration camp above the Arctic Circle, Exarch Leonid continued to operate as a priest and to spread the idea of Reunion among the Orthodox clergy who were imprisoned with him. After a series of releases in which he continued to violate the terms of his release by preaching the Catholic Faith, Exarch Leonid died in the city now known as Kirov on March 10, 1935. He was beatified during Pope John Paul II’s visit to Ukraine in 2001.

The last word is best left to Leonid Feodorov himself. In a prayer for the reunion of the Russian Church with the Holy See, he wrote:

“Cast a glance, compassionate Lord Jesus Our Savior, on the prayers and supplications of Your sinful and unworthy servants who in all humility kneel before You, and unite us all in the one and only Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Shine Your never-declining light into our souls. Dissipate the disorders of the Church. Grant us the grace to glorify You as a single heart and a single mouth so that everyone may recognize that we are Your true disciples and beloved children.

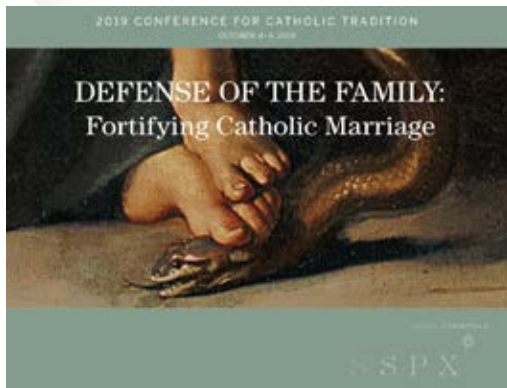
“Merciful Lord, fulfill Your promise without delay that there may be only one flock and a single Pastor in Your Church and that we may be worthy of glorifying Your Holy Name, now and forever. Amen.”

—Brendan D. King

# Defense of the Family

## Fortifying Catholic Marriage

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- Raising a Catholic Family Today: A Call to Hope – Rev. Fr. Gerard Beck, SSPX. School Superintendent
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- Conclusion: Sacramental Grace of Marriage a Source of Unlimited Hope in the Darkest Times of History – Rev. Fr. Jürgen Wegner, US District Superior, SSPX

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# A Rebours, En Route,

and Very Much on Target:  
Huysmans and the Apostolate  
of the Outsiders

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By John Rao, D.Phil. Oxon.

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*A Rebours* is the name of a novel written in 1884 by Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907). Its anti-hero, Jean des Esseintes, namely Huysmans in disguise, is disgusted with the dominant, arrogant, mid to late 19th century “positivist” vision, which insisted that only empirical, scientifically verifiable data could reveal the character of “nature.” His reaction is to abandon the spirit of the times, to go “against nature”—the English translation of the title—and to indulge in a decadent, self-indulgent, and ultimately cynical aestheticism, totally alien to the practical “blood and iron” concerns of the mainstream positivist world.

The author of *Against Nature* and the so-called Decadent Movement in literature he was central to creating, both traced their initial anti-Establishment inspiration to *Les*

*Fleurs du Mal* (1857) of Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867). But Baudelaire, a deep admirer of the counter-revolutionary thinker Joseph de Maistre, was ultimately encouraging more than simple decadence to counter the modern conception of progress. Hence, Huysmans, like others in the movement, soon realized that the fanciful excesses of the voluntary “outsider” *des Esseintes*, while an understandable response to the flatness of the “insiders” *Zeitgeist*, was not sufficient to deal with modernity’s sickness unto death. In fact, it was his own reflection upon *des Esseintes*’ weaknesses thus actually helped most to convert the very author who had created this anti-hero to Catholicism.

Huysmans traces his gradual rejection of an outsider’s childish, decadent, and nihilistic decision to live “against nature” as falsely

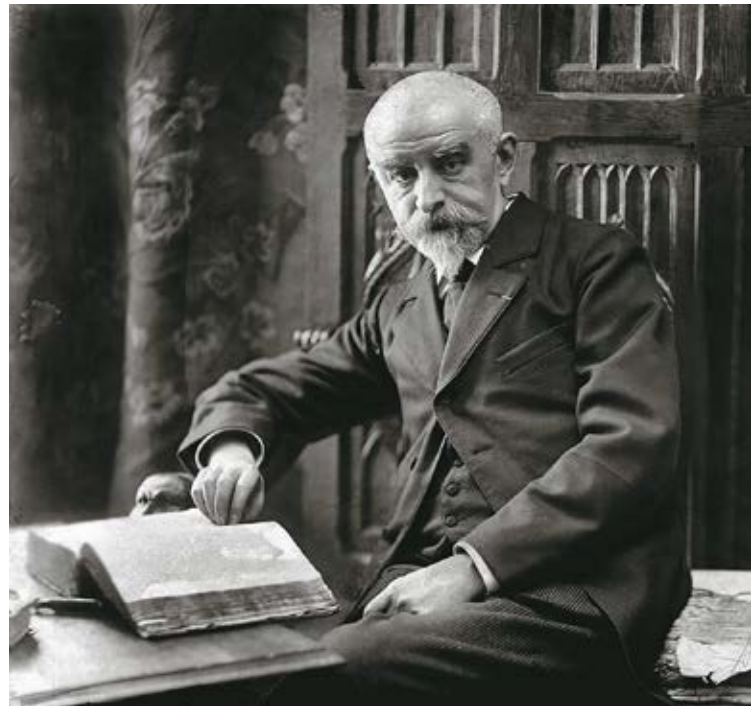


presented by the positivist with a life guided by a proper understanding of the natural world as taught by the Incarnate Word in four further novels: *Là-bas* (*The Damned*, 1891), *En Route* (1895), *La Cathédrale* (1898), and *L'Oblat* (*The Oblate*, 1903). Here, the main character, another autobiographical figure named Durtal, flees the dangerous flirtation with demonic forces to which his decadence has led him. He goes *en route* to a Catholicism whose full effect on nature is symbolized by the cathedral of Chartres, which inspires him to become an oblate in a Benedictine monastery. Durtal-Huysmans has come to realize that he lives in a good natural world flawed by sin where the believer has to accept the need for suffering and expiation on his way to eternal glory.

A man like Huysmans was always an outsider from the standpoint of many Catholics who did not grasp the different kind of path that people who started with Baudelaire and moved through Decadence and the subsequent Symbolist Movement had taken to arrive at the fullness of the Faith. Huysmans's truly "insider's" sense of the importance of orthodox belief and the dangers to which the dominant mentality exposed someone seeking to find and maintain it, can be seen in the alarmed warning regarding theological Modernism sounded in *The Oblate*, which was published the year of St. Pius X's election to the See of Peter.

Biographies such as Huysmans's and his fellow Decadent-to-Symbolist-to Catholic literary colleagues are of great interest to me for two reasons, the first of which is that they contribute to an understanding of something very important in the history of the Church: the apostolate of the outsiders. This apostolate has repeatedly proven to be an incomparable blessing to the Mystical Body of Christ, whose "insiders," clergy, religious, and laity alike, can often lose their way, if not in terms of "officially" rejecting the Faith and destroying the sacraments, certainly in the sense of neglecting, obscuring, and giving public scandal to them. It is at such moments that those who are "outsiders," whether through their lack of any power to correct what has gone badly wrong or their sincere longing for deeper knowledge of the substance of the Way, the Truth, and Life—

and not its disfigured image— have repeatedly entered onto the scene to fulfill their role. This outsider call to "jump start" a failing engine has the occupational hazard of being misunderstood and maltreated by the insiders who are not doing their own job properly. All one has to do is to look at the accusations of schismatic and heretical behavior hurled at the monks of Cluny in the 10th century and the initial reformers of the Renaissance and Catholic Reformation era to verify this fact.



Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907), Albert Harlingue/Roger-Viollet 1905

By now, it will be clear to all of my readers that the specific and incomparably important apostolate of the outsiders that concerns me here is the one that has been exercised for 50 years by the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX). Founded by a man who never dreamed that the term "insider" could possibly be denied him, this apostolate has unashamedly dedicated itself to teaching and doing nothing other than what Archbishop Lefebvre had had the highest official approval for preaching and promoting throughout his entire previous vocational career. Moreover, it has >

courageously maintained this commitment while being publically reviled for crimes the injustice of which only its predecessors in cleaning the ecclesiastical Augean Stables in previous periods of mainstream collapse could fully appreciate.

Other contributors to this issue will outline the many particular accomplishments of the Society in very detailed ways, being much more competent to do so as day-to-day laborers in its multiple fields of endeavor. It was only after reflecting on what it was that I might possibly offer in this regard that the “outsider” Huysmans came to mind, and the second reason why meditation upon his experience and that of so many others either following seemingly “untraditional” paths to the Faith or rediscovering its fullness in times of confusion and despair is important: the fact that Christian charity demands they be taken seriously and nurtured. It is the Society of Saint Pius X’s remarkable apostolate to so many other Catholics or would-be Catholics “on the outside looking in” in the gravest time of crisis in the history of the Church—an apostolate of an Outsider to the Outsiders—that I felt capable of recording for posterity. For there are many who are “of” the Society even though not “in” it.

This truth is driven home to me over and over again on the many occasions I attend Mass at St. Nicolas du Chardonnet in Paris. There are men and women in that congregation, very easily identified by their manner of dress and their failure to socialize with anyone after Mass is over, who are not SSPX “insiders.” Nevertheless, this parish is obviously their home; I recognize their faces from year to year, and they come because St. Nicolas is where they see the fullness of the Faith. They are indeed “in” this community of believers even if they are officially not “of it”; no one has turned them away, and it must be the case that this has kept them sane amidst the rubble of the Catholic Church and Catholic Christendom. The apostolate of the outsiders exercised by the SSPX has been exercised to and for them as well; there are concentric circles of outsiders for whom this exercise has been crucial whether the leadership and members of the Society are aware of it or not. Although no historical record is likely ever to associate

this community with the force responsible for keeping it spiritually alive, I can at least offer one bit of evidence for its existence: myself.

It must be a peculiar sensation to feel like an “insider” in one’s own particular narrow time and place, but that is certainly not a feeling that I have ever experienced. Although I had good parents, a happy home, a wonderful childhood, and a fruitful educational experience, I can remember very much always thinking of myself as something of an outsider peering at a scene that was just not quite right. What, exactly, was wrong with the picture was very unclear to my immature mind, but as my entrance into high school in the dreadful Year of Modernity called 1965 led to graduation in the still more ominous one of 1969 it was obvious that the disconnect between my own life and what “nature” as my time and place was offering me was becoming more and more pronounced. And the most distressing aspect of that disconnect was the fact that nothing in my personal makeup particularly disposed me to want to be or to enjoy being “on the outside looking in.”

Developments portending a still more thorough-going exile from the world around me were soon to follow. In the spring of 1970, my first years as an undergraduate, I was introduced by one of my history professors to the entire counter-revolutionary critique of modern civilization as a whole. Three years later came entry into Oxford and membership in an international fraternity of exiles from modernity determined to make our experience at that venerable institution an outsiders’ defiance of a *Zeitgeist* that looked as though it had the full backing of the clueless powers that-be, administrative and student. This was followed at the end of the decade by the beginning of my own university career, whose lack of connection with any current-day “insider” existence can be read by anyone with the stomach to do so in the novel posted on my Internet site entitled—appropriately enough—*Periphery. Caveat emptor!* It is the bitter, sardonic, product of an outsider engaged in a total war against the distorted nature of my times; someone at that point still regularly and intensely tempted to become another—but probably much more





mediocre version of—*des Esseintes*.

Thankfully, this pull to take the path *là-bas* was not uncontested. From the very outset of my university experiences, there were forces that were putting me *en route*. And a constant companion along the highway towards the true understanding of the meaning of nature and how to use it properly to reach eternal life in Christ, a fellow-traveler that has helped mightily to pick me up when too weary to go on or turn me around when ready to go astray has always been that Apostle to the Outsiders called the Society of Saint Pius X.

For an outsider I always have been. I only learned of Archbishop Lefebvre through Dietrich von Hildebrand and the Roman Forum, having been introduced to their own counter-cultural fight against heresy and the *Novus ordo Missae* in 1970 by the same university professor who acquainted me with the secular counter-revolutionary critique. I merely watched the opening of the seminary at Écône on a television screen from Oxford. It was simply as a representative of the Roman Forum that I was sent to meet and interview Monsignor Ducaud Bourget soon after the takeover of St. Nicolas and have my one and only glimpse of the Archbishop himself. It was curiosity alone that brought me to Ridgefield, Connecticut, immediately following its opening in 1979, to find out what the seminary training there was like. I was never a member of a Society parish and I am not one now.

Somehow, this has never stopped the Society from always welcoming and encouraging me. In fact, it literally saved me from my most serious *des Esseintes* relapse, which took place between 1985 and 1987, when my revolt against an ever-more wretched natural world led me entirely to abandon both my secular counter-revolutionary and traditionalist Roman Forum commitments. It did so by pressing me to come to lecture for it regularly on Church History and the problem of Americanism and re-awakening my desire to get back *en route*. And it has continued to do so with an openness which I credit more than anything else for maintaining my sense of self respect and the value of my historical discipline; keeping me, more than 30 years hence, from falling once again prey to the temptations of *là-bas*.

Openness to outsiders, according to the Society's enemies, is not a quality that it possesses. But openness is a virtue, as I believe Chesterton said, only when, like a mouth, it chomps down on something solid. At least, in my experience, the Society has demonstrated precisely this kind of openness encouraging valuable influences that it might not have considered part of its mission at the outset, and gaining strength in the process. Dare I suggest, in proof of this fact, that St. Mary's Kansas today is a quite different phenomenon, academically and culturally, than it was some decades ago? It has benefited from this proper openness, just as the Catholic world of the turn of the 20th century benefited from Huysmans and other outsiders like him.

But once again, these outside influences have proven their value in union with a Society committed to the *unum necessarium*: handing down the Tradition full and intact that was handed down to us, something which the mainstream Church is, to say the least, very confused about doing. Reveling in being outside and *avant garde* for their own sake, is, as Huysmans was well aware, a very dangerous game to play, with some of the would-be Catholics whom he knew who continued to indulge that narrow sport feeding the Modernist Movement he vigorously condemned. Outsiders have been a blessing for the Church only as a force working to enrich and strengthen Tradition, ultimately from the inside.

Let us hope that it will not take another 50 years *en route* for an event to take place that so many of us “of” but not “in” the Society fervently pray to be able to see: the day when the mission of Archbishop Lefebvre is vindicated, and the errors of an ecclesiastical *Zeitgeist* which has truly gone *a rebours* are targeted and chastised with what Dietrich von Hildebrand labeled “the glorious and liberating words—*anathema sit!*”

Letter to a Young Lady

# About Strength

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By Fr. Vincent Gelineau

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Dear Miss Agnes,

It certainly takes a lot of courage to remain a Christian today! In your nursing school, you feel very alone. The months pass and you find yourself measuring the difference between yourself and your classmates. You often speak to me about Isabel whom you get along with well, but that she is completely incapable of any supernatural reflection. You have the impression that you are wasting your time when you explain to her why you are against euthanasia. And you don't even dare speak to her about the Mass or pilgrimages, since you have so little hope of being understood.

This solitude weighs upon you. You aren't tempted by that which tempts your comrades. This life, without effort, without conviction, nourished by the little smartphone screen, seems

insignificant and pitiable to you. It remains, all the same, quite seductive. It is so easy to go along with the world, to follow the current, but it takes courage to keep wearing the elegant skirt that singles you out. Today, you understand better what human respect means. You look with compassion at your friends who have little by little crumbled under the pressure of the college atmosphere and who have lost the fervor of their younger years. In order not to meet opposition, they have hidden their Faith. They have found for themselves a passion for reality television. Little by little, they have removed themselves from prayer and the sacraments. The worst is yet to be feared.

You do not want anything like this for yourself. But you fear that the anonymous pressure of this indifferent class of people will dominate your



good resolutions. If at least, you had obvious enemies to deal with, things would be simpler. It suffers you to follow the example of the virgin martyrs, in particular that of St. Agnes, your patron saint.

But what can you do, faced with the creeping opposition that you are met with? Your dear friend Isabel could not suspect how much you are annoyed by her intellectual inertia, she who repeats often that each person has their own truth. This permits her to avoid each and every serious question. With the demission of the intelligence which refuses to bear judgment and the nullity of the will, which is captivated by the latest news, the idea of the virtue of force has

but then perhaps you will have the joy of awakening a soul of good will and to help him to know the Catholic Faith. In effect, your classmates who seem to be hermetic to all supernatural reflection cannot help but to admire you. Some have even made the effort to come to your grandmother's funeral. Do not be discouraged; your good example will bear fruit. Do not be a mediocre and contemptible soul under the pretext of false prudence. Do not follow your shy natural bent, but continue to be a good example which comforts the weak and touches those who are plunged in error and vice.

Remember your patron saint, who, regardless of her young age, kept all of her constancy when



completely disappeared from circulation and heroism seems to be out of place today. In fact, your comrades, even though very nice to you, won't understand anything when you explain to the professors why you are resolutely opposed to abortion. This indifference discourages any frank reaction. You will see there, surely, a trap inhabited by the demon: wanting no more Christians, he doesn't want any more martyrs or open persecutions. He is contented with anesthetizing intelligences and wills so they won't be able to react and thus lose their souls. This gentle persecution is worse than the first, because it doesn't make martyrs, but only apostates.

But do not fear. It isn't sure that you won't die a martyr. You will have to suffer in being overlooked, in being put in a separate category,

faced with a tyrant who menaced her virtue and her life. Delivered miraculously from the pains of fire, she chided the executioner who hesitated in giving her the death blow: "What are you doing? What are you waiting for? What is holding you back? Kill this body which can be seen by men and which I do not want to be seen, and let the soul live, which is agreeable to the eyes of God." Let this remembrance help you to fight against human respect, which all too often neutralizes the best of resolutions. It doesn't help to uselessly provoke hostile reactions. But do not forget that you are of the family of saints and martyrs. Like them, your soul is nourished with solid doctrine and elevated by sanctifying grace. Dare to live as a true Catholic!

Translated from the French by Associate Editor Miss Jane Carver.

# Who Is My Child?

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By the Sisters of the SSPX

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A mother leans over her baby's bassinet. "There's my little man whom I will love, take care of, and educate for the next 20 years. Who are you, little Peter, you whom God has confided to me?" In effect, this is a fundamental question. Who is this, this little man? From the response to this question depends the choice of education he will receive. If one responds, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, that a child is good by nature, one will educate him according to the standards of our current society. The result is, alas, not very compelling.

## From the Senses to the Intelligence

St. Thomas Aquinas borrowed from the Greek

philosopher Aristotle when said that man is a "reasonable animal." His mother protests "Little Peter is not an animal!" No, of course not! There is an abyss between a kitten and a man, the abyss of the intelligence. But little Peter still has a body and senses, and it is this that first solicits the attention of the parents; one must give him physical care, but since the very beginning, there are good habits which must be communicated to him. These are the first foundations of education: to have a regular routine for meal times and bed time, to learn to obey without crying, not to touch electrical outlets—and if he does, there will be a little smack on his hand—to sit up straight in a chair without squirming, *etc.*

It is of course understood that we won't hold his development there because his intelligence and will must be formed. But it is only little by



little that the intelligence will blossom. It is only little by little that Peter will acquire language, which is the tool of thought, a tool which will be perfected from infancy all the way to the philosophical dissertations of his senior year. It is only little by little that he will acquire the habit of judgment and reflection. He will have many sessions of trial and error before arriving at thoughts which are all his own. This is why it is necessary to adapt the education to the capacity of the child's comprehension. In the beginning, it is the parents who will think for the child, because he is still incapable. It is useless to tell little Peter at three years old that he must eat his green beans because they contain the vitamins which are indispensable for his growth. It is much simpler: "Peter, eat your green beans. If not, you won't have any dessert." Period. The rest is superfluous conversation. That which Peter is capable of understanding at this age and that which he has need of learning are not the principles of nutrition, but that it is the parents who command and the child who obeys. Later, he will understand that it is all for his good.

Obviously, the more that Peter grows, the necessary explanations will need to be given to him. An adolescent does not obey simply because his father said so. But what he needs are explanations, not justifications. Authority does not have to "justify" in detail how well-founded are its orders. The father and the mother give their orders because they are the parents, because they are responsible before God for the children entrusted to them. But in order for these orders to be obeyed by the children, it is necessary to give them certain reasons, certain circumstances which surround them, in order that the child, who will become an adult in his turn, has learned to guide himself. "No, Peter, you are not permitted to spend the weekend with Kevin. There is a whole collection of video games that you would surely play. And you know very well what worth is found in those games. But you can invite him over to our house. He would be able to benefit well from a true family ambiance. A friendship's worth is measured by the good that one exchanges." This example would be the occasion for a serious discussion from the father with his growing son about true friendship.

Be careful! Even if he doesn't yet know how to express himself well, the intelligence is still there and the small child understands what one says much more than one might believe. No commentaries should be made between friends about the children in front of the children, because they will surely be listening without appearing to do so. "Oh, dear friend, your little Agatha is so cute with her little curls and blue eyes! And you even made her dress! She is just so adorable!" Behold! Those comments have not fallen on deaf ears...alas! >



## From Sin to Grace

But we have not yet exhausted the entire description of the little man in saying that he is a reasonable animal. Peter is a son of Adam, marked by the consequences of original sin. It is also since his baptism that he has been elevated to being a child of God, elevated to the supernatural state by sanctifying grace and destined for eternal life.

Since little Peter has been marked by original sin and the tendency to evil that is to follow, this is seen, alas, rather early in his life; it is a truth of experience. The first tantrums manifest themselves quickly. From as young as six months old, the child is perfectly capable of making difficulties which are completely unreasonable: Emily cries the moment her mother puts her into her crib; one absolutely has to pick her up and she only sleeps when she is overcome by tiredness. John is very hungry for dessert, but not at all for spinach; he is extremely tired when it is time to clean his room, learn his lessons, or help his mother, but he finds all of his vitality again to play football or tease his little sister; there is an incredible capacity to invent lies to make himself sound important, *etc.* No, it doesn't matter what Rousseau said, man is not born naturally good. It would be an absolute crime to let a child do exactly what he wants when he wants. Poor little modern children who have never had anything refused to them and who are nothing more than the object of their impulses, of their untamed passions! Having become adults, they will clearly see that their passions destroy them (passion of laziness, impurity, ambition, alcohol, pleasure...), but enchained by 20 years of bad habits, they do not have the strength to resist themselves.

Luckily, the grace of God is strongly present in the little soul of the baptized, in order to heal, little by little, all of these bad tendencies and to elevate to the highest heights his destiny of a future inhabitant of paradise. A baptized child opens himself very quickly and spontaneously to the entire supernatural universe. Readily, he will blow a kiss to Jesus before bedtime, a sign of his future night prayers. There is, within himself, an entire supernatural universe where he dives head first. The stories of Jesus and Mary capture the soul opened by grace to the divine mysteries.

The ardent practice of "the good" makes for a complete other motive, and how much more enthusiastically will the young soul respond to such a request as: "What are you going to do this year during Lent to console Jesus who is so sad because of our sins? Will you make an effort to clean your room every evening without me having to ask you? This will make Jesus happy." To aid the missionaries, children can deprive themselves of treats and send the corresponding money, with the aid of their parents, for this or that mission in a poor country. To convert sinners or deliver the souls in Purgatory, children are capable of very great generosity. It is up to the adults to spark, encourage, and channel them. At baptism, this life of faith plants the seed in the soul and it needs abundant education to fully develop: good examples, family prayers, religious instruction, the reception of the sacraments...

Torn between so many contrary tendencies (animal...but intelligent; sinner...but supported by grace), how are we surprised that the soul of a child sometimes resembles that of a battlefield, where so many opposing tendencies clash? Here is where the entire balance of education is found. One realizes, after having become an adult, that a little man must fully comprehend that he is a general charged with combat. He must take to himself the proper account of his struggles during life in order to let grace triumph so that he becomes a saint.

Translated from the French by Associate Editor Miss Jane Carver

# Q&A

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By Fr. Juan Carlos Iscara, SSPX

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## Why is it only in Luke's account that we learn of the "good thief"?

Could you please explain the variations between the accounts of Our Lord's Passion, as written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke—specifically regarding the thieves crucified with Our Lord. Why is it only in Luke's account that we learn of the "good thief" but in the other two accounts both thieves are said to have reviled Our Lord? Isn't this a contradiction which

undermines the divinely-revealed character of the Gospels?

The Evangelists, each one of them, had a particular intention when writing their Gospels, and consequently they focused on particular aspects of Our Lord's life and teachings. Their differences are not discrepancies or contradictions, but only highlight their different approaches to the story. Thus, even when relating the same events, sometimes they focus on one detail and omit others, or they reorder the succession of events and sayings, or they refer >

to different moments of the same event.

That explains away the apparent “contradiction.” Initially, both thieves insulted and mocked Our Lord, as reported by St. Mark and St. Matthew. But then, as reported by St. Luke, one of the thieves, hearing Christ’s words on the Cross and seeing His forgiveness towards those who had crucified Him, acknowledged that Our Lord was indeed the Messiah, repented of his previous insults and asked—and received!—Christ’s forgiveness.



## What is the history of the Apostles’ Creed? Was this also approved by a Council?

We know the Nicene Creed was agreed upon and promulgated by the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople. What is the history of the Apostles’ Creed? Was this also approved by a Council?

The Apostles’ Creed is a brief summary of the principal doctrines of our Faith. Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410) relates a tradition according to which the apostles, before separating to follow their missions among different nations and peoples, agreed to write down a summary of Christian doctrine, to be used as a basis for their teachings and as a rule of faith for the believers, each apostle having composed one of the 12 articles of the Creed. This explanation, taken up by St. Ambrose in the 6th century, prevailed during medieval times, but in the Council of Ferrara (1438) it came as a surprise when Mark Eugenius, the Greek archbishop of Ephesus, declared that the Eastern churches did not know the formula of the Creed used by the Roman church.

In fact, its essential contents date from the apostolic age, but its present form developed gradually in the Latin Church and its history is closely related to the development of the baptismal liturgy and the preparation of the catechumens. From the times of the apostles it was the practice of the Church to require an explicit profession of faith in the fundamental Christian doctrines. The candidates for baptism had to learn it by heart and recite it in the presence of the whole congregation as an integral part of the liturgy.

The Roman rite of baptism, as described in the *Apostolic Tradition* of St. Hippolytus, contains a Creed of eight Trinitarian and Christological articles: “I believe in God, the Father Almighty. / I believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, / who was born of the Virgin Mary, / and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was dead and buried, / and rose again the third day, alive from the dead, / and ascended into Heaven, / and sits at the right hand of the Father, / and will come to judge the living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, in the holy Church, / and the resurrection of the body.”

By the end of the 2nd century, Tertullian knew this Roman Creed and attested to its composition long before his times. From the 3rd century onwards, it spread until it prevailed everywhere in the Western Church.

The present text is first to be found in the writings of St. Cesarius of Arles, about the middle of the 6th century. It differs from the previous versions chiefly by reason of a few additions (descended into Hell, the communion of saints, life everlasting). Although this liturgical and catechetical monument, in its present form, was not elaborated or specifically approved by a Council, it is nonetheless the infallible expression of the daily teaching of the Church since the apostolic times.







## Is there such a thing as baptism of desire for the unborn?

In quite a few pro-life websites and publications the practice of the “baptism” of the unborn is promoted. Others, equally prompted by pious thoughts, argue that aborted babies may receive the grace of the baptism of desire, a desire supplied by well-meaning strangers. Unfortunately, these proposals do not correspond to Catholic doctrine.

First of all, sacraments are only for living human beings, not for angels or separated souls. Only those who are *in statu viae*, “in the wayfaring state,” *i.e.* alive in this world, are capable of receiving grace through the mediation of a sensible sign, the matter and form of the sacrament. In consequence, a dead child, an aborted baby, cannot receive this sacrament.

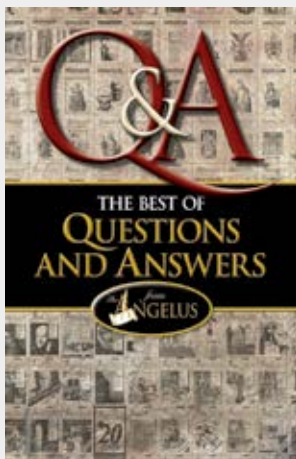
In the early Church, there were heretics and even misguided Catholics who attempted to “baptize” dead catechumens, by making a profession of Faith on their behalf and then sprinkling the bodies with baptismal water. This practice was condemned by the third Council of Carthage in 397.

Secondly, we must rightly understand what baptism of desire is. St. Augustine stated that the actual reception of baptism may be supplied

only in two ways, by martyrdom and by faith and conversion of heart (*De Baptismo contra donatistas*, IV, 22, 25). This means that an unbaptized person who, without fault on his part, is unable to receive sacramental baptism, may still receive sanctifying grace through an act of perfect charity or of perfect contrition for sin, acts which, in themselves, at least implicitly, include the desire to receive the sacrament, inasmuch as they include the desire to fulfill all the commands of Christ.

Pius XII, in his address to Italian midwives in October 1951, clearly stated that such an act of love is sufficient for the adult to obtain sanctifying grace and to supply the lack of baptism. But to the as yet unborn and to the newborn, this way is not open. In the present economy of salvation, apart from sacramental baptism, there is no other way to communicate that life to the child who has not attained the use of reason. That is exactly what St. Thomas Aquinas taught: before receiving sacramental baptism, infants in no way have Baptism in desire; but adults alone may have (*Summa Theologica* III, q. 73, a.3). Therefore, no, there is not a thing as baptism of desire for the unborn.

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Step softly, under snow or rain,  
To find the place where men can pray;  
The way is all so very plain  
That we may lose the way.

Oh, we have learnt to peer and pore  
On tortured puzzles from our youth,  
We know all labyrinthine lore,  
We are the three wise men of yore,  
And we know all things but the truth.

We have gone round and round the hill  
And lost the wood among the trees,  
And learnt long names for every ill,  
And served the mad gods, naming still  
The furies the Eumenides.

The gods of violence took the veil  
Of vision and philosophy,  
The Serpent that brought all men bale,  
He bites his own accursed tail,  
And calls himself Eternity.

Go humbly...it has hailed and snowed...  
With voices low and lanterns lit;  
So very simple is the road,  
That we may stray from it.

The world grows terrible and white,  
And blinding white the breaking day;  
We walk bewildered in the light,  
For something is too large for sight,  
And something much too plain to say.

The Child that was ere worlds begun  
(..We need but walk a little way,  
We need but see a latch undone...)  
The Child that played with moon and sun  
Is playing with a little hay.

The house from which the heavens are fed,  
The old strange house that is our own,  
Where trick of words are never said,  
And Mercy is as plain as bread,  
And Honour is as hard as stone.

Go humbly, humble are the skies,  
And low and large and fierce the Star;  
So very near the Manger lies  
That we may travel far.

Hark! Laughter like a lion wakes  
To roar to the resounding plain.  
And the whole heaven shouts and shakes,  
For God Himself is born again,  
And we are little children walking  
Through the snow and rain.





Questions  
Complex & Simple  
Answers

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Part One: Prof. Felix Otten, O.P. and C.F. Pauwels

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Editor's Note: This article is the first in a series of straightforward responses to frequently encountered questions and objections concerning the Catholic Faith. The questions and answers are adapted from Professor Felix Otten, O.P. and C.F. Pauwels O.P.'s *The Most Frequently Encountered Difficulties*, published originally in Dutch in 1939.

## How can there be a God if there is so much misery in the world?

It is common to hear people contend that there is no God because the world is full of misery. Whether man-made or the product of natural disasters (tornadoes, volcanoes, earthquakes, *etc.*), misery is everywhere. Then there are as well the miseries caused by starvation, economic inequality, and conflicts between peoples and nations.

We must have a very strange idea of God to conclude from such facts that there is no God: as if God should be ready everywhere to take away

the harshness and cruelty of life. Certainly, there are atrocities in nature, but that is a necessary consequence of the interacting parts of nature, which is part of creation and therefore limited and finite in perfection. Parasites, for example, live and enjoy life at the expense of others. But the animals on which they parasitize often live and also enjoy life. The pain caused by the parasites can be borne by them; otherwise they could not live.

All forces of nature are good for the whole; there are no purely destructive forces of nature that do nothing but destroy. Earthquakes, fire-spitting mountains, *etc.* are common in nature



as a whole and have a useful purpose in that whole. But something that is good for the whole can sometimes be harmful to a component in its elaboration. And so the forces of nature can sometimes be harmful to humans, who, after all, also belong to nature and are part of that.

The slaughter of men in wars and similar miseries, in which the free will of the people plays a role, are not due to God, but to those who do not keep His laws. God is our Father, for sure. But we, the children of God, are immature children and sometimes very degenerate children. We are free beings who can misuse our freedom. When we misuse that freedom we act *against* God's will and such a misconduct should never be used as an indictment of God. And that misconduct also brings poverty, inequality, and so forth.

Some may retort, "But can God just allow that misconduct? He can prevent it!"

God can allow that. He need not stop the disasters that result from misconduct. He is not obliged to restore what spoils man. If He gives people the glorious gift of freedom, man must not demand that He prevent any abuse thereof through special intervention.

Moreover, it must be borne in mind that natural evil in the world (not moral evil, namely sin; but suffering, disasters, wars, and poverty, *etc.*) still has something good in it: as a punishment for moral evil, as a means to repent, as a training school for virtue, *etc.* Therefore, God may even allow this kind of evil in a certain sense for our correction from the path of moral evil.

## Why did God create people who are lost and who will be damned?

Another common contention is that God, Who is all-knowing, knows who will be lost. This leads some to wonder, "Then why did God even create these people?" After all, Christ Himself says of Judas: "It would have been better if this person had not been born" (Mt. 2:6 & 2:4).

If God would designate one man for damnation

and the other for salvation, without regard to man's actions, then this was indeed a major difficulty. But it is something very different. God knows beforehand who will be lost and who will be saved; but He also knows that no one is lost through no fault of their own!

God wants all people to be saved. Christ died for all people. So, all people can be saved on their own. That some do not "get it" is due to the misuse of their will, that is, due to their voluntary sins. God does not condemn the people. When the matter is viewed properly, it is clear that the sinner condemns himself.

There is nothing to the argument that God created men who cannot be saved. That God allows, that is, does not prevent a man from being lost through his own fault is also not proof against God's goodness and wisdom. For we must never forget that the main goal, the absolute goal of creation, is God Himself, namely the glory of God.

The happiness of people is only the secondary goal. But because people are endowed with reason and therefore free creatures, this secondary goal is only a conditional goal: that is, it is only achieved on condition that the people do not go against God's intention with regard to their happiness by abusing their free will. Due to this freedom, people can throw away their happiness themselves.

God will not drag someone kicking and screaming into Heaven.

## Can God repent of something that He has done?

A final problem we will deal with is whether God can repent of something He has done. After all, we read in Scripture that God says: "I am sorry I created man."

We read these words in the Book of Genesis 6:6. They were spoken by God in response to the many and great sins of men before the flood. And if they are understood correctly, they are not at all contrary to God's Providence, nor to God's immutability. God is all-knowing: past, present, and future are open to Him. He oversees >

# Catechism

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everything in one infinite act of His divine mind. God is also absolutely unchangeable in His decisions because He is infinitely perfect.

So, God can never have “regret” about anything for that implies an imperfection, *i.e.*, a lack of prior knowledge where something turns out differently than calculated. As such, from eternity God knew that people would sin; and He had also decided from eternity to punish those sins by the flood.

But the writers of the Biblical books were people who wrote for other people, and so they expressed themselves in a human way. For example, these authors also speak about the eyes and hands of God, although God has neither eyes nor hands. And if it is said in the Bible that God was sorry to have created man, then the writer is using this human saying not to express God’s changeability, but to show clearly God’s anger at those who sin. It is therefore a metaphor with which we humans, with our limited mind and our corresponding expressions, speak about God in a human and imperfect way.

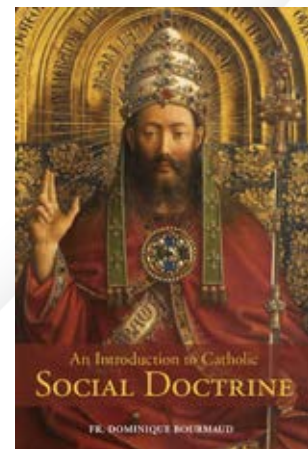
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Bishop Schneider on the Problem of a

# Heretical Pope

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By Fr. Jean-Michel Gleize

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On March 21, 2019, the “Blog de Jeanne Smits” published a French translation of a long text by His Excellency Bishop Athanasius Schneider published in English the day before on *Rorate-Caeli.blogspot.com*. The French journalist presented her translation under the suggestive title “On the Question of a Heretical Pope: Bishop Athanasius Schneider Sheds Light on the Debate.” Bishop Schneider seeks to bring everything down to one specific question: “How to handle a heretical pope, in concrete terms?”<sup>1</sup> The question is considered on the practical level. This level must include not only necessary and absolute principles, but also variable and relative circumstances. The difficult part is putting each of the two in its proper place, in a truly heavenly perspective.

## Schneider’s Principles and the Society’s

Are Bishop Schneider’s considerations inspired by the same principles as those held by Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX)? Without denying the grave harm heresy represents for the Church or underestimating the importance of the integrity of the Faith, the prelate rather insists upon a different aspect of the question raised by the supposed heresy of the pope. In his eyes, the opinion according to which the Church has an authority over the pope and in the event of a heresy on his part could depose him or at least declare his demise manifests “the unhealthy attitude of a pope-centrism, of *papolatria* ultimately.”

He says those who hold this opinion make the pope “a kind of half-god, who cannot commit any errors, not even in the realm outside the object of papal infallibility.” It is “an indirect or subconscious





identification of the Church with the pope or [a way of] making the pope the focal point of the daily life of the Church. This means ultimately and subconsciously a yielding to unhealthy ultramontaniam, pope-centrism, and papolatry, *i.e.* a papal personality cult." According to Bishop Schneider, this opinion "originated only in the High Middle Ages, in a time when pope-centrism arrived at a certain high point, when unconsciously the pope was identified with the Church as such." And he sees it as "the root of the mundane attitude of an absolutist prince according to the motto: 'L'État, c'est moi!' or in ecclesiastical terms: 'I am the Church!'"

This truly astonishing way of presenting the issue reveals a viewpoint inherited from the "*nouvelle théologie*."<sup>2</sup> With all due respect to Bishop Schneider, *papolatry*, *pope-centrism*, and *ultramontaniam* are nothing but words, words that have been overused and misused for the purpose of discrediting the best theological tradition<sup>3</sup> that was careful to define the power of the pope in keeping with the initial elements offered by divine Revelation. What is more, the Church cannot be defended against the pope, and the difficulty that the hypothesis of a pope tyrannizing the Church presents for ecclesiology must be resolved in the light of the definition of the Papacy, for a good definition always includes the answers to the objections that may be raised against it. This definition is contained in the sources of divine Revelation and in the constant teachings of the Church's Magisterium that explain it.

### The First Principle of Ecclesiology

The first principle of all ecclesiology is expressed in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, (16:18). St. Peter and all his successors, the bishops of Rome, are the "rock" on which Christ unceasingly builds His Church, and by this we are to understand that the pope, as the successor of St. Peter, is the Vicar of Christ, and as such, the head of the entire Church; the primacy, that is to say, the power of supreme and universal jurisdiction, is his. Such is the constant and unanimous teaching of Tradition, and the first Vatican Council and Popes Leo XIII in his encyclical *Satis Cognitum* and Pius XII in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis* give the fully developed expression of it. Leo XIII clearly declares that this truth is not a medieval exaggeration and he proves his point by quoting the Fathers of the Church: "These declara-

tions," he says, "were preceded by the consent of antiquity which ever acknowledged, without the slightest doubt or hesitation, the bishops of Rome, and revered them, as the legitimate successors of St. Peter. Who is unaware of the many and evident testimonies of the holy Fathers which exist to this effect?"<sup>4</sup>

Theologians have done nothing but repeat and develop these divinely-revealed teachings. The Church therefore is indeed, in a certain sense, in the pope as in her head, according to the expression attributed to St. Ambrose: *Ubi Petrus, ibi et Ecclesia*, in the sense that, as Leo XIII recalls, "the Roman Church is the efficient cause of unity in the Christian commonwealth."<sup>5</sup>

### The Pope's Jurisdictional Powers

What is more, considering the pope as the supreme head of the entire Church on the level of his jurisdictional power properly speaking does not lead these theologians to make of him a "half-god," infallible in all his actions on the *different* level of his magisterial power. Cajetan, for example, declares that outside of the limits of a judgment passed with authority on a matter of Faith, the pope does indeed "risk being mistaken more than all the rest of the Church in matters of Faith."<sup>6</sup> It is true that, according to the most common opinion of the theologians, the simply ordinary papal Magisterium is considered as being habitually unerring, but that is not the same thing as infallibility in the strict sense of the word.

Remember, too, that the pope is not alone. The ordinary teaching of the entire hierarchy of the Church, by the very fact that it is constant and unanimous, is an infallible sign, for it is guaranteed against any error thanks to the "charism of truth, which certainly is, was, and always will be in the succession of the episcopacy from the apostles. The purpose of this is, then, not that dogma may be tailored according to what seems better and more suited to the culture of each age; rather, that the absolute and immutable truth preached by the apostles from the beginning may never be believed to be different, may never be understood in any other way."<sup>7</sup>

This is a different type of divine assistance, quite distinct from the charism "of truth and unerring faith" granted to St. Peter and his successors and described in the constitution *Pastor Aeternus*.<sup>8</sup> >

With this other type of assistance, the entire hierarchy of the “Church teaching,” not only the pope, but also all the bishops with him and under him, enjoys this “charism of truth” thanks to which the “Church taught” can trust the ordinary teaching of the Magisterium of the entire episcopate without any risk of error in their beliefs.

But above all, as we recalled earlier, it is the very definition of the papacy that provides the principle that will resolve the present difficulty. The Pope, successor of St. Peter, is essentially and by definition the “Vicar of Christ.” That is the meaning of the Gospel metaphor in which St. Peter (and with him each and every one of his successors) is compared to a “foundation” on which Christ builds His Church. Once again, it is Leo XIII<sup>9</sup> who tells us how we are to understand this expression, referring, as usual, to the teachings of the Fathers of the Church:<sup>10</sup> “When he heard ‘thou art a rock,’ he was ennobled by the announcement. Although he is a rock, not as Christ is a rock, but as Peter is a rock. For Christ is by His very being an immovable rock; Peter only through this rock.<sup>11</sup> Christ imparts His gifts and is not exhausted. ...He is a rock and constitutes a rock.”

## The Foundation of the Church

The Pope is the foundation of the Church only by participation, and in dependency on Christ, who is this foundation by essence; that is the meaning of the consecrated expression in which we confess as a truth of the Faith that the pope is the “Vicar of Christ.” Leo XIII’s predecessor, Pope St. Leo the Great, expressed the same idea when he placed on Our Lord’s lips the following words to St. Peter: “Although I am the indestructible rock, I the cornerstone who make both things one, I the foundation on which no one can lay another, you also are rock because you are made firm in my strength. What belongs properly to my own power you share with me by participation.”<sup>12</sup>

This idea was developed by Fr. Calmel in a beautiful text whose unequaled depth, along with the wise decisions of Archbishop Lefebvre, should serve Catholics of our days more than ever as food for thought and provide them with the true answers to the true questions. The first truth this text begins by recalling is the very one that Bishop Schneider’s considerations unfortunately tend to downplay: “There is no Church without an infallible Vicar of

Christ who enjoys the Primacy.” This truth is the divinely-revealed principle that should serve as the basis for any theological considerations on the Church. “Jesus Christ desired a Church with the bishop of Rome at her head, as His visible vicar and at the same time the bishop of bishops and of the entire flock. He conferred upon him the prerogative of the rock so that the edifice would never collapse. He prayed with an effective prayer for him at least, of all the bishops, never to fail in the Faith in such a way that, having recovered after the failings from which he will not necessarily be preserved, he might ultimately confirm his brothers in the Faith; or if it is not he in person who confirms his brethren in the Faith, it might be one of his first successors.”

The other idea that immediately follows from this principle, in which it is contained in act, is that “no matter the miseries, even on the religious level, of this visible and temporary vicar of Jesus Christ, it is Jesus Himself who governs His Church, who governs His vicar in the government of His Church, who governs His vicar in such a way that he cannot engage his supreme authority in upheavals or complicities that would change the religion.” Indeed, “if the pope is the visible vicar of Jesus who ascended into the invisible heavens, he is no more than a vicar: *vices gerens*, he stands in for Him, but remains someone else. ...While the pope is preserved from error when he engages his authority in the matters and manner in which it is infallible, he can err in other cases. If he errs in matters other than those covered by infallibility, this does not keep the one head of the Church, the invisible sovereign priest, from continuing to govern His Church.”

The papacy’s essentially vicarious role therefore signifies that “the Church is not the Mystical Body of the pope”; instead, it signifies that “the Church with the pope is the Mystical Body of Christ.” And there we have the divinely-revealed and absolutely necessary principle that provides us with the solution to the difficulty raised by the hypothetical situation of a heretical pope; the power of the pope is limited by Christ and not by the Church.<sup>13</sup>

## The Limits of Schneider’s Considerations

In application of this principle, Fr. Calmel concludes as follows, in terms that show how limited Bishop Schneider’s considerations prove: “The weaknesses of a pope must not make us forget



even for a moment the solidity and sanctity of the lordship of Our Savior, or keep us from seeing the power and wisdom of Jesus who holds in the palm of His hand even insufficient popes, who contains their insufficiencies within impassable limits." Indeed, the means by which the Church protects herself against the possible heresy of a pope is first and foremost, in its fundamental principle, this lordship of the Savior, the sovereign power of the invisible head that is essentially the foundation of the Church, the rock from which Peter receives his own stability. And this lordship of the Savior that preserves the Church from the weaknesses of the pope is exercised through the papacy itself. The means of protection against the heresy of a pope is not, strictly speaking, as Bishop Schneider claims, most likely under the influence of the new ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium*, "the substituting ministry of the representatives of the episcopacy" or "the invincible *sensus fidei* of the faithful."

The means is the very regency of Christ as it is exercised through the pope, to keep the gates of Hell from ever prevailing against the Church. To those who would object that this regency of Christ cannot do without the secondary causes, the very principle of papacy's vicarious nature offers the answer: it is first and foremost (*primo et per se* as our scholastic authors would have put it) through the pope that Christ gives the Church the means to protect herself against the pope. The pope must remain the first of all the secondary causes through which Christ rules over His Church, respecting the order He Himself has established. And it is from the pope that the other living forces of Tradition and the Church will receive the means to protect themselves from heresy.

The Faith of the Church comes to her from Christ always through the intervention of the pope. What Vatican Council II chose to call a "*sensus fidei*" is not the result of an assistance from the Holy Ghost directly applied to the entire body of the faithful. Nor do the "representatives of the episcopacy" have any "substituting ministry" to replace a defective papacy, as if the Holy Ghost directly preserved the Church in her Faith and morals by means of a college of cardinals or bishops.

The Gospel promises apply first and foremost to the See of St. Peter. And it is in remaining attached to this See and clinging to the age-old teachings of

its living Magisterium that both the simple faithful and the bishops can protect themselves against the possible failings of the present pope. Christ thus unceasingly preserves the faithful and the pastors from the present attacks of heresy thanks to all the past teachings of the only "rock" upon which He built His only Church once and for all.

### The Sense of Faith

We do not deny that the "sense of the Faith" or more precisely the "*sensus catholicus*" of the faithful can have a role to play in resisting heresy; but this role is that of a rule that is itself regulated, not by the Holy Ghost as Vatican II claims,<sup>14</sup> but by the past teachings of the Magisterium of the popes. Nor do we deny that the representatives of the episcopate can compensate for the failings of a heretical pope; but this compensation is made possible through direct dependency not on the Holy Ghost but on the former Magisterium of all the popes who came before the pope who has fallen into heresy. This was the argument that Archbishop Lefebvre constantly developed to explain his conduct and he summed it up perfectly at the episcopal consecrations on June 30, 1988.

"It seems to me, my dear brethren, that I am hearing the voices of all these popes—since Gregory XVI, Pius IX, Leo XIII, St. Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII—telling us: 'Please, we beseech you, what are you going to do with our teachings, with our preaching, with the Catholic Faith? Are you going to abandon it? Are you going to let it disappear from this earth? Please, please, continue to keep this treasure which we have given you. Do not abandon the faithful, do not abandon the Church! Continue the Church!...' This is why we are convinced that, by the act of these consecrations today, we are obeying the call of these popes and as a consequence the call of God, since they represent Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Church."

The entire strength of this argument comes from the very definition of the papacy, that is to say, from the papal power's essentially vicarious nature. For, in order to be vicar, it has to be the one and unceasing echo of the one and unceasing word of the same Christ. All the weight of the past echoes always repeating the same things thus represents the solid foundation on which the Church can constantly depend. For Christ remains the same yesterday, to- >

day and forever, through the Magisterium of the See of St. Peter, which is the ever-living Magisterium, be it past or present, the “proximate and universal criterion of truth in matters of Faith and morals,” as Pius XII put it.<sup>15</sup>

While ancient theologians did consider the possibility of declaring the demise of a pope who had fallen into heresy, the reason they gave was the very authority of the positive divine law, whose expression they believed they discovered in the sources of Revelation. In keeping with the first principle of ecclesiology, they considered the pope as the Vicar of Christ and therefore thought that only Christ possessed enough authority to remove a pope from power. The idea that the Church here below could have any authority over the pope to depose him was unacceptable in their eyes. Therefore, if proclaiming the loss of the papacy is not to be considered a sufficiently well-grounded hypothesis, it is not, as Bishop Schneider believes, because it would be the excessive consequence of an excessive principle. It is because the pope remains in his essential definition the vicar of Christ and the possibility of his deposition in the event of heresy does not seem to be sufficiently established as the express will of Christ in the sources of Revelation. And on the practical level, this possibility is not to be retained in the eyes of prudence by reason of the harm it would cause to the Church.

For the rest, Bishop Schneider’s reflections repeat evidences of a historical (Arianism, Pope Honorius) or theological (“the pope is not an absolute monarch, who can do and say what he likes, who can change doctrine or liturgy at his own discretion”) nature. We gladly concede the material exactitude of these elements, albeit with reserves as to his comments on the different liturgical reforms. But we cannot support the prelate’s fundamental argument that is too tainted with the new ecclesiology. In its democratic and collegial orientation, this argument disregards the true nature of the papacy that gives way to a sort of “Petrine office” or “ministry.” The greatest credit goes to Archbishop Lefebvre for defending the Church and her Tradition in the very name of the papacy, that is to say, based on the first principle of all ecclesiology, “*Tu es Petrus.*”

<sup>1</sup> All the quotes are taken from Bishop Schneider’s text published on *Rorate Caeli*.

<sup>2</sup> See Jean-Marie Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome* (SPCK, 1983); Klaus Schatz, *Papal Primacy: From Its Origins to the Present* (Michael Glazier, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> See the *De Ecclesia* and *De Romano Pontifice* treatises by Johann Baptist Franzelin, Louis Billot, Domenico Palieri, Timotheus Zapelena, and Joaquin Salaverri, as well as the various authors of theological tradition who wrote on the issue: Juan de Torquemada in his *Summa de Ecclesia*, Cajetan in his treatise *De Comparatione Auctoritatis Papae et Concilii*, St. Robert Bellarmine in his *Controversies*, Francisco Suarez in his *Cursus Theologicus*.

<sup>4</sup> Leo XIII, Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* (June 29, 1896).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*: “...quia in christiana republica causa efficiens unitatis est Ecclesia romana.”

<sup>6</sup> Cajetan, *De Comparatione Auctoritatis Papae et Concilii*.

<sup>7</sup> St. Pius X, *Motu Proprio Sacrorum Antistitum* (Antimodernist Oath), “*de charismate veritatis certo.*”

<sup>8</sup> Vatican Council I, constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, chapter 4: “*Veritatis et fidei nunquam deficientis charisma Petro ejusque in hac cathedra successoribus divinitus collatum.*” The “charism of truth and unfailling faith granted by God to St. Peter and to all his successors in this see,” the see of the Primacy of the bishop of Rome.

<sup>9</sup> Leo XIII, Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* (June 29, 1896).

<sup>10</sup> It is a passage from a Homily entitled *De Paenitentia* and attributed to St. Basil.

<sup>11</sup> “*Christus enim essentialiter petra inconcussa; Petrus vero per petram.*”

<sup>12</sup> St. Leo the Great, *Serm.* 4, Ch. 2.

<sup>13</sup> All of Cajetan’s considerations in his *Apologia Tractatus de Comparatione Auctoritatis Papae et Concilii*, from chapters 1 to 4, develops this point.

<sup>14</sup> Paragraph 12 of *Lumen Gentium* claims that “the entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples’ supernatural discernment in matters of faith.” This sense of the Faith is “aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth.” And even if “the guidance of the sacred teaching authority” does play a certain role, it is not the proper principle of the infallibility of the People.

<sup>15</sup> Pius XII, encyclical *Humani Generis*, August 12, 1950. When we say that the Magisterium is “living,” we are not speaking of the present Magisterium as opposed to the past Magisterium but of the Magisterium as a whole in relation to Revelation, which is over.

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# The Last Word

Dear Reader,

The Society of Saint Pius X is a deeply Marian congregation. From the profound Marian life of the founder, with a priesthood sharing in the hypostatic union which took place in the womb of the Virgin Mother, through key Marian feasts punctuating its 50 years' existence, to a major front role in the apocalyptic battle raging against the Church, this "small band of Gedeon" is definitely, like the rosary, a battling ram in the hands of the Immaculate.

Few people know that it was on October 13, 1969, that Archbishop Lefebvre himself welcomed the first batch of nine seminarians in Fribourg, the embryonic SSPX, a mere 50 days before the New Mass started and war broke out against the Traditional Latin Mass. Rebecca made sure her little Jacob got the patriarchal blessing in time.

In the northern hemisphere, seminarians always receive their black cassock on the feast of the Purification, February 2, and the day chosen to become canonically a member of the SSPX is December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception. The members, "the seed of the Woman," thus publicly enter the enmity with the infernal serpent.

The Society has repeatedly consecrated itself publicly to the Mother of God, as a whole, such as in Martigny in 1984, or at other times in all the districts, and has frequently answered the call to go on pilgrimage: at Fatima in 1987, 1997, 2005 and 2017; and in Lourdes in 2008, 2014—the next one to be in 2020. We must mention, too, that it resurrected the traditional branches of the Legion of Mary and of the *Militia Immaculatae* which reached 100,000 members in 2017.

Our superior general, with the advice of his counsel, has recently decreed that in the SSPX, as of this year 2020, the two feasts of Our Lady of Sorrows (one in Lent, one on Sept. 15) will be raised to the rank of First Class.

Lastly, when considering the worldwide persecutions Archbishop Lefebvre and his Society went through, that too could be a symbolic and profoundly Marian touch. Listen to a saint speaking of the apostles of the latter days: "In the eyes of the world they will be little and poor and, *like the heel, lowly in the eyes of all, downtrodden and crushed as is the heel by the other parts of the body...*" And the saint concludes: "In union with Mary, they will crush the head of Satan with their heel, that is, their humility, and bring victory to Jesus Christ" (*True Devotion*, n. 54).

Fr. Daniel Couture

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Society of Saint Pius X is an international priestly society of almost 700 priests. Its main purpose is the formation and support of priests.

The goal of the Society of Saint Pius X is to preserve the Catholic Faith in its fullness and purity, not changing, adding to or subtracting from the truth that the Church has always taught, and to diffuse its virtues, especially through the Roman Catholic priesthood. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means to foster virtue and sanctity and to bring the divine life of grace to souls.

*The Angelus*, in helping the whole man, tries to be an outlet for the work of the Society, helping them reach souls. We aspire to help deepen your spiritual life, nourish your studies, understand the history of Christendom, and restore the reign of Christ the King in Christian culture in every aspect.

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