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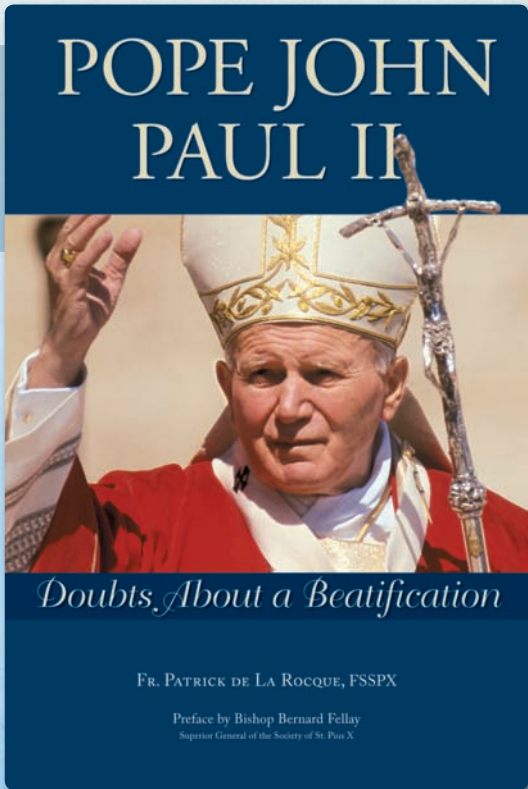
2011 Angelus Press Conference

Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais:

- Archbishop Lefebvre: A Life for Christ the King
- Catholic Action: Whose Job Is It?

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Doubts About a Beatification



BY FR. PATRICK DE LA ROCQUE, FSSPX

Preface by Bishop Bernard Fellay
Superior General of the Society of St. Pius X

"Santo subito!" "Sainthood now!" exclaimed the people assembled in St. Peter's Square on the very day Pope John Paul II passed away. The crowd called for the immediate canonization of the deceased pope.

To many, John Paul II was a hero. He traveled the world and inspired the multitudes. He caused the fall of the Berlin Wall. He invited Catholics to "be not afraid!" He was an intrepid defender of life, especially against abortion.

The reality is not so simple. An in-depth study of the requirements for beatification and the examination of John Paul II's pontificate in light of those requirements leads to amazement. Gray areas, sometimes extensive, come to light. The greatest of the Christian virtues—faith, hope, and charity—are not unscathed. Many of the Pope's teachings and initiatives which for the wide public seem to be titles of glory prove to be in fact matters of grave reproach.

Benedict XVI's beatification of his predecessor on May 1, 2011, may indeed have been a serious mistake.

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—Pope St. Pius X

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

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Institut Civitas poster giving an invitation to a national demonstration against state-funded anti-Christian art in Paris

ON OUR COVER: Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerai at the 2011 Angelus Press Conference. Photograph by David Sestak.

Letter from the Publisher

We have recently celebrated the feast of Christ the King, a feast dear to our hearts since it is a reminder that our Lord Jesus Christ must reign in our souls, families, and parishes, and at every level in civil society.

In fact, this doctrine was the theme of our recent Angelus Press Conference in Kansas City. There, we explored the doctrinal foundation of Christ's Kingship, the practical applications of that doctrine, and examples of Catholic action in some of the great historical battles of Christendom. I encourage you to obtain a recording of these conferences from Angelus Press.

The keynote speaker for this year's conference was His Excellency, Bishop Tissier de Mallerai, who gave two excellent conferences: one on the doctrine of Christ the King in the life of Archbishop Lefebvre, and a second conference on Catholic Action.

During his first conference, His Excellency recounted the life and struggles of Archbishop Lefebvre, showing that this doctrine was particularly dear to the Archbishop, whose every action was motivated by a desire to promote the reign of Christ.

In his second conference, Bishop Tissier explained that there are two kinds of action for laymen according to the teaching of the Popes. The first is the help that laymen can give to the priests in their apostolate, collaborating in the work for souls under the direct leadership of the priests. Organizations such as the Legion of Mary and the Holy Name Society, teachers and catechists who assist the priest in the education and formation of youth, camps and youth groups—all are examples of this form

of assistance. It is the priest's responsibility to develop and lead these precious apostolates, which count greatly on the generous involvement of lay Catholics.

His Excellency explained, however, that there is Catholic Action properly defined, which is to work for the reign of Christ in civil society. This work is the particular responsibility of laymen, whose task it is to see that the principles of the Gospel are applied in society. The priest should be looked to for guidance and support, but the responsibility and therefore the initiative belongs to the laity. This work is not easy in today's world, but it must be remembered that it belongs to a Catholic's duty of state, and especially to that of Catholic fathers of families.

Because of the immense value for Catholics in each of these talks, we have reproduced them in this month's issue of *The Angelus* in their entirety. It is my great hope that readers will study these talks and truly seek to understand them and, consequently, promote the Social Reign of Christ the King according to their state in life.

In addition to these two wonderful conferences from Bishop Tissier, you will also find, in this issue, articles that will help you to better understand how we can promote Christ and His Church, and to better understand the disastrous consequences that come when Christ's reign is opposed or ignored.

As we move towards the end of the liturgical year, and in light of our recent conference on Christ the King, I challenge each of you to truly study the teachings of our faith, particularly those explained in this month's issue of *The Angelus*, so that we may truly know, love, and serve Christ in order that He may reign

not only over us as individuals, but also over cities, states, and the whole of society.

Finally, I have some exciting changes to mention to the format of *The Angelus* magazine. As we mentioned in the August/September issue, *The Angelus* will be switching to a much larger, bi-monthly magazine starting in January 2012.

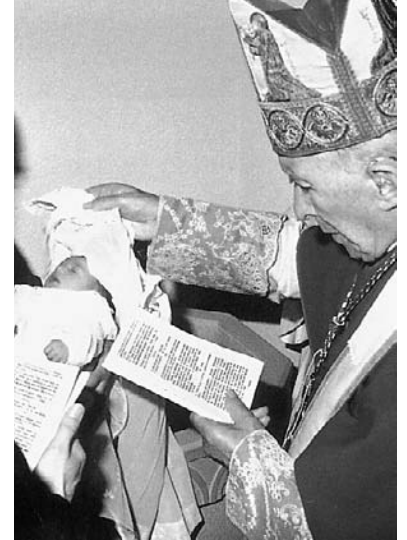
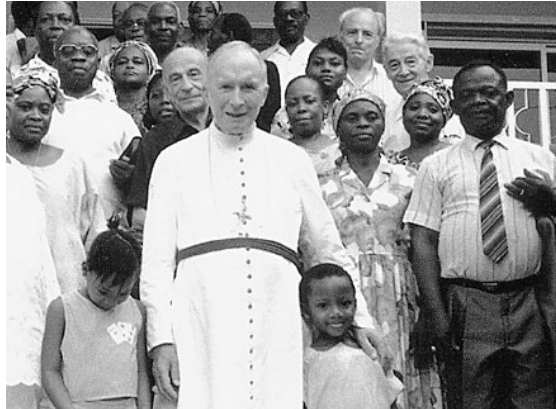
Each issue will have a section dedicated to a specific theme, as well as having regular sections on subjects such as Spiritual Life and Devotion, History, the Liturgy, and more. We hope that these changes to *The Angelus* will give you, the reader, a better, more focused magazine, covering the issues that matter to you from the best Catholic writers in America.

Because we are focusing on this new layout, this October issue will be the last for the 2011 year. Don't worry, though; we will be extending your subscription for an additional two months to cover this hiatus. I can only assure you that the wait is worthwhile. Also, please do not forget to renew your own subscriptions, and even participate in the work of Angelus Press by purchasing subscriptions for others. More information on how to purchase gift subscriptions will arrive in the upcoming Angelus Press Christmas catalog, which you will receive shortly.

As we enter this new phase in the life of *The Angelus*, I ask you to please remember us in your prayers, that as Pope St. Pius X stated regarding Catholic periodicals, we may not only publish Catholic journals, but also "spread them as far as possible that they may be read by all."

Instaurare Omnia in Christo,
FR. ARNAUD ROSTAND

ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE



A Life for Christ the King

Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

Archbishop Lefebvre always linked the priesthood to the social reign of our Lord Jesus Christ: the one is source of the other; the other spontaneously flows from the first.

I. At the French Seminary in Rome

On the Via Santa Chiara, where he trained for the priesthood from 1923 to 1929, Fr. Lefebvre learned from Fr. Henri Le Floch, the Father Superior of the house, not to separate what should be joined: the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and His social reign, a priest's doctrine and his piety, and also the holy sacrifice of the Mass and the social reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the teaching of the popes in their encyclicals.

Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, and Pius XI are the masters, and also Cardinal Pie, Louis Veillot, and so on. But the Fathers of the seminary were also well-beloved masters to whom they listened.

Fr. Le Floch

According to Archbishop Lefebvre:

Fr. Le Floch made us enter into and live the history of the Church, this fight that the perverse powers take to our Lord. *We were mobilized against this dreadful liberalism*, against the Revolution and the forces of evil which were trying to overcome the Church, the reign of our Lord, the Catholic States, and the whole of Christianity.¹

This conflict imposed a personal choice on every seminarian: "We had *to choose*: we had *to leave* the seminary if we didn't agree, or else *join* in the fight." But taking up the fight meant taking it up for one's

whole life: "I think that our whole life as priests—or as bishops—has been marked by this fight against liberalism."²

But how does the priesthood fit into this essentially political combat?

At the French Seminary, the seminarians had to read or had read to them the writings of Godefroid Kurth [*The Origins of Modern Civilization*, 1912] to make them consider how "the mystical Body of Christ transformed the pagan society of imperial Rome and prepared the growing movement that recognized the plans for society of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Priest and King"; the seminarians also learned through the writings of Fr. Deschamps [in his book *Secret Societies and Society*] that "revolutions caused the exclusion of Christ the King from government with the final goal of eliminating the Mass and the supernatural life of

Christ the sovereign High Priest.”³ Father (and later Cardinal) Billot’s *De Ecclesia* made them grasp “the sense of the royalty of Christ and the horror of liberalism.” Through the works of Cardinal Pie they learned “the full meaning of ‘thy kingdom come,’ namely, that Our Lord’s kingdom must come not only in individual souls and in heaven, but also on earth by the submission of States and nations to His rule. The dethroning of God on earth is a crime to which we must never resign ourselves” (Fr. Fahey).⁴

[Fr. Fahey was a seminarian in Rome twelve years before Marcel Lefebvre. He attended the same seminary, which was also under Fr. Le Floch’s direction.] “Pius IX’s Syllabus and the encyclicals of the last four Popes,” said Fahey, “have been the principal object of my meditations on the royalty of Christ and its relation to the priesthood.”⁵

What a surprising meditation subject for a young seminarian: joining the highest spirituality with the submission of the temporal order to Christ. For Marcel Lefebvre’s teachers, there was no divorce between individual life and political action in the broadest sense. So-called “Catholic” liberalism separates what should remain united.

Fr. Voegtli

It was also at the French Seminary in Rome that Fr. Marc Voegtli, C.S.Sp., a professor at Santa Chiara, commented on Pius XI’s Encyclical *Quas Primas* of December 11, 1925, on the social kingship of Jesus Christ. Before his enthusiastic young audience he set forth the political program of the Catholic Church by the action of the Catholic priest. We’ll explain at the end of this talk the political program in which the priest is engaged.

The testimony of Fr. Voegtli’s students is unanimous: “His teaching was simple, he spoke only of



Our Lord Jesus Christ the King.... He taught *the integrity of the priesthood*, the priesthood taken to its logical conclusion: *the sacrifice of the priest* [Keep that idea in mind] for the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Everything was judged in that light. ‘My dear friends,’ the Father would say, ‘you must preach Our Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart!’”

A collective testimony signed by twelve seminarians declares:

Through him [Fr. Voegtli] we learned to see our Lord Jesus Christ, the King, as the *center* of everything, the *answer* to all questions, our *food*, our *thought*, our *life*, everything.... That is what he wanted to impress upon us: that will remain!⁶

And remain it did, as we shall see. Marcel Lefebvre was one of those who had an unforgettable memory of Fr. Voegtli’s conferences. You may be thinking, *Let’s get to his actions during the Council and after!* Yes, but it is essential to understand the mainspring of his action!

The Mainspring of Archbishop Lefebvre’s Fight for Christ the King: A Testimony

He essentially gave his own testimony to the fact: Fifty years [after

the twelve seminarians’ testimony] one of Fr. Voegtli’s rare faithful disciples, Marcel Lefebvre, also bore witness to the indelible impression produced by Fr. Voegtli’s “talks, which were very simple, taking the words of Scripture, showing who Our Lord Jesus Christ was.... That remained with us for life!”⁷

It even became the subject of the seminarian’s meditation:

We shall never have sufficiently meditated on, or sought to understand, what Our Lord Jesus Christ is.... He should *rule* our thinking, He makes us *holy*. He is also our *Creator* since nothing whatsoever was made without the Word, and therefore without Our Lord Jesus Christ who is the Word. So we must only *think about* and *contemplate* Our Lord Jesus Christ. And *that transforms one’s life!*⁸

What a striking remark. For Marcel Lefebvre, *belief in the divinity* of our Lord Jesus Christ and consequently His right alone to reign meant personally dedicating himself to the fight. This he did, like many of his confreres, at Rome before the Confession of St. Peter. There he made a private vow of doctrinal and militant Romanity. The account of the Abbé Berto suggests that making such a vow was normal and went without saying. The seminarian promised to be constantly on crusade (Archbishop Lefebvre).

He didn’t know *when* or *where* or in *what troubled, tragic circumstances* of the Church it would be that he would have to enter the arena and himself write a page of that Church history that he was shown under the light of Christ the King, but he knew that he would have to *join in* the battle.

The Second Vatican Council was to be the providential moment for Archbishop Lefebvre, the moment when he felt himself pushed to intervene in fidelity to the promise he

had made as a seminarian at Rome long before.

II. Herald of Christ the King

During the Council, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre became the head of the resistance against false religious freedom in the name of Christ the King. During the presentation of two rival drafts on religious freedom, one by Cardinal Bea and one by Cardinal Ottaviani, at the last meeting of the Central Preparatory Commission in June 1962, he gave his opinion.

About the liberal schema of Cardinal Bea, he said:

On Religious Liberty: *non placet*... since it is based on false principles solemnly condemned by the sovereign pontiffs, for example Pius IX, who calls this error 'delirium' (Denzinger 1690)...The schema on religious liberty does not preach Christ and therefore seems false....

About the Catholic schema of Cardinal Ottaviani, he said:

'On the Church': *placet*. However, the exposition of the fundamental principles could be done with more reference to Christ the King as in the encyclical *Quas Primas*....Our Council could have as its aim to preach Christ to all men, and to state that it belongs to the Catholic Church alone to be the true preacher of Christ who is the salvation and life of individuals, families, professional associations, and of other civil bodies.

...The Theological Commission's schema expounds the authentic doctrine but does so like a thesis; it does not sufficiently show the aim of this doctrine which is nothing other than the reign of Christ....From the point of view of Christ as source of salvation and life, all the fundamental truths could be expounded as they say "pastorally," and in this way the errors of secularism, natural-

ism, and materialism, *etc.*, would be excluded.¹⁰

III. Theological Adversary of the Secular State

The Declaration on Religious Freedom promulgated by the Council on December 7, 1965, *Dignitatis Humanae*, seems to assert that the State must recognize the Catholic religion as the one true one (*DH 1*), but at the same time it teaches the "natural" freedom of the adherents of false cults to practice their beliefs publicly (*DH 6*). This contradiction became more problematic after the Council from the way the Holy See required its application by States that were still officially Catholic: the article in their constitutions professing the Catholic religion as the State religion had to be expunged.

So, while passing through Colombia, South America, soon after the suppression of the "Catholic religion" as "that of the nation," Archbishop Lefebvre remarked that "the speech of the president of the Republic is more Catholic than the Nuncio's." The Archbishop was indignant that Ireland had agreed to replace the expression "the special position of the holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church as guardian of the faith professed by the great majority of its citizens," with "the homage of public worship" given by the State "to Almighty God."

In Italy, Article 1 of the Lateran Accords of February 11, 1929, read: "Italy recognizes and reaffirms the principle expressed by Article 1 of the Statute of the Realm of March 4, 1848, by which the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion is the only religion of the State."¹¹ In

1984, to the consternation of Archbishop Lefebvre, the new concordat between the Holy See and Italy only recognized that "the principles of Catholicism constitute part of the historical patrimony of the Italian people." In 1977 [seven years before the 1984 concordat], Cardinal Giovanni Colombo, the Archbishop of Milan, had declared: *Lo stato non puo essere che laico*.—The State can only be secular. He explained:

The Church does not ask for privileges, but for genuine freedom....In the current historical development of society, a confessional State is not possible: not only a confessional Christian State, but also a confessional Marxist atheistic State or a confessional radical bourgeois State. We are calling for a State that does not embrace any particular ideology, that does not impose the dogmas of any culture, and that does not identify with any party. Otherwise, very many of its citizens, because of their religious or ideological or partisan choices, would be compelled to feel like strangers in their own land.¹²

In terms that are insulting to the Church of Christ thus put on a par with ideologies, parties, and cultures, the Cardinal could not better express the current interpretation given to *Dignitatis Humanae* as propounding the agnostic and indifferentist State. The State's pledge of allegiance to Jesus Christ, God Incarnate and the one true God, would amount to uncharitableness, contempt for human dignity, and unfair discrimination.

Archbishop Lefebvre spoke out against these liberal platitudes in an interview with the three cardinals who questioned him in 1975. "The goal of the secularization of the State," he said, "is nothing other than the goal of the devil, who is behind Freemasonry: the destruction of the Catholic Church by affording all the false religions

freedom of speech and by forbidding the State to work for the social kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Archbishop explained what he meant: First of all, the recognition of Christ by the State is not a *privilege*; it is the *right* of the Man-God and Redeemer of the human race. On the other hand, “How many Catholics are still able to recognize that the work of our Lord’s Redemption must also be accomplished through civil society?” And yet this is so, for “everything was made for our Lord Jesus Christ,” as St. Paul teaches (Col. 1:16).¹³

Man has but one ultimate goal: eternal salvation. The Church works directly toward this goal, but the State should also work towards it, although indirectly, for civil society is also a creature of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁴ Consequently, as St. Pius X teaches, the State has as its “ultimate object...man’s eternal happiness after this short life shall have run its course.”¹⁵

This...is founded on the dogmatic reason and on the experience of the conversion of numerous nations subsequent to the conversion of their rulers: for example, Clovis, Ethelbert, and so on. This fact prompted St. Alphonsus Liguori to declare: “If I convert a king, I do more for the Catholic cause than hundreds of missionaries.”

Archbishop Lefebvre also held the supernatural and traditional position of the Church on Christ the King—namely, that the State should be an instrument in the work of Redemption. He is not far from taking as his own the program of his brother in religion and co-alumnus of Santa Chiara, Denis Fahey: since the reign of Christ must be established by the cross (“*Regnavit a ligno Deus*” we sing in the “*Vexilla Regis*”):

In order to favour union with Christ as Priest in Holy Mass, God wants the world organized under Christ as King.¹⁶

From this it follows that:

At Holy Mass all the members of Christ express their determination to work for the integral establishment of the rights of God and of Christ the King over the world.¹⁷

More briefly, Archbishop Lefebvre would often say: “The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the expression of the kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

At the French Seminary in Rome, Fr. Marc Voegtli, following the teaching of Fr. Deschamps [in his book *Secret Societies and Society*], taught the young Marcel Lefebvre the liberal, Freemasonic agenda in three points: **1)** The banishment of Christ the King from government by the secularization of the State; **2)** eliminating the Mass which would result from the persecution of the Church by legal means, and ultimately the secularization of the Church itself, the supreme plot of initiated Masons; in order **3)** finally to suppress the grace of Jesus Christ High Priest in souls—the very secularization of Catholic souls. All of this happened after the Second Vatican Council...

What Archbishop Lefebvre did is reverse this satanic program in order to come up with the Catholic program, which is that of the Society of St. Pius X, also in three points: **1)** Restore to the faithful the Mass—the true Mass, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—which is the source and expression of the reign of Jesus Christ. **2)** By the grace of the Mass, form an elite of faithful Catholics living in the state of grace; and **3)** through the work of this elite in public institutions—not just in ecclesiastical organizations, but also in openly Catholic civil organizations—re-crown our Lord Jesus Christ in society: “*Omnia instaurare in Christo*—Establish all things in Christ,” according to the motto of St. Pius X.

This is the program Archbishop Lefebvre tried to explain to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the future

Benedict XVI, in a meeting they had in Rome on July 14, 1987:

Eminence...you are working to dechristianize society and the Church, and we are working to Christianize them. For us, our Lord Jesus Christ is everything, He is our life. The Church is our Lord Jesus Christ; the priest is another Christ; the Mass is the triumph of Jesus Christ on the cross; in our seminaries everything tends towards the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. But You! You are doing the opposite: you have just wanted to prove to me that our Lord Jesus Christ cannot, and must not, reign over society.¹⁸

For us, our Lord Jesus Christ is everything! ☑

¹ Bernard Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre: The Biography* (2002; Kansas City: Angelus Press, 2004), pp. 36-7.

² *Ibid.*

³ Fr. Denis Fahey, C.S.Sp., “*Apologia pro Vita Mea*,” 1950 (reprinted in *Catholic Family News*, April & May 1997), quoted in Tissier, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 37.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

⁶ Tissier, *Marcel Lefebvre*, pp. 43-4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Archbishop Lefebvre, *La petite histoire de ma longue histoire*, 1999, p. 28.

¹⁰ Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 285.

¹¹ *A.A.S.* 21 (1929), pp. 290 seq.

¹² Quoted from *L’Osservatore Romano*, translated from the Italian and published by “Ya” on July 14, 1977, and reprinted in the *Bulletin of the CICES*, No. 210, March 15, 1977, under the byline of André Laforge.

¹³ Spiritual Conference, Ecône, September 23, 1977, relating the conference of Archbishop Lefebvre at Rome at Princess Palaviccini’s in June 1977. Cf. *They Have Uncrowned Him* (1987; English version: Angelus Press, 1988), p. 101 [ref. to French edition].

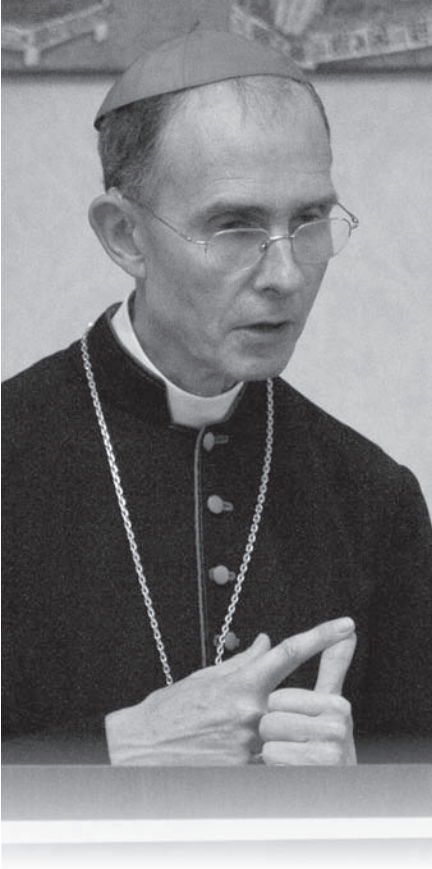
¹⁴ It is a creature of God because the social nature of man is God’s creation.

¹⁵ St. Pius X, Encyclical *Vehementer Nos* condemning the Law of Separation of Church and State in France, February 11, 1906.

¹⁶ Rev. Fr. Denis Fahey, C.S.Sp., *The Mystical Body of Christ and the Reorganization of Society* (Palmdale, Calif.: Christian Book Club of America, 1995), pp. 114-5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre*, p. 548.



CATHOLIC ACTION: WHOSE JOB IS IT?

Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre knew as well as Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer the teaching of St. Pius X concerning Catholic Action for the laity. Nevertheless, both of them, the latter in response to the deviations of the TFP, the former in response to the independence of the *Renaissance Catholique*, made ambiguous statements about the *nature* of Catholic Action and its dependence on the clergy. We will try to clarify both questions and answer the following question: “Catholic Action: whose job is it?”

Nature of Catholic Action: Definitions and Confusion

Catholic Action can never be construed as completely independent of the authority of the Church. That which is constant in all of the popes is the teaching that there can be no question of giving total autonomy to the laity in their action. This is impossible. This is repugnant to the Catholic sense. This is repugnant to the sense of hierarchy in the Church.

Catholic Action must be defined as the “participation [by the laity] in the hierarchy’s apostolate,” which, they points out, followed the definition of Pope Pius XI,¹ which reads: Catholic Action “does not wish to be nor can be anything other than ‘the participation and the collaboration of the laity with the hierarchy’s apostolate.’” This is *extremely problematic* for a number of reasons.

This second point differs essentially from the definition given previously by Pope St. Pius X in *Il Fermo Proposito*, on June 11, 1905:

“To restore all things in Christ” has always been the Church’s motto, and it is especially Our own during these fearful moments through which we are now passing. “To restore all things” not in any haphazard fashion, but “in Christ”; and the Apostle adds, “both those in the heavens and those on earth” (Eph. 1:10). “To restore all things in Christ” includes not only what *properly pertains to the divine mission of the Church*, namely, *leading souls to God*, but also what We have already explained as *flowing from that divine mission*, namely *Christian civilization* in each and every one of the elements composing it. (§6)²

Since We particularly dwell on this last part of the desired restoration³, you clearly see, Venerable Brethren, the services rendered to the Church by those chosen bands of Catholics who aim to unite all their forces in combatting anti-Christian civilization by every just and lawful means. They use every means in repairing the serious disorders caused by it. They seek to restore Jesus Christ to the family, the school and society by re-establishing the principle that human authority

represents the authority of God. They take to heart the interests of the people, especially those of the working and agricultural classes, not only by inculcating in the hearts of everybody a true religious spirit (the only true fount of consolation among the troubles of this life) but also by endeavoring to dry their tears, to alleviate their sufferings, and to improve their economic condition by wise measures. They strive, in a word, to make public laws conformable to justice and amend or suppress those which are not so. Finally, they defend and support in a true Catholic spirit the rights of God in all things and the no less sacred rights of the Church. (§7)

All these works, sustained and promoted chiefly by lay Catholics and whose form varies according to the needs of each country, constitute what is generally known by a distinctive and surely a very noble name: "Catholic Action," or the "Action of Catholics." At all times it came to the aid of the Church, and the Church has always cherished and blessed such help, using it in many ways according to the exigencies of the age. (§8) (Emphasis mine)

Pope Pius XI's definition is partially responsible for the confusion made by Archbishop Lefebvre. On his part, Bishop de Castro Mayer⁴ correctly calls "false" the notion that "Catholic Action confers on [a layman] a participation in the apostolic mandate..."; but Pius XI himself repeatedly refers to Catholic Action as "the participation and the collaboration of the laity with the hierarchy's apostolate." Clearly the defining of Catholic Action in this way lends itself to misinterpretation, a fact which is only too evident—for instance—from a mere cursory reading of Msgr. Civardi's *A Concise Manual of Catholic Action*. Therein Civardi defines Catholic Action in numerous different ways, variously referring to it as a true "apostolate" and in other places maintaining that

it has for its principal aim the reconstruction of the Christian State.

What Kind of Action Is Appropriate to the Catholic Laity?

The definition of Pius XI is not wrong, but it certainly refers to something *essentially and totally different* from that which St. Pius X strove to promote. Pius XI's idea of Catholic Action⁵ is clearly apostolic and religious, something clearly in the spiritual sphere, essentially a part of the priestly ministry, and therefore under the direct authority of the Church. St. Pius X's notion is that Catholic Action is a temporal work principally of the layman, and insofar as it is temporal it falls under the indirect authority of the Church, not under her direct authority.

I have already referred to this distinction in my 1991 conference (cf. section IV):

Now I will try to summarize the idea of St. Pius X, who distinguished two sorts of apostolic endeavors for the laity:

1) Direct participation of the laity in the priestly apostolate inasmuch as it is possible. This includes the education of youth, teaching in our schools, and special, more properly apostolic youth movements which have as their purpose the conversion of souls. It is obvious that such a movement has an essential dependence with respect to the clergy. *It would be quite erroneous to say that such a movement is a movement of Catholic Action in the strict sense of the word, with a relatively loose dependence on the clergy.*

From the very fact that it is for the conversion of souls, it follows that there is an intrinsic dependence on the clergy. The same applies to the Catholic Scout movement and the Legion of Mary, which has as its purpose, by the intercession of Our Lady, the conversion of souls. This is, if you wish, a participation in the priestly ministry on the part of the laity. Whether, consequently,

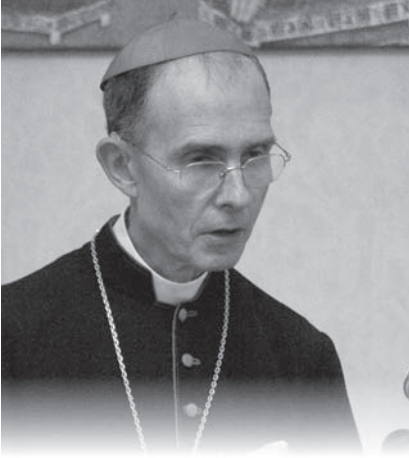
it requires a mandate, that is to say, that the priest gives a mandate to the laity to exercise a part of his priestly apostolate, is a question that I will answer by saying that there is never any formal mandate; the bishop's approval is sufficient.

2) *Quite different is Catholic Action understood as a work of the Catholic laity in the temporal order, so as to bring about the reign of Christian social principles in the State. It is this which St. Pius X strove especially to promote, and which he called Catholic Action in the strict sense of the term.* We cannot say that such Catholic Action, because it is not the ministry of the priest, is independent of the priest. St. Pius X said: "One cannot at all conceive of this Catholic Action of the faithful independently from the counsel and higher guidance of ecclesiastical authority."

It is an essential distinction. Pope Pius XII, following Pius XI, blurred somewhat its importance, which is not without consequences. He simply spoke of a gradation in the dependence of works of Catholic Action on the hierarchy. The more a work is properly priestly the more must it have an intimate dependence on the priest, and the more a work properly belongs to the laity, the more tenuous the link with respect to the clergy. (Emphasis mine)

St. Pius X himself (in *Il Fermo Proposito*) was very clear about the two types of activities in which Catholics may participate (Catholic Action, and more properly apostolic endeavors) and the relation of each to the direct and indirect authority of the Church:

We must touch, Venerable Brethren, on another point of extreme importance, namely, the relation of all the works of Catholic Action to ecclesiastical authority. If the teachings unfolded in the first part of this letter are thoughtfully considered it will be readily seen that *all those works which directly come to the aid of the spiritual and pastoral ministry*



of the Church and which labor religiously for the good of souls must in every least thing be subordinated to the authority of the Church and also to the authority of the Bishops placed by the Holy Spirit to rule the Church of God in the dioceses assigned to them. Moreover, the other works which, as We have said, are primarily designed for the restoration and promotion of true Christian civilization and which, as explained above, constitute Catholic Action, by no means may be considered as independent of the counsel and direction of ecclesiastical authority, especially since they must all conform to the principles of Christian faith and morality. At the same time it is impossible to imagine them as in opposition, more or less openly, to that same authority. Such works, however, by their very nature, should be directed with a reasonable degree of freedom, since responsible action is especially theirs in the temporal and economic affairs as well as in those matters of public administration and political life. These affairs are alien to the purely spiritual ministry. Since Catholics, on the other hand, are to raise always the banner of Christ, by that very fact they also raise the banner of the Church. Thus it is no more than right that they receive it from the hands of the Church, that the Church guard its immaculate honor, and that Catholics submit as docile, loving children to this maternal vigilance. (§22) (Emphasis mine)

Archbishop Lefebvre also approached the question with the assumption that there were two distinct types of lay activity, one an ecclesiastically approved, hierarchically constituted and institutionalized “Catholic Action” which was essentially spiritual and religious, and another consisting of the activity of the laity in the temporal order for the defense or restoration of the Christian state.

How Archbishop Lefebvre Taught the True Meaning of Catholic Action

Archbishop Lefebvre also approached the question with the assumption that there were two distinct types of lay activity, one an ecclesiastically approved, hierarchically constituted and institutionalized “Catholic Action” which was essentially spiritual and religious, and another consisting of the activity of the laity in the temporal order for the defense or restoration of the Christian state.

1) That the Archbishop possessed this conception of two types of lay activity is evident from a letter of encouragement that he wrote to Jean Ousset, whose work was being opposed by liberal French bishops as detailed on p. 256 of my book *Marcel Lefebvre*:

Are you criticized for not having the bishops’ permission? Such permission is not needed for any activity which is not properly speaking Catholic Action [in the sense of Pius XI, that is to say, of religious or apostolic work.] All that is needed is for an activity to be fully in accord with the spirit of the Church and her discipline, and every bishop can judge that for himself in his own diocese.

Here Archbishop Lefebvre uses the phrase “Catholic Action” to indicate the spiritual activity—participation and collaboration with the apostolate of the hierarchy—which Pius XI encouraged, and he therefore concludes that the work of Jean Ousset and *La Cité Catholique* is not “strictly speaking” Catholic Action. This inversion of terms is a result of the prevailing situation during

the early part of both the Archbishop’s as well as Bishop de Castro Mayer’s lifetimes, where organs of so-called “Catholic Action”—in fact, they were *specifically* so called—were established and constituted officially by the hierarchy as movements of the Church, following the understanding of Pius XI. This institutional “Catholic Action” is an essentially different activity (though there may be points of overlap, especially when the *teaching* of the Social Doctrine is involved) from what St. Pius X encouraged, which is an activity in fact quite similar to what Ousset undertook, and which, according to Archbishop Lefebvre, falls under the indirect authority of the Church; hence all that is required of it is that it “fully conform to the spirit of the Church and her discipline.”

2) The Archbishop’s understanding of the question is further illustrated by one of his interventions prior to the Second Vatican Council (related in *Marcel Lefebvre*, pp. 279-80):

At the seventh and last preparatory meeting [for the Council], the Archbishop acted decisively in support of the reign of Christ the King even over temporal affairs. On June 18, [1962], he spoke about the lay apostolate and asked for a reaffirmation of its dependence on the priestly apostolate. *Following Pius X, he distinguished two ways in which this dependence operates*: the first regards the lay apostolate in the broadest sense—“the sanctification of professions and civil society”—in which the laypeople are “subject to the bishops’ *vigilance*”; the second is through an apostolate in the strict sense in which laypeople “unquestionably depend *directly* and *immediately* on the authority of the bishops and the

priests appointed by them, since they then collaborate in the very mission entrusted by Christ to the bishops.

Having made this enlightening distinction, Archbishop Lefebvre added that, nevertheless, one cannot separate the temporal and the spiritual domains; on the one hand the temporal is in fact subject to the supernatural order, and on the other the clergy cannot be excluded from the care and possession of temporal things.” (Emphasis mine)

How Bishop de Castro Mayer Caused Regrettable Confusion

The juxtaposition of Bishop de Castro Mayer’s statement that “Catholic Action...is entirely subject to the bishop’s authority....His authority is not only for vetoing anything contrary to faith and morals, but is also for governing all social activity,” with Pope St. Pius X’s definition of Catholic Action (quoted above) implies an entirely incorrect notion of Catholic Action, *i.e.*, that it is essentially a work of the laity in the temporal sphere (Pius X), *and* that it is entirely subject to the authority of the bishop. The correct notion, rather, is that Catholic Action is essentially the work of the laity in the temporal sphere, *and* that it has a relatively loose dependence on the clergy, who do not direct the temporal work of building the Christian State, but rather exercise their jurisdiction over faith and morals to ensure that the means and ends proposed by the laity are in conformity with Catholic faith and morals. Another way of saying this would be that Catholic Action, properly speaking, falls under the indirect authority of the Church (in keeping with the traditional teaching of the Church on the relation between the spiritual and temporal powers), and that the participation of the laity in the ministry of the priest is not Catholic Action, strictly speaking; such activity, rather, is

essentially spiritual and falls therefore under the direct authority of the Church.

Bishop de Castro Mayer’s statement, “If the priest had over Catholic Action the simple power of veto, it would practically escape the bishop’s power” illustrates the unfortunate confusion which results from an inadequate definition of Catholic Action.

1) Over Catholic Action, strictly speaking, the Church does have only veto power—the power to correct errors in faith and morals. This “veto” power is the exercise of the Church’s indirect temporal authority and, in such circumstances, Catholic Action does not escape the bishop’s power, but is rather submitted to it in a way proper to both the nature of Catholic Action and the nature of the bishop’s authority. Put another way, this “veto” is simply an exercise, adapted to modern circumstances, of the Church’s right to intervene in the temporal sphere *ratione peccati*.

2) Since Bishop de Castro Mayer is referring not to Catholic Action strictly speaking, but to the essentially religious and spiritual “participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy,” it is evident that he is simply referring to the fact that the Church has direct authority over this kind of activity, and that this direct authority is (naturally) all-encompassing.

Following this line of thought, when Bishop de Castro Mayer maintains that, “Since organizations of Catholic Action wholly belong in the ranks of the ‘hearing Church,’ its members must normally be received by the vicar or the priest who directs the association,” it is evident that he is referring to an essentially spiritual and religious activity. When, following St. Pius X, laymen “strive, in a word, to make public laws conformable to justice and amend or suppress those which are not so” (*Il Fermo Proposito*, §7), it

would be absurd to suggest that they need to somehow be received by the local priest in order to do so. Over this kind of activity—Catholic Action strictly speaking—the priest exercises his indirect authority by teaching the general principles of social justice and correcting the laity in the event that they pursue aims contrary to those principles or attempt to implement them in a way which would be condemned by the Catholic Faith or the Moral Law.

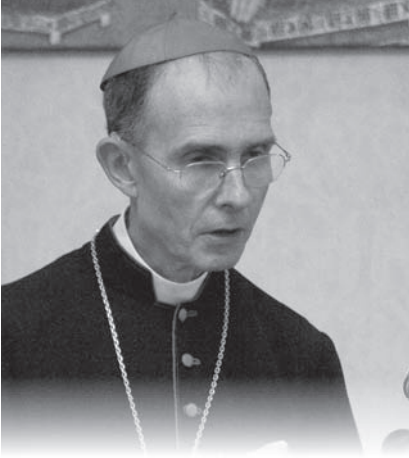
Ultimately, all the statements of Bishop de Castro Mayer are correct when understood in light of his assumption that when *he* says “Catholic Action,” we actually are to understand him to be speaking of the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy, and not “Catholic Action” strictly speaking, as it has been best defined by Pope St. Pius X in *Il Fermo Proposito*.

The Wisdom and Clarity of St. Pius X

Our understanding of the question rests, finally, with the profound wisdom of St. Pius X and the subtle yet precise distinctions which he makes in his encyclical. I would like to conclude by inviting you to look closely at the following passages, in which will be found an elaboration of the general principles that form the basis of the foregoing discussion.

Pius X begins by pointing out the extremely wide scope of lay activity, what we might call the entire “lay apostolate,” generally and loosely so-called; his reference to the “direct or indirect” missions of the Church sets up the distinctions he will make later in his letter:

The field of Catholic Action is extremely vast. In itself it does not exclude anything, in any manner, direct or indirect, which pertains to the divine mission of the Church. Accordingly one can plainly see how necessary it is for everyone to co-operate in such an important work, not only for the sanctification



of his own soul, but also for the extension and increase of the Kingdom of God in individuals, families, and society; each one working according to his energy for the good of his neighbor by the propagation of revealed truth, by the exercise of Christian virtues, by the exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. (§3)

Following this, the Pope alludes to the difference between the goods of the soul, over which the Church has a direct mission, and the temporal goods of Christian civilization, over which the Church has no direct mission but of which she is “the guardian and protector” thanks to the “Catholic revelation,” the “evangelical counsels,” and the “doctrine and morality” which she preaches:

Over and above spiritual goods, however, there are many goods of the natural order over which the Church has no direct mission, although they flow as a natural consequence from her divine mission.... By the very nature of things, the Church has consequently become the guardian and protector of Christian society. That fact was universally recognized and admitted in other periods of history. In truth, it formed a solid foundation for civil legislation. On that very fact rested the relations between Church and State; the public recognition of the authority of the Church in those matters which touched upon conscience in any manner, the subordination of all the laws of the State to the Divine laws of the Gospel; the harmony of the two powers in securing the temporal welfare of the people in such a way that their eternal welfare did not suffer. (§4)

Notice, please, how St. Pius X completely reverses the “participation”: In this work of the laity for promoting Christian civilization, it is not the laity that share in the hierarchical apostolate but on the contrary, it is the clergy that may participate in organizations of lay action. A most significant inversion of perspectives!

Respective Functions of the Clergy and Laity in Catholic Action

Following this distinction between the spiritual goods which it is the business of the Church’s hierarchy to foster, and the temporal goods which are fostered chiefly by the laity and which are guarded and preserved by the Church by her preaching and her doctrine, St. Pius X reminds the clergy and the laity of their respective roles in promoting those works which are “designed for the restoration and promotion of true Christian civilization”:

He reminds the clergy of the fact that their “proper field of action is the Church” (§25), and indicates that *their participation in organizations of Catholic Action must be oriented towards “favoring and promoting”* the various temporal organizations constituted to assist the masses, thus guaranteeing that their involvement will have “a truly religious purpose”:

By means of the printed and spoken word, by direct participation in the above-mentioned cases, the clergy can labor on behalf of the people according to the principles of justice and charity by favoring and promoting those institutions which propose to protect the masses from the invasion of Socialism, saving them at the same time from both economic ruin and moral and religious chaos. In this way *the assistance of the clergy in the works of Catholic Action has a truly religious purpose* [emphasis mine]. It will then not be a hindrance, but rather a help, to the spiritual ministry by enlarging its sphere and multiplying its results. (§26, emphasis mine)

Notice, please, how St. Pius X completely reverses the “participa-

tion”: In this work of the laity for promoting Christian civilization, it is not the laity that share in the hierarchical apostolate but on the contrary, it is the clergy that may participate in organizations of lay action. A most significant inversion of perspectives!

Additionally, he warns the clergy specifically against placing too much emphasis on temporal activity:

While pointing out the true nature of Catholic Action, Venerable Brethren, We cannot minimize the grave danger to which the clergy may find themselves exposed because of the conditions of the time. They may attach such importance to the material interests of the people that they will forget those more important duties of the sacred ministry. (§24)

To the laity the Pope says that their activity—in this case, for instance, their participation in the national politics of Italy—must at all times be based upon Catholic principle, and must involve a well-informed Catholic conscience, resolved to be as Catholic in public as in private:

This concession [resumption of participation by Catholics in Italian political life] places a duty on all Catholics to prepare themselves prudently and seriously for political life in case they may be called to it. Hence it is of the utmost importance that the same activity (previously so praiseworthy planned by Catholics for the purpose of preparing themselves by means of good electoral organization for the administrative life of common and provincial councils) be extended to a suitable preparation and organization for political life....At the same time the other

principles which regulate the conscience of every true Catholic must be inculcated and put into practice. Above all else *he must remember to be and to act in every circumstance as a true Catholic*, accepting and fulfilling public offices with the firm and constant resolution of promoting by every means the social and economic welfare of the country and particularly of the people, according to the maxims of a truly Christian civilization, and at the same time defending the supreme interests of the Church, which are those of religion and justice. (§19) (Emphasis mine)

Additionally, he indicates that the activity of the laity must be of evident worth, constructive, and useful:

It is also important to define clearly the works which the Catholic forces must energetically and constantly undertake. These works must be of such evident importance that they will be appreciated by everybody. They must bear such a relation to the needs of modern society and be so well adapted to moral and material interests, especially those of the people and the poorer classes, that, while arousing in promoters of Catholic Action the greatest activity for obtaining the important and certain results which are to be looked for, they may also be readily understood and gladly welcomed by all. (§12)

Finally, St. Pius X reminds the laity that to restore Christ in the family and society, to promulgate His Social Reign, they must be well-prepared and well-suited to the work at hand, by relying on divine grace and Catholic doctrine to form them in piety and in manly virtue:

Above all, one must be firmly convinced that the instrument is of little value if it is not adapted to the work at hand. In regard to the things We mentioned above, Catholic Action, inasmuch as it proposes to restore all things in Christ,

constitutes a real apostolate for the honor and glory of Christ Himself. To carry it out right one must have divine grace, and the apostle receives it only if he is united to Christ. Only when he has formed Jesus Christ in himself shall he more easily be able to restore Him to the family and society. Therefore, all who are called upon to direct or dedicate themselves to the Catholic cause, must be sound Catholics, firm in faith, solidly instructed in religious matters, truly submissive to the Church and especially to this supreme Apostolic See and the Vicar of Jesus Christ. They must be men of real piety, of manly virtue, and of a life so chaste and fearless that they will be a guiding example to all others. (§11)

Answer to the Question; the Consequences of the Misunderstandings

From these considerations, we may conclude that Catholic Action, as a work of restoring Christian civilization and the Catholic State *is the job of the Catholic laity*, even if the very root of this restoration is the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, spread by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the work of bishops and priests. In this work of submission of the temporal welfare to the Kingship of Christ, the clergy is only involved in the measure of its spiritual ministry.

Having answered the question, “Catholic Action: whose job is it?” we may consider the sad consequences of the misunderstanding that followed the new conception of Catholic Action promoted by Pius XI as “the collaboration of the laity in the hierarchy’s apostolate.”

The first consequence of such a reduction of Catholic Action to the level of only spiritual activity was that the Catholic laity was forced to retreat from the political fight for Christ the King and abandon the

terrain to both socialist and liberal forces.

The second consequence of the aforesaid reduction is that, excluded from all political activity, the leaders of Catholic Action found compensation in social activities, especially in social activism, giving way to collaboration with socialism and communism.

The third consequence of the said reduction of Catholic Action is that the clergy, leaving the domain of the spiritual apostolate, mixed in social activities from the deviated Catholic Action: hence the “worker priests” of the 1950s.

The fourth and worst consequence of the reduction of Catholic Action is that the priests, the clergy, the religious (especially Dominicans and Jesuits) took the leadership of the deviated Catholic Action and its social activism, making up a parallel hierarchy in front of the episcopate, in hidden or open disobedience or rebellion against episcopal and Roman authority. The revolution in the Church began with the reduction of Catholic Action to sharing priestly activity. ❏

¹ Pius XI, Letter of 16–1927, EPS, n. 459, *etc.*

² A marvelous distinction made by the clear mind of the saintly pope.

³ St. Pius X clearly takes a position on what he felt was the most necessary work in the Church: not seminaries, not schools, but laymen really engaged in re-crowning Christ as King. That is to say, Catholic laymen not deserting the field of politics to take refuge in piety and works of mercy! Pius X exactly defines the aims and means of this fight.

⁴ *Catechism of Opportune Truths*, 1953, question about *Catholic Action*.

⁵ Sometimes Pius XI, at least at the beginning of his pontificate, includes in Catholic Action “preparation of the citizen to a good politic, a great politic...obliging them to intervene in political affairs.” (Allocution to the Assembly of the Italian Federation of Catholic Men, October 30, 1929, EPS *de laicat*, n. 455) But often he says that Catholic Action is to “somehow take part in the priestly ministry!” What a mix up! (EPS, *ibid.*, 454).

A RENEWED APOLOGETICS FOR A CHURCH IN CRISIS



Fr. Alain Lorans, FSSPX

The French District's 2010 Summer University focused on the Church, its nature, divine constitution, notes and properties. It also aimed at equipping Catholics to rebut the accusations leveled against the Church over some historical episodes: its treatment of women, the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Galileo Affair, and the alleged silence of Pope Pius XII. Fr. Alain Lorans delivered the final talk, which set the stage for the 2011 summer session.

The question we shall address is the following: Doesn't the current crisis cast doubt on or even destroy apologetics, the defense of the Church, as it is traditionally studied? More precisely, doesn't the current crisis ruin the apologetical argument from the four marks of the Church? for the facts are there, and as we well know: *contra factum non fit argumentum*—there is no arguing against the facts. We may well say that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, but what do we see today? Let us take a look at some of these facts.

Unity. We may well wonder whether the Church's unity exists today at the liturgical level. Every priest has more or less his Mass, his liturgy, for a Mass of Paul VI does not exist; rather, we have the Mass of Paul VI reviewed and corrected in accordance with each celebrant's taste: it's "the Mass of Paul VI according to so and so." Everyone displays his inventiveness and creativity... Where is the unity in that? This is a fact of life that everyone who practices in the Conciliar Church can observe: they go from church to church and see that it is

not quite the same Mass, depending on whether the rubrics are faithfully observed or freely revised. We cannot fail to see this lack of unity; not to look at the facts as they are would amount to culpable, willful blindness.

Holiness. Of course, it is necessary to distinguish between the Church, which is holy, and members of the Church, who are not always so. This distinction notwithstanding, there is still the crying fact that after the Council tens of thousands of priests abandoned the priesthood and took up with a



The counterfeit Church that has cropped up since the strange Second Vatican Council perceptibly departs year after year from the Church founded by Jesus Christ. The counterfeit post-conciliar Church has been breaking away—that is to say, opposing—more and more from the holy Church that has been saving souls for twenty centuries (and also enlightening and sustaining the City). The pseudo-Church under construction is separating itself more and more from the true Church, the one Church of Christ, by the strangest innovations in its hierarchical constitution as well as in its teaching and morals.

—Fr. Calmel

woman. One may legitimately ask the question: What has become of the observance of chastity; where is fidelity to the code to which they had freely pledged themselves?

Apostolicity. One could ask similar questions concerning the Church's apostolic character. At the level of jurisdiction, these conciliar priests and bishops can always assert: "We are the official Church, we are officially attached to our dioceses, we are incardinated, therefore we have authority." Surely. But what connection is there between Cardinal Pie [1815-1880] and his current successor on the see of Poitiers? How can the latter lay claim to this filiation? Isn't he rather inclined, on the contrary, to disavow such a paternity because it bothers him? In reality, all the new bishops scarcely desire to hear about their pre-conciliar predecessors.

Fr. Calmel, a Son of the Church in Trying Times

These are the questions we shall examine during our sixth Summer University. But I would like to give you right now, if not some elements of a reply, at least some avenues of reflection. Firstly, the questions we are asking today were formulated before us by the priests who were at the forefront of the battle for Tradition. I am thinking in particular of Fr. Calmel in his *Short Apologia for the Church of All Time* [*Brève apologie pour l'Église de toujours*]. It is a collection of articles he wrote for the review *Itinéraires* during the 1970s. Their prophetic character is striking; one wonders how he could have foreseen everything at the very beginning of the crisis in the Church. We in 2010 need not make projections for the future—we are experiencing the full effects of this crisis *hic et nunc*, but he foresaw them 40 years ago. He wrote what was going to happen, which unfortunately did

happen. To show you how current—and how keen—his analyses are, here is a passage from an article entitled "Two Inseparable Aspects of the Mystery of the Church":

To profess one's faith in the Church in the face of modernism, to be happy to have to suffer in order to bear witness to the Church betrayed from all quarters, is to keep watch with her in her agony, or to keep watch with Jesus, who prolongs in His afflicted, betrayed Spouse His agony in the olive garden. (p. 18)

I shall return shortly to this comparison, which Archbishop Lefebvre also developed in a sermon—a comparison of the Passion of Christ and the Passion of the Church.

Fr. Calmel continues: "Insofar as we shall prove to be faithful watchers, impervious to worldly fear and discouragement, we shall come to know that the holy Catholic Church is a mystery of supernatural strength and divine peace." We find here recognition of both the supernatural strength and of the divine peace of the Church, and the affirmation that this Church has been widely betrayed, is in agony, a state of passion. And we must not sleep as did the apostles who accompanied Jesus to the garden of olives, but keep watch.

In the same work, Fr. Calmel makes an even more precise observation. He writes:

The counterfeit Church that has cropped up since the strange Second Vatican Council perceptibly departs year after year from the Church founded by Jesus Christ. The counterfeit post-conciliar Church has been breaking away—that is to say, opposing—more and more from the holy Church that has been saving souls for twenty centuries (and also enlightening and sustaining the City). The pseudo-Church under construction is separating itself more and more from the true Church, the one Church of Christ, by the strang-

est innovations in its hierarchical constitution as well as in its teaching and morals. (p. 48)

Some might ask whether he does not go too far. That would be to forget that a Roman prelate writing in 1976 to Archbishop Lefebvre dared to speak of “the Conciliar Church.” It was Archbishop Giovanni Benelli, substitute at the Secretariat of State. When we were speaking about the notes of unity, sanctity, and apostolicity, we were not envisaging the Conciliar Church, but the Catholic Church. Can a Conciliar Church exist? Archbishop Benelli did not hesitate to say it and even to write it.

These quotations from Fr. Calmel show us that the investigation we shall undertake during the next Summer University originates at the beginning of the crisis gripping the Church. In the appendixes of his *Brève apologie pour l'Église de toujours* we find an article entitled “A Son of the Church in Trying Times” from January 1975; then “Of the Church and the Pope,” May 1973; also “The Fog of Revelationism and the Light of Faith,” March 1974... Once again, we are not making anything up. We need only appropriate these doctrinal studies bequeathed to us by our elders in the fight for the Faith—no more and no less.

Here is a final passage, taken from the article “The Church’s Regime and Sanctification”:

Rousseauesque democracy is a political regime conceived and applied in such a way that number overrules right, and those who are actually in charge, those who in fact exercise authority, ordinarily have a way to shirk their duty or dodge responsibility or escape observation....

Fr. Calmel denounces conciliar collegiality, which undermines authority and dissolves unity.

In effect, the official holders of power are hypocritically dispos-

sessed of effective power. The actual power is transferred to irresponsible and unaccountable parallel authorities. It is in this that Rousseauesque democracy is a mendacious regime. It is even more intolerable in the Church—in the Kingdom of Truth—than in the kingdoms of this world.

Archbishop Lefebvre’s Comparison of Christ’s Passion to the Passion of the Church Today

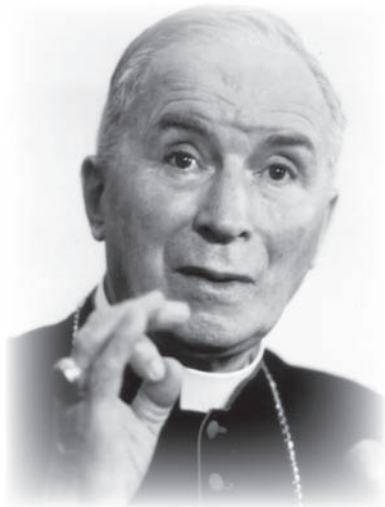
After this lucid assessment of the state of the Church, it is appropriate to see if our predecessors in the good fight, in particular the chief among them, Archbishop Lefebvre, left us some teaching to guide our steps through the general confusion in which we find ourselves. There is in fact a sermon Archbishop Lefebvre gave on June 29, 1982, at the ordinations at Ecône: in it he establishes a comparison between the Passion of Christ and that of the Church, and points out two temptations to which we must not succumb. In it he affirms what position we ought to hold. The Founder of the Society of St. Pius X recalls that confronted with the scandal of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, some said, We’ve lost, it’s over. Others believed that it was not possible, that it was only a matter of appearances, that it wasn’t real. But it was real, and yet nothing was lost. Archbishop Lefebvre explains to us what happened during the Passion of Christ, which can be applied to the present situation of the Church:

Briefly, I would like to try to explain what it seems to me our course of action should be in the face of these sad developments taking place in the Church. It seems to me that we can compare this agony the Church is suffering today to the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. You see how astonished the Apostles themselves were when Our Lord was taken and bound—

after the kiss of Judas. He is taken away. He is clothed in a scarlet robe, mocked, beaten, weighed down with the Cross. And the Apostles run away; they are scandalized. It is not possible that He—whom Peter proclaimed: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of God”—can be reduced to this plight, this humiliation, this destruction. It cannot be. They run away.

Only the Virgin Mary, with St. John and some women remain with Our Lord and keep the faith. They will not abandon Him. They know that Our Lord is truly God, but they also know that He is man. It is precisely this union of the divinity with the humanity of Our Lord that poses extraordinary difficulties. Our Lord in fact did not want to be merely man; He wanted to be a man like us, with all the results of sin—yet without sin, apart from sin; but He wanted to accept all the consequences: sadness, fatigue, suffering, thirst, hunger, death. Yes, right up to His death, Our Lord embodied this extraordinary thing that so scandalized the Apostles, as it indeed scandalized many others who turned their backs on Our Lord and did not believe in the divinity of Our Lord.

Throughout the history of the Church, one comes across these people who are so surprised at the weakness of Our Lord that they cannot believe He is God. This was the case with Arius. Arius said no, it won’t do, that man cannot be God, because He said He was less than His Father, that His Father was greater than He. He is therefore less than His Father. He is therefore not God. And then Our Lord said that astonishing thing, “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death.” How could He, with the Beatific Vision, seeing God in His human soul, and thus far more glorious than weak, far more eternal than temporal—His soul already in eternity and blessed—yet here He is saying, “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death,” and goes on to utter those astonishing words we could never imagine on the lips of Our Lord, “My God, my



The Church, if she is divine and truly divine, transmits to us all the things of God—especially the Holy Eucharist—eternal things which can never change and which will be the glory of our souls in heaven. Yes, the Church is divine, but she is human too. She is made up of men who may be sinners, indeed, who are sinners, and yet who share somehow in the divinity of the Church, to a certain extent—like the Pope, for example, by his infallibility; by the charism of infallibility he shares in the divinity of the Church and yet remains human. They all remain sinners. Except in those instances where the Pope makes use of his charism of infallibility, he can err, he can sin.

—Archbishop
Marcel Lefebvre

God, why hast Thou abandoned Me?” Hence the scandal, alas, which spreads among weak souls. Arius takes practically the entire Church with him in saying this Man is not God.

Others, on the other hand, go the other way and say that perhaps everything Our Lord endured, spilling blood, the wounds, the Cross, all that was imaginary. They were external phenomena but not real. Rather like the archangel Raphael, when he went with Tobias and later revealed to him, “You thought I was eating when I had dinner with you, but I am nourished with a spiritual nourishment.” The archangel Raphael did not have a body like that of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He was not born of an earthly mother, as Our Lord was born of the Virgin Mary. Was Our Lord an illusion like that and only appeared to eat, but did not really eat, or appear to suffer but did not really suffer? There were those who denied the human nature of Our Lord Jesus Christ: the Monophysites, the Monothelites, who denied the human nature and the human will of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Everything about Him was God (they claimed), and everything that seemed to happen was only an illusion.

So you see what happens to those who are scandalized by reality and truth.

Then Archbishop Lefebvre switches from the Passion of Jesus Christ to that of His Mystical Body, the Church.

Let me make a comparison with the Church of today. We thought the Church was truly divine, that she could never deceive herself or deceive us.

Well, it is true, the Church is divine; she cannot lose the truth. The Church will always be the guardian of truth. But she is also human. The Church is human and indeed more human than Our Lord Jesus Christ was. Our Lord could not sin. He is the Holy One, the Just One *par excellence*.

The Church, if she is divine and truly divine, transmits to us all the things of God—especially the Holy Eucharist—eternal things which can never change and which will be the glory of our souls in heaven. Yes, the Church is divine, but she is human too. She is made up of men who may be sinners, indeed, who are sinners, and yet who share somehow in the divinity of the Church, to a certain extent—like the Pope, for example, by his infallibility; by the charism of infallibility he shares in the divinity of the Church and yet remains human. They all remain sinners. Except in those instances where the Pope makes use of his charism of infallibility, he can err, he can sin.

Why be scandalized and say, like some people following the example of Arius, that he is not pope? He is not Pope, as Arius said Christ was not God, it cannot be, Our Lord cannot be God. We ourselves may be tempted to say that it cannot be, he cannot be Pope and do what he is doing.

On the other hand, others would divinize the Church to the point that everything in it becomes perfect. So everything in the Church being perfect, we could say there is no question of our doing anything whatever to oppose anything coming out of Rome; we must accept everything coming out of Rome. Those who talk this way are like those who say that Our Lord was God to such an extent that He could not suffer, that He gave only the illusion of suffering, but in reality did not suffer; in reality it was not His blood that flowed. Those around Him had only illusions in their eyes—not reality. There are some of these today who go on saying there can be nothing human, nothing imperfect in the Church. They too are mistaken. They do not see the reality of things. How far can imperfection in the Church go, how high can sin go, if I may say it, in the Church, sin in the intellect, sin in the soul, sin in the heart and in the will? The facts tell us.¹

I leave it to you to read the rest of this very important sermon, which will no doubt inform our reflections next year on “The Church in Crisis.” Now I would like to give you the broad outlines of a form of proactive apologetics in the manner of Chesterton, whose spirit enlightened our 2010 summer university; an offensive, as opposed to defensive, apologetics on the question that has occupied us from the start: has the Church’s traditional apologetics been called in question by the crisis?

For a Chestertonian Apologetics

We have seen that the Church’s unity has been seriously battered, and that its universality has been challenged. But we also meet with an unavoidable objection that is leveled directly against us, which amounts to saying, “You have a lot of nerve to be talking about divisions when you yourselves are responsible for them by your schismatic mentality and your parallel church.” You get this from your conciliar relatives and friends. They add: “You talk about obedience to Tradition, but you people disobey the Pope! Clean your own house! Before looking at the mote in your neighbor’s eye, get rid of the beam in yours!”

These kinds of accusations call for a proactive apologetics. A defensive apologetics is when our traditionalist assumes a low profile, shoulders hunched and head tucked, who murmurs an apology for being Catholic and attached to Tradition. A jovial, proactive apologetics is what Chesterton gives us, and what, in a way, Bishop Fellay deploys when he answers the Roman authorities:

You reproach us for being sowers of division and of responsibility for the crisis in the Church. But we are

not the cause; rather, we are just the thermometer that discloses the crisis. In your feverish state you may break the thermometer, but that is not a solution. That is no way to resolve the problem. Look at the thermometer and see how high the fever has risen, but do not hold us responsible.

Such are the remarks of the Superior General of the Society of St. Pius X, if not literally, at least in spirit...

Using this kind of answer with your progressive cousins, you will feel a bit better. You will stand a little taller. Having thus become less fearful, you may wonder what you can do next to take it to the next level. Here is an outline of what you might say.

Firstly, do not hesitate to grant momentarily the objections the conciliarists may make. They see us a bit like Montesquieu in his *Persian Letters*. They wonder with surprise how one can be a Persian, or, in our day, a traditionalist. Because in their eyes, we are straight out of Jurassic Park; we’re dinosaurs. Or else we are fixated and obsessed about the liturgy; we have a neurotic need to cling to the minutiae of ritual; we are not intellectually equipped to accept progress; we are not conceptually competent to meet modernity, etc., etc.

Let’s take these objections as they come, and reassure our interlocutor that we are not against them, at least not right away, as in judo, where the fighter adapts to his antagonist’s movements only to turn them to his advantage... For, as you know, all traditional priests are “black belts”!

Then answer your interlocutor with the following: I get the impression that you need to bolster yourself with a caricature of us, which allows you to keep your positions. But the question is to know whether

this picture is genuine or not. Would you be willing to examine why you need these reassuring caricatures? Are you really so sure of yourself, and why? You wonder how someone can be a traditionalist in 2010. And I ask you how you can be a progressive today. When I look at the situation, and not at caricatures, I see that what characterizes conciliar progressives is dispersion, disintegration—anything but unity. There is division in the Church without any traditionalist involvement whatsoever. There are as many modern Masses as there are priests, and perhaps as many creeds as parishes. And this is not without connection to the state of contemporary society in which we find a growing absence of social unity since there is no longer any common good that transcends individual selfishness. It is everyone for himself. The individual-king is a perfect, and solitary, totality, as conceived by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

At this stage, it is important to help the progressive realize what the state of the modern world to which the Church should continually adapt itself is. Tell him frankly that modernity is anemic. This fact is easily verified in the Church: in France, for example, the clergy will comprise just 6,000 or 7,000 priests, where there used to be 36,000 parishes. There are still about 18,000 diocesan priests, but their average age is 70 to 75 years old. Vocations have also dried up. Every year, from either death or retirement, the church loses about 600 priests, and they are hardly being replaced by the scant 100 new priests per year. The attrition is thus about 500 priests a year. These are the facts. Numbers are not traditionalist, still less “Lefebvrist.” Faced with statistics like these, traditionalists should stand up and be done with the defensive apologetics sketched above, because Tradition is the youth of the Church.

And the progressives know it. That is why they are so attached to their caricatures and slogans against us. They have a genuine need to reassure themselves. But our apologetics is there to prevent them from anesthetizing themselves.

A Buoy for the Castaways

The third stage of our Chestertonian apologetic is to ask the question that logically comes at this point: how can you still be a progressive, still aboard the good ship modernity that is sinking. At bottom what characterizes the modern mentality is autonomy, freedom, the refusal of anything transcendent. It is man who takes the place of God, but it has to be obvious today that modernity is in a state of full-blown decadence. People nowadays talk about late modernity and post-modernity the way they have about the conciliar Church, then the post-conciliar Church, and now para-conciliar—and why not meta-conciliar!

To persist in clinging to this modern world while it is collapsing from exhaustion is literally suicidal. Several books written by non-Catholics observe this collapse without daring to assume a genuinely detached critical view of the observed phenomena. I could mention an author I have spoken about previously, the sociologist Marcel Gauchet, hardly a traditionalist, who describes the “exit of the religious” and the “disenchantment with the world,” marked by the disaggregation of society—a dissociety—as it was termed by [the Belgian Catholic Thomistic philosopher] Marcel De Corte. They may resort to euphemisms like “incivility” or “wild children,” but daily life is marred by real crimes committed by real hoodlums. A psychiatrist like Alain Ehrenberg, also someone who cannot be accused of Catholic traditionalism, observes a “self-weari-

ness,” an incapacity for assuming the burden of one’s own existence, the human condition, the status of a creature before its Creator. The modernity to which Vatican II wanted to rally the Church cuts man off from all transcendence, from God and from the reality He created. Modern man has the illusion of living autonomously, without dependence on any superior, exterior authority, but this illusion is fatal. And Rousseau’s perfect individualist is a chimera. Marcel De Corte spoke of “the intellect in danger of death”—it is no longer a danger, it’s a reality.

From this standpoint, apologetics is exciting. Cracking the books and taking notes is not tedious. We find ourselves today in a critical situation that imposes on us a duty to go to the aid of people in danger. Apologetics today needs enthusiasts, and not anesthetists. Minds and wills have to be awakened. Practically, to do this will require demonstrating that its attachment to absolute freedom, which is the characteristic of modernity, is what is destroying it. That is the heart of the problem. I often give the example of the poet’s “drunken ship” that has no anchorage in reality. This state of affairs has a name, and it’s called shipwreck. The post-moderns and the post-conciliarists are in that situation. You can throw them a life-buoy.

In the next step, the next-to-the last, you will tell why you are traditionalist in 2010: precisely because you are attached to the natural order and to the supernatural order; because you are linked to the One who created the natural and supernatural orders. Then you’ll see that the way your interlocutor looks at you has changed. Where are the backward, the maladjusted, the sick, now? At the beginning of your conversation with this conciliar progressive, it was you, obviously, and you provisionally accepted this caricature he needed to bolster his fragile

positions. But now it’s different. He begins to notice that it is perhaps he who is in an untenable position, because he sees that health, equilibrium, and order are on the side of Tradition. At this point he can begin to envisage Tradition, not as a vexation or refuge in the past, but as a solution, a remedy. It is no longer a question of breaking the thermometer, but of finding the medicine. Such an intellectual conversion, such a change of mind, is what you must try to obtain.

At the conclusion of this friendly joust, the time comes to say to our interlocutor: You were asking at the beginning of our conversation how I could be a traditionalist. Now I can give you a plain answer: by being a dissident; that is to say, by not bleating with the majority of the herd [of Panurge’s sheep]. I don’t mean the dissidence of “resident expatriots”—the sort of people who try to establish an enclave where they can enjoy the strange satisfaction of being the last of the Mohicans! No, I mean a vertical dissidence in the midst of a world immersed in itself. This kind of dissidence in which the mind adheres to God, the author of the natural and supernatural orders, results in our being in the world but not of the world. This is how one can be the “leaven in the dough.” Of course, as you may surmise, this profession of faith must be accompanied by prayer and self-denial. And it often involves trampling human respect not only in words, but in deeds.

Let’s be lucid: let us see things as they are today, but let us also see what we can contribute. You have a treasure at your disposal. The Tradition you’ve inherited is a treasure. It is a remedy adapted to the current situation; it is the solution to the crisis affecting us. An inheritance is not meant to be simply received, but to be handed on. This is the reason for this summer session. We must,

in the footsteps of Chesterton, do apologetics with a lot of friendliness, common sense, and a touch of humor. Correction goes over much better with a smile (*castigare ridendo mores*). There is no place for mockery or mordant irony. No, we laugh to lighten things a bit and to help those who do not yet have the faith to see that there is a solution, that there is a glimmer of hope, that they are not doomed to the shadow of darkness. They can hope if they accept the light.

The Compass and the Magnet, or The Council and the Modern World

To finish up, I would like to give you an example from an editorial published in *DICI* a few months ago entitled “The Compass and the Magnet.” It was about the Council. It starts with a fact, because you must always start with a fact. The fact is that at the end of August several clerics, former students of the Pope from when he was a professor in Germany, got together at Castel Gandolfo to pore over the hermeneutic of Vatican II; in other words, to discuss the correct way of interpreting the documents of that Council. It also happens that the Council was introduced by Pope John XXIII as a compass for the Church, and Benedict XVI adopted this metaphor by saying that Vatican II would be the compass of his pontificate. It is immediately clear what they both wanted to indicate by using this word. A compass is what shows direction, points to the north. If you lose the north, you become disoriented.

Another fact: last March, the Lenten conferences at Notre Dame in Paris also described Vatican II as a compass for our times. The concern of the Church’s authorities nowadays to defend the Council at all costs is notable. They seem to be on the defensive, which can only be

an encouragement to us to go on the offensive...

So let’s take this assertion as it comes: the Council is a compass. Then let’s ask a naïve question: Can one interpret the direction a compass points to? If it points north, as every good compass does, what commentary is needed? What is a hermeneutic of a compass? That is the question. A compass furnishes precise information that should silence all discussion: here is the north, and all the rest is superfluous.

In our naivety, let’s push it a little further: Why, for almost 50 years, has the Second Vatican Council been the object of so many divergent or even contradictory readings and re-readings? They talk about discontinuity and rupture, about renewal in continuity and continuity in change... Opinions clash and disoriented minds seem to be all over the map!

Our object here is to get our interlocutor off-balance, as I mentioned earlier. Our interlocutor is camped in an unstable equilibrium based on false certitudes, and the goal is to lead him to genuine certitudes grounded in reality. Let’s understand well that Tradition is not a return to the past, but a return to reality—whence this preliminary act of putting our interlocutor off-balance, as Socrates would do with the Sophists of his time. Getting back to my ingenuous query, I’ll outline a response: If opinions clash, and if minds are disoriented, it is because the needle of the compass is no longer pointing north, which means that it is undergoing an extraneous attraction. A magnet can make it deviate or even cause it to behave crazily. If need be, you might even suggest a practical demonstration: bring a compass and a magnet and put them under your progressive interlocutor’s nose: *Here you have the Council-compass. It should point north, you say, but you still want to interpret*

the direction it shows. If you want to work out a hermeneutic, it is because it does not point north with certainty; you recognize that you are a bit disoriented. In such a case, you have to look for the extraneous influence, the magnet, that is making the needle of this compass deviate.

Might we not suggest the following explication? While intending to be open to the spirit of the modern world, the Second Vatican Council subjected itself to the force of an attraction extraneous to the Church. In order to find north again, which we all desire, one would have to be freed from the influence of that magnet—which is to say, modernity, post-modernity, para-modernity or even meta-modernity... And if we accept that, there will no longer be any need of a hermeneutic, and we shall understand St. Paul, who reminds us with biblical simplicity: “Do not be conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:2).

By means of this little example, I wanted to show you that every convinced Catholic can engage in an apologetics that is within everyone’s reach. It is simply a matter of trying to adapt the argumentation studied during our summer session to particular members of your social circle. Your argumentation should be inspired by charity, by the love of souls. It is understood that you are going to destabilize your interlocutor, that for a moment you are going to make him anxious or uneasy, but solely to be able to give him the certitude he no longer has, the landmarks he is currently lacking. ☐

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¹ English version: “The 1982 Ordination Sermon,” in *Apologia pro Marcel Lefebvre: Part III, 1979-1982* (Angelus Press, 1988), pp. 411-14.

RENEWING THE ASSISI SCANDAL

Errare humanum est, perseverare diabolicum

Fr. Regis de Cacqueray, FSSPX

A letter from Fr. du Cacqueray, the District Superior of the French District. In it, he explains why the Assisi meeting in October is problematic from a Catholic perspective. In light of the recent developments with Rome, this should serve as an example that, no matter what happens, the Society of St. Pius X will not change its doctrinal critique of the problems in the Church since the Second Vatican Council.—*Fr. Arnaud Rostand*, FSSPX

What is going to happen this October 27, 2011? A simple friendly encounter among men and women of good will? Desultory discourse on the divinity of Christ and of His Church? No—the renewal by the reigning pope, Benedict XVI, of the unprecedented scandal perpetrated by his predecessor, John Paul II, on October 27, 1986.

What will occur this October 27, 2011? A call for conversion to the Catholic faith? The Pope's declarations clearly indicate what this day will be: the meeting of representatives of all the false religions, called by the Pope personally to join in a day of reflection where all are invited to pray for peace.¹

Certainly, unlike the first Assisi meeting, the prayer is to be silent, though intense. But to what god will these representatives of all the false religions be praying in silence? To what god will they be praying, if not their false gods, since the Pope has invited them explicitly to live more deeply “their own religious faith”?² To whom will the Muslims be turning, if not the god of Mohammed? To whom will the animists address themselves, if not their idols? How

is it conceivable that a pope should call upon the representatives of false religions in their official capacity to participate in a day of personal prayer? This act of the sovereign pontiff constitutes *ipso facto* a dreadful blasphemy toward God as well as an occasion of scandal for all on earth.

An Offense against God Triune and Incarnate

How else should we characterize this religious fair, which gravely offends against the First Commandment: “The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve.”³ How can anyone entertain the thought that God will be pleased with the Jews who are faithful to their fathers, who crucified the Son of God and deny the Triune God? How could He give ear to prayers addressed to Allah, whose disciples relentlessly persecute Christians? How could He accept the suffrages of all the heretics, schismatics, and apostates who have repudiated His Church, which came from His Son's open side? How could He be honored by the worship offered to idols by all the animists, pantheists, and other idolaters? How could He hear these prayers when His Son

has clearly told us the contrary: “No man comes to the Father but by me”?⁴

That souls in good faith pray to God while still heretics or unbelievers is one thing; God will recognize His own and will guide them to the one true Church. But to invite these men to pray as representatives of the false religions, according to “their own religious faith,” surely signals that they are being invited to pray according to the spirit and in the manner of their false religions.

How can we fail to see in this a supreme insult to God thrice holy? How can we fail to be profoundly indignant at the sight of such a scandal? How can silence be anything but complicity?

The Peace of Christ Denatured

This exceedingly grave sin equally offends the peace of Jesus Christ. The Pope is calling for prayer for peace. But what is the nature of the peace the Pope seeks? Is it the cessation of the conflicts that bloody the world? But are we really to believe that prayer to false gods will merit for us, not chastisement, but the blessing of peace among men? Has the primeval Flood been

forgotten? Has remembrance been lost of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose crime was less grave than that of incredulity?⁵ Has the record of the gory destruction of Jerusalem, the wages of the sins of His people, been stricken from the Gospels and from history?

Moreover, of what use would it be to us to purchase temporal peace were we to lose our soul? “Be not afraid of them who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do....Fear ye him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.”⁶ In another connection, how can we fail to see in this prayer for peace a doubtlessly unconscious yet perfidious diversion, for ecumenical ends, of the legitimate aspiration of humanity for civil peace? No, the peace brought by Christ cannot be a worldly peace, the Masonic peace sealed with freedom of conscience.

For in reality the peace for which the current pontiff prays is not merely temporal peace; it is especially religious freedom,⁷ the liberty of conscience so often condemned by the popes.⁸ This is the prayer intention given by the Pope; this is the peace the Pope prays for: temporal peace obtained by freedom of conscience.

Is this the peace of Jesus Christ? of the One who died on the cross to affirm His divinity? The peace of Christ is quite different, as far removed from this Masonic idea of peace as charity is from fraternity. The peace of Christ is peace with God, fruit of the redemption of souls by the Blood of His Son and men’s rejection of sin. As for the civil peace communicated by Christ, it is nothing else than the fruit of Christian civilization, molded by Catholic faith and charity.

An Odious Humiliation of the Church

But if the Triune God and the Sacred Humanity of Christ are gravely offended by this invitation to sin, the immaculate Spouse of Christ, His one Catholic Church, is humiliated publicly. Mocked is the teaching of the Apostles, Popes,

Fathers of the Church, the saints, the martyrs, and Catholic princes and heroes. Mocked is the teaching of the Psalmist according to whom “all the gods of the gentiles are devils”;⁹ mocked, the formal order of St. John not to greet heretics;¹⁰ mocked, the teaching of a Gregory XVI or a Pius IX,¹¹ for whom freedom of conscience is “insanity”; mocked, the formal prohibition by Popes Leo XIII¹² and Pius XI¹³ to organize or participate in interreligious congresses; mocked, the martyrdom of a Polyeuctus refusing to sacrifice to idols; mocked, the example of a St. Francis de Sales, writing his *Controversies* to convert Protestant heretics; mocked, the thousands of missionaries who gave up everything for the salvation of the souls of infidels; mocked, the heroic deed of a Charles Martel, halting Islam at Poitiers, or of a Godefroy de Bouillon, forcing his way by lance and sword into Jerusalem; mocked, a St. Louis of France, who punished blasphemy.

How can a Catholic imbued with the spirit of Assisi still subscribe to the dogma “Outside the Church no salvation”? How can he see in the Catholic Church the one ark of salvation? What’s more, this scandal comes from the highest sacred authority on earth, from the Vicar of Jesus Christ himself, as if the gravity of such a gathering were not enough. Does this not make of the Pope, presiding over this meeting, not the head of the Catholic Church but the head of a “Church” of the United Nations, the *primus inter pares* of a religion of all the religions, essentially identical with the Masonic cult of the Great Architect of the Universe? Is this not a satanic perversion of the mission of Peter? Whereas Christ solemnly commanded Peter to “confirm his brethren in the faith” and to feed His sheep, the successor of Peter is in fact going to confirm his brethren in indifferentism and relativism.

An Immense Scandal

For, beyond the terrible blasphemy, this personal decision of

the Pope will engender an immense scandal in the souls of both Catholics and non-Catholics. Before the image of a Pope uniting the representatives of all the false religions, the reaction of the majority of men will be to relativize truth and religion still more. What individual, little acquainted with the Catholic religion, will not be tempted to be reassured about the fate of non-Catholics when he sees the Pope inviting them to pray for freedom of conscience? What non-Christian will see in the Catholic religion the one true religion to the exclusion of all others when he learns that the head of the Catholic Church has convoked a pantheon of religions? How will he interpret the Pope’s exhortation not to yield to relativism if not by thinking that it is a matter, not of holding to the truth, but of being sincere?

How could he not interpret in a relativist sense¹⁴ the Pope’s explicit invitation to practice one’s own religion as well as possible:

I shall go as a pilgrim to the town of St. Francis, inviting my Christian brethren of various denominations, the exponents of the world’s religious traditions to join this Pilgrimage and ideally all men and women of good will... [in order] to solemnly renew the commitment of believers of every religion to live their own religious faith as a service to the cause of peace.¹⁵

In 1986, a journalist published this telling conclusion:

The Pope is inventing and presiding over a United Nations of Religions: those who believe in the Eternal, those who believe in a thousand gods, those who believe in no particular god. An amazing sight! John Paul II spectacularly admits the relativity of the Christian faith, which is now but one among the others.¹⁶

How can it be imagined that this judgment is not shared by many on the eve of October 27, 2011?

That is why it seems to us singularly strange to excuse the Pope from such a sin on the grounds that Assisi 2011 is different from Assisi

1986. To the contrary, everything concurs to convince us of the surprising continuity between the Assisi meeting in 1986 and that of 2011:

The nature of the gathering: an invitation to the representatives of the false religions to get together to reflect and to pray for peace.

The motive: the civic peace promoted by the United Nations. In 1986, John Paul II invited all the religions “in this year 1986, designated by the U.N. as the Year of Peace, to promote a special gathering to pray for peace in the city of Assisi.”¹⁷ During his message for peace of January 1, 2011, the date on which he announced the gathering at Assisi on October 27, 2011, Benedict XVI signed these revealing lines:

Without this fundamental experience [of the great religions] it becomes difficult to guide societies towards universal ethical principles and to establish at the national and international level a legal order which fully recognizes and respects fundamental rights and freedoms as these are set forth in the goals—sadly still disregarded or contradicted—of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights... All this is necessary and consistent with the respect for the dignity and worth of the human person enshrined by the world’s peoples in the 1945 Charter of the United Nations...¹⁸

As Bishop Fellay wrote to John Paul II on the occasion of the second scandal of Assisi in 1999:

The humanist, earthly and naturalist themes taken up at these meetings cause the Church to fall from its entirely divine, eternal and supernatural mission to the level of the Freemasonic ideals of world peace outside of the only Prince of Peace, Our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁹

The date: Benedict XVI chose to undertake this initiative twenty-five years to the day after the Assisi fest:

The year 2011 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Peace convened in Assisi in 1986 by Pope John Paul II.... The memory of that experience gives

reason to hope for a future in which all believers will see themselves, and will actually be, agents of justice and peace.²⁰

Is this not a clear sign of evident continuity? Is it not a way to make us relive the painful memory of the scandals of a Buddha on the tabernacle in St. Peter’s Church, the chickens sacrificed to the gods on St. Clare’s altar, the Vicar of Christ flanked by the Dalai Lama and an Orthodox Patriarch under the heel of the KGB? Is it necessary to commemorate the anniversary of an event if the goal is to distance oneself from it? Why proclaim *Ubi et Orbi* that “the memory of that experience gives reason to hope”? Only the betrayal of straight thinking can have given rise to such a flight from reality.²¹

The recollection of his predecessor, as if he wanted to dissipate any misunderstanding and to remind one and all of his fidelity to the spirit of the first Assisi meeting: “This year, 2011, is the 25th anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Peace which Venerable John Paul II convened in Assisi in 1986.”²²

It is not only the stalwart defenders of the Pope who use these same arguments to attempt to justify the unjustifiable. Formerly Assisi was defended by making a subtle distinction between “being together to pray” and “praying together.” Will they now be saying that there will be no common prayer, but rather a day of prayer in common? Instead of denying the concomitance of the silent prayers, shall we say that everybody prays separately according to his own religion? As if these specious distinctions were not manufactured for the needs of the cause. As if these subtleties were immediately grasped by the majority of men, who will retain only one thing: a gathering of all the religions for everyone to pray to the divinity, abstracting from any Revelation.

Finally, and like most of the gestures of the current Pope compared to his predecessor’s, the scandal of Assisi 2011 will be substantially the same but less spectacular

than Assisi 1986. That is why, to those who would accuse us once again of lacking in charity because of the vehemence of these lines, we remind them of Christ’s words: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” Do we show an ardent love of Christ when we fail to decry blasphemy or criticize those who are shocked by it? Do we love our neighbor when we fail to warn him of the looming scandal? Is this the love Christ requires of us? No, as St. Pius X recalled at a dark hour:

But Catholic doctrine tells us that the primary duty of charity does not lie in the toleration of false ideas, however sincere they may be, nor in the theoretical or practical indifference towards the errors and vices in which we see our brethren plunged, but in the zeal for their intellectual and moral improvement as well as for their material well-being. Catholic doctrine further tells us that love for our neighbor flows from our love for God, Who is Father to all, and goal of the whole human family; and in Jesus Christ whose members we are, to the point that in doing good to others we are doing good to Jesus Christ Himself. Any other kind of love is sheer illusion, sterile and fleeting.²³

So, then, what Church do we belong to? To the Church of St. Polycarp of Smyrna, who retorted to the heretic Marcion, who had asked him if he recognized him, “Yes, I recognize you as the devil’s elder son”?

Do we belong to the Church of St. Martin, who broke the idols and felled the sacred trees of our countryside?

Do we belong to the Church of St. Bernard, who preached the crusade to our forefathers?

Do we belong to the Church of St. Pius V, who not only prayed the Rosary, but summoned the Christian princes to make war against the Mohammedans?

Do we belong to the Church of the saints and martyrs, or to the Church of the Pilates, the Cauchons, the Lamennaises, the Teilhard de


Chardins, ever ready to toady to the world and to deliver Christ and His disciples to their detractors?

Will we judge Assisi with the eyes of faith, of the popes and martyrs, or with the eyes of worldlings, liberals, and modernists?

That is why we cannot keep silent, and while the Pope prepares for one of the most serious acts of his pontificate, we vigorously and publicly proclaim our indignation, hoping and beseeching Heaven that this well-prepared calamity may not

take place. Lastly, how can we fail to think of these words of Archbishop Lefebvre recalled by Bishop Fellay in 1999 in his letter to the Pope:

Archbishop Lefebvre saw in this disastrous event of Assisi one of the “signs of the times” which permitted him to proceed legitimately with episcopal consecrations without Your consent and to write to You that “the time for an open collaboration has not yet come.”²⁴ The time has come, however, to make reparation for this scandal, to do

penance while keeping in our heart the firm hope that despite the progress of the Mystery of Iniquity, “the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church.” 

With the approval of the SSPX’s Superior General, Bishop Bernard Fellay, this text of Fr. Regis de Cacqueray was first published (in French) on laportelatine.org on September 12, 2011, Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, anniversary of the victory of the Catholic armies over the Turks at Vienna, September 12, 1683. Fr. Regis de Cacqueray is the District Superior of France.

¹ The agenda for the day and the Holy See’s communiqué leave no doubt about the religious dimension of the event:

...On the day of the anniversary, 27 October this year, the Holy Father intends to hold a Day of reflection, dialogue and *prayer* for peace and justice in the world... There will follow a period of silence for individual reflection and *prayer*. In the afternoon, all who are present in Assisi will make their way towards the Basilica of St. Francis. It will be a *pilgrimage* in which, for the final stretch, the members of the delegations will also take part; it is intended to symbolize the journey of every human being who assiduously seeks the truth and actively builds justice and peace. It will take place in silence, *leaving room for personal meditation and prayer*... [Emphasis added]. (Vatican Press Office, Communiqué of 2 April 2011, “Pilgrims of truth, pilgrims of peace”: Day of reflection, dialogue and prayer for peace and justice in the world [Assisi, 27 October 2011]).

² The purpose announced by the Pope is “to solemnly renew the commitment of believers of every religion to live their own religious faith as a service to the cause of peace.” Benedict XVI, Angelus, St. Peter’s Square, Jan. 1, 2011.

³ Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:10.

⁴ John 14:16. Cf. also 1 Jn. 2:23: “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.”

⁵ “And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words: going forth out of that house or city shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city” (Matt. 10:14-15).

⁶ Luke 12:4-5.

⁷ ...the World Day of Peace is a favorable opportunity to reflect together on the great challenges our epoch confronts humanity with. One such is religious freedom, dramatically urgent in our day. For this reason, this year I have chosen to dedicate my Message to the theme: “*Religious freedom, the path to peace*”... [I]n my Message for today’s World Day of Peace I have had the opportunity to emphasize that the great religions can constitute an important factor of unity and peace for the human family. In this regard, moreover, I recalled that this year, 2011, is the 25th anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Peace which Venerable John Paul II convoked in Assisi in 1986. *Therefore next October I shall go as a pilgrim to the town of St. Francis*, inviting my Christian brethren of various denominations, the exponents of the world’s religious traditions to join this Pilgrimage... (Benedict XVI, Angelus, Jan. 1, 2011)

⁸ “From this poisoned source of indifferentism flows that false and absurd, or rather extravagant, maxim that liberty of conscience should be established and guaranteed to each man...” Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos*, 1832.

⁹ Ps. 95:5.

¹⁰ “If any man come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into the house nor say to him: God speed you. For he that saith unto him: God speed you, communicateth with his wicked works” (II John 10-11).

¹¹ Cf. the Syllabus of Errors, 1864, condemned proposition No. 79: “For it is false that the civil liberty of every cult, and likewise, the full power granted to all of manifesting openly and publicly any kind of opinions and ideas, more easily leads to the corruption of the morals and minds of the people, and to the spread of the evil of indifferentism.”

¹² On the occasion of the World’s Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893.

¹³ “For since they hold it for certain that men destitute of all religious sense are very rarely to be found, they seem to have founded on that belief a hope that the nations, although they differ among themselves in certain religious matters, will without much difficulty come to agree as brethren in professing certain doctrines, which form as it were a common basis of the spiritual life. For which reason conventions, meetings and addresses are frequently arranged by these persons, at which a large number of listeners are present, and at which all without distinction are invited to join in the discussion, both infidels of every kind, and Christians, even those who have unhappily fallen away from Christ or who with obstinacy and pertinacity deny His divine nature and mission. Certainly such attempts can nowise be approved by Catholics, founded as they are on that false opinion which considers all religions to be more or less good and praiseworthy, since they all in different ways manifest and signify that sense which is inborn in us all, and by which we are led to God and to the obedient acknowledgment of His rule. Not only are those who hold this opinion in error and deceived, but also in distorting the idea of true religion they reject it, and little by little, turn aside to naturalism and atheism, as it is called; from which it clearly follows that one who supports those who hold these theories and attempt to realize them, is altogether abandoning the divinely revealed religion.” (Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos*, January 6, 1928)

¹⁴ This can be done “without losing its own identity or assigned to forms of syncretism.” Press Release of the Holy See of April 2, 2011: A day of reflection, dialogue and prayer for peace and justice in the world—“pilgrims of the truth, pilgrims of peace”

(Assisi, October 27, 2011).

¹⁵ Benedict XVI, Angelus, St. Peter’s Square, Jan. 1, 2011.

¹⁶ *Le Figaro* magazine, October 31, 1986, p. 69.

¹⁷ *L’Osservatore Romano*, January 27-28, 1986.

¹⁸ Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, January 1, 2011, Nos. 7, 12.

¹⁹ Open Letter of Bishop Bernard Fellay to Pope John Paul II solemnly protesting the renewed scandal of Assisi at Rome on October 28, 1999.

²⁰ Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, January 1, 2011, No. 11.

²¹ [Seule la trahison des bien-pensants peut permettre de se voiler ainsi la face.] Cf. Bernanos, *Journal d’un curé de campagne* (Plon, 1936), p. 245.

²² Benedict XVI, Angelus, St. Peter’s Square, Jan. 1, 2011. See also the Vatican’s press release of April 2, 2011:

“Pilgrims of truth, pilgrims of peace”: Day of reflection, dialogue and prayer for peace and justice in the world, Assisi, 27 October, 2011: The image of pilgrimage therefore sums up the meaning of the event. There will be an opportunity to look back over the path already traveled from that first meeting in Assisi to the following one in January 2002, and also to look ahead to the future, with a view to continuing, in company with all men and women of good will, to walk along the path of dialogue and fraternity, in the context of a world in rapid transformation.

Already in 2007, on the occasion of the interreligious reunion at Naples, Benedict XVI dispelled any thought of a desire to repent of the first convocation at Assisi:

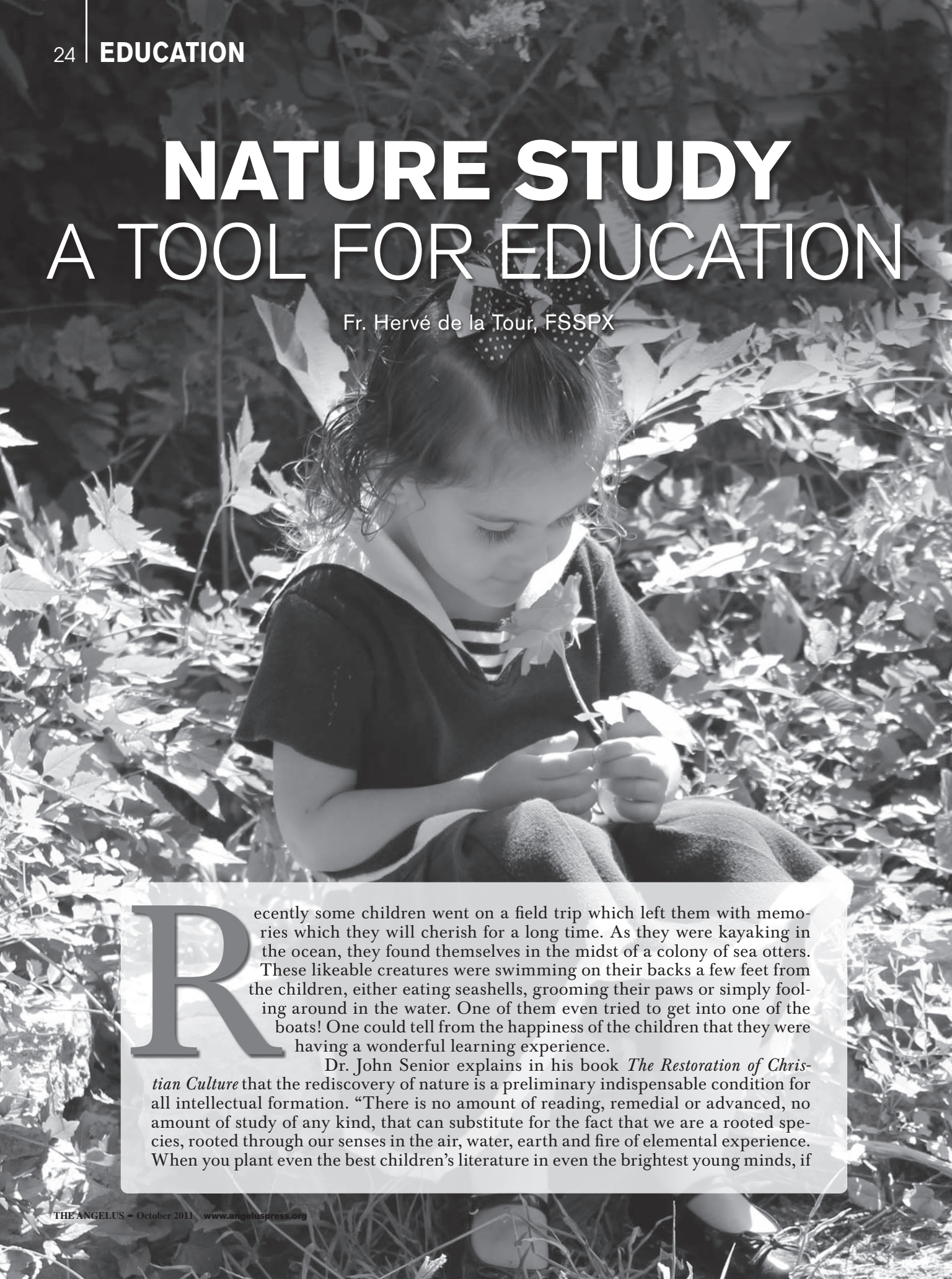
Today’s meeting takes us back in spirit to 1986, when my venerable Predecessor John Paul II invited important Religious Representatives to the hills of St. Francis to pray for peace, stressing on that occasion the intrinsic ties that combine an authentic religious attitude with keen sensitivity to this fundamental good of humanity... While respecting the differences of the various religions, we are all called to work for peace.... (Meeting with the Heads of the Delegations Participating in the International Encounter for Peace, October 21, 2007)

²³ St. Pius X, Encyclical *Our Apostolic Mandate* to the French Episcopacy, August 25, 1910 [English tr. Yves Dupont (1974; Instauratio Press, 1990), §24].

²⁴ Letter of Bishop Fellay to John Paul II to solemnly protest against the renewal of the scandal of Assisi at Rome on October 28, 1999.

NATURE STUDY A TOOL FOR EDUCATION

Fr. Hervé de la Tour, FSSPX



Recently some children went on a field trip which left them with memories which they will cherish for a long time. As they were kayaking in the ocean, they found themselves in the midst of a colony of sea otters. These likeable creatures were swimming on their backs a few feet from the children, either eating seashells, grooming their paws or simply fooling around in the water. One of them even tried to get into one of the boats! One could tell from the happiness of the children that they were having a wonderful learning experience.

Dr. John Senior explains in his book *The Restoration of Christian Culture* that the rediscovery of nature is a preliminary indispensable condition for all intellectual formation. "There is no amount of reading, remedial or advanced, no amount of study of any kind, that can substitute for the fact that we are a rooted species, rooted through our senses in the air, water, earth and fire of elemental experience. When you plant even the best children's literature in even the brightest young minds, if

the soul of those minds has not been richly manured by natural experience, you don't get the fecund fruit of literature which is imagination, but infertile fantasy. Children need direct, everyday experience of fields, forests, streams, lakes, oceans, grass and ground."¹ Nature study should have a prominent place both in our homes and in our schools. Anyone who has taken children for a walk in the school backyard can testify to the benefits of such an activity. For instance, a teacher took a class in September to watch sunflowers. As the students were observing them, several black-capped chickadees landed on the flowers to eat their seeds. You should have heard the gasps and seen the wonder in the eyes of these little girls! But nature study should begin at home, and we hope that the present article will help parents to lay its foundation in their children's souls.

St. Thomas Aquinas explains that the world of nature is the world most proportioned to our intellect. The study of what is familiar to us like the clouds and the rain, the rhythm of the seasons, the leaves of the trees in our garden, *etc.*, is the study of the easiest and most natural object of knowledge.

Experience of nature is a prerequisite to any teaching since, according to Aristotle, nothing is in our intellect unless it was first in our external senses. And let us point out the importance of the sense of touch in Thomistic philosophy. By means of touch we are awakened to the reality of things about us. Is the surface of this leaf rough or smooth? Does the frog feel slimy in your hand? *Etc.* The richer our experiences concerning nature, the better will be our understanding of the various subjects of our curriculum.

Let us first consider the ends of nature study. We will then consider its means. The ends of nature study are conveniently reduced to three: **1)** The immediate end is to know and love the world which surrounds us. **2)** The intermediate end is to arouse wonder and thereby to acquire a contemplative mind. **3)** The ultimate end is to praise God since the order and the beauty we see in nature come from its Creator. Let us study these three ends more in detail.

The immediate end of nature is the study, knowledge and love of all the beautiful and wonderful things which are within our reach. Its spirit should be inquiry, discovery and delight. An old teacher used to say: "In the early years we are not to teach nature as science, we are not to teach it primarily for method or for drill: we are to teach it for loving—and this is nature-study. On these points I make no compromise."

Of course, the child needs guidance in this domain. Ideally, this should start at home. The parents should be the first ones to open the world of nature to their children, saying at the right moment "look" and "listen." But this presupposes that they themselves have looked and listened for years. Remember the walks St. Therese of the Child Jesus took with her father and how it awakened her love for flowers.

The intermediate end of nature study is the wonder aroused by the observation of the simple and familiar things of everyday life: the red leaves of the maples in autumn, the squirrels storing acorns in preparation for the winter, the snow geese flying over our head on their migration, *etc.* Reflection is stimulated through thoughtful questioning. The aim, let us repeat it, is to develop the contemplative faculty of the child and its capacity to

"sympathize" with the world God has created.

Fr. Edward Leen was a Holy Ghost Father like Archbishop Lefebvre. He wrote a beautiful book about education and one passage especially applies to our subject:

How much the toilsome struggle upwards of the young towards the true good would be facilitated were they taught a little contemplation! To be trained to pause and to admire the beauty that is spread around them in such profusion in the works of nature and in the works of art, in sounds, and in phrase, in lines and in colors, would have a great power to uplift their souls and lure these souls to the ways of moral beauty. A great enemy of the noble life is the senseless speed of a mechanized existence that allows no time for the enjoyment of the pure and chastening delight that springs from the contemplation of the beautiful. It needs to be understood by those who devote themselves to the task of education, that appreciation of the beautiful has relevance to a life that is good....One who is insensitive to the beauty of the things will easily content himself with the ordinary and the mediocre in conduct and spiritual aspirations.²

Thirdly, the ultimate end of nature study is to sing the glory of God. Anyone who has ever gazed at the stars on a clear night has been filled with a sense of awe—"Dear Lord, I thank Thee for having created such a wonderful universe! If the stars are already so beautiful that they fill my heart with joy, how much more beautiful Thou must be, Thou who art their Creator!" This is the spirit of the saints.

Listen to the enthusiasm of St. Bernard:

Consider first of all the creation of the universe, and the disposition and ordering of its various parts. What a display of power in the production of a world out of noth-

ingness! What wisdom in the collocation of the different orders of creatures! What benignity in their manifold combination! Reflect on the multitude and magnitude of the things created by almighty power, how wisely they are all distributed, with how much goodness they have been compounded, the highest being united to the lowest, with a charity as amiable as it is admirable. For to this slime of the earth has been added the vital force, as for instance, in the trees where its presence is manifested in the beauty of the foliage, in the brilliancy of the flowers, and in the sweetness and wholesomeness of the fruit.



A Child's Thought of God

They say that God lives very high;
But, if you look above the pines,
You cannot see our God, and why?

And if you dig down in the mines,
Your never see Him in the gold;
Though from Him all that's glory shines.

God is so good He wears a fold
Of heaven and earth across His face,
Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace
Slides down by thrills through all things made.
Through sight and sound of every place.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Now let us consider the means to achieve these ends. The first one is the direct observation of the object of the lesson, either outside (nature walks) or inside (either the children bring the pine cone, the grasshopper, the feathers, *etc.*, or the teacher or parent brings enough specimens for everyone).

The child must have under his eyes the actual object so that he may observe it, handle it, examine its properties and becomes thoroughly acquainted with it, instead of just reading information about it in a textbook. There are so many things children may observe: flowers, seeds, insects, leaves, minerals.

In one school, a teacher was able to identify 25 different species of trees in the surrounding area. Every child should be able to name the trees he sees in his own garden and the birds he hears outside his window. It is through taking regular nature walks that one learns to know the whole round of the year in his particular region and to catch the spirit of the seasons. After a few years of practice, one is able to know when this particular flower blooms or where to find this particular bird.

The second means is skillful questioning. These questions are in fact suggestions for personal investigation. We want as much as possible to encourage the child to go on a "voyage of discovery," according to the expression of Mother

Stuart. For example, if the children are observing various leaves they have collected (oak, maple, pine) here are some simple questions to help their investigation: "How are the leaves alike? How are they different? Is the leaf simple or compound? How many parts can you see (stalk, midrib, veins)? Do some leaves feel rough to the touch? Do some, when crushed, have a fragrance you can smell? *etc.*"

Some questions will lead to admiration: "Did you know that some trees can live up to 2,000 years? How do the leaves of the tree know when it is time to change color in the fall? Do you realize how many animals live in trees (birds, squirrels, insects), *etc.*" The interest of the child must be aroused so that he will start asking his own questions, like when they realize that the summer birds (orioles, warblers, swallows, *etc.*) are leaving: "How can a bird find its way through thousands of miles of land or sea? How does it eat while it is flying? Why do they go so far away? *etc.*"

The third means is to keep a personal notebook where the child will record his observations and sketch what he has seen. Nature study gives the child many beautiful things to draw. It brings the eye and mind together and makes the hand the organ of both. It teaches the child to express his response to God's creation through writing in his own "nature journal," activity which is not limited to school time but can be continued during the week-end or the summer. It is a sign that we have "lit a fire" in the soul of a student when he proudly shows you the pages of his notebook which he has filled during his free time, not because it was an assignment, but just because he enjoyed doing it.

The explorers of old had logbooks. Our children need to be

taught how to keep their “discovery notebooks”: Here is an example. “September 7, during my walk I saw 5 turkeys, 3 different kinds of frogs, a wheelbug, a stinkbug and a soldier beetle. There were some black-eyed Susans in bloom (sketch). I observed the acorns of the bur-oak (sketch) and the seed pod of the milkweed (sketch). I heard a woodpecker and a quail.” Nature journaling is a wonderful way for the child to withdraw from the artificial world of man and contemplate the natural world of God. It teaches the child to be still, quiet, receptive so as to be able to see and hear. It is a means for integrating poetry, art, science, and religion.

Let us finally reply to the main objection from parents and teachers: “I don’t know how to teach nature study.” We reply that it is a good starting point. We must admit that there are so many mysteries in the natural world, so many unknown domains. It is good for us to have this feeling of awe in front of the vastness of God’s universe. But then the next point should be: “Let us explore together.” The parent who confesses his ignorance but at the same manifests interest (“Let us find out what is the name of this bird we have seen in our garden for the past week!”) establishes a bond with his child which will facilitate nature study. Instead of being an expert teaching a novice, the parent becomes a fellow-investigator. Both share the joys of discovery. God is surprising us with so many beautiful things everyday of the year!

There is now a huge amount of resources on nature study. The Field Guides (Audubon, Peterson, Golden, Lone Pine, *etc.*) for mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, trees, flowers, mushrooms, *etc.*, are available everywhere, and every home should have some of them for identification. The Reader’s Digest *North American Wildlife* is a great buy since

we can find everything in one book. There are so many books we could recommend, but our two favorites are *Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Comstock and *Type Lessons in Nature Study and Literature* by Ann McGovern. There are some interesting ideas in *Keeping a Nature Journal* by Clare Walker Leslie. Of course the books of Jean Henri Fabre are great for introducing students to observation. There are also books about the flowers named after Our Lady which provide us with wonderful connections between religion and science. Try *Mary’s Flowers: Garden, Legends and Meditations* by Virginia Krynaw.

We just have at this point to quote again Fr. Leen:

The neglect of nature-study in boys’ schools is much to be deplored. They grow up in the midst of the beauties of nature and never observe them. The love and study and contemplation of the fair forms and colours that God pours forth about them with such lavish hand, would give them constant interest and enjoyment. They live for years in the midst of a beauty offering every degree of variety as the seasons change, and few of them ever taste the delight of tracing the lovely lines of a leafless tree silhouetted against the steely grey of a winter sky at eventide.

The great evil of our days, the evil which is the root of many others, is that men and women have lost the art of finding joy and the resources of life in what is at their



Poems in Nature

In the oldest wood I know a brooklet,
That bubbles over stones and roots,
And ripples out hollow places,
Like music out of flutes.

There creeps the pungent breath of cedars,
Rich coolness wraps the air about
Whilst through clear pools electric flashes
Betray the watchful trout.

I know where wild things lurk and linger
In groves as gray and grand as time;
I know where God has written poems
Too strong for words or rhyme.

—Maurice Thompson

door. They are not trained to find satisfaction in the simple and wonderful things that God has made for their delight. They have eyes and they do not see what is made to gladden the eye and elevate the soul. They can neither enjoy themselves sanely nor entertain themselves in a natural way.

They know not how to be still. They rush from the natural delights and pleasures which God offers them in nature, to the artificial and “canned” entertainment prepared for them by cynical and commercial-minded men. And to the education they have received must be assigned the fault.

Yes, parents and teachers must help children to know and love nature and thereby grow in admiration of God’s perfections and in gratitude for His goodness to us.



The Glory of God in Creation

Thou art, O God, the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night
Are but reflections caught from Thee.
Wher'er we turn, Thy glories shine
And all things fair and bright are Thine.


—Thomas Moore

When a child sees the vast number of seeds falling from the trees in autumn, he will learn about God's Providence. When he listens to the melodious songs of the birds in the spring, he will thank God for providing this enjoyment for him. When he sees the sun rising and setting day after day and night following day with wonderful regularity, he will appreciate God's order manifested in His laws.

Here are some simple activities which could be done at home to awaken an interest in the natural world: Plant and care for a small garden, observing the growth of the vegetables and how they must be protected from insects and excessive cold or heat. Have a few pet animals such as dogs, cats, chickens, goats, pigs, rabbits, learning how to feed them and care for them. Set up backyard feeders during the winter to observe birds (we identified 20 different species at the feeders of the District House). On cloudless nights, identify the most common constellations with the help of a monthly sky chart. Collect insects like beetles, grasshoppers,

butterflies, *etc.*, identifying them and learning about their habits.

We will finish with a quote from the great educator Mother Stuart:

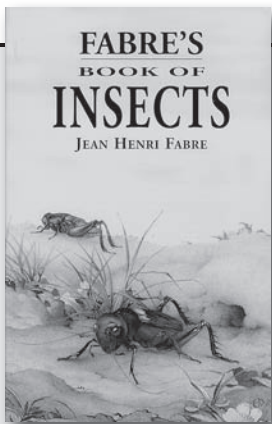
The love of nature is a great source of happiness for children, happiness of the best kind in taking possession of a world that seems to be in many ways designed especially for them. It brings their minds to a place where many ways meet; to the confines of science, for they want to know the reasons of things; to the confines of art, for what they can understand they will strive to interpret and express; to the confines of worship, for a child's soul, hushed in wonder, is very near to God.³ 

Fr. Hervé de la Tour was ordained in 1981. He was editor of the popular *Catholic Family* magazine, which he published while serving in Australia. Father's articles on education have appeared in previous issues of *The Angelus*.

¹ This quote was extracted from a conference given by the Dominican Sisters.

² This quote and the following are from the "What Is Education?"

³ This quote is from *The Education of Catholic Girls*.



Fabre's Book of Insects

Jean Henri Fabre

No one "read the book of nature" like the author. This book was the result of countless hours devoted to observing bugs while they hunted, built nests, and fed their families. Suspensefully-written essays blending facts and picturesque folklore:

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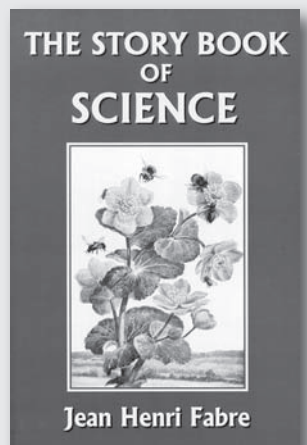
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Jean Henri Fabre

Renowned Catholic scientist and bugman Fabre said, "After 87 years of thought and observation, I say not merely that I believe in God—I can even say that I see Him." See (70 illustrations) and read what he meant in this ultimate classic nature book on plants and animals as "Uncle Paul" (Fabre) converses about nature's wonders with three imaginary children who ask him to tell "true stories."

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- spiders' suspension bridges
- habits of cows and sheep
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- cold water and cats
- sun, moon, stars, and sky.

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Where Are the Workers for the Harvest?

Fr. Christian Bouchacourt, FSSPX
Superior of the South American District

When the storm hits and the ship is in danger of sinking, to whom do the fearful crew turn, if not to the ship's captain? His authority, calm, and experience, reassure all who see him standing steadily at the helm. Likewise on the field of battle, the soldiers who feel themselves flagging look to their leader, who exhorts them by his orders and rallies them by his example. Were the leader to be lost, the soldiers' courage would fade, doubt would take hold, and defeat would be at hand. The one to whom generations have looked for centuries is Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament, who reassures the doubtful, consoles the afflicted, strengthens the weak, kindles the lukewarm, listens to those who speak to Him, and fills with His grace those who ask. For more than two thousand years, He has been truly present among us in all the tabernacles of the world and gives Himself as nourishment in Holy Communion. But our Lord willed that this presence depend on an intermediary: the priest. He alone by his ordination has received the power to change bread and wine into the substantial, real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where the priest is, Christendom lives!

Dear friends, Christendom needs priests to exist, otherwise it breaks down and dies. Without the priest the divine truths would no longer be taught and faith would die out. Without him, divine life would no longer be kept alive in souls by grace, which fortifies and sanctifies them. Heaven would then be closed and hope would disappear. Without him, the tabernacles would be hopelessly empty, for the holy sacrifice of the Mass would no longer be celebrated and souls thus

orphaned would die of hunger. Charity would grow cold and the flock would be divided and scattered. Our Lord wanted not only priests for the perpetuation of His action here below, but also souls that would imitate His obedience, chastity, and poverty in religious life; souls that would pray and sacrifice for those who do not; souls that would spend their lives praising, serving, imploring, and consoling Him by living according to the evangelical principles He taught us in the Sermon on the Mount.

Let us keep foremost in our minds this complaint of our Lord in the Gospel: "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few" (Matt. 9:37). That is why every Catholic family must not only pray for priestly and religious vocations, but also live in such a manner that they can awaken and develop in their midst. To flourish, the divine call is needful of a favorable soil and must avoid the pitfalls that could endanger it. "A vocation is not a miraculous or extraordinary call, but the blossoming of a Christian soul that clings to its Creator and Savior Jesus Christ with an exclusive love and shares His thirst to save souls."¹ Where better than in a Catholic family can such a blossoming occur?

Indeed, the first crucible of priestly and religious vocations is the Catholic family:

But the first and most natural place where the flowers of the sanctuary should almost spontaneously grow and bloom remains always the truly and deeply Christian family. Most of the saintly bishops and priests whose "praise the Church declares" [Ecclus. 44:15], owe the beginning of their vocation and their holiness to example and teaching of a father strong in faith and manly virtues, of a pure and devoted mother, and of a

family in which the love of God and neighbor, joined with simplicity of life, has reigned supreme. To this ordinary rule of divine Providence exceptions are rare and only serve to prove the rule.²

Such an atmosphere can exist only if our Lord Jesus Christ reigns over the family. This will happen especially if the family's day is punctuated by prayer recited in common, such as grace before meals, the Rosary, and night prayers. To this must be added the exemplary lives of both parents, manifesting a profound unity in their piety and reception of the sacraments.

The life of a priest or religious is centered on sacrifice and the imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ. This orientation of life must be cultivated from the cradle. No soul will be able to answer the divine call unless the spirit of sacrifice has become second nature to it. Children ought to learn prompt obedience and to be self-forgetful and helpful not only at home, but also to others and at their parishes. May the spirit of riches not cut off their generosity as happened with the rich young man in the Gospel. Parents ought not to coddle their children, but educate them with a virile love.

A pure and chaste environment is also necessary for the blooming of vocations. For this, dear parents, watch over your children's leisure activities, reading, and friendships. Consecrating your home to the Sacred Heart will help you immensely.

Make it a point to attend Sunday Masses whose beauty uplifts the soul. It is not enough just to attend a traditional Mass, but go to the High Mass, during which the Church in her liturgy deploys all her splendor and proclaims on high her faith in order to nourish and fortify our own. Your sons will be able to participate in the service of the altar. Altar boys make up the court of

Christ the King. They are His pages, amongst whom our Lord likes to choose those whom He calls to His service. Too many of the faithful abstain from attending the high Mass out of sheer laziness, preferring shorter or later Masses for the sake of their hobbies. Such conduct is not without consequences.

And lastly, dear parents, make the decision to enroll your children in good schools. I am full of admiration to see how, every year, you are more and more numerous in making this sacrifice for their good. This sacrifice may go so far as to enroll them in boarding schools as some of you do. The souls of your children are your most precious possession. You are not their owners, just their trustees. God confided them to you; you will have to answer to Him for them. The perverse teaching that takes place in official schools, including Catholic ones, the bad friendships, and the deleterious atmosphere prevailing there can mark your children's lives and endanger their salvation. Do not delude yourselves; especially when they are adolescents, your authority will count much less than that of their teachers and comrades who set before them base or twisted ideals.

How can we explain the dearth of vocations we are experiencing? How can we explain that for the last few years, with a few exceptions, the majority of the boys entering our seminary come from families that do not adhere to Tradition? There are some priories that have not given a vocation for more than twelve years even though the children are numerous. Let us take a look at the obstacles that may suffocate the divine call in your children's souls.

The first and foremost among them is the absence of the spirit of sacrifice. Protect your families against the spirit of the world. Television and especially the Internet

work ravages in souls. To allow a television set or Internet connection in your children's rooms is totally irresponsible. To let them use these devices without supervision is tantamount to putting them in a proximate occasion of sin for which you are responsible before God. I appeal to your authority, you fathers of families who quite often because of the obligations of your work neglect those of your family. Be vigilant! *You have no idea of the ravages that the Internet can cause in the souls of your children. Take a look at their Facebook account as I have and you will understand!* Your teenagers need your authority. It is their strength and their shield even if they do not always realize it during the critical teen years. Keep out of your homes the love of comfort and convenience, laxity, and consumerism.

A certain sentimentality in education also constitutes an obstacle to the blooming of vocations. Dear parents, your children are not your equals. Your authority has been delegated to you by God Himself to help them to accomplish His will and to put them on guard against the dangers of life and to protect them from themselves. *Be good but firm.* Loving one's children does not mean hugging them ten times a day, but encouraging them to do good and to shun evil resolutely. Education is the art of arts, and upon the quality of the education received depends the direction a child's life will take. Your children ought to respect your authority by their prompt obedience. Do not yield to their whims. Teach them to love the cross! There is no salvation without it.

Your parental duty makes it incumbent upon you to monitor the visits and outings of your older children. Do not let them "go steady" from the age of 15 or 16 or 17, as our priests see happen too often. These "commitments" are nothing

else than flirtation in disguise, even if the two young people are traditionalists. They are marred by original sin, and do not forge it! By allowing this to go on, you put their purity in jeopardy, you kill their youth and sterilize the generosity of which they are capable. Courtship can only be envisaged for young adults, not adolescents. How many vocations have we lost this way! It is the ultimate ruse used by the devil to ruin a vocation. Your children must make the distinction between love and healthy friendship. Far too many parents do not see the danger and remain not only deaf to the priest's remarks, but judge them inept and make fun of them. Every young Catholic should ask himself or herself one day whether he or she is called by God. A spiritual retreat can be a good opportunity to get light on the likelihood of this call. But once the fires of passion have been lit, young people no longer want to consider this possibility.

A major obstacle to vocations is the habit of criticizing the priests at home. Love your priests and respect them! Trust them. If you should notice their faults or failings, pray for them! In case of disagreement with one of them, do not take up the matter in front of the children. Do not label them, do not criticize their faults publicly, be docile to what they teach you. Do not critique their sermons. How do you expect children to respond to God's call if they see the priests and nuns constantly denigrated? Such behavior is unfortunately all too frequent and causes much damage even if it arises more from levity than malice. The habit of criticizing priests in order to preserve oneself from the conciliar disasters does not justify the continuation of such a practice in our priories today. How many times have I heard this line: "Since the conciliar crisis, I no longer trust priests. My anticlericalism saved me, so I keep

it up!" That is tantamount to saying that in Tradition there are not good priests and that docility and obedience would constitute weakness and naivety. Luther could not have said it better; private judgment has become the order of the day. Such a state of mind produces disastrous effects on budding vocations and destroys the unity of communities. Such families give no sons or daughters to the Church.

I would like you to be convinced that *there is no greater honor than to give a son or daughter to the Church.* These vocations, dear parents, will draw down upon your family abundant graces in this life, and in paradise they will be the most precious gems adorning your crowns and will be your boast. So do not discourage them, but rather help them to take root and develop. The Church is so in need of them! If they do not come from your families, then I do not know where we shall find them. The most solid and stable vocations come from united, fervent Catholic families. Your children's devotion depends on yours. Numerous fathers and mothers of families who received Holy Communion not only Sundays but during the week have merited the grace of a vocation for one of their children.

Let us pray for priestly and religious vocations and for their perseverance. Let us pray likewise for priests, monks and nuns. On their holiness depends not only that of your souls, but also that of society. It is because the Catholic priesthood is not well that Christendom is perishing. So,

Lord, give us many holy priestly and religious vocations and very many holy priests! God bless you. ☩

Translation from the French of Fr. Bouchacourt's September editorial for the South American District monthly *Jesus Christus* posted on La Porte Latine. Fr. Christian Bouchacourt, FSSPX, is the District Superior of South America.

¹ Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Letter, Albano, October 17, 1983.

² Pius XI, Encyclical *Ad Catholicos Sacerdotii*, December 20, 1935, §80. [English version online at www.vatican.va.]





Destruction of the

The relationship between natural realities and their supernatural origin and destiny is one of the most appropriate subjects of our times. Specifically, the Marxist ideological attack on the family is not understood unless one has first thought about this profound reality, that is, the family's relationship to divine parenthood. In his "Theses on Feuerbach," Marx writes that if the origin of the celestial family is nothing more than the human earthly family itself, then the latter is the one that must be destroyed. The case of the family is nothing more than an example, since the global Marxist ideal is to destroy, deny, or stir up a revolution as is preferably said against all human reality that has any analogy with some divine reality.

Although the family is also threatened by the distortion of relationships between parents and children, the most essential attack is dealt in the same proportion as the destruction of the matrimonial structure. Since the nucleus of the family is found in matrimony, the attack against it not only affects relations between spouses, but it is also

intentionally orientated toward the destruction of the parent-child relationship. This is in accordance with the definition of matrimony as an inseparable union between a man and a woman for the procreation and education of children. In fact, in the well-known work by Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, the family is not

mentioned except as the result of a certain concept of matrimony. According to Engels, it is sufficient to modify the concept of matrimony for the family as we know it to cease to exist.

The Marxist attack strictly consists in considering man as a sexual animal at the same time as a monopolizer of wealth. On the other hand, contradictions are abundant because of its intended foundation on a "primitivism" where monogamy would disappear and from its collusion with women's liberation through their insertion in large modern factories. In general, an intimate relationship can be seen nowadays between the Marxist revolution and the feminist movements that deny the traditional meaning of the family. The latter could hardly operate in our society if they did not have the support of political parties along Marxist lines. Our topic therefore requires consideration of the meaning of indissoluble marriage as the basis and nucleus of the family. In other lectures in this series we have already heard several arguments



The Family

Jose Maria Petit Sulla

for the indissolubility of matrimony. I would only like to add a basic sociological thought: no contracting party would accept any restrictions to the marriage union during a religious or even simply a civil marriage. Any act conducted under such conditions would be grotesque and would make the entire ceremony useless. Moreover, no legislation lists the same, certainly quite variable, causes as restrictions to the marriage union, which could later serve as arguments for divorce. The profound reason for this is that stating these supposed reasons for dissolving the marriage would denaturalize the marriage act itself. Then, instead of the right to divorce, what would actually take place would be illegitimate unions since through such a ceremony there would be no marriage in a strict sense. There is a radical hiatus between marriage and divorce. If the causes for divorce were included, as they should be in a fully logical legal act, explicitly mentioning the conditions under which the marriage is celebrated, the latter would be denatured *ipso*

facto, not only theoretically but would also be impossible practically. No contracting party would tolerate his spouse saying at that moment what the law gives the right to invoke later. With divorce, one thing is the law and another, reality.

Ordering the marriage union to the procreation of children, which makes us participants in the same creative gift as God, requires matrimony to be indissoluble. It is obvious, and no one can deny it, that the inseparable union of matrimony is the only basis of the family. Moreover, the indissoluble union between spouses is the basis for parents' concern, commitment, and dedication to their children. To renounce indissoluble marriage is to doubt paternal responsibility. There is a mutual agreement between natural generation and spiritual education. The parent-child relationship is guaranteed in theory and in practice by the permanent marriage union.

Marriage does not consist of establishing a voluntary relationship fixed by the spouses, because then we would not know what marriage

is, since its nature would depend on the will of the contracting parties in each case. It could be an economic, social, political, cultural or simply hedonistic, *etc.*, marriage. Marriage could not be spoken of as such. All the favorable or unfavorable aspects that come together in marriage influence it as mere accidents and do not form a part of its essential definition. The nucleus is a mutual, total donation without restrictions with regard to children. And so, just as procreation is not the fruit of art or technology, but of nature, so too education is not the fruit of suitability but of parenthood. Simply by being a parent one has the right to educate, and this parenthood is the result of fidelity.

Marxism, as we have stated, denies that monogamy is the natural family institution, yet must recognize that the only possible marriage for the future is monogamous matrimony. According to Engels, what should disappear from marriage is "indissolubility" and "the preponderance of the man." But monogamy without indissolubility

and the primacy of man is simply words. Without indissolubility, *de facto* polygamy is obviously confirmed; and without the primacy of the man, denial of the principle of matrimonial stability is intended, for there cannot be two principles of union in any society. Moreover, the latter is so evident that Engels himself upholds that the “liberation” of women will bring about the disappearance of the family. This will happen if women devote themselves to socially productive work and abandon domestic jobs. “The emancipation of women demands, as a primary condition, the entire feminine sex to turn to public industry. And this condition simultaneously requires the individual family to be suppressed as an economic unit of society.”

“When the individual family is no longer the economic unit of society,” writes Engels, “the custody and education of children becomes a public matter.”

If the primacy of the man, that primacy St. Paul expresses in a language that cannot be distorted in any way, is like the formal cause of the family; the “woman being at home” is like its material cause. That is why Marxism insists that women should be inserted in productive factory work and abandon domestic work and caring for the children, who would be taken care of by the State. Marxism is interested in presenting Christian marriage, indissoluble marriage, as “the first oppression of classes” where consequently “the man is the bourgeois in the family and the woman represents the proletariat.” Note that this criticism does not fall on a determined historical manner of understanding the preponderance of the man, but rather on the very factor of indissoluble marriage and even of monogamy.

The crass materialism from which the Marxist view of matrimony stems is very adequately revealed in a fragment of the above-quoted work by Engels which is good to review:

If marriage based on love is the only moral kind, it can only be so where love persists. But the duration of access to sexual love is quite variable according to individuals, especially among males: and the disappearance of affection in the presence of a new passionate love makes its disappearance a benefit for both parties as well as for society. Except that people ought to be saved from making a fuss in the useless mire of a divorce lawsuit.

Note that Engels identifies love with sexual love and even points out, which would not please current feminists very much, that access to sexual love is quite variable among men, and lastly Engels recognizes that affection disappears when confronted with a new passionate love. In this text there are not many concessions or much dissimulation: marriage is not stable nor can it be, assuming it deals with a relationship based exclusively on sexual love. Indissolubility according to Engels comes from the father’s desire to leave his wealth to those whom he knows for sure are his children. And so monogamy turns out to be the triumph over sexual appetite of the desire to transmit wealth. Monogamous marriage is the result of the triumph of capitalism. Without the accumulation of wealth, neither indissoluble marriage nor even monogamy would exist.

Neither an extraordinary experience nor elevated knowledge of matrimony is necessary to realize that this theory cannot be sustained under any aspect. But the Marxist idea continues today as it did in 1884 when the work we are commenting was published: The family is based on oppression which

simultaneously has its justification in the accumulation of wealth. Consequently, the only possible liberation of women is by transforming the way they relate to their surroundings, or more technically, by terminating the current division of labor. Note then that the one who substantially changes activity is precisely the woman. The disappearance of the family takes place exactly when the woman reports for productive work “in the great modern industry” to use the words of Engels himself.

When reflecting on the Marxist thesis, we realize that the family is a natural reality based on a natural relationship and that the fastest way to destroy a family is to replace the idea of a domestic economy with that of social production. Economy, the administration of domestic wealth, is replaced by production, the manufacture of products for social exchange. Domestic work is the basic task of marriage. That is why Engels says that equality of condition with men will be impossible “as long as women remain excluded from productive work and confined within private domestic work.” Note that if “domestic” is the opposite of “social,” the adjective “private” should be the opposite of “productive.” But evidently it is not. What is really contrary to production, in the final analysis, is contemplation. And in the sphere of action, since it deals with work in both cases, the opposite of production is planning, distribution, administration, whatever is strictly called economy. Marxism is basically against such economy.

Marriage, which has the purpose of the procreation and education of children, is an economic unit but not a productive one. Within it, several of its members can carry out productive work, but there can be only one economy, one administration of this wealth. This administra-

tion is what confers material unity to the family and what expresses the more spiritual job of training children in human terms.

Harmony between the different temperament of the man and the woman in confronting work finds its natural fulfillment in marriage and in the family. But instead of recognizing that the family is a natural reality based on the different natural temperament of the different sexes, Marxism argues that the woman should conquer her "true being" through insertion in a determined productive social means: public enterprise. The attack against the family, the destruction of this social cell is necessary to create a new type of woman. Current conditions in our productive society facilitate and actually make the Marxist idea possible. The real family, the only possible, existing one is a continuous refutation of Marxism by its very presence. Therefore, its destruction is an irreplaceable project, especially in the current Euro-communist strategy to conquer political power by dominating society.

We must think in depth about the idea expressed by Marx in his fourth Thesis on Feuerbach. The natural order is not indifferent to the divine order, but rather participates in it. The greatness of the human being born in the heart of a family could not be compared to anything other than the very creative act of God. Therefore, the ultimate denial of all supernatural reality requires the denial of whatever participates in the divinity, as the primacy of the man does in our concrete case over the woman in matrimony, the indissolubility of this union, and the primordial dedication of the woman to the care of the children and domestic tasks. But all these realities that Marxism wants to destroy do not belong to a determined image of the family, but to the family itself

as such, the only possible and only existing one. For the same reason, the values on which a family is based do not belong to a certain age or to the domination of a certain ideology or economic situation. Rather, they are based on the reality of the mission the family must fulfill. The greatness of procreation and education must be the viewpoints that lay the foundation of the requisites for marriage and the family. And these fundamental requisites are not at the mercy of any human individual or collective event.

The modern consumer society can create the most ideal material conditions for the practical destruction of the family in many different ways. But Marxism, with its fundamental idea of the transformation of reality, is the one that knows how to take advantage of these circumstances to promote the breakup of the family by presenting indissolubility as a bourgeois prejudice incompatible with women's liberation. And Marxism is the only one that will benefit from all the sophisticated literature directed toward "overcoming" the age of the husband's preponderance over the wife. Finally, Marxism will also be what manages to incorporate women into revolutionary tasks by taking advantage of and exploiting the shallowness that disparages and ridicules the value of domestic work nowadays.

To define as tension what is harmony and to present as equal what was first called contradictory, is the typical way the Marxist dialectic works. Applying this pernicious mechanism of seduction to the family offers these characteristics: the family, based on monogamous marriage, is an exploitation of the wife by the man. At the same time, the division of labor confirms the priority of the male by reducing the woman to domestic tasks

that produce no wealth. The reality to be conquered by Marxism is simply the destruction of this concept of family by denying the indissolubility of matrimony and affirming the obligatory nature of leading women toward productive social work. Engels not only does not hide that these two suppositions are to destroy the family, but he also explicitly affirms it. There is no new model for the family, but rather its simple disappearance because the State takes over the support as well as the education of the children. The family loses its reason for existence and is not maintained except in the proportion in which humans cannot be manufactured, but must still be engendered. But the family has no other responsibility beyond this function.

In general, to conclude, we must consider that behind certain apparently progressive formulas there are doctrinal formulas that have existed for many years now and that fulfill radically opposed proposals and totally inverted ends to everything that upholds our concept of the family. The family is a traditional reality, we tend to say, but that does not mean that the foundation of its make-up is merely the result of human experience, which could be surpassed by the development of humanity itself. The foundation of the family, on the contrary, is transcendent and has no other mirror for seeing itself than the creative and provident divinity. And it even receives new illumination by contemplating the natural and supernatural reality of the Holy Family of Nazareth, and especially the role of Mary, wife and mother, model for all women of fidelity, contemplation, and daily domestic work. ☑

Article from *Verbo* magazine, No. 329-330, 1994.



FR. FRANZ SCHMIDBERGER, FSSPX,

on the Pope's upcoming visit to Germany [Sept. 22-25, 2011]

What does the Superior of the German District of the SSPX think about the Pope's upcoming trip to Germany? On September 21, 2011, the German news agency DAPD in Stuttgart asked Fr. Schmidberger nine questions about the Pope's visit.

The negotiations between the Vatican and the Society of St. Pius X reached a critical point on Wednesday [Sept. 14] with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith setting conditions. In view of this situation, what do you think of Benedict XVI's visit?

We are looking forward with joy to the visit of the Holy Father to our country; after all, he is the representative of Christ, God Incarnate, on earth. And this is true independently of the discussions between our Society and the Vatican.

What are your expectations for the visit of the German Pope to Germany?

We all hope for a real reinforcement of the Faith. The Pope should clearly explain to the German people that Christianity is based on faith in the Triune God, on our Lord Jesus Christ, and on the Church founded by Him; and that outside this Truth there is not nor can there be genuine spiritual life, nor any hope for the individual and no happy future for society. *Pax Christi in regno Christi*—the peace of Christ in the reign of

Christ. To this must also be added love of the Church and of our Christian tradition. To be Christian is no burdensome load, but rather a merciful and liberating grace.

For the first time, the Pope is going to visit the nine federal states in which Catholics are in the minority. What impetus can the Pope give there?

The Pope could offer the Evangelical Christians of Germany a structure like the one established for Anglicans desirous of returning to the House of their Father, and which has proven to be extremely beneficial. Genuine ecumenism would consist in exhorting them to return to their roots, which sustained the whole Church until the Reformation.

How will the Society be following the Pope's journey in Germany?

We'll be watching the Pope's visit attentively by means of the media, and during the different events we'll be distributing literature to the faithful. Also, we have prepared for this event in our priorities by a novena of prayer.

Do you recommend that your faithful participate in the religious ceremonies that will be taking place with the participation of the Pope, or do you advise them against it?

We have not made any recommendations to our faithful about attending; they are all aware of our justified reticence toward the new liturgy, and unfortunately this also applies to the Pope's Masses.

As Superior of the SSPX District, what is your opinion of a Eucharistic celebration in a soccer stadium with a rather eclectic pre-show and with male and female altar servers?

All these mass events are exposed to the dangers typical of big demonstrations—the absence of the sacred, of dignity, and of holiness. Moreover, in the Church's entire history, there have never been women ministers for the very reason that service at the altar has always been patterned on the priesthood, which is, according to the will of our Lord, reserved to men. Women priests are an invention of liberal churchmen who are more attached to the spirit of the age than to the Faith and to religion—the well-known "*sentire cum ecclesia*."

By the Pope's will, one of the key points of His voyage will be ecumenism. So, at Erfurt there



will be an interview as well as an ecumenical religious service of the Word. What do you expect from this?

It is always important and useful to speak with men; but among men of the Church it is paramount to raise the question of Truth, to wit: Did Jesus Christ institute the Sacrifice of the Mass in expiation for our sins? Did He give us the gift of the priesthood? Did He institute sacramental confession, and did He build His Church on Peter? These ecumenical Liturgies of the Word not only are of no use for this, but they also sow confusion and contribute to religious relativism.

At the start of his trip, the Pope will meet with representatives of the Jewish community. Relations with the other religions are one of the subjects on which the differences between the Vatican and the SSPX are strongest. How do you envision this meeting on the agenda?

There again, beyond the exchange of polite greetings, the question of truth should be at the heart of the encounter. St. Peter, the first Pope, on Pentecost answered the Jews gathered at the Cenacle who asked him about salvation: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:37-38). Why then shouldn't his current successor tell them the same thing?

At Berlin notably, homosexuals and lesbians plan to get out into the streets during the Pope's visit to demonstrate against the Church's sexual morality. They will likely attract a lot of attention. Do these protests risk eclipsing the message of Benedict XVI?

These protests highlight how far Germany has departed from the faith of their fathers, how far indecency can be flaunted in public, and how much the hatred of God has developed. Germany is by far a neo-pagan country, a land needing re-evangelization. It is for these people, too, that we pray.

(Sources: German District, translated from the approved French version; Rorate-Caeli blogspot)

Interview with Fr. Niklaus Pfluger

First Assistant of the Society of St. Pius X, Rev. Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, despite his very busy schedule, found time to answer a few questions for pius.info.

What do you think of the doctrinal preamble?

The document allows for corrections from our side. That is necessary also, if only to exclude clearly and definitively even the appearance of ambiguities and misunderstandings. So now it is our duty to send Rome an answer that reflects our position and unambiguously represents the concerns of Tradition. We owe it to our mission of fidelity to Catholic Tradition not to make any compromises. The faithful, and the priests even more, understand very well that in the past Rome's offers to the various conservative communities were unacceptable. If Rome now makes an offer to the Society, then it must be made unambiguously and unmistakably clear that it

is for the welfare of the Church and hastens a return to Tradition. We think and feel with the Catholic Church. She has a worldwide missionary task, and it was always the most ardent desire of our founder that Tradition should flourish again throughout the world. A canonical recognition of the Society of St. Pius X could accomplish just that.

Critics say that Rome is trying to set a trap for the Society and to take advantage of it.

This criticism is altogether justified and should be taken seriously. For how can we avoid giving the impression that this amounts after all to a tacit acceptance, so to speak, that would in fact lead to this parallel diversity and relativize the one

truth; that is indeed precisely the basis of Modernism.

Assisi III and even more the unfortunate beatification of John Paul II, but also many other examples, make it clear that the leadership of the Church now as before is not ready to give up the false principles of Vatican II and their consequences. Therefore any "offer" made to Tradition must guarantee us the freedom to be able to continue our work and our critique of "modernist Rome." And to be honest, this seems to be very, very difficult. Again, any false or dangerous compromise must be ruled out.

It is pointless to compare the present situation with the talks in 1988. At that time Rome wanted to prevent any sort of autonomy for the Society; the bishop that they



maybe were and maybe were not going to grant would in any case have to be subject to Rome. That was simply too uncertain for Archbishop Lefebvre. If Marcel Lefebvre had given in, Rome could in fact have hoped that a Society without its “own” bishops would someday come round to the conciliar way. Today the situation is completely different. We have four bishops and meanwhile 550 priests worldwide. And the structures of the official Church are breaking down faster and faster. Rome can no longer confront the Society as it did more than 20 years ago.

Will the Society of St. Pius X agree to the preamble?

Here diplomacy plays an important role. Rome wants to save face in public. The pope has already been accused too often of lifting the “excommunication” of our bishops without preconditions. If it had been up to the majority of the German bishops, then the Society would have to sign a blank check recognizing the whole Council first. Inciden-

tally, they are demanding that now as before. Pope Benedict has not done that. Moreover, free access to the Catholic Sacrifice of the Mass [*i.e.* Tridentine Mass] was the second condition required by the Society. Therefore Rome complied twice with the Society’s wishes. It is clear that now they are demanding a document that can be presented to the public. The question is, whether one can sign the document. In one week the superiors of the Society of St. Pius X will meet in [Albano Laziale, a suburb of] Rome to discuss this together. Of course it has to be clear to Cardinal Levada and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith too that they cannot insist on a document that the Society cannot justify in turn to its members and faithful.

Who gained the greater advantage from the theological talks, Rome or the Society of St. Pius X?

That is a very important point, and so I will say it again: We are not that concerned about any

advantage of our own. We want to make the treasure that Archbishop Lefebvre entrusted to our safekeeping available again for the whole Church. To that extent, canonical recognition would be a gain for the Church. In that way a conservative bishop, for example, could ask Society priests to work in his diocesan seminary. Of course, the regularization of relations would also mean that Catholics who were perhaps kept away from the Society by the label “suspended” will now venture to take that step. But that is not what this is about. For 41 years the Society has grown steadily, even in spite of being beaten with the “excommunication” stick. We are concerned instead about the Catholic Church. Together with the Archbishop we too would like to say [the words of St. Paul, I Corinthians 11:23], “*Tradidi quod et accepi*”—We hand on what we ourselves have received.

(Translation by *DICI*)

Europe: The Alarming Situation of Catholicism, According to Cardinal Erdö



Last September 29, on the occasion of the opening of the General Assembly of the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE) in Tirana, Albania, its president, Peter Cardinal Erdö, expressed concern about the increase of Christophobia in Europe. “In the media, the schools, and in public opinion there is a systematic propagation of an attitude opposed to Christianity,” maintained the Hungarian prelate. He went on to explain, “The Christian faith is represented in a false way, the Internet sites hosting Christian content are systematically being closed or censored.” For the Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest, the “grave crisis of European countries is having a serious effect on the life of families and single people....One of the obvious symptoms of the crisis is the economic crash. But the ethical and anthropological crisis is more profound and insidious, and it is spreading into families, education, and the media.”

Peter Cardinal Erdö also denounced “drugs, abortion, and euthanasia” as manifestations of the “social tensions crossing Europe. Signs of a culture of death, they also symbolize the increasing violence that affects the younger generation and increases the sense of insecurity.” Again, according to the Cardinal, the Catholic Church in Europe is working “for a renewal of society by proclaiming the Christian message,” in taking up the call of the Pope for “a new evangelization of the continent.” (Source: *DICI*, No. 242)



Commentary on the Third Pastoral Journey of Benedict XVI to Germany

I. Berlin. From the first day of his visit to Berlin, Benedict XVI kept the commitment he gave to the journalists on the plane to the city: to avoid a brutal confrontation. As noted by Jean-Marie Guénois in *Le Figaro* on ReligioBlog: “It remains to be seen if this strategy will pay off.” Many journalists are surprised that the Pope has not addressed current problems—economic ones in particular, but also the geo-political ones—and that he addressed only matters of principle, which are considered stratospheric.... “Many of my colleagues think, however, that this is not the best method to use to put out the smoldering fire that exists at present in Germany and to address the dissatisfaction which strikes at the Church,” regarding the issues that are today debated by dissenting priests, and also by certain bishops: marriage for priests, ordination of women, welcoming remarried divorcees...

II. Erfurt. On the second day, under the sign of ecumenism, Benedict XVI used a reflection by Martin Luther on the gravity of sin to point out that divine mercy must not be forgotten. But can one isolate just that element of a reflection in the Lutheran context when the Pope wanted to borrow it? In a note on the possession of truth, often cited here, Thomistic philosopher Louis Jugnet says that Catholicism does not maintain that everything is false in the doctrines to which it is opposed, “but the question put forth here is different. It is the question of knowing if these truths are, so to speak, comfortable, free, and at home, in these opposing doctrines. Or ought we think that these truths have only a partial, fragmentary, or incomplete role there—that they are wrapped in flagrant errors which warp them by distorting the true focus—and that is what dominates in a false doctrine and

In the World but Not of the World

During his trip to Germany, Benedict XVI invited Catholics who are involved in the Church and in society to combat the worldly spirit that causes the Church to “settle down in this world” and to “adapt herself to the world’s standards.” It is true that the pope was aiming these remarks at an excess of structural rigidity that is characteristic of German dioceses. Yet, independently of these particular circumstances, one can see in his invitation an involuntary questioning of the openness to the world extolled by Vatican II. For the worldly spirit is not just adaptation to the contemporary world’s criteria of technological efficiency. It is above all a spirit dominated by the threefold concupiscence (cf. 1 John 2:16), as all the Apostles, all the Fathers of the Church, and all the saints teach, following Jesus Christ.

Hence the question that arises is the following: Was the Church able to open herself to the world, as she intended to do at the Council, without opening herself to its spirit, without adapting to it a little, without adopting it in a certain way? One simple example: In adopting secular dress, wouldn’t the clergy run the risk of adapting to secular habits, even the most deplorable ones sometimes?

It is convenient to blame the secularization of society for the scarcity of vocations and the precipitous decline in religious practice... It would be more effective to give serious thought to that spirit of the world that entered the Church when she decided to open herself to the world’s preoccupations.—Fr. Alain Lorans, FSSPX

(Source: *DICI*)

by which it risks being literally disastrous. It is the spirit of this doctrine, the spirit of error and contradiction.”

Louis Jugnet gave a few examples to clarify this visit to Germany: “Judaism and Islam always insist on the unity of God (which is true), but they intentionally word it so, in a unilateral manner, which excludes the Christian dogma of the Trinity.” Luther insisted on the fact that it is only grace that justifies, and on its face, this formula is true. But with him, this excludes the Catholic economy of the sacraments... Everything is not false, technically, in the adverse doctrines, but a spirit infects everything.” This is why, the French philosopher continues: “If these partial truths are acceptable and comparable, it is on condition of their being uprooted from these false doctrines (for that reason, there must

first be a critique of the error) and ‘baptized’ in some way, reconsidered from another perspective.” But since the Second Vatican Council, which declined to use its power to condemn, criticism of error which would allow one to root out a partial truth from a false system is no longer done. For ecumenical reasons, the magisterial power of the Church is no longer exercised, and seems to have fallen dormant.

On the subject of the ecumenical inclination of his visit to Erfurt, Benedict XVI reiterated to journalists who accompanied him on the plane to Berlin the common and divergent points between Catholics and Protestants: “When I accepted the invitation to Germany, it was clear to me that ecumenism with our Protestant friends should be a strong point and



central to this trip. We live in a secular age, as I said before, where Christians together have the mission to convey the message of God present, the message of Christ, to believe that it is possible, to go forward with these great ideas, with truth. And it is for this that together, Catholics and Protestants, are a fundamental component of our time, even if we are not all united institutionally and even though major problems remain, problems on the fundamentals of faith in Christ, in the Trinitarian God, and in man as image of God. We are united, and to show the world that, to deepen this unity, is essential in this moment of history.... Accordingly, I am very happy to be able to show this fundamental unity, the fact that we are brothers and sisters who work together for the good of humanity, announcing the joyful message of Christ, of God who has a human face and who speaks with us."

Two questions were asked: (1) These "major problems" which remain between Catholics and Protestants, such as the "fundamentals of the faith in Christ"—do they allow them to announce together and unequivocally the "joyous message of Christ"? (2) If this account is at its foundation discordant, what is the value of this work "together for the good of humanity"?

And in the end what is the result of the ecumenical efforts displayed by Benedict XVI with the German Lutherans? In the wake of the meeting in Erfurt, Fr. Federico Lombardi, a Vatican spokesman, cautiously acknowledged to these journalists that "different assessments" of this meeting were possible. He pointed out encouraging aspects, from the ecumenical point of view, aspects equally highlighted by the Protestants, such as the positive evaluation of the faith of Luther by Benedict XVI, or again, the fact that the Pope came to Erfurt to pray at the same place where Lutheranism started. But he also had to admit: "Naturally, there were great

expectations as to what the Pope could say, expectations that are perhaps a little higher than reality. One may be disappointed, because those expectations remained without answers. But you must see if those expectations were realistic."

Yet, as of September 24, the majority of the German press believed that this meeting was a failure, especially from the Protestant point of view. "The Pope Disappoints the Hope of More Ecumenism" read the headline in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, then the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* wrote, "So Close and Yet So Far." The Berlin *Tageszeitung*, in tight with the Greens, spoke of a "historic" meeting which will produce no results. The *Frankfurter Rundschau* evokes "Roman Self-importance" and "Ecumenical Disaster." The Berlin *Tagesspiegel*, while noting the homage given to Martin Luther by Benedict XVI, sees a "slap in the face" meted out to the Protestants.

III. Freiburg im Breisgau. On the last day of his trip, after having kept a cordial interreligious dialogue with Jews and Muslims, as well as a fraternal ecumenical dialogue with Protestants and the Orthodox, the Pope did not spare his fellow Catholics in speaking about the crisis of the faith, of subliminal relativism. One wonders if this crisis and this relativism are not encouraged by the cordial and fraternal dialogue with non-Catholics. Here the power of images and strength of example have more weight than adroit speech.

In the last speech of Benedict XVI to German Catholics involved in the Church and society, a paradox deserves to be noted. After having very conveniently recalled that the Church is in the world but is not of the world (see editorial), Benedict XVI considers secularization as a providential opportunity for the Church to get rid of the worldly spirit. However, it seems that there are two dis-

tingent realities: secularization, *i.e.* the dechristianization of the society, is not equivalent to renouncing the spirit of the world castigated by St. John in his first epistle:

Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man loves the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever. (1 Jn. 2: 15-17)

One senses in the comments of the Pope a certain difficulty in reconciling the traditional teaching of the Church to fight against the spirit of the world and the new requirements of the Second Vatican Council lauding the "opening to the world" in the constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, "On the Church in the Modern World." Indeed, it reads that "the Church must continuously distance herself from her environment; she must, as it were, leave the world," and "she must constantly open herself to the concerns of the world." Yet the concerns of the world—since the world is the world—are those listed by St. John, and the concerns of the contemporary dechristianized world are the same; in addition, most of the supporting institutions are now secularized. Yet, as Fr. Calmel wrote with clarity in *École chrétienne renouvelée* [Renewal of the Christian School]: "Two basic truths intrude upon our mind: in themselves these just institutions promote virtue," and "evil is more formidable when scandal comes from the institutions themselves" (p. 168). But Christianity and Christian institutions are no longer acceptable since the issuance of the conciliar declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, "On Religious Freedom."

(Source: *DICI*, No. 241)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Fr. Peter R. Scott, FSSPX

Can one offer one Rosary for two different intentions?

The intention is the act of the will that orders our acts towards their end. If it is true that all of our acts must have a supernatural end or motive, at least implicitly related to Almighty God, in order to be supernatural and meritorious, it is in no way necessary that there be only one end. All of our acts can have several subordinate supernatural ends, directed ultimately to the salvation of our soul and the greater glory of God. The more explicitly and actually we think of and renew the intention of these ends, the more meritorious do the acts become. Thus it is that we do our chores at home to help our family members, to keep order and peace in the family, to do penance for our sins and to overcome our disordered self-love, and ultimately to save our souls and give glory to God. None of these intentions takes away the slightest from the others, but the more we reflect on each one, the greater the love of God and merit that is gained by the good deed.

Thus also it is that the priest can and does have multiple intentions in offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He has only one principal or first intention, for which he receives the stipend, but he may also have other or secondary intentions, such as for other persons, souls, situations or needs. Moreover, every Mass is offered up for the Pope and the bishop, the Catholic Church and right-believing Catholics, for the celebrant and for those present, and for all faithful Christians, living and deceased, and finally that through and with and in Christ be given “to God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all

honor and glory”! None of these intentions conflicts with the others, nor does the application and reflection on them diminish in any way the other intentions, but rather to the contrary reinforces them. The reason for this is that spiritual things are not like material things. When material things are divided up there is less to go around for each person, but when spiritual things are shared, there are quite simply more and more graces granted, according to the intensity, fervor, and love with which we offer our intentions to Almighty God.

The same applies to all our prayers, and to the Rosary in particular. They can likewise be offered up for multiple intentions, all these intentions being directed to the salvation of our soul and the greater glory of God. The same Rosary can be offered up for the sick and dying, our relatives in need, the grace of conversion for my own soul or for another, and for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The multiplying of the intentions does not in any way decrease the efficacy of the prayer for any one of those intentions. It is true that we do well to have a special intention for each decade of the Rosary, as well as a general intention for the entire Rosary. However, this is not because the entire Rosary cannot have multiple intentions, but on account of our human weakness, according to which we will focus and concentrate much better if we have a specific intention for each decade. Consequently the same family Rosary can be used for the intention of the Eucharistic Crusade for the month, for the obligation of the family Rosary, and for the Rosary Crusade to obtain the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. All is in the intention, and

there lies the difficulty. We must reflect on the various intentions, and offer our Rosary up, at least at the beginning (virtually) for these different intentions.

Can and/or should bishops and superiors report cases of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities?

In his letter of March 20, 2010, to the Catholics of Ireland concerning the sexual abuse of children by priests and religious, Pope Benedict XVI explains that one of the causes of the pedophilia crisis was “a misplaced concern for the reputation of the Church and the avoidance of scandal” (§4). This is certainly one of the reasons for the failure of Church authorities to investigate and report for civil investigation the perpetrators of these crimes against civil law, which failure is in turn the major reason for the extremely large financial settlements against the Church and in favor of the victims.

In the above-mentioned letter the Pope is categorical in reminding the perpetrators of these crimes that they must admit their crime and accept the demands of justice: “At the same time, God’s justice summons us to give an account of our actions and to conceal nothing. Openly acknowledge your guilt, submit yourselves to the demands of justice, but do not despair of God’s mercy.” This means the acceptance of the punishment inflicted by ecclesiastical tribunals, as well as that imposed by civil tribunals.

In its “Guide to Understanding Basic Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse Allegations” the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

makes this very clear statement: "Civil law concerning reporting of crimes to the appropriate authorities should always be followed." In general, civil law requires that all those who are responsible for the well-being of children, and in particular all health care professionals, must report such allegations for investigation. The responsibility of religious superiors in this regard will differ from country to country. However, they will generally be obliged to report them, and must certainly not do anything to discourage parents from reporting such crimes for civil investigation.

The grave danger involved in such reporting is that an allegation might in fact be false. To report such a false allegation could entirely destroy a priest's reputation and the good that he can do for the Church. Consequently, only founded allegations should be reported for investigation.

In former times the reporting of priests to civil authorities was not so necessary, since the ecclesiastical

tribunals were very strict and punished adequately the offenders and were able to protect the innocent. Canon 2359, §2 of the 1917 Code states that all those guilty of offense against the sixth commandment (of all priestly and sacramental functions), declared infamous, deprived of every office, benefice, dignity or position that they may hold, and in more grievous cases they shall be deposed" (from the clerical state). It is in the spirit of this traditional law of the Church that the General Chapter of the Society of Saint Pius X in 2006 decided that crimes of this kind (which God forbid) would lead to dismissal from the Society, and had this decision introduced into the Society's statutes.

The 1983 Code, to the contrary, simply states that such offenders are to receive a just punishment, dismissal from the clerical state not being excluded (Canon 1395, §2). It is typically vague, and has not regularly been applied. Now (since 2001) all such cases must be referred to

the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which reserves judgment and imposition of the punishment to itself, and has a clear protocol, although not as strict as in former times, leading to reduction to the lay state only in a small proportion of the most grievous cases.

Given all this confusion, the simple answer to the question is that this crime, if certain, ought always to be reported to civil authorities. The criminal then receives the punishment due in justice as for any other crime against society. He is placed on the list of sex offenders, and thus is excluded from ever working with children, even outside the priesthood. It is the best protection for the innocent victims and the most powerful means to eliminate this plague of moral corruption from the Church. ❏

Fr. Peter Scott was ordained by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988. After assignments as seminary professor, U.S. District Superior, and Rector of Holy Cross Seminary in Goulburn, Australia, he is presently Headmaster of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy in Wilmot, Ontario, Canada.

THE LAST WORD

For the Honor of Christ (continued from p. 43)

their opinions and weak in their will....What spirit survives in them is doomed to be conquered because it has not had the audacity to know itself....Moderates appear to be like a troop of indecisive individuals, their heads turning with the winds of discourse like weather vanes on the housetops that are trying to find out which breeze to obey.

To those who speak to us about moderation in order to hide their weakness or mediocrity, *de Bonald* replied:

The truth seems to them to be an excess, like error. Too smart to stop at the latter, too weak to raise themselves up to the former, they remain in the middle (midway, we

might say) and give to their weakness the name of moderation and impartiality, forgetting that although one must be impartial with human beings, one cannot remain indifferent about opinions in morality.

Even less, then, could you remain indifferent when Our Lord Jesus Christ is attacked, blasphemed.

But let us let *St. John Chrysostom* answer the Cardinal: "*The patience to endure insults that are aimed at us is a virtue, but to remain insensitive to those that are aimed at God is the height of impiousness.*"

Well then, dear friends, let the height of impiousness not invade our hearts.

No longer must we go to Jerusalem to defend Christ's tomb; it is in Paris, ***on Saturday, October 29 at 6:00 p.m., at the Place des Pyramides that we must all be present for the honor of Jesus Christ.***

God wills it! [Motto of the French crusaders]

The time has not come to shout "bread and circuses" while the barbarians are at our gates. ❏

¹ Reply of Cardinal Vingt-trois to the journalist Clémence Houdaille.

Translated from laportelatine.org, the official website of the French District of the Society of St. Pius X. Fr. Xavier Beauvais is the prior of the church of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet in Paris.

For the Honor of Christ

Press release of Fr. Xavier Beauvais, FSSPX

CALL to demonstrate
against anti-Christianism

Enough Christophobic Provocations!

Saturday, October 29 [2011]

Come all to the great
national demonstration
against anti-Christianism
6:00p.m.: assemble at the
Place des Pyramides in Paris

www.civitas-institut.com



Shocked but Not Vanquished!

The last third of the year 2011 will conclude in several cities in France against a backdrop of obscenity and blasphemy caused by works of “art” that have scandalously been financed by a secular State, when everyone knows that *laïcité* [secularity] = hatred of Jesus Christ and overt hostility toward anything that is an expression of Catholic thought.

Will we be able to remain passive spectators of a destructive work that scoffs at Him who has shown us so much mercy, Our Lord Jesus Christ?

How could it happen that Jesus Christ should be disparaged, the Christian religion vilified and mocked, without calling forth any reaction?

Should our indignation be content with “moderation after the example of Christ,”¹ as *Cardinal Vingt-trois* scandalously recommends? He even dares to add, “We must be willing to endure with

Christ the lack of understanding, hostility and violence of others.”

And to drive home the nail of inertia and cowardice: “One can certain express very well the fact that one is offended without it becoming an argument for organized combat.”

Now Catholic doctrine about the virtue of fortitude does not just require us to endure but also to attack. Well then, if “it is up to the public to make known its opinion,” as those who run the Garonne Theater in Toulouse point out, then let them count on that public. And this Catholic public is made up of you Catholics.

These dramas that insult Our Lord Jesus Christ do not authorize us to remain mute. That would be seriously culpable, since it would be a criminal attack on the profession of the Catholic faith.

We cannot be accomplices of those who, being horrified by any sort of strictness, declare themselves

moderate as a matter of principle, with a more than moderate taste for the truth and a very mediocre hatred of error.

Some think that they are virtuous by being moderate, but there, at the end of October, the beginning of November and the beginning of December, at the time of those performances, moderation on our part will be, when all is said and done, only lamentable mediocrity.

“A mediocrity,” *Fr. Garrigou Lagrange* once wrote, “that appears to be a clever mixture of true and false and a science of good and evil. Here the mediocre person pretends to accomplish what God has never been able to do. He says that he wants to harmonize everything, and he gets ready to confuse everything, which will be to jumble up and destroy everything.”

Those who call others in this way to moderation “increase their merit only by wiping out their distinctive edge. They do not lack courage, but energy. They lose the ability to intervene in what is part of their duty, and they manifest an admirable spiritual fortitude, supporting blasphemies and disrespect that it was up to them to prevent.”

In reading the remarks by Cardinal Vingt-trois calling for moderation, one cannot resist copying out these commonsensical remarks that *Abel Bonnard* wrote in *Les Modérés*:

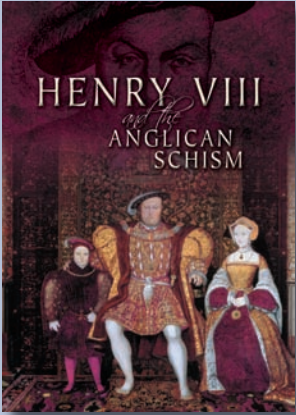
If the moderates wish to be reconciled with their adversaries, it is no doubt because they are afraid to fight and because their naïve duplicity murmurs to them that in order to disarm a rival whom they fear, the best thing is to embrace him.

Continuing his very realistic description of moderates, he also writes:

They are as stubborn in their feelings as they are uncertain in

(continued on p. 42)

Audio Books from Angelus Press



Henry VIII and the Anglican Schism

Christopher Check

Yet even today, Anglican apologists for Henry's cruel treatment of his wife, Catherine of Aragon, argue that the king's motives, while perhaps not admirable, were merely political: the stability of the Tudor line and of the whole realm demanded a male heir. This lecture, as told by Christopher Check, exposes that dishonest defense, lays bare Henry's true motives in divorcing Catherine, identifies the sinister operators behind the scenes, unwinds the convoluted legal arguments with which Henry attempted to justify his actions, and names the painful and widespread effects of the divorce we feel yet today. Henry VIII's divorce is among mankind's most consequential tragedies.

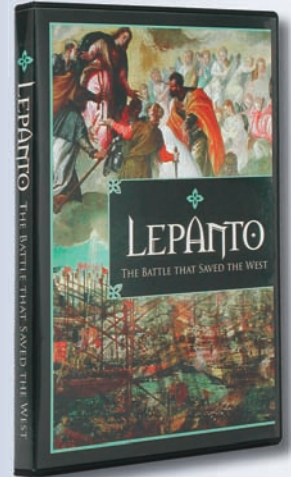
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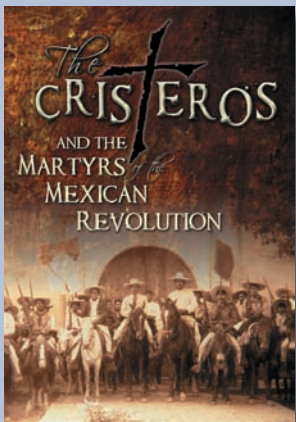
Lepanto: The Battle That Saved the West

Christopher Check

On October 7, 1571, the most important sea battle in history was fought near the mouth of what is today called the Gulf of Patras, then the Gulf of Lepanto. On one side were the war galleys of the Holy League and on the other, those of the Ottoman Turks, rowed by tens of thousands of Christian galley slaves. Although the battle decided the future of Europe, few Europeans, and even fewer European-Americans, know the story, much less how close Western Europe came to suffering an Islamic conquest. G. K. Chesterton honored the battle with what is perhaps the greatest ballad of the 20th century. He wrote this extraordinary poem while the postman impatiently waited for the copy. It was instantly popular and remained so for years. The ballad is no less inspiring today and is more timely than ever, as the West faces the growing threat of Islam. In the brand new CD Set *Lepanto: The Battle That Saved the West*, Christopher Check tells the exhilarating story of Lepanto, first in his own words and then through the poem of G. K. Chesterton.



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The Cristeros and the Martyrs of the Mexican Revolution

Christopher Check

The average American's understanding of Mexican history is incomplete. American Catholics, however, should know Mexican history because, unlike our own history, much of Mexican history is Catholic history. In the early part of the 20th century, Masonic, Marxist revolutionaries, who were nothing less than the enemies of Jesus Christ, seized control of the government of Mexico and attempted to destroy the Church. They very nearly succeeded. In the midst of the terror, courageous priests clandestinely made their way through the countryside dispensing the sacraments and ministering to the Mexican faithful. Many received the crown of martyrdom; the most famous is Blessed Miguel Pro. As these holy priests fulfilled the duties of their divine vocations, an army of laymen rose up and challenged the godless government. They were the Cristeros. Their battle cry was "Viva Cristo Rey!" Their tale is one of the great Catholic war stories of all time.

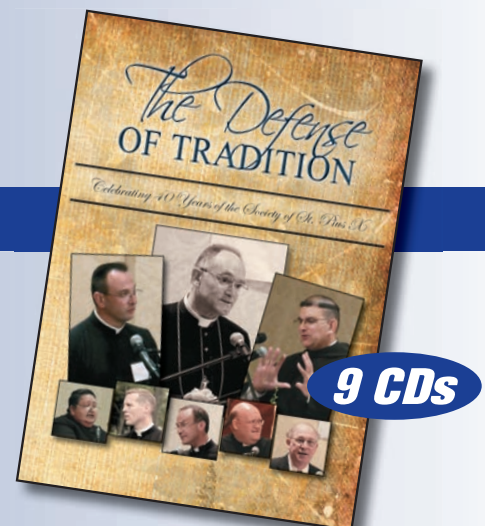
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as transmitted by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

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