



S S P X



# The Angelus


“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

Luther

Luther's Life

Luther's Spiritual Journey

Catholic Reformation

A close-up photograph of the bronze face of a statue of Martin Luther, looking upwards. The background is a blurred blue sky with a tall, thin monument visible in the distance. The statue's features are detailed, showing the nose, lips, and the texture of the bronze.

The doctrine of the Church had remained pure until the 16th century; saintly lives were yet frequent in all parts of Europe. Whatever unhappy conditions existed were largely due to civil and profane influences or to the exercise of authority by ecclesiastics in civil spheres. Ecclesiastical and religious life exhibited in many places vigour and variety; works of education and charity abounded; religious art in all its forms had a living force; domestic missionaries were many and influential; pious and edifying literature was common and appreciated. Gradually, however, there grew up in many parts of Europe political and social conditions which hampered the free reformatory activities of the Church, and favored the bold and unscrupulous, who seized a unique opportunity to let loose all the forces of heresy and schism so long held in check by the harmonious action of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities.

Statue of Martin Luther, Eisleben, Germany



# Letter from the Publisher

Dear readers,

Why would *The Angelus* be interested in turning the spotlight upon Protestantism, and especially upon the person of Martin Luther? The Protestants are celebrating the fifth centenary of Luther nailing his *Ninety-Five Theses* in Wittenberg. This bold move marked the beginning of the Protestant revolt against the Holy Catholic Church.

"It is not Luther who brought about the Modern Times, it is the Modern Times which brought about Luther." There is little doubt that the sparks of revolt were already enkindled in many minds at the turn of the 16th century, especially in Germany, which was politically divided and morally corrupt from top to bottom. If a mad man, endowed with fiery boldness and gusto, initiated a mob insurrection, it could ignite an eruption that could rage out of control. The new Roman Emperor of Germany, Charles V, sat on a potential volcano, having to contend with powerful aristocrats only too keen in their inflammatory desire to upset his power. But Charles could not admit the Protestant ascent: "It is certain that a single monk must err if he stands against the opinion of all of Christendom. Otherwise Christendom itself would have erred for more than a thousand years. Therefore I am determined to set my kingdoms and dominions, my friends, my body, my blood, my life, my soul upon it."

Faith and morals, by Divine command, have been handed down to us through the Church. Taking The elimination of just one jot or tittle, much less large chunks of the Church's perennial teaching is a recipe for self-destruction. Rejection of the Church's authority instituted by Christ on earth is not the way to order and peace, but to chaos and bloodshed. It took only 50 years of Lutheranism to set all Europe on fire with moral and social disaster. What the Church needed at that time was not a revolution from the bottom, but reform from the top. The real reform came—but alas—50 years too late! It nonetheless came with certainty, and worked wonders in the wake of the great Council of Trent, bringing about the Counterreformation.

For anyone who has eyes to see, history is the mirror of life and has not a few things to show and teach us. When the enemy is assaulting the Church, the most sacred bastions of faith and morals, clear teaching and asceticism is the answer. Fifty years of post-conciliar modernism continues to endanger the Church. *What Trent condemned as heretical and excommunicated from the Church is given safe conduct today within the walls of the Vatican.* How long have we to wait before we witness a return to sanity through a renewed Counterreformation under a second Council of Trent?

Fr. Jürgen Wegner  
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# Luther's Life

From Fear to Blind Trust

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by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

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If we were to study a map of Europe tracing religious belief from the fourth century to the Reformation, we would discover a remarkable unity of thought, faith, and morals grounded in the Catholic Church and spreading over the civilized world.

A hundred years after Luther, a new edition of the same map would reveal a world profoundly divided in its belief. Any discussion of “Reformation” theology immediately brings up the father of the Reform. It has been rightly said of Luther that to know the doctrine is to know the man: his struggles became the root and foundation of his new theology. And a fairly accurate insight in the intricacies of the Protestant Reform is offered us by reviewing the itinerary—dare we call it spiritual?—followed by Luther’s personal struggles.

## A Forceful Temperament

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born of humble peasant stock. His pious Christian mother tended to see the devil everywhere while his father was the epitome of the cruel judge; he was never to pardon his son for abandoning the family to become a monk. After completing his studies in law, the 21-year-old Martin Luther vowed to consecrate himself to God after being caught in a storm and suddenly overcome with fear; he was accepted a fortnight later by the Augustinians at Erfurt, a university town of Saxony. Thereafter followed a lightning career as a monk and priest.

He made his perpetual vows the year following his entry and was ordained priest a few months later; only then did he apply himself to some short but serious theological studies. In 1508, he was



transferred to his hometown university to become a lecturer. Within a few years, he became sub-prior at Wittenberg and doctor in theology and finally went to Rome as the legal representative for Augustinian convents in dispute.

His monastic studies brought him into contact with St. Augustine, which supposedly proved to him the vanity of reason and will, as well as the mystics, from whose writings he claimed to have drawn his rejection of exterior works. Luther also came to be familiar with decadent Scholasticism, particularly that of Ockham, the philosopher who taught that words are devoid of meaning and that Christ and Scripture are the only sources of life. Already in 1515, in his commentary on the Epistle to Romans, Brother Martin, only recently “doctor,” exposed his new theory on justification—that theory which was to become the foundation for all Lutheran theology. The Reformation was born.

How did Luther reach this point? Many historians have sidestepped the question and provided answers reflecting their own bias. Some say that one fine day he came upon a newly printed Bible in the library of Erfurt. Others see in Brother Martin a monk incapable of controlling his immoral passions. Yet, the only way to do justice to history is to try to look into the soul of this monk and follow him through the drama of those crucial years.

What was the personality of this Augustinian brother? Whereas the corpulence of St. Thomas hid a brilliant mind, Luther was a Hercules of the will, full of passion and fire, with an intelligence rather limited and mostly practical. Historians agree in painting him as the German *par excellence*; Martin Luther was a Christian Odin; a latter-day Thor. He was endowed with a nature at once realistic and poetical; courageous but impulsive; sentimental and hypersensitive. He was a living volcano and vehement in everything, including his generosity and kindness. Ardent and full of nervous energy, he was prone to sudden breakdown and moments of acute sadness. His depression was as profound as his joy was exuberant. Was his weakness the fruit of a poorly balanced education with too much emphasis on fear? Was he tormented by scruples or haunted by the constant thought of the mystery of predestination?

In his moments of natural optimism, just like his forefathers, his passions easily held sway over his reason. He had the fighting spirit and threw himself headlong into quarrels, which he relished. Contemporaries described him as bold and fiery in defending his own cause, which is why he was sent to Rome as a young master to plead the cause of his monastery. Practical and impatient, he was more anxious to argue down an opponent than to listen to his views. Luther was a remarkable preacher, if it were not for his crude language. Moreover, the power of his images and the flow of his words establish him as one of the most influential forces in the creation of modern German. His very words were battles. There was a strength in his genius and a vehemence in his language, with a lively and impetuous eloquence which enchanted the crowds and left them in transports of admiration—a speech waxing to extraordinary boldness under applause—all united to an air of authority such that his disciples trembled before him and dared not contradict his slightest nuance. This ascendancy over his followers was to be his strength and his downfall.

## From Luder to Lutherius

Having entered religion rather swept away than attracted, as he would later avow, Brother Martin began as a conscientious and dutiful monk, certainly eager to attain priestly perfection although tending toward anxiety and scruples. He was not slow in noticing that all of his pious actions, his “good works,” brought about no change in him, from which he concluded that nothing of what he did made any difference to God; or, in his own words, “When I was a monk, I used immediately to believe that it was all over with my salvation every time I experienced the concupiscence of the flesh, that is to say an evil movement against one of the brethren, of envy, of anger, of hatred, or of jealousy and so forth...I was everlastingly tormented with the thought... ‘all your good works are just useless.’”

It would seem that at this stage our monk made two errors on the principles of the spiritual life. In the first place, his sentimental temperament made him too anxious to feel sensible consolations. He >

had to feel that he was in the state of grace, as if grace were something to be felt! The doctrine that grace is infused into the soul when sin is effaced made him almost despair of God, for he had never *tasted* the perfect purity of grace. His second error was his desire to attain virtue and perfection by his own efforts rather than by the grace of God. This personal voluntarism was all the more dangerous because his scrupulosity made him take the least involuntary sensations for sins and made him want to attain a level of holiness which would betray no sign of human weakness. For ten years his soul was consumed with fear of eternal damnation. He was counseled to put all his trust in the Redeemer of the human race, who had not died in vain.

To escape this state of interior torment in which his scruples and his proud voluntarism held him captive, Luther threw himself into activism with his preaching and instruction. Then came the temptation to despair: be content to be what you are, a fallen angel, a deformed creature; your job is to do evil, for your very being is evil. Luther's torment was the echo of the drama lived by St. Paul himself: "But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus Christ! Behold the sole response given for 1500 years to the agonizing question of personal salvation. Saul became St. Paul because he threw himself into the arms of his God. Behold all the difference between Luther and St. Paul. Instead of calling immediately upon his Savior, Luther resigned himself to his base passions: "Concupiscence is invincible." Around this time he began signing his letters, "Luder, son of Adam the outcast."

Up to this point, we have been following the story of a scrupulous monk on the brink of despair. Suddenly, the theme changes and we see emerge Luther the Reformer, who has found holiness in the face of despair and of perverse resignation. To put the seal on his transformation, he began to call himself *Lutherius*, Martin the Freedman. Thus, for ten years, Luther had been haunted by the question of salvation, seeking in vain how he might escape the fury of the just

Judge. In 1516, reading St. Paul to the Romans, he finally hit upon the decisive argument: "For the justice of God is revealed therein, from faith unto faith, as it is written, 'The just man lived by faith.'" Brother Martin explained that according to St. Paul, the justification of God means covering with a purely extrinsic mantle the accumulation of sin which is man. In order to be just, sinful man has but to believe.

Again from St. Paul, he would deduce that all of man's efforts are sinful; that he is without freedom; that he is only a beast driven either by God or by the devil, whichever of the two is in the saddle. Depraved animal that he is, man can do nothing by himself to win his salvation. It is useless to perform good works since Christ has done everything in our place. Salvation comes to man only when he has put all his faith in Christ—faith here meaning blind trust. This confidence brought him to utter his *Pecca fortiter et crede firmitus*—Sin heartily, but believe more heartily still! This axiom is not to be understood merely as the glorification of moral laxism. Whether we sin or not is of little consequence; what matters is that we believe. For Luther, to believe is to have a confidence as firm as it is blind. Thus, the life of a Christian is nothing but a continual exercise in feeling that we have not sinned even as we sin, confident that we have cast our sins upon Christ.

## Belief Based on Experience

All of Luther's doctrine is clearly the result of his personal experience. He transformed his needs into dogmatic truths. His inner feelings became theological principles and his particular case became universal law. Thirsting for moral security and spiritual freedom, he liberated himself from his scruples of conscience by despairing of any good work and by casting himself, sinner that he was, into the arms of Christ. He had been preaching this doctrine at the university for more than a year when the question of indulgences arose. Abuses in the granting of indulgences were indeed to become the spark which set all aflame but in reality they were only a pretext for revolt. As he nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* on indulgences to the church door of Wittenberg in





1517, he had already refined his own teaching on the fundamental questions surrounding eternal salvation, the justice of God, faith, and good works.

The drama of Protestantism and Luther does not consist so much in his immorality and his blasphemy which arose from a warped theology. No; the whole tragedy of the revolt consists in the fact that a monk took it upon himself to erase fifteen centuries of tranquil possession of divine truth and that he gained an extraordinary influence over the masses by claiming to be directly inspired by God. The root of the problem is Luther's boast to have understood St. Paul better than anyone else hitherto, better than the Church herself, interpreter and guardian of the divine word. Luther's great victory is to have turned half of Christendom away from what it had accepted until then without dispute, as a brilliant orator holding out the attractive offer of a free and automatic paradise, and to have brought it to embrace this doctrine of a gratuitous salvation simply because he said he understood things better than anyone had before him. Private judgment therefore emerges as the source and origin of the Reformation, that upon which all else depends. Luther's private judgment would do more to destroy what the Church held most dear than would any other point of doctrine. Private judgment signed the death warrant of the entire treasure of the Church.

Soon, men abandoned the faith of the Church and received the imperious dogmas of Luther, Calvin, Elizabeth, Gustav Adolphus, *et alia*. They were indeed imperious, in Geneva perhaps more than anywhere else, to the extent that wielding too freely one's private judgment became a matter of life and death. Erasmus laments their fate with a touch of irony: "What a great defender of Evangelical freedom we have in Luther! Thanks to him, the yoke we bear becomes twice as heavy. Mere opinions become dogma."

"Private judgment" is not a viable principle for any constituted group anymore than for the Catholic Church. Thus, at the very heart of Protestantism, there is solution of continuity, perfect illogic, and ultimate contradiction. All the irony of Protestantism's inherent schizophrenia is captured by the Protestant scholar Adolph von Harnack:

"Protestantism suffers from an internal antinomy, derived from its very foundations. If you have no confession of faith, who are you? What society do you make up? Why do you exist? And if you do promulgate a confession of faith; if you wish to impose it on me by your authority and in spite of the resistance of my conscience, how are you still Protestant? What do you do any differently from the Catholic, and against what do you claim Luther and Calvin did well to revolt?" Likewise, Hausser, speaking of Calvin, states that he "did not see, or did not wish to see, the frightful antinomy at the very root of his own effort: to recreate an authority, a dogma, a Church, on the basis of private judgment."

## Conclusion

At the beginning of the 20th century, eminent Protestants of the German High Church, like Seeberg of Berlin and Braun, deplored the bitter fruits of the Reformation, considering that, rather than celebrate the fourth centenary of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*, Protestants would be better off doing penance in sack-cloth and ashes.

"How small the Reformer has become according to the studies of our own Protestant investigators! How his merits have shriveled up! We believed that we owed to him the spirit of toleration and liberty of conscience. Not in the least! We recognized in his translation of the Bible a masterpiece stamped with the impress of originality—we may be happy now if it is not plainly called a 'plagiarism'!... Looking upon the 'results' of their work thus gathered together, we cannot help asking the question: What, then, remains of Luther?"

Luther's lifetime witnessed a substantial change of Europe. What had been one Christendom was suddenly a vase broken into a thousand pieces. In other aspects too, like morality, anthropology and theology, Luther's ultimate legacy looks very much like a divided kingdom.

For more reference on Luther, see Philip Hughes, *A Popular History of the Reformation* (Garden City, NJ: Hanover House, 1957); O'Hare, *Facts about Luther* (Rockford, Ill: TAN Books and Publishers, 1987)

# Luther's Spiritual Journey

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by Fr. J. M. Mestre, SSPX

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On October 31st, 2016, the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's nailing his *Ninety-Five Theses* on the doors of a church in Wittenberg, Pope Francis invited Catholics at the Lutheran cathedral in Lund to commemorate "the spiritual experience of Martin Luther." Luther's action is generally considered the beginning of the so-called "Reformation"—rather, a revolution, the destruction of the faith and an apostasy and rebellion against Our Lord and His Church. Let us then remember that spiritual experience, but not aim at re-telling the events differently, as Pope Francis would have us do, but as they were in reality: the spiritual journey of an unrepentant heretic.

Martin Luther was born in 1483 to a good Catholic family. From an early age he felt drawn to religion and God, later he developed an interest in theology. His father wanted him to study law, but Luther chose to become a monk instead and joined the Augustinian order in 1512. From that point on, his life was spent teaching and preaching.

## Failed

At first, Luther was a pious and zealous monk. However, his gift of a rich and passionate temperament exposed him to strong temptations against chastity, a penchant for good eating, a tendency to wrath, a spirit of independence, and a predisposition to pride.



Luther would have liked to be free from these temptations. As St. Peter at the Transfiguration, he would have liked to lead a saintly life, to have “put on Our Lord Jesus Christ,” to find himself already in a state of perfect integrity—a state not to be found on earth save in exceptional cases. Luther began to be obsessed about the certitude of his own salvation. As the temptations continued to assail him, a growing feeling of guilt ended up in a certain despair for the spiritual life, for the efficacy of grace, and the ordinary means of acquiring and maintaining grace (such as the sacraments, prayer, fasting, etc.).

It was upon this intimate “spiritual experience” that Luther built a new religious system. A system that had nothing to do with the teaching of the Church or the truths of Christianity.

## Heretical

In 1515 from his Biblical theology chair, Luther began an exegesis of the Epistles of St. Paul, starting with *Romans*, an extraordinarily rich but difficult text. Luther developed a new “Christian” theology based on a personal reading of the text, following his own feelings and disregarding Tradition while drawing from his internal struggles (“Can I save my soul in spite of having these many temptations?”). This new theology from the beginning was incompatible with that of the Catholic Church, although the eventual public split would not transpire until later.

Catholic doctrine teaches that if man accepts divine revelation by faith and, moved by hope, repents of his sins and turns to God through the merits of Christ, he obtains the forgiveness of his sins and a regeneration and sanctification of >

# Theme Luther

his soul so that, as St. Peter puts it, he “may be made partakers of the divine nature.” The soul that lives by charity is, therefore, “a saint,” as St. Paul says; a saint because he has truly been purified, transformed, sanctified, and become a friend of God. Being a friend of God, the soul spontaneously performs good works, virtuous acts that merit eternal salvation through the grace of Christ.

Luther denied this truth. Based on what he felt, Luther concluded that the mere fact of having embraced the Christian faith and life does not rid the soul of sin (Luther referred rather to *temptation*, which is not sin if it is not consented to). He believed that the Christian remains, in fact, a sinner and enemy of God and his soul remains totally corrupted. Nonetheless, since Christ has merited the salvation of all men through the sacrifice of the Cross, he who by faith (or *trust* in this salvation through Christ) firmly believes that he is saved, will have his sins covered by the mantle of the merits of Christ. And God the Father would deliver this soul to paradise, this soul covered by this mantle through faith/trust. Good works, therefore, do not attain merit; man remains a sinner interiorly. Good works merely encourage pious souls to persevere in this faith/trust.

## Revolutionary

So far this is the core of what Luther calls “the truth of the Gospel.” From it flows the rest of his doctrine.

1. Luther starts by questioning the Church, denying its divine origin. The Church teaches that man saves his soul through good works, while Luther has suffered during his monastic period the frustrating experience of discovering that good works do not eradicate sin (again, not sin but *temptation*, as we saw above). He also claimed that the Church had abandoned “the truth of the Gospel,” that is, salvation by faith.
2. The Lutheran doctrine is built upon this rejection of the Church, a new Gospel to suit Luther’s own beliefs—the textbook

definition of heresy. Since to Luther, the Church has betrayed the “truth of the Gospel,” it necessarily and logically followed that he should engage in a free interpretation of Scripture to search for the truth and transmit it to the people of God, led astray by an illegitimate hierarchy. “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either the pope or councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything” (Luther’s words at the Diet of Worms, presided over by Charles V in 1521).

3. In Luther’s doctrine, the soul is not transformed by grace; the sacraments do not impart anything substantial to the soul and therefore the classic Catholic teaching that the sacraments are efficacious by their own operation is rendered meaningless. For Luther, the sacraments merely signify and awaken the faith. Therefore, only those sacraments that bring about that psychological effect should remain.
4. For that same reason the Mass, the unbloody renewal of the sacrifice of Christ, whose merits are daily applied to us, loses all its meaning. There only remains a memorial of the Last Supper to remind the faithful of the one sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and to enkindle the faith in the redemption. And yet, Luther was not satisfied with tearing down the Mass. Abandoning his priestly vocation, this monk who had betrayed his vows nurtured a pathological hatred for the sacrifice of the Mass. His words in this respect are so horrible, one might believe he was possessed by the devil. For instance, he stated in 1521, “The Mass is the biggest and worst of the papal abominations; it is the tail of the dragon of the Apocalypse, spreading innumerable impurities and filth all over the Church.” In 1524, “Yes, I declare, all brothels (severely condemned by God as they are), all homicides, murders, robberies, and adulteries are less harmful than the abomination of the Mass.” And indeed Luther showed quite the



insight as he drew the conclusion, “If I succeed in doing away with the Mass, then I shall believe I have completely conquered the Pope.”

5. Since the Church, referred to with contempt as “the papacy” is no longer held as the mystical body of Christ, the faithful stand alone before God. On the one hand, the soul is enlightened by the Bible, which Luther wanted the faithful to read on their own, generating thus the need of printing Bibles in the vernacular. On the other hand, the Holy Ghost instructs the soul from within to discern from the Bible those teachings that pertain most to his spiritual life. In the sensible words of Boileau, “All Protestants became their own pope, Bible in hand.”
6. As a consequence of Luther’s abolishment of the hierarchy—the “holy authority” of the Church—his followers would gradually question all other human authority: the essence of Protestantism thus being revolutionary. Since every individual is left to his own interpretation, without input from the Church, it follows logically to separate absolutely the religious and the political realms through secularization. No wonder, then, that Protestants have often played the role of promoters of causes such as the establishment of secular governments, godless education, the rise of anticlericalism, and the process of separating Church and State.
7. For Luther then, good works and especially the religious vows were useless and deceitful. Neither to avoid sin nor to fight temptation (as he himself had done during his Catholic period) is essential for Luther because man remains a sinner. Even though still an enemy of God, what is important to the soul is to cling to and cover itself with the mantle of the merits of Christ and thereby avert the divine wrath, as God will see in the soul only the merits of His beloved Son. Such is the meaning of Luther’s words to his friend and biographer Phillip Melancthon in his letter dated August 1, 1525, “*Peca fortiter, sed fortius crede*” (Sin greatly, but believe greater still).

In line with his ideas, Luther forsook his vows in 1525 and married a former nun, Katharina von Bora, with whom he had six children. The

rest of his life he waged war on the Catholic Church, “the great Babylonian whore,” whom he insisted ought to be attacked and destroyed by any available means. To that end, Luther wrote numerous vile and obscene flyers. His followers systematically destroyed Catholic monuments, tortured and murdered bishops, priests, religious, and innumerable faithful, not to mention the terrible wars they unleashed.

## In Short

At Luther’s death on February 18, 1546, and for many years later, Europe was, due to him, torn by fire and sword. Because of his false doctrine and pernicious example, millions of souls apostatized and strayed from the path of salvation.

Notwithstanding the Church’s magnificent renovation through a multitude of saints, through the great reforming work of the Council of Trent, and through the great missionary efforts of adding numerous peoples to the faith of the Church, whole nations unfortunately would blindly adopt the errors and lies of the former Augustinian monk and would not return to the true faith.

Luther was a great enemy of the grace of Christ, which he claimed to honor: he attacked the grace of Christ in the Church, in the sacraments, in good works, and in the very meaning of grace itself. For this reason, no Catholic aware of his duty to Christ and to the Church—not to mention a Pope (!)— can ever praise and honor Luther’s name or rejoice in his legacy.



# Private Interpretation

Reviewing Saint Augustine

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by Douglas LeBlanc

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“Open the Bible and just let God speak to you.” This way of reading scripture is heard commonly in Protestant circles. Belief in private interpretation is one of the most significant differences between the wandering denominations and Catholicism. If we are to be instrumental in bringing invaluable souls back to the fold, a proper understanding of the Bible is a key place to start—for us and for them. Another key place to start is St. Augustine. Though many Catholics are unaware of the fact, this sainted Doctor of the Church is actually a respected figure to many Protestants. By starting from a common ground—respect for the thoughts of St. Augustine—we may have a more effective means of bringing Protestants to a proper understanding of the true nature of Sacred Scripture.

## The Peril of Private Interpretation

The reasoning behind private interpretation may go something like this: The Bible is the inspired word of God, and God’s grace is always present when we ask for it, so ought we not expect to find God and truth when we



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<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (Digireads.com Publishing, 2009), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

read His holy word? Saint Augustine would vehemently argue that this is a grave oversimplification of Sacred Scripture. In *De Doctrina Christiana*, he discusses at length the difficulties of properly understanding Scripture. “Ascertaining the proper meaning” is, in fact, one of the primary themes of Augustine’s work, and it directly confronts the practice of a merely personal interpretation.<sup>1</sup> We are not meant to read simply for the sake of discovering our own understanding—even if that understanding helps us love God and our neighbor better—because of the grave danger that misinterpretation presents. Augustine illustrates the point with an analogy, putting before us a man who reaches his destination even though he accidentally takes a circuitous route: “He is to be corrected...[and] shown how much better it is not to quit the straight road, lest, if he get into a habit of going astray, he may sometimes take cross roads, or even go in the wrong direction altogether.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, while good can come from well-intentioned readers forming their own personal interpretations, the danger of misinterpretation leading to misdirection is all too grave. Worse yet, misinterpretation will inevitably lead to contradictions during reading, and contradictions will ultimately lead to frustration with scripture. “He begins to feel more angry with Scripture than with himself,” Augustine explains. “And if he should once permit that evil to creep in, it will utterly destroy him.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the importance of “ascertaining the proper meaning” is clear.

However, correctly interpreting Scripture is no easy task. As Augustine explains, difficulties abound. Chief, he notes, are the difficulties of unknown and ambiguous signs;<sup>4</sup> that is, unknown and ambiguous words and phrases. Augustine recommends two solutions to start with.

“The first rule to be observed” is that we must gain familiar knowledge with the entirety of scripture, thereby enabling our knowledge of “the plainer expressions to throw light upon the more obscure.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, casual reading and interpreting at random is not sufficient for proper interpretation; we must gain and maintain a comprehensive view of God’s word.

Secondly, we must overcome our ignorance “by learning the Greek and Hebrew languages, in which Scripture is written, by comparing the various translations, and by attending to the context.”

Now, from a purely practical standpoint, most people have no chance of ever learning Greek and Hebrew, yet Augustine calls this method “the great remedy.”<sup>6</sup> Part of Augustine’s reason for this advice was because there was an “endless diversity” of Latin translations at the time that would “throw [readers] into doubt” about the real meaning of a passage.<sup>7</sup> Might not the same be said about English translations today? They are indeed numerous—for Catholics and Protestants alike.

Even before Vatican II, new translations in English had been released and the Douay-Rheims itself was refined with the goal of achieving a more readable and accurate English edition. Thus, Augustine’s point remains that the only real way to understand the differences still to be found in these abounding translations is by knowing how to read the originals well. Since understanding the Word of God is an important component of the Christian life, it is only logical for the common man to recognize the need of a guide to steer him clear of misinterpretations. Of course, Catholics realize that this guide is the Church and her ministers. Before bringing Protestants to this >



Close-up of St. Augustine, Oil on Canvas





<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

final conclusion, it makes sense to begin by showing them the necessity of guides, and the revered Augustine provides a strong case.

## Overcoming Protestant Objections

However, some Evangelicals may respond that a reliance on guides to help the common man read Scripture leads to an elitist mentality. One Protestant blogger writes that the “intellectual crowd” can be “very harmful to the spreading of the Gospel.” This is, admittedly, an extreme example. However, it highlights the point that an anti-guide attitude is ultimately a revolution against all scholarship. Rarely do we hand people Milton’s *Paradise Lost* or Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and tell them to dive in unaided. These are difficult works. Most people need help reading them—as did most teachers themselves when they too were learning from teachers of their own. If we feel this way about literature, why should we treat the Bible any differently? It is only the most revered and highly esteemed text of Christianity. In comparison, Milton’s and Chaucer’s works become *Aesop’s Fables*. It is inconceivable that we should treat the Bible with less scholarly attention than we treat revered literary classics. However, by encouraging blind, personal reading and interpretation, Protestants are doing just that.

Moreover, to argue that guided reading is elitist and superfluous is to miss a major mark about Scripture. Rather than lowering or degrading man, a reliance on authoritative guides actually raises man’s dignity. Augustine makes this point most beautifully, noting that God could have used “voices from heaven” or “ministration of angels” to teach men.<sup>8</sup> However, He chose instead to reach and teach men through other men, thereby elevating men to temples of Himself. Augustine retells the famous story of Philip and the eunuch:

“[N]or was it an angel who explained to [the eunuch] what he did not understand, nor was he inwardly illumined by the grace of God without the interposition of man; on the contrary, at the suggestion of God, Philip...sat with him, and in human words, and with a human tongue, opened to him the scriptures.”<sup>9</sup>

Rather than being an unnatural or degrading practice to be educated by our fellow men, guided reading of Scripture is “love itself, which binds men together...pouring soul into soul.”<sup>10</sup> How can this Divinely inspired “bond of unity” be undesirable?

“Open the Bible and just let God speak to you.” Such a practice has undoubtedly provided rich moments of grace to countless well-intentioned souls—as the personal experience of too many readers would attest. However, as an approach or philosophy itself to reading Scripture, Augustine makes it clear that this is inadequate and dangerous. “We must rather think and believe that whatever is there written, even though it be hidden, is better and truer than anything we could devise by our own wisdom.”<sup>11</sup> That is, there is an objective truth in the words of God that we must uncover. Of this point, we must convince our Protestant friends.

**Douglas LeBlanc** currently teaches humanities classes for La Salette Boys Academy. He holds an MA in English and is working on a PhD in Humanities.

# The Reformation Goes East

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by Gabriel S. Sanchez

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As the story goes, the Reformation—that series of revolts against the Roman Catholic Church which is commonly said to have begun with the publication of Martin Luther’s *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517—was a Western Christian phenomenon, and that is largely correct. Originating in the German lands and quickly spilling over into Switzerland, France, and then the rest of the European Continent, the Reformation had little direct contact with the Christian East at first. Since the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, (Western) Catholics and (Eastern) Orthodox had limited contact with each other. That tragic event in Christian history dashed any hope of resuscitating the reunion of East and West which was laid out at the Council of Florence in 1439. By that point, most of the Eastern Slavic lands that adhered to Orthodoxy were embroiled in their

own conflicts with the Muslims or, in the case of Kievan Rus’, busy consolidating into the Russian state. The Reformation, simply put, was not on the radar.

A century before the Reformation, however, the followers of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague, known as the Hussites, briefly sought communion with the Greek Orthodox Church after breaking with Rome. While many of their ideas were at odds with the settled doctrine of the Catholic Church, some contemporary Orthodox churchmen, including the former head of the Czech Orthodox Church, contend that Hus and Jerome were “martyrs” for the “undistorted [Orthodox] faith” following their execution at the Council of Constance in 1415-16. This attitude is telling insofar as it reveals an unfortunate commonality between Protestants and many



(though not all) Eastern Orthodox, namely blind antipathy toward Rome. It is this antipathy which later Reformers, and indeed some contemporary Protestants, hoped to use in order to build an alliance against Catholicism.

## The Orthodox/ Lutheran Dialogue

Perhaps the most famous intersection of the Reformation with Eastern Christendom came in the mid-16th century when a Greek Orthodox deacon named Demetrius made contact with Phillip Melanchton, a conferee of Martin Luther. Both Melanchton and Luther had appealed to Greek Patristic sources in their polemical battles against the Catholics and believed that their vision of a “reformed Christianity” would align with the doctrines and practices of the Orthodox.

Later, in 1570, diplomatic contacts between Germany and the Ottoman Empire led to a fresh dialogue between the Lutherans and Orthodox. Jeremias II had ascended to the patriarchal throne and unlike many of his fellow Greek Orthodox under the Turkish yoke, he was a man of considerable theological learning. (After the Turkish invasion, most Greek priests and bishops had limited educational opportunities, leading to a “dark age” in Greek theological history.) After crafting a new translation of the *Augsburg Confession*, the Lutherans hoped that Jeremias would see that there were no substantial differences between the faith of the Lutherans and the faith of the Orthodox. They were wrong.

Jeremias, like his predecessor, was not enthusiastic about what the Germans had sent him, though he realized that it was necessary to respond to the Lutherans in order to clarify what the Orthodox Church actually professes. At



John Hus, Czech priest, philosopher, Master at Charles University in Prague, church reformer and a key predecessor to Protestantism.

One of the ideas floating about at the time was that the Orthodox, perhaps due to their relative isolation from Rome, had maintained the “pure” and “primitive” Christian Faith, unadulterated by alleged accretions such as Papal Primacy, Purgatory, and the Church’s practice of granting indulgences. Contact with Demetrius prompted the Lutherans to translate their statement of faith, the *Augsburg Confession*, into Greek, which was sent to Patriarch Joasph II of Constantinople. Upon reading the document and its accompanying letter, Joasph found its contents heretical and opted not to respond. The matter didn’t end there.

the time, the Orthodox had no settled catechism or compendium of their doctrines, and the fall of Constantinople had left a lacuna in Orthodox learning that would take centuries to correct. After reviewing the 21 articles of the *Augsburg Confession*, Jeremias responded to each, noting where the Orthodox agreed and disagreed. For instance, while he approved of the Lutheran retention of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, he rejected their retention of the *filioque* (“from the Son”), which was introduced into the Latin version of the Creed in the latter half of the first millennium. (The addition and interpretation of the *filioque* remains a point of contention between >

Catholics and Orthodox to this day, though the Eastern Catholic churches in communion with Rome are under no obligation to use it in their respective recensions of the Creed.)

More distressingly for the Lutheran cause was Jeremias's rejection of justification *sola fide* ("by faith alone") and his profession that there are at least seven sacraments rather than only the two recognized by Lutherans: Baptism and the Eucharist.

With respect to the Eucharist, Jeremias stressed that bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ while admonishing the Lutherans for retaining certain Latin liturgical practices—such as the use of unleavened bread—which differed from the Byzantine Rite. Here, along with his comments on the *filioque*, Jeremias's anti-Catholic bias shines through. Despite his well-placed desire to avoid compromising Orthodoxy in the name of ecumenical ties with the Lutherans, Jeremias's chauvinistic attitude concerning Greek practices can be found among the Orthodox to this very day.

Another area where Jeremias could not come to an agreement with the Lutherans concerned the liturgical year, specifically the celebration of various feasts and the commemoration of the saints. Tied to this was Jeremias's overarching uneasiness with the Lutheran rejection of works, including fasting and monastic life. For Jeremias and indeed Orthodoxy as a whole, the Church's liturgical life is paramount; to deny the spiritual good of these works, these celebrations, and periods of penance degrades Christianity and breaks off communion with God.

Upon receiving Jeremias's reply in 1576, the Germans drafted a response which Jeremias—in a much icier tone than before—in turn responded to in 1579. In that letter, Jeremias made it clear that unless the Lutherans set aside all doctrines and practices which did not adhere to Jeremias's understanding of the Orthodox faith, there could be no hope for either ecumenical dialogue or ecclesiastical ties. While the Lutherans made additional appeals to Jeremias, he dispatched a note in 1581 which simply read, "Go your own way, and do not send us further letters on doctrine but only letters written for the sake of friendship." Whatever hopes the Lutherans may have had for

making an ally of the Orthodox were dashed once and for all.

## Protestant Incursions in Russia

While the Orthodox/Lutheran dialogue ended in failure for the Protestants, this did not stop Protestant missionaries from attempting to convert the Orthodox individually, particularly in Eastern Europe. As already noted, Constantinople's fall dealt a severe blow to Orthodox education among the Greeks. In the Slavic lands, particularly Russia, centuries of captivity under the Mongol Golden Horde along with ongoing conflicts with what became the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had a deleterious effect on clerical education. For centuries, the Russian Church's hierarchy had come from among the Greek-educated clergy. Now that the Russian state and its church were one of the last "free" Orthodox polities in the world, they were on their own with respect to producing priests and bishops. This created a situation where many priests were ordained without any formal theological training, and large swathes of the laity took to superstitious beliefs and practices. This made them particularly susceptible to Protestant influence.

In order to stave off Protestant influence among the Orthodox, particularly in the western region of Russia, a learned Orthodox bishop, Peter Mogila, began revising his clergy's liturgical and ceremonial books in order to deepen their understanding of the sacraments and remove superstitious beliefs. Ironically, despite his rejection of Catholicism, Mogila relied heavily on Latin Scholastic sources for explicating the meaning of the sacraments, including their proper form, matter, and intention. Mogila also borrowed heavily from Latin models of clerical and lay education, establishing not only a higher educational institute for monastics but also a series of schools around the modern-day Ukraine which instructed students in a variety of languages, including Greek and Latin, and other disciplines such as theology, philosophy, rhetoric, and classical studies. Moreover, Mogila also set-up print shops for the production of uniform liturgical and theological texts and a new catechism which,



much like the famous *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, was intended to educate the laity while preserving them from Protestant polemics.

The effect of Mogila's work (and the work of subsequent educated clergy in Russia) was considerable, though not total. Following the schism in the Russian Church in the 17th century over the matter of liturgical reform, Tsar Peter I (otherwise known as Peter the Great) instituted a "Protestantized" governance model on the Russian Orthodox Church beginning in 1700. After preventing the Russian bishops from electing a new patriarch to head their church, Peter created the Most Holy Governing Synod, a committee comprised of hierarchs and lay officials appointed by the Tsar, which oversaw church operations. Under the influence of Bishop Theofan Prokopovich, a prelate who had drunk deeply from the poisoned wells of the Reformation during his extended trips through France, Germany, and Switzerland, Peter believed that the church should be the handmaid of the state, with the tsar as its ultimate ruler. The "synodal model" of Peter the Great would last for more than 200 years, coming to an end only after the 1917 Soviet Revolution.

## Protestantism and Orthodoxy Today

Following the Soviet Revolution and the spread of communism in Eastern Europe, increased numbers of Russian and other Slavic Orthodox Christians began making their way to Western Europe and North America. They were joined by Greek and Arab Orthodox Christians who had fled Muslim domination both before and after World War I. For the first time in centuries, sizable Orthodox communities had full and frequent contact with Western Christians, both Catholics and Protestants alike. The result, especially in Europe, was the establishment of formal and informal dialogue groups which aimed at overcoming Eastern/Western doctrinal differences. Although some Orthodox theologians were impressed by the spread of Eastern Patristic learning among their estranged Catholic brethren, ongoing criticism against certain Latin theological trends coupled with concerns over the power

of the papacy prompted the Orthodox to keep their distance. Instead, many turned toward the Anglican Church as a source for fruitful dialogue, believing—wrongly—that they had retained the greater part of the Apostolic faith and might even be inclined to unite with the Orthodox Church. Upheavals in the worldwide Anglican communion during the 20th century, including the ordination of women ministers and the acceptance of homosexuality, thwarted any chance for unification.

By the close of the 20th century, a growing number of Protestants in the United States (specifically Evangelicals) began turning toward the Orthodox Church in the hopes of overcoming the doctrinal and practical disagreements that have plagued Protestantism from the beginning. While certain Orthodox jurisdictions were initially wary of receiving Protestant converts, especially en masse, this began to change in the 1990s and early 2000s. Today, most Orthodox jurisdictions operating in the West have sizable convert populations and even depend on these converts for their survival, given that many so-called "cradle Orthodox" have left their ancestral religion over the decades. Unfortunately, one of the effects of these conversions has been a growing Protestant influence in American Orthodoxy at the expense of closer relations with the Catholic Church. Holding fast to their deep-seated prejudices against Rome, these converts have instilled the idea that Orthodoxy is a bulwark against Catholicism and that whatever problems plague the Catholic Church, ranging from heterodox clergy to the sex-abuse scandal, are somehow nonexistent in Orthodoxy.

What this Protestant influence on Orthodoxy means for the future of Catholic/Orthodox relations remains to be seen. However, it is important to note that Orthodoxy in the United States, if not the West as a whole, is something of a backwater; the vast majority of Orthodox Christians still live in that communion's historic lands, such as Greece, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, and Russia. Given that world Orthodoxy remains suspicious of the Western Christianity, including Protestantism, it is doubtful that the Orthodox Church will ever find itself wholly influenced by the Reformation. For that we should be grateful.

The Reformation Wall is a monument in Geneva, Switzerland. It honours many of the main individuals, events, and documents of the Protestant Reformation by depicting them in statues and bas-reliefs.



### Population and Religion in the US

According to Pew Research Center data for 2014, 70.7% of American population is "Christian"!



70.7 % Christian  
22.8 % Unaffiliated  
5.9 % Non Christian  
0.6 % No answer

### Mainline Protestants include

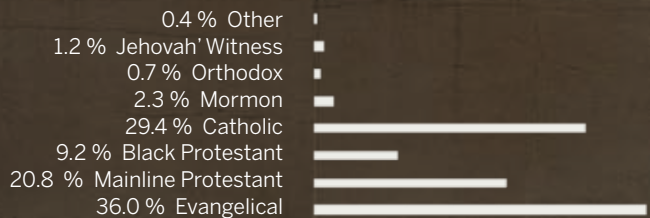
- United Methodist Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Presbyterian Church (USA)
- African Methodist Episcopal Church

- Episcopal Church
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

- American Baptist Churches USA
- United Church of Christ
- Disciples of Christ.

### Christian Population

Pew Research Center data for 2014 show that 29.4 % of American Christians are Catholic.





## Major Christian religious movements founded in the United States

**Pentecostalism** – Movement which places a special emphasis of the influence of the Holy Ghost and on the direct experience of God through the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The baptism with the Holy Ghost enables Christians to live under the influence of the Holy Ghost and to use spiritual gifts as speaking in tongues and healing. This movement finds its historic roots in the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles from 1904 to 1906, sparked by Charles Parham. It is estimated to have over 279 million followers worldwide, many in Africa and South America.

**Adventism** – Movement that starts with the 19th century American Protestant

revival, began as an inter-denominational movement. Its founder was William Miller. In the 1830s in New York he became convinced of an imminent Second Coming of Jesus. The most prominent modern group to emerge from this is the Seventh-day Adventists.

**The Latter Day Saints** - Movement founded in 1830 by Joseph Smith in upstate New York. Began at the same time as the Adventist movement. Joseph Smith pretended that he received visions revealing a new 'sacred' text, The Book of Mormon. He published this book in 1830 as complement to Holy Scripture. Several denominations are derived from

the original movement. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), the largest denomination, is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Community of Christ, the second-largest denomination, is headquartered in Independence, Missouri. Worldwide they claim about 15 million members.

**Jehovah's Witnesses** – Originated with the religious movement known as Bible Students, which was founded in Pennsylvania in the late 1870s by Charles Taze Russell. It is distinct from other Christian denominations by its nontrinitarian beliefs. The Jehovah's Witnesses claim about 7.69 million active members worldwide.

An Interview with a

# Convert from Protestantism

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Interview with Mrs. Laura Patten Sanchez

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*Editor's note:* The following is a transcript of an interview with Laura Patten Sanchez, a convert from Protestantism. Mrs. Sanchez graduated with a B.A. from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI before receiving her M.A. in Biblical Studies from the University of Chicago. She is the mother of four young boys and the business manager for Chews Life, which produces Rosaries and other devotional items for mothers and small children. (To preserve the interview's character, the oral style has been maintained throughout.)

**Angelus Press:** Can you explain for our readers the road you took in converting from Protestantism to Catholicism?

**Mrs. Sanchez:** Well, first I'll clarify that my "first conversion" (I'm not sure what else to call it) was actually from Evangelical Protestantism to the Eastern Orthodox Church, not to the Catholic Church. This conversion from Protestantism to Apostolic and liturgical Christianity was a much bigger movement for me than was eventually "swimming the Tiber" from

"Constantinople," and ending up in Rome; this latter was more of a mini-conversion.

**Angelus Press:** Please elaborate more on the type of Protestantism you grew up with.

**Mrs. Sanchez:** I grew up in a fundamentalist Protestant group known as the Plymouth Brethren, which both my parents had grown up in, though my mom in a more "liberal" group—she wore pants growing up, and there was a TV and a Christmas tree in the home. My dad's family,





in contrast, didn't even celebrate Christmas. When I was about 10, my immediate family and much of my extended family left that group due to a sexual abuse scandal, among other disagreements they had with individuals and with the group as a whole. After searching for a "home church," my parents settled on a conservative nondenominational megachurch in our city. In high school and throughout college, I switched from that church to a "church plant" that opened nearby. It was led by a young pastor who was a gifted teacher—very engaging and energetic and probably an early part of the "hipster" trend.

After graduating from high school, I attended Calvin College from 1999 to 2003, which is affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), but I never took any interest in the CRC's more liturgical tradition, beyond thinking that the more liturgically-focused Reformed churches in my area were "kind of cool." I did, however, attend a retreat for my college's women's group at an Episcopalian monastery. That was my first introduction to anything liturgical in Christian worship.

In college, I very much embraced a liberal Christianity, including flirting with the idea of "process theology," which (un)makes God into a temporal rather than an eternal being. This was how I dealt with questions of theodicy after living in Costa Rica for a semester in college. It was there that I encountered up close the legacy of the Spanish colonialism (admittedly leftist-slanted but not entirely untrue), history lessons on western intervention in Central America, and the literal faces of real suffering and hardship in the world—third-world style, not first-world problems. Funny enough, while I lived in Costa Rica, I was so taken aback by the Pentecostal-style assembly that my host family attended, that I chose instead to attend the local Catholic parish for worship on Sundays!

**Angelus Press:** I assume this wasn't a Catholic parish with a traditional liturgy.

**Mrs. Sanchez:** It is very funny to me thinking back to that period in my life. At the time, the single guitar in that parish was so much less jarring than the band at my host family's

assembly that I felt peaceful with that guitar. Today, however, I would be aggravated by a guitar in the Mass! Even funnier to me, is that it was in a religion class called "Doctrine of God," through the help of an ordained female Presbyterian minister, that I was able to reconcile the question of evil with an immutable, eternal, omnipotent and all-loving and merciful God. She herself was helped on by the works of Catholic theologians. And this was at a Reformed college, mind you. God works in mysterious ways, and now looking back, I see this all as having a part in me coming to the Catholic Faith.

**Angelus Press:** How different or similar are various Protestant groups?

**Mrs. Sanchez:** I've heard Catholics dismissively say about Protestantism, "They're all the same, aren't they?" No, they are not! Protestant groups are very different, and Catholics would do well to recognize this. For example, I grew up steeped in the Bible, but I knew absolutely nothing about Reformation history, and, as an Evangelical in a praise-and-worship assembly, the most foreign thing to me about Catholicism was its rituals and liturgy (and the Virgin Mary...always Mary). An acquaintance who grew up in a Presbyterian church grew up with a much larger knowledge base than just the Bible, such as catechisms, and is quite familiar with the rhythms of Mass because it is so similar to services at her church. Different Protestants will have vastly different experiences of their faith, and different questions about the Catholic Church based on these.

There is an astounding amount of diversity in Protestant beliefs, and so I think that similarities can only be spoken of generally. As far as my experience tells me, the similarities are: a distaste for dogma, especially any that reaches into the most intimate parts of our lives (the Catholic teaching on contraception being the foremost example); a dislike or distrust of what they perceive as "top-down management" by the Pope; and, as I already hinted, a nearly complete skepticism when it comes to veneration of Our Blessed Mother. I have thought to myself before that a refusal to love Mary as Jesus did probably keeps more Protestants from uniting >

themselves to Catholicism than anything else does.

**Angelus Press:** What was satisfying about your experience growing up Protestant? What was unsatisfactory?

**Mrs. Sanchez:** Generally speaking, Protestants, at least the Evangelicals and the Reformed Protestants I spent my teen years and 20s with, take seriously the Great Commission, and they take it seriously as individuals. I knew many, many missionary families growing up, but coming across a missionary family in the Catholic Church is rare, in my experience. Being a missionary can be a vocation in various Protestant churches in ways that I don't see in Catholicism right now.

And I do miss the “small group” culture. A “small group” is typically a study and fellowship group, in which the same people consistently meet and share life. As a Protestant, I took part in a Torah study, in which several people met weekly to study our way through the first books of the Bible. Because Protestants lack a real history (the Protestants I knew essentially thought that “the True Church” was underground for the 1,500 years between the Apostles and Martin Luther), there is a movement, I think fairly recent, to explore, and even appropriate, the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

At any rate, I was in a Torah study, to be fed with the Scriptures, and I was part of a small group of women who met together biweekly for a couple years. I do miss the very intentional focus on relationships in Protestantism. Catholic parishes can seem unwelcoming to non-Catholic visitors, because there is little evident outreach, and it can be a real struggle to “get connected.” Interestingly, the Eastern Orthodox parish through which I first entered the church was made up almost exclusively of converts from Protestantism, and that was an incredibly friendly place, small enough where people noticed visitors, and they were determined to make these visitors their friends! Indeed, one married couple who was among the first my then-boyfriend, later husband and I met at this parish became our first three children's godparents. I think this friendliness and outreach was due to the fact that our friends were themselves

converts, and this was the culture they had experienced growing up.

As far as what was unsatisfactory: this was something I never thought of until I started attending inquirers' classes at the local Orthodox parish, when I suddenly realized that there was an entire Christian intellectual and spiritual history that I'd never known about. Surprise, surprise!, the rituals and vestments and incense in the liturgy weren't “traditions of men” (an anti-Catholic phrase of my childhood), but were the direct liturgical descendants of Jewish worship. Baptism wasn't a symbolic, me-centered chance for a preteen to tell about “being saved”—it is a sacrament that efficaciously heals the soul from Original Sin! Women couldn't be priests not because men didn't like them, but because the Church does not add to or subtract from the deposit of Faith handed down by Christ through the Apostles. And, perhaps most revelatory for me, as silly as it may sound, was the fact that the Church *had* been alive for those 1,500 years before the Reformation. The people in it were flawed, certainly, but the Church has been faithful all that time, loving people, changing the world, toiling at the harvest, studying, and proclaiming the Truth that Jesus Himself gave us. I myself experienced an intellectual conversion to liturgical, Apostolic Christianity before I experienced a “heart” conversion, as it was only the Church that could fill the intellectual void inherent in Protestantism.

**Angelus Press:** Did you notice anything in Eastern Orthodoxy that made look toward making the “next step” to Catholicism?

**Mrs. Sanchez:** A major issue in Protestantism that is obviously problematic is the lack of a settled Magisterium, and this is true in the Eastern Orthodox Church as well, though to a lesser degree and in a different way. There is no standard one can ultimately appeal to outside of making the individual claim of being “moved by the Spirit.” Protestants can never be sure that their denomination or stand-alone “Bible church” won't be the next one to condone homosexual relationships or allow women to be pastors. Even in the Orthodox Church, such fundamental questions as contraception and artificial



reproductive technology are often left up to one's own conscience. Moreover, there is a great deal of misinformation about Catholicism floating around among the Orthodox, especially among ex-Protestant converts who carry a lot of their anti-Catholic baggage with them into Orthodoxy.

I should note that when I speak about the importance of the Magisterium, this isn't to say that I "check my brain at the door" as a Catholic; instead, I want to affirm and be thankful for the continuous line of teaching, with a traceable intellectual and spiritual history, and for the Catholic Church remaining an infallible wellspring of teaching on faith and morals.

**Angelus Press:** What tells you that the Catholic Church is right and not wrong?

**Mrs. Sanchez:** Well, much of what I just laid out is what has convinced me of the truth of the Catholic Church. It really was an intellectual conversion for me—that lineage of thought and its inherent reason aren't things that can be faked and made up. And I submit to the words of Jesus when He named Peter as the Rock, and said that the gates of hell would not prevail against His Church.

When I went from Eastern Orthodoxy to Catholicism, I told my husband that, "This is it, I won't do any more faith changes or conversions. I will be Catholic until I die!" And there is one thing in the Catholic Church that I have faith will always keep me here, even if I am tempted to stray: that one thing is the Real Presence in the Eucharist. This is something that we share with the Orthodox, as the sacrament of the Eucharist is valid in the Eastern churches. Intellectually and morally, though, I could never return to Orthodoxy for the reasons I noted above. As thankful as I am for Orthodoxy leading me out of Protestantism and to the Catholic Church, it often felt like a ship without a pilot where the private opinion of individual priests and bishops served as a de facto Magisterium.

Protestant denominations, though, don't even try to claim the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. They may claim better fellowship with other believers, better Biblical knowledge, or any number of other things, but they do not even pretend to claim the Real Presence of Jesus

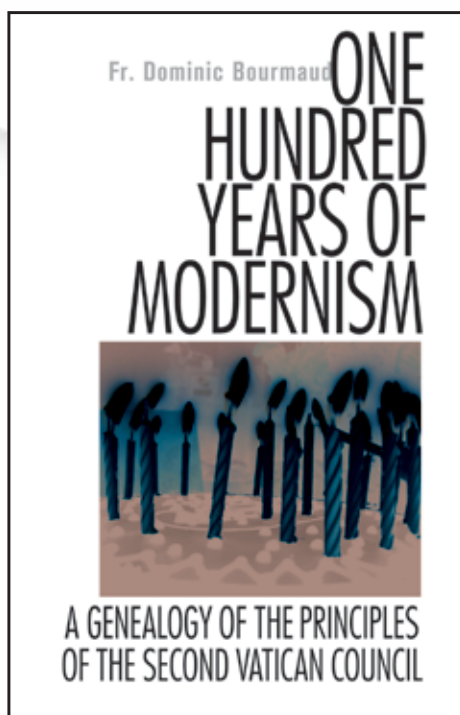
in their liturgies or worship. Whatever else might happen, this is the thing that I know deep in my soul will keep me in the Catholic faith. The claim that this is the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ, and that partaking of this sacrament is a means of salvation, and the reverence given the tabernacle for containing this great Mystery is something that I could never turn my back on, Heaven help me.



# One Hundred Years of Modernism

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by Fr. Dominic Bourmaud, SSPX



This is an everyman's survey of the history of philosophical ideas from Aristotle's sane realism to the existentialists' insanity. In chronological order, from its roots in Luther's principle of private judgment through its subsequent developments, it shows that modernism, prematurely declared dead after St. Pius X's reign, revived after World War II and reached the highest levels of the Catholic Church's hierarchy.



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# Catholic Reformation

And The Never-Ending Battle Versus the “Customary”

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by Dr. John Rao

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“Christ said, ‘I am the Truth’. He did not say, ‘I am custom.’” (Tertullian)

Martin Luther (1483-1546) claimed that the reforms made by the Roman Church in his day—all of them pathetic and doomed to failure as far as he was concerned—were due only to the storm that he personally had aroused. But as much as his appearance on the historical stage was undeniably crucial to the history of the Catholic Reformation, it was totally false for him to claim that this magnificent revival was nothing other than a response to his own revolutionary activity.

Everything that was truly substantive in what is popularly referred to as the “Tridentine Reform” had a pre-Lutheran origin, from the neo-Thomism that would figure significantly in its intellectual development, through the Observant

Movement in the traditional religious orders and the zeal for a purified clergy displayed by the disciples of St. Catherine of Genoa, and up to and including the practical example of how to get things done on a broad scale offered in Spain by Queen Isabella and her ecclesiastical advisor, Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros. All that was central to this pre-Lutheran movement of thought and action would have continued to exert its influence even if the founder of Protestantism had never opened his mouth. One prime indication of this fact: the work of St. Ignatius of Loyola, at the start of his spiritual journey from hospital-to Paris-to Rome, was done in total ignorance of Luther’s teachings and importance. Moreover, a Tridentine Reform that was truly triggered and obsessed by Luther alone would have tackled many challenges >

more fully than it actually did. Abandonment of some of these challenges entirely, and failure to follow up on others among them, was to a large degree due to long term problems regarding the role of pope, bishops, priests, religious, and laity both mighty and low, in the “constitution” of the Church, as well as complexities concerning the relationship of grace and free will; dilemmas with whose intricacies a number of Catholic activists of the pre-1517 era were familiar. Problems would also have continued to present difficulties for reformers even if Luther had never raised his sights outside of his Saxon classroom. Their stubborn nature is well indicated by the fact that the same problems continued troubling the life of the Church after Luther was supposedly “answered,” right up until our own unhappy time.

## “Catholic Reformation”

What both of these truths point to is the fact that “Catholic Reformation” is a never-ending battle. Its perennial necessity gives the lie to any belief that the ecclesiastical polis runs smoothly unless some villain or outside catastrophic event comes along to disturb it, and that the ills caused by such woes can be brought to a conclusion through the thunderous proclamations and apostolic assaults against them on the part of a single heroic council or saintly ecclesiastical leader. Reform was required, and projects pursuing it conceived, not only before Luther and in response to Luther, but also after the last participant left Trent in 1563, and in 1663, 1763, and 1863 as well. And among the ever-present sins making this never-ending battle for reform a constant reality is the incalculably immense power exercised at all times and in all places by familiar but erroneous “customs” masquerading as or at least accepted as the traditional teaching, administrative procedures, and moral practices proper to the Roman Catholic Church.

False “traditions,” by which were meant the “customary” practices of papal and diocesan courts and curiae, along with the ideas defending them, were the bugbear of fervent Catholic reformers long before Luther, including Pope Gregory VII, making reference to the quotation

from Tertullian cited under the title of this article. All that men like Luther did, as far as reformers like Gian Piero Carafa, the future Pope Paul IV, was concerned, was to intensify their concern for a swift revamping of standard operating procedures and the corrupt canonical and erroneous theological justifications lying behind them. This and this alone could prepare the Church for the brutal war for the souls of men and the health of secular society that they saw the Protestant Reformation portended.

## Doctrinal Importance

In the minds of the defenders of “custom-defined-as-tradition,” such Catholic critics of papal and episcopal courts and curiae were, at the very least, the sort of deluded, destructive, and even heretical zealots that centuries of papal bureaucratic prudence and pragmatism had sought to tame. At worst, they were themselves viewed as the *true* problem of the day, unnecessarily aggravating that Protestant tempest-in-a-teapot which could be quelled through the tried laws and methods of practical professionals, or through the rhetorical genius of Humanist word merchants. This latter line of argument rejected both a closer examination of Luther’s theological assault and the need for proper doctrine to defend a beleaguered Church, and a defense of both doctrine as well as the demands for moral administrative procedures which respected a proper hierarchy of values through which spiritual matters were placed above mere political and economic concerns. Instead, it literally verged on the point of treating the Protestant revolt as a non-event, and its consequences were particularly deadly. For nothing, says Hubert Jedin, the great historian of the Council of Trent, furthered the Reformation more than a widespread delusion about its actual lack of doctrinal and pastoral importance among people who conceived of themselves as dealing with the “real”—*i.e.*, the customary, non-doctrinal, politically and economically relevant—problems of grown-ups.

One instance of just how thick the “defenders of customary traditions” were can be seen in



The Reformation set in motion a rebellion against the authority of the Catholic Church. It brought new types of religious music, including chorales and chorale settings in the Lutheran Church and Psalters in Calvinist churches. The Catholic Church undertook its own internal program of reform, which likewise had important effects on church music.

their lack of reaction to the Sack of Rome of 1527. This had its origins in the French-Spanish struggle for hegemony in Italy in the 15th and 16th centuries. Its proximate cause was the clash between the political program of the harried Medici Pope, Clement VII (1523-1534), and the ambitions of Charles V (1516-1558), King of Spain, King of Germany, and Holy Roman Emperor [Charles was Charles I, King of Spain, from 1516, and Charles V, King/Emperor from 1519, both down to 1556, when he abdicated]. If its agents were actually mutinous, unpaid, imperial soldiers, these nevertheless could say that they were merely following the examples of their more illustrious clerical ally, the Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, who had plundered the Vatican side of the Tiber some eight months earlier. Whatever the specific responsibilities of pope, Catholic king-emperor, and prince of the Church might have been, the end result was indeed a nightmare. On May 6, 1527, Rome suffered the worst assault that it had ever known, far worse than anything at the time of the barbarian migrations. Nothing was spared, sacred, or profane. Clement VII's escape to and confinement within the walls of Castel Sant'Angelo until December, listening to the taunting of German mercenaries calling for his death and replacement by "Pope Luther," were

the least of the indignities. Various cardinals and prelates, including one future pope, Julius III, were humiliated and tortured, altars were ransacked, the Sistine Chapel used as a stable, riches confiscated, patients in hospitals and children in orphanages gratuitously butchered. Rape and rapine, exacerbated by raids of hoodlums under the direction of the abbot of the nearby monastery of Farfa, were followed by the onset of plague. Rome and the stench of death became one.

One might have thought that the Sack would guarantee their great awakening. Nothing of the kind happened. Those whose eyes were open before the Sack may have had them opened wider still, but they were relatively few in number. With rare exceptions, men who were blind remained blind. An event of such magnitude, whose mere possibility in the abstract might have seemed apocalyptic beforehand, was digested when it finally did occur in reality as though it were simply another move on the chessboard of ordinary political life. Indeed, most Catholics, clerics and laymen alike, afterwards as before, went about their daily affairs, changing nothing, watching the collapse of the Church's position in Germany, uninspired to lift a finger to arrest it, even when possessing the authority to do so. >

## Pastoral Commitment

Fortunately for the survival of the Church, those treating doctrinal and spiritual matters as secondary in importance—so long as the power and political influence of the Papacy was protected—suffered at least a partial defeat at the hands of the heroes of the Catholic Reformation. As Trent, the Jesuits, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Pius V, St. Francis de Sales, and so many others progressed in influence, the “traditions” that these custom-obsessed conservatives supported were exposed for what they were: abuses fortified by many spurious, self-deceptive arguments, but used for so long as to have gained the appearance of being something sacred. Fortunately for Rome, an effort was made to rebuild its walls with something more suitable and more sturdy than whatever happened to be merely familiar: a reaffirmation of the authentic and eternal Catholic Tradition, a deeper understanding of whose *doctrines* alone revealed the *pastoral* flaws of the immediate past and indicated a surer path to a better future on both the theoretical and practical, pragmatic level. Rooted in concerns that pre-dated the Protestant revolt, Trent was deeply committed, probably more committed in a practical way than any previous council, to a thorough evangelization of a Christian world which was believed to be still all too rooted in superstitious pagan practices. Evangelization was to be accomplished by a reinvigorated clergy, episcopacy, and papacy. But already from the beginning of the Council’s first sitting, it recognized that any attempt to separate pastoral activity from zeal for doctrine was impossible. The minute one touched upon the first realm the second inexorably reared its head, the same being true when approached the other way around. The Christian evangelist had to accomplish his work with good doctrine behind him. He had to be able to teach and teach correctly.

Year by year, decade by decade, on every level, intellectual, moral and physical, we have witnessed all that we have considered to be valuable from our Christian-Greco-Roman past mercilessly attacked, torn to shreds, and mocked in its helplessness. And yet each new assault, which seems as though it ought to be the final

eye-opening disaster, appears to do little to awaken us to the major cause of our impotent defense of our own heritage.

Our impotence stems from our continued support for certain supposedly practical, prudent, pragmatic “traditions”—those composed of ever more heretical interpretations of the meaning of Vatican II, marching in lock step with naturalist, pluralist, libertine, secular principles, and protected by a Stalinist understanding of the infallibility and practical wisdom of “a Pope who can do no wrong”—which, like the “traditions” of the corrupt papal and episcopal courts and curiae of the early sixteenth century, are actually not part of Catholic Tradition at all, but, rather, are errors and abuses. It emerges from our conviction that critics of such false traditions are wild-eyed and destructive zealots. It is fed by our insistence on so closing our minds to the full character of the problem that we face as to remind one of Hubert Jedin’s warning that nothing does more to abet a disaster than an unwillingness to recognize its real existence.

The proponents of false traditions in the first half of the 16th century did not see that their standard operating procedures were helpless to deal with the disaster of 1527. Thankfully, their influence was weakened—though not by any means entirely destroyed—by the doctrinally and pastorally solid heroes of the Catholic Reformation. Similarly, Catholics who have accepted the false traditions of our own time cannot understand that the standard operating procedures of this heritage—the spirit of Vatican II—render them helpless in fending off further collapse. Any defenders of Rome at the time of the Sack of 1527 who might have been guided by the kinds of “traditions” defended tooth and nail by contemporary modernist and conservative Catholic idol worshippers would have had to do their duty by joining the mutinous soldiers in breaching the Aurelian Walls. Let us hope that the Catholic reformers of our own day—courageous cardinals, bishops, priests, and laity who recognize the need for solid doctrine to back serious pastoral activity—will one day be celebrated justly along with those who made the reform of the 16th century possible.





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# Tradition

a Treasure Received to be Handed Down

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by Abbé François-Marie Chautard

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*Editor's Note:* The following is an extract from a sermon by Abbé François-Marie Chautard. In order to conserve its original character, the original oral style has been retained throughout.

Very dear brothers, we are heirs: heirs of God, heirs of the Cross of Jesus Christ, co-heirs of Heaven, heirs of a formerly glorious Christianity, heirs of a beautiful Catholic Tradition built by our ancestors. Let us be grateful, infinitely grateful, to God for this inheritance. But, after having thanked God, let us know how to receive this inheritance, let us know how to conserve it.

## Do Not Renounce Your Inheritance

My very dear brothers, let us keep ourselves safe from a certain “complex” which has affected

Catholics and which could affect us. Under the pretext of humility, of charity, of virtue, some today reproach their fellow Catholics and themselves for being fixated on doctrine, for holding to an intransigent morality, outdated piety, and a narrow conception of family and love. These accusers have soiled the memory of their forebears. They have buffeted their inheritance. Alas, numbers of Catholics let themselves be influenced, rattled by this repentance, this self-criticism, which has made them too often *dhimmis*, defeated men—men of compromise, ready to ridicule what they loved and love what they ridiculed. >

Fr. Charles de Foucauld, who died a century ago, spoke these prophetic words: “I had believed in entering into the religious life that I had above all to counsel gentleness and humility; with time, I believe that what is lacking the most often is dignity and pride.” *O christiane, agnosce dignitatem tuam*, said St. Leo the Great. *O Christian, remember your dignity*. Yes, you are a son of God and not *Abdallah*, you are of the race of the children of God and not slaves of God.

Let us be, then, proud of the inheritance of our fathers, that is to say, let us admit its grandeur, let us venerate it, defend it; let us be enthusiastic witnesses. This is what it means to be proud. And let us be it all the more because this legacy has been bequeathed to us without any merit on our part. “It is time to be humble,” said St. Pius X, “because it is time to be proud.”

Let us have the spirit of the *Magnificat*, of this joy, of this enthusiasm, of this recognition, of this publication of the riches of God who dwelt in the heart of the Virgin Mary. Yes, let us thank God. Let us glorify God for all the riches that He has given to us.

## The Treasures of the Faith

My brothers, we have received an immense treasure: the treasure of the Catholic faith, the treasure of the Mass of all time, the treasure of an authentic Catholic priesthood, the treasure of the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, the treasure—especially in our country of France—of an authentic counter-revolutionary thought forged in the battles of our ancestors, a treasure of a truly Marian piety, of the cult of the Sacred Heart, the treasure of the Spiritual Exercises. We have as well the treasure of the religious life: contemplative, missionary, and teaching. And I am not speaking of the myriad of works that have bloomed and re-bloomed, these primary and secondary schools and those of higher education, these youth movements, these third orders, these apostolic works, these study groups throughout the world, an evident sign of the love of God and the breath of the Holy Ghost, who acts *suaviter ac fortiter*, with gentleness but with force.

Yes, my brothers, let us be proud of this Catholic doctrine which has spanned the





centuries because it speaks to us of the Eternal. Let us be proud of this Catholic morality of which the demands are nothing but the reflection of our elevation to the Divine Sonship. Be proud, dear parents, to transmit life and forge Christian souls of the children of God. Fathers of families, teach your children! Fathers of families, pass down to your sons! Fathers of families, make your own these words of St. Peter: Know how to “justify your hope” (I Pet. 3:15), your choices, your positions, your life.

Be proud, Catholic spouses, to be the living and faithful images of the love of Christ and His Church. Be proud, Christian women, to hold the place of the heart and not of the body.

Be proud, dear faithful, whoever you are, to be Catholic. And do not be frightened by this point used to scare us, by affirming that we would not be fully Catholic, that we do not have the spirit of the Church. Whether or not [the authorities in Rome] give us a document of Catholicity, we are, and we are fully, totally. And this diploma of Catholicity, it’s our attachment to the Catholic Faith, to the Roman liturgy, to the sacraments of the Church; it’s our unwavering fidelity to the See of Peter—fidelity founded on the faith and not on a voluntarist obedience; this diploma of Catholicity, it’s you, dear numerous families, it’s you, profoundly Christian families from which are born solid religious and priestly vocations.

You dear faithful, who—more than whoever—adhere to the doctrine of the Church. You who are attached to eternal Rome, to the liturgy of St. Gregory the Great, of St. Pius V and of St. Pius X. You who receive the valid sacraments and not adulterated ones: would we be less Catholic because we are rejected by those who have squandered the inheritance?

Certainly, we do not have a canonical structure, and literal legality is without doubt a very good thing. Yes, without doubt, but would we be less Catholic because we do not possess the proper papers? Is it because of that that we give less respect to the rights of the Church? I am going to say something crazy. The rights of the Church, we have them much more than those who, by their pernicious laws, distill the modern errors and separate what God has united.

In saying this, I do not intend to say that

sanctity is in every corner of Tradition and that evil is unthinkable among our ranks. To this day, no man has yet discovered a way to be shielded from abuses. A different inheritance, a different heir. And if we are not worth more than the others, if we are not better than the others, we have received much more. Because “we have”—as says the Apostle—“this treasure in earthen vessels” (II Cor. 4:7). And if we ourselves are subject to weaknesses, to falls, we on the winning side: “Fear not, little flock, I have overcome the world” (Lk. 12:32; Jn. 16:33).

## Transmit the Faith

My brothers, this faith, we have it; these moral rules, we know them; these means of salvation, we possess them. So, it is up to us who have this inheritance to pass it on to all souls of good faith.

And how do we transmit it? By genuineness. By clearly speaking, not hard and without appeal, but clear, caring, far from double talk, from the daily ocean of lies. Genuineness of a life conformed to our faith: “So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:16). “We would like,” said Pius XII to the Italian youth, “that no one speak with you, deal with you, work with you, without receiving in their spirit a ray of Christian light.” “The first gage,” he said again, “of success of your apostolate will be to possess in abundance within yourselves this treasure of the love of God.”

It is in showing to our contemporaries a life more peaceful, more loving, more righteous, more pure, poorer, more nourished by the contemplation of God, a soul neither stiff nor bitter, that we will be apostles.

To use the words of Fr. Calmel: “May each Christian, may each one among us, go to the limit of his grace,” “may each be at his post, following the particular rules of his state of life, soldier or school teacher, farmer or lawyer or lowly clerk, or priest of the Lord, may each exhaust his potential and his power.”

# Exsurge Domine

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Extracts from *Exsurge Domine* of Pope Leo X Condemning the Errors of Martin Luther, June 15, 1520

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Arise, O Lord, and judge your own cause. Remember your reproaches to those who are filled with foolishness all through the day. Listen to our prayers, for foxes have arisen seeking to destroy the vineyard whose winepress you alone have trod. When you were about to ascend to your Father, you committed the care, rule, and administration of the vineyard, an image of the triumphant church, to Peter, as the head and your vicar and his successors. The wild boar from the forest seeks to destroy it and every wild beast feeds upon it.

Rise, Peter, and fulfill this pastoral office divinely entrusted to you as mentioned above.

Let all this holy Church of God, I say, arise, and with the blessed apostles intercede with almighty God to purge the errors of His sheep, to banish all heresies from the lands of the faithful, and be

pleased to maintain the peace and unity of His holy Church.

These errors have, at the suggestion of the human race, been revived and recently propagated among the more frivolous and the illustrious German nation. We grieve the more that this happened there because we and our predecessors have always held this nation in the bosom of our affection. For after the empire had been transferred by the Roman Church from the Greeks to these same Germans, our predecessors and we always took the Church's advocates and defenders from among them. Indeed it is certain that these Germans, truly germane to the Catholic faith, have always been the bitterest opponents of heresies, as witnessed by those commendable constitutions of the German emperors in behalf of the Church's independence,



freedom, and the expulsion and extermination of all heretics from Germany. Those constitutions formerly issued, and then confirmed by our predecessors, were issued under the greatest penalties even of loss of lands and dominions against anyone sheltering or not expelling them. If they were observed today both we and they would obviously be free of this disturbance.

Witness to this is the condemnation and punishment in the Council of Constance of the infidelity of the Hussites and Wyclifites as well as Jerome of Prague. Witness to this is the blood of Germans shed so often in wars against the Bohemians. A final witness is the refutation, rejection, and condemnation—no less learned than true and holy—of the above errors, or many of them, by the universities of Cologne and Louvain, most devoted and religious cultivators of the Lord's field. We could allege many other facts too, which we have decided to omit, lest we appear to be composing a history.

*[Editor's Note: Then the pope gives a list of 41 propositions of Luther which the Pope declared to be erroneous. Here are some of these erroneous statements.]*

1. It is a heretical opinion, but a common one, that the sacraments of the New Law give pardoning grace to those who do not set up an obstacle.

2. To deny that in a child after baptism sin remains is to treat with contempt both Paul and Christ.

5. That there are three parts to penance: contrition, confession, and satisfaction, has no foundation in Sacred Scripture nor in the ancient sacred Christian doctors.

8. By no means may you presume to confess venial sins, nor even all mortal sins, because it is impossible that you know all mortal sins. Hence in the primitive Church only manifest mortal sins were confessed.

12. If through an impossibility he who confessed was not contrite, or the priest did not absolve seriously, but in a jocose manner, if nevertheless he believes that he has been absolved, he is most truly absolved.

13. In the sacrament of penance and the remission of sin the pope or the bishop does no

more than the lowest priest; indeed, where there is no priest, any Christian, even if a woman or child, may equally do as much.

14. No one ought to answer a priest that he is contrite, nor should the priest inquire.

16. It seems to have been decided that the Church in common Council established that the laity should communicate under both species; the Bohemians who communicate under both species are not heretics, but schismatics.

17. The treasures of the Church, from which the pope grants indulgences, are not the merits of Christ and of the saints.

18. Indulgences are pious frauds of the faithful, and remissions of good works; and they are among the number of those things which are allowed, and not of the number of those which are advantageous.

20. They are seduced who believe that indulgences are salutary and useful for the fruit of the spirit.

24. Christians must be taught to cherish excommunications rather than to fear them.

25. The Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, is not the vicar of Christ over all the churches of the entire world, instituted by Christ Himself in blessed Peter.

31. In every good work the just man sins.

32. A good work done very well is a venial sin.

33. That heretics be burned is against the will of the Spirit.

36. Free will after sin is a matter of title only; and as long as one does what is in him, one sins mortally.

37. Purgatory cannot be proved from Sacred Scripture which is in the canon.

No one of sound mind is ignorant how destructive, pernicious, scandalous, and seductive to pious and simple minds these various errors are, how opposed they are to all charity and reverence for the holy Roman Church who is the mother of all the faithful and teacher of the faith; how destructive they are of the vigor of ecclesiastical discipline, namely obedience. This virtue is the font and origin of all virtues and without it anyone is readily convicted of being unfaithful.

We have found that these errors or theses >

# Faith and Morals

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are not Catholic, as mentioned above, and are not to be taught, as such; but rather are against the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church, and against the true interpretation of the sacred Scriptures received from the Church. Now Augustine maintained that her authority had to be accepted so completely that he stated he would not have believed the Gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church had vouched for it. For, according to these errors, or any one or several of them, it clearly follows that the Church which is guided by the Holy Spirit is in error and has always erred[.]

With the advice and consent of these our venerable brothers, with mature deliberation on each and every one of the above theses, and by the authority of almighty God, the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own authority, we condemn, reprobate, and reject completely each of these theses or errors as either heretical, scandalous, false, offensive to pious ears or seductive of simple minds, and against Catholic truth. By listing them, we decree and declare that all the faithful of both sexes must regard them as condemned, reprobated, and rejected.... We restrain all in the virtue of holy obedience and under the penalty of an automatic major excommunication[.]

Moreover, because the preceding errors and many others are contained in the books or writings of Martin Luther, we likewise condemn, reprobate, and reject completely the books and all the writings and sermons of the said Martin, whether in Latin or any other language, containing the said errors or any one of them; and we wish them to be regarded as utterly condemned, reprobated, and rejected. We forbid each and every one of the faithful of either sex, in virtue of holy obedience and under the above penalties to be incurred automatically, to read, assert, preach, praise, print, publish, or defend them. They will incur these penalties if they presume to uphold them in any way, personally or through another or others, directly or indirectly, tacitly or explicitly, publicly or occultly, either in their own homes or in other public or private places.

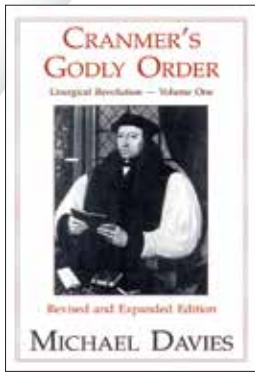
As far as Martin himself is concerned, O good God, what have we overlooked or not done? What

fatherly charity have we omitted that we might call him back from such errors? For after we had cited him, wishing to deal more kindly with him, we urged him through various conferences with our legate and through our personal letters to abandon these errors. We have even offered him safe conduct and the money necessary for the journey urging him to come without fear or any misgivings, which perfect charity should cast out, and to talk not secretly but openly and face to face after the example of our Savior and the Apostle Paul[.]

But he always refused to listen and, despising the previous citation and each and every one of the above overtures, disdained to come. To the present day he has been contumacious. With a hardened spirit he has continued under censure over a year.

What is worse, adding evil to evil, and on learning of the citation, he broke forth in a rash appeal to a future council. This to be sure was contrary to the constitution of Pius II and Julius II our predecessors that all appealing in this way are to be punished with the penalties of heretics. In vain does he implore the help of a council, since he openly admits that he does not believe in a council.

Therefore we can, without any further citation or delay, proceed against him to his condemnation and damnation as one whose faith is notoriously suspect and in fact a true heretic with the full severity of each and all of the above penalties and censures.



## Cranmer's Godly Order

Michael Davies

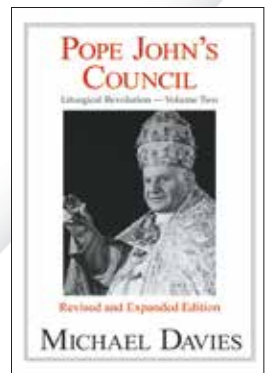
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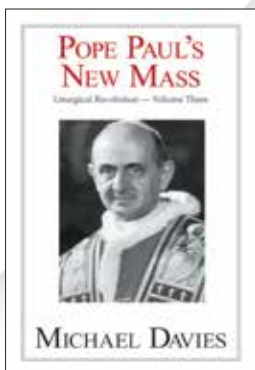
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Michael Davies

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## Pope Paul's New Mass

Michael Davies

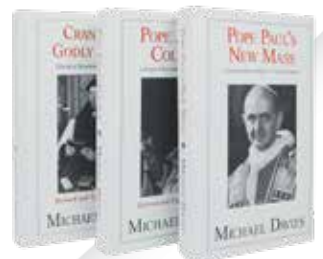
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Feasts of Our Lady

# The Annunciation

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by Fr. Christopher Danel

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“And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the Virgin’s name was Mary.” Thus begins the famous *Missus est* Gospel, which recounts the beginning of our Redemption, the Incarnation of the Divine Word in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, or “Lady Day.”

## The Historical Date

The Annunciation took place on March 25, and knowledge of its date is considered as coming from the Apostles themselves. This date was undoubtedly known in the early Church,

particularly in regard to the Nativity, and even as late as the fifth century, it is certainly well-established. St. Augustine (†430) in *De Trinitate* comments on the interval of 276 days, inclusively, between the Incarnation and *octavo kalendas ianuarias* (the eighth of the kalends of January, which is December 25). Therefore, he takes as a given that the date of the Nativity is the 25th day of December, and by consequence that the actual date of the Annunciation is likewise fixed to the 25th day of March. Guéranger remarks, “To March 25 will correspond, nine months later, December 25, the day on which will be manifested to the world the miracle as yet only known to heaven and to the humble Virgin.” He mentions that the hour of St. Gabriel’s embassy to Our Lady was midnight. Venerable Mary of Agreda remarks that the Holy Virgin was at





that moment alone and absorbed in highest contemplation.

anonymous pilgrim from Piacenza, Italy, writes of the church he visited there in A.D. 370. Not



The location of the Annunciation was Nazareth. The root of the name (NSR) means *flower, to blossom, or to guard/to keep*. Thus is the name chosen by the Most High for the town where the prophecy of Isaias would be accomplished, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and *a flower* shall rise up out of his root” (Is. 11:1). St. Luke, after the Finding in the Temple, reads, “And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And His mother *kept* all these words in her heart” (Lk. 2:51). Nazareth: where the shoot of Salvation springs up, blossoms, and flowers, a mystery kept and guarded in the Immaculate Heart.

The site in Nazareth is the Holy House of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The house, in fact, abutted a small natural grotto which was incorporated to the house. This Holy House and the Grotto both have been venerated by generations of Catholics for two millennia. Until 1291, the house remained on its original site in Nazareth, and several churches were built upon it over the centuries. An

long after, a large church in the Byzantine style was erected at the site with an atrium and three naves, but when the first Crusaders arrived, they found that it had been devastated by Muslims. Tancred, Crusader Prince of Galilee (†1112), erected a “large, high church with three altars,” measuring 250 feet long by 100 feet wide, even larger than the current church, and provided exquisite vestments for the shrine, as noted by William of Tyre (†1184).

The Crusader basilica, too, would be profaned by the Muslim horde in 1263, although the Holy House itself survived the devastation. In 1730, the Franciscans of the Holy Land with much difficulty caused by the local non-Christian authorities, finally were able to erect a fitting church over the Grotto, which was very beautiful, with an exquisite altar of Our Lady surmounting the Grotto shrine, as shown in the sketches made by the British artist David Roberts during his visit there in 1844. Unfortunately this jewel of a church was razed in 1955 in order to make way for a modern structure which, however

lacking in beauty, at least left the Grotto untouched. In the course of the 1955 excavations, ancient Christian graffiti and decorations were discovered, including an inscription reading “Christ, the Son of God” and another reading in Greek “XE MAPIA,” an abbreviation of the Hail Mary inscribed by a pilgrim in the first centuries. The excavations also revealed, abutting the Grotto, the exact foundations where the Holy House once stood.

## Loreto

At the end of the 13th century, Providence saw fit to preserve the Holy House from any further danger by an outstanding miracle. On May 10, 1291, the Holy House was raised up from its foundations by angels and transported across the Mediterranean to Trsat (Tersatto), in modern-day Croatia, where the house remained for three years. As the Muslims advanced into the Balkans as well, shepherds witnessed a host of angels once again moving the house across the Adriatic into Italy on December 10, 1294, where it finally came to rest in Loreto. The liturgical calendar lists on this date the Translation of the Holy House of Loreto, as described in the Martyrology. Evidence has always shown that the structure of the Holy House of Loreto, miraculously, does not rest on any solid foundation which could possibly support it, but merely touches the ground. As cited above, the 1955 excavations at Nazareth unearthed the original foundations of the house, which were found to exactly match the dimensions of the Holy House of Loreto. The Holy House and the Grotto, once united in Nazareth, can both be said to be the dwelling where the Annunciation occurred. Both places bear the golden inscription on their altars: *Hic Verbum Caro Factum Est*, Here the Word was Made Flesh.

## Liturgical Origins

Besides the Gospels, the earliest traces of the Annunciation in the liturgy are in the ancient formulae of the *Credo*, such as the brief baptismal

credo of the Armenians: “We believe in the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the annunciation of Gabriel, [in the conception of Mary], in the nativity of Christ,” *etc.* There are also artistic depictions such as the Annunciation image in the Catacomb of St. Priscilla in Rome, which dates to the early third century, and is considered to be the oldest surviving image of Our Lady apart from the images painted by St. Luke.

It would not be until the fifth century that the Annunciation would be solemnized with a particular feast. The reason is that the ancient Church united the Incarnation so closely with the Nativity of Christ that the mysteries were celebrated as one. In the fifth century, the Nativity and the Christmas cycle were given a greater prominence in the liturgical calendar, and the Annunciation began to be celebrated separately on the day of the event itself, March 25.

## The Feast Develops

There is documentation of the festal liturgy of the Annunciation in the Eastern branch of the Church in the *Chronicon Paschale* of Alexandria (A.D. 624) and the decrees of the Council in Trullo (A.D. 692). In the West, documentation appears in the Gelasian Sacramentary, which provides three collects for the feast and for vespers. The Council of Toledo (A.D. 656) affirms that the feast is celebrated “by us in many churches, and in lands distant from us.” Around A.D. 670, Pope Sergius I approved a litany for use in the Roman liturgy and procession of the Annunciation. This procession was still in use at least until the end of the twelfth century. There is also another liturgical reference to the Annunciation dating to the sixth century, but this one is not a text. Rather, it is a fragment of vestment embroidery depicting the Annunciation which was once used in the private papal chapel at the Lateran *Patriarchium* known as the *Sancta Sanctorum*, at the summit of the Holy Stairs.

Having such an important feast in the penitential season of Lent has been no small



issue, because since the earliest centuries of the Church, every solemnity was rigorously forbidden during Lent. Different approaches have been followed in consequence. At Constantinople, the Council in Trullo made an exception for the Annunciation. It declared that the feast is immovable, and that it would be celebrated on its proper day, March 25, even if this were to fall on Saturday or Sunday. The feast remained in Lent also in Rome, even if the feast is transferred to the nearest possible day when it falls on a Sunday or in Holy Week.

In Spain, another approach was followed. One of the Councils of Toledo considered that “the feast cannot be celebrated fittingly, as it is seen to fall among the days of Lent (*eadem festivitas non potest celebrari condigne, cum interdum quadragesimae dies videtur incumbere*).” The solution was to fix the date of the feast for the Mozarabic Rite to December 18, one week before Christmas: “the eighth day before which the Lord is born, the day of his Mother will be held as most celebrated and outstanding (*ante octavum diem, quo natus est Dominus, Genitricis quoque eius dies habeatur celeberrimus et praeclarus*).” The Ambrosian Rite of Milan adopted this custom from Spain, but also allowed a second feast on March 25, until this was suppressed by St. Charles Borromeo. The Roman Rite conceded to the custom of its Latin Rite cousins to a minor degree in the seventeenth century with the institution of a Mass on December 18 known as the *Expectatio partus Beatae Mariae Virginis*, the Expectation of the Delivery of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## Our Lady’s *Fiat*

The Fathers of the Church put special emphasis on the role of Our Lady as the second Eve, whose obedience repairs for the former’s disobedience. The Vespers hymn describes it succinctly: “Thou that didst receive the *Ave* from Gabriel’s lips, confirm us in peace, and so let *Eva* be changed into an *Ave* of blessing for us.” St. Bernard describes Our Lady as the salutary woman given to us, contrasting with the woman given to Adam, who induced him to

sin: “The Woman, whom Thou hast given me, O Lord, hath given me of the Tree of life, and I have eaten thereof; and it is sweeter than honey to my mouth, for by it Thou hast given me life.”

The triumph of Redemption moves toward its fulfillment in virtue of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s consent, her *fiat*. As Guéranger writes in *The Liturgical Year*,

“A Virgin is a Mother, and Mother of God; and it is this Virgin’s consenting to the divine will that has made her conceive by power of the Holy Ghost...; it gives to the almighty God a means whereby He may, in a manner worthy of His majesty, triumph over satan, who hitherto seemed to have prevailed against the divine plan...The result of so glorious a triumph is that Mary is to be superior not only to the rebel angels, but to the whole human race, yea, to all the angels of heaven. Seated on her exalted throne, she, the Mother of God, is to be the Queen of all creation...In heaven, the very Cherubim and Seraphim reverently look up to Mary, and deem themselves honored when she smiles upon them, or employs them in the execution of any of her wishes, for she is the Mother of their God... Therefore it is that we, the children of Adam, who have been snatched by Mary’s obedience from the power of hell, solemnize this day of the Annunciation.”

## Conclusion

The antiphons for Vespers on the Feast of the Annunciation, when joined all together, form a “little Gospel,” as it were, succinctly recapitulating the miraculous event: “The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, a virgin espoused to Joseph—Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women—Fear not, Mary for thou hast found grace with the Lord; behold thou shalt conceive and bring forth a Son—The Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign forever and ever—Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word.”



The fact of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is related in Luke 1:26-38. The Evangelist St. Luke tells us that in the sixth month after the conception of St. John the Baptist by Elizabeth, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to the Virgin Mary, at Nazareth, a small town in the mountains of Galilee. And the angel came into the house and said to her: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." The Virgin understood that there was no question of the coming of the Redeemer.

Ceiling painting, St. Joseph Centre, St. Césaire, Canada



Vas Spirituale  
Rosa Mystica



# Catholics & Protestants

Since Vatican II

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by Fr. Jean-Michel Gleize, SSPX

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All Saints Day is one of the great Catholic feasts par excellence, in that it is a feast that only the members of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, duly instructed in the dogma revealed by God, can celebrate with dignity and without contest. This feast expresses one of the essential points of the Catholic faith—the meritorious value of good works not only for the personal salvation of the one performing the works, but also for the salvation of his neighbor. This truth is the foundation of the dogma of the Communion of Saints, and St. Augustine summed it up in saying that “God created us without our consent, but He will not save us without our consent.” The Protestant, he who is not Catholic, in as much as he is not in communion with Rome because he refuses the supreme authority of the Vicar of Christ, the Bishop of Rome, cannot

join in such a celebration. In fact, by following Luther and Calvin, the Protestant denies the meritorious value of good works for salvation. Thus, he denies the dogma of the Communion of Saints. So, November 1st is fundamentally an anti-ecumenical day, a day which Catholics and Protestants can never celebrate together.

## Anti-Ecumenical Feast

And yet, this shared celebration is one of the principal objectives sought by Pope Francis, in keeping with the Second Vatican Council. And that is why this Pope wanted, during this vigil of All Saints, to make “a willing and participative witness” of the process begun by the Swedish Lutherans to celebrate the five-hundredth



anniversary of the protest undertaken by Luther. Speaking to the official successors of the heresiarch, the Pope said to them, “What unites us is greater than what divides us.” This was what John Paul II and Benedict XVI said before him in order to promote an ecumenism that went against the teaching of the Magisterium before the deadly Second Vatican Council.

## What Divides?

In fact, what is it that divides Catholics and Protestants? Luther said it once and for all in a decisive text, *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (August 1520). This text is a declaration of total war without mercy on the Roman Catholic Church, which is compared to the city of Jericho. Luther calls upon Christians to march on her so as to knock down the three walls of the sacrament of orders, the infallible teaching of the Pope, and the primacy of jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome. Voila! The very declaration by Luther is what separates Protestants and Catholics: the priesthood (and with the priesthood, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass); the tradition of the Magisterium; the power of the papacy. And these are the three pivot points upon which rest the unity of the Church, desired by Christ: unity of sacraments and cult dependent upon the priesthood; unity of faith dependent upon Tradition and the Magisterium; and unity of government dependent upon the primacy of the pope. In the end, this is what separates Catholic and Protestants, the very definition of Church unity drawn from its three founding principles. These three founding principles are exactly what the new theology of the Second Vatican Council seriously weakened. For all that, this Council brought about a truly “protestantization” of Catholicism in the sense that it introduced the germs of Lutheranism into the thinking of the men of the Church.

## Weakening of the Faith

The Council weakened the traditional doctrine of the priesthood. The second chapter of *Lumen*

*gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no longer makes a distinction between the priesthood of the members of the hierarchy, which is a priesthood in its proper sense, and the common priesthood of the faithful, which is an inappropriate use of the term. Pius XII affirmed that if one speaks of a type of “priesthood” of the faithful, this expression is simply an honorific title and is distinguishable from that of the true and real priesthood. This clarification disappeared in section 10 of *Lumen gentium*. It presents the common priesthood of the faithful >

Three Helper Saints,  
Tilman Riemenschneider  
(German, 1460–1531)



# Faith and Morals

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as essentially different from the ministerial priesthood of the members of the hierarchy, but this difference is no longer recognized as one that exists between a spiritual priesthood and a true and real priesthood. This omission authorizes defining the common priesthood of the faithful as a priesthood in the proper sense of the term. And this is what Luther wanted: all faithful, baptized Christians are, for him, priests in the proper sense of the term, because their faith puts them in direct contact with God. After the Council, using this logic, Paul VI modified the rite of the Mass in such a way as to introduce into it this new concept of the priesthood, where the role of the celebrant is overshadowed by the communal action of the faithful. Further, because of the ambiguities of this new rite, the Mass appears to be more like a memorial meal of the Last Supper of Holy Thursday than the renewal and representation of the sacrifice of Good Friday. Again, this is what Luther wanted: to make the Mass a simple remembrance of the Holy Thursday meal so as to stimulate the faith of the people.

The Council weakened the traditional doctrine of the Magisterium and of Tradition. Section 12 of *Lumen gentium* puts the emphasis on the “meaning of the faith” of the people and thus on the role of the educated Church, to the detriment of the Magisterium and the teaching Church. The faithful are inspired by the Holy Spirit and so become the first depositaries of the truth revealed by God. The teaching hierarchy’s only mission is to develop the dogmatic formula required for the conservation of this original intuition. Tradition thus becomes the continuity of an experience lived in communion and the Magisterium only translates it into intelligible terms. Again, this is what Luther wanted: according to him, each of the faithful directly receives the light of the Holy Spirit, which makes him an inspired prophet.

Finally, in chapter three of *Lumen gentium*, the Council made the college of bishops a second source of supreme power, in addition to the pope. And in this college, the pope is no more than the head of the bishops, whereas it is the college which is the head of the Church. This principle of collegiality detracts from the papacy and the monarchical nature of the government

of the Church. It conforms to the model of a representative government in which the pope is the spokesman of an assembly which is itself representative of the people. This is always what Luther wanted: not a Church society, but a democratic communion.

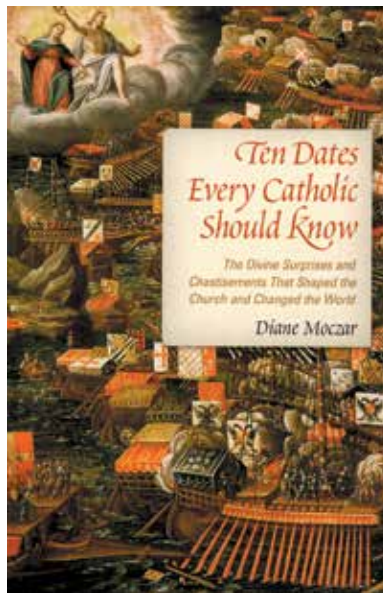
There is more. The fundamental principle of Protestantism is in fact the principle of personal judgment. This principle is equivalent to establishing the primacy of conscience over everything else. The rule of belief and moral action is not what is true and good, but what the conscience presents as true and good. This subjective and relative presupposition is the basis of *Dignitatis humanae*, Declaration on Religious Liberty. This results in the autonomy of the temporal order which is also laid down in principle by section 36 of *Gaudium et spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, which echoes the Protestant principle of “*cujus regio ejus religio*” [whose realm, his religion]. There is no State religion; there are simply as many religions as citizens. This results in ecumenism: if religion is a matter of conscience, religious unity, in and through the Church, is an ideal towards which all consciences converge, without ever reaching it. And, in reality, it is the process that inspired the Council document *Unitatis redintegratio*, Decree on Ecumenism.

The Council thus contributed to this war without mercy through which Protestantism wanted to put down the three powers of the Holy Church, the power of its priesthood, of its Magisterium, and of its monarchical government. It thereby became the accomplice of Luther. And it now gives to popes imbued with its teachings the means to make common cause with Protestants, by telling them, “What unites us is greater than what divides us.” Admittedly, yes, but at what price? The price of the eternal salvation of souls, who are tossed about on the winds of these new Protestant doctrines. Yet the eternal salvation of souls is the supreme law, the law which must inspire the entirety of the faith and the apostolate of the Holy Church. It presents again a requirement which renders impossible and useless the process undertaken by Francis and his predecessors.



# Ten Dates Every Catholic Should Know

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Excellent for any Catholic who wants to understand the history of our Faith. But it will give you more than knowledge: you'll close this book with renewed confidence that no matter how dark and dangerous the times may be, God has never abandoned his people...and never will.

An Irish Writer and Apostle for

# Christ the King

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by Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, SSPX

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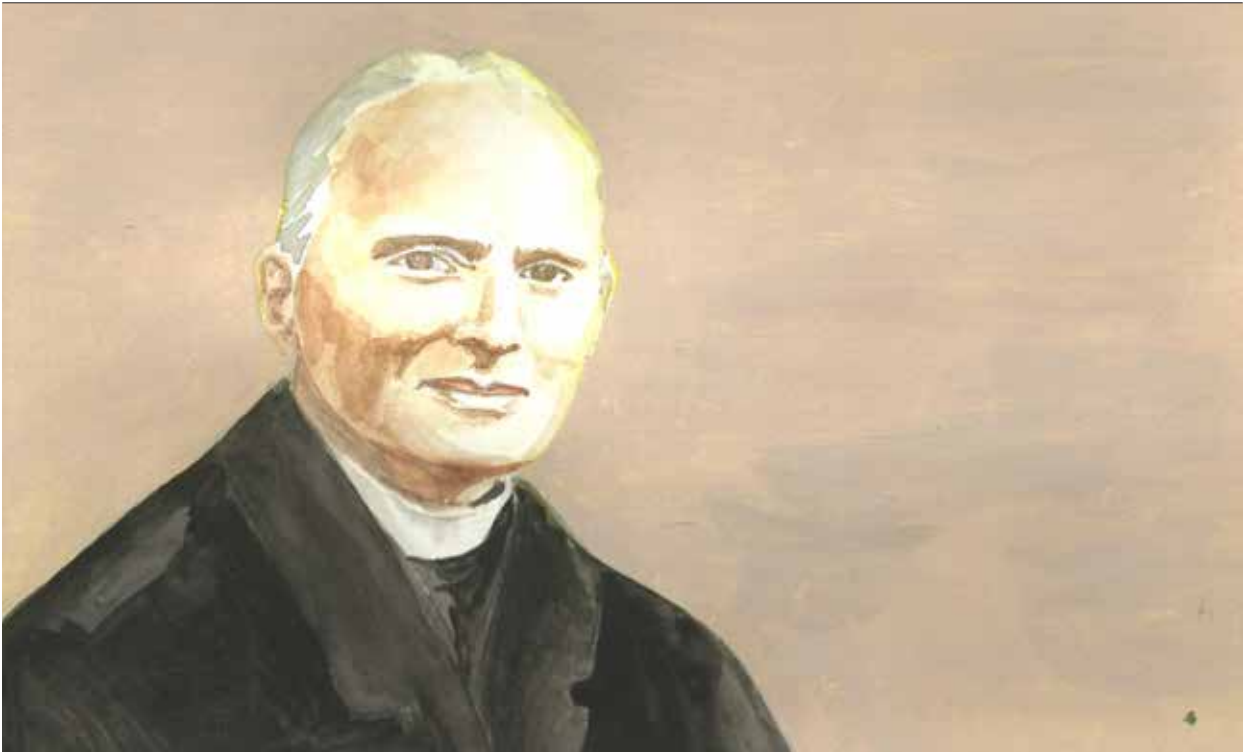
On July 3, 1883, the man whom many consider the 20th century's Apostle for the Social Reign of Christ the King came into the world, Fr. Denis Fahey. He was born into a truly devout Irish Catholic family and into a local environment in Golden, County Tipperary, saturated with the values of the true faith. In his childhood he would have heard many a tale of the sufferings of his ancestors for their Catholic faith in the not so distant past. Denis Fahey entered the Holy Ghost Congregation which developed him in his formative years.

## The Formation of an Apostle

Sent to study in Rome, his high intelligence blossomed, but more importantly his faith in the

Catholic Church as the Mystical Body of Christ deepened. Fahey's study of history, viewed from the standpoint of the Faith, "which casts a new light on everything," showed him the true meaning of the world and man. God knows best how man is to function. Only by living as God made him to live as individual and citizen can man attain peace on earth and eternal happiness in heaven.

Secularism, as defined by *Webster's Dictionary*, pretends that moral conduct should be determined exclusively by reference to social well-being. It is a view of life based on the premise that religion and considerations of God and the Future life should be excluded. Its other name is Naturalism, so dangerous to souls. Fr. Fahey's *The Kingship of Christ and Organized Naturalism*, quotes Cardinal Pie: "Wherever



the breath of Naturalism has passed, the very source of Christian life has dried up.” No clearer illustration of this truth can be given than the secular agenda promoting laws which have introduced divorce, abortion, and sodomy into almost all Western countries.

This is the age-old conflict of Light versus Darkness, of Good versus Evil, of Christianity versus Paganism. Fr. Fahey foresaw this and fought all his life to repel the attack on Christ and his Church. Once, in a lecture to the Holy Ghost Scholastics, commenting on some scurrilous attack on him in the media, Fahey declared, “I have said what I shall be glad to have said at Judgment.” This fearless champion of God’s rights knew how to be humorous. His students have fond memories of their teacher:

“It was as a teacher of Philosophy that most of us first encountered Father Fahey. We felt we were in the presence of one who was great because he was good, good with the goodness of God. He had a rare sense of humor which found expression often at his own expense but never at the expense of others. He was wont to get quite a large mail from England and America, a large proportion of it from non-Catholics, writers in various social fields, who sought his advice and

criticism. One day holding up a sheaf of such correspondence he remarked in his high-pitch voice: ‘They said Father Fahey had a bee in his bonnet, but now they are all coming looking for the honey!!’”

## Standing Firm for Christ’s Kingship

Because he did not approve of Article 44 of the 1937 Constitution of Eire, he was termed “unpatriotic” by many. But, pointing out that such a disapproval flows from the principles of Catholic social teaching as inevitably as water from a fountain, Fr. Fahey explained: “The Popes posit the major premise: Article 44 provides the minor premise—and they all jump on me because I draw the conclusion!” The humor in the situation was the humor of the logician. As an Irish priest, however, he felt very keenly the infidelity to Christ contained in Article 44. It haunted his waking hours and disturbed his brief moments of repose.

Deeply Irish he certainly was, Fr. Fahey was fond of his Tipperary roots. The locals spoke of “Father Denis” with an affection and legitimate >

pride. His sermons on the Sundays of his brief annual sojourn in his native parish were eagerly anticipated. He knew his audience. That is why perhaps one of his listeners could pay him a tribute and make an important distinction at the same time. "He's a Tipperary man, is Father Denis, and hurling is in his blood. He never delays us on the Sunday of the Munster Final and thinks nothing of cycling the 25 odd miles to be present himself!"

Forced to write his apologia, he gives us an interesting and revealing flash-back on his student-days at Rome during the Pontificate of the St. Pius X:

"When in Rome, I began to realize more fully the real significance of the history of the world as the account of the acceptance and rejection of Our Lord's program for order. I used to ask permission to remain at the Confession of St. Peter while the other scholastics went sightseeing around the Basilica. I spent the time there going over the history of the world, and I repeatedly promised St. Peter that if I ever got the chance, I would teach the truth about his Master in the way he and his successors, the Roman pontiffs, wanted it done. That is what I have striven to do and am doing."

Though his writings where at first sight so varied, ranging from a treatise on mental prayer to a book on money, there is continuity and consistency throughout. He disapproved of Article 44 because it could not be reconciled with the traditional teaching of the Sovereign Pontiffs on the Social Rights of Christ the King. He opposed Freemasonry because it stood for organized and insidious opposition to the influence of the Mystical Body in society. He exposed and deplored the machinations of International Finance as a perversion of God's order. Money in the hands of a small but powerful minority, instead of being the servant of prosperous family life, was imposing iniquitous conditions hostile to the life of Grace on millions of people.

Besides his priestly duties, professorship, and writing, Fr. Fahey was engaged in a considerable amount of "activism." He founded *Maria Duce* ["With Mary as Our Leader"], an organization of likeminded clerics and laity whose purpose

was to combat the cultural Marxism that was beginning to infiltrate and corrupt Irish life. Detested by Modernists even today, *Maria Duce* took concrete action to organize protests, petition politicians, and distribute written materials. Its hard-hitting periodical, *Fiat*, named names and kept records of those who sought to pollute and break down traditional Irish life.

## Challenging the Media in the Name of Truth

Because of his books Fr. Fahey gained an international following, especially in America, where his work received notoriety through his association with the "radio priest" Fr. Charles Coughlin. Fr. Coughlin often quoted passages from Fr. Fahey's books on his broadcasts and in the pages of his publication, *Social Justice*. Although Fr. Coughlin ended his popular radio program in 1942 (the same year, coincidentally, that Fr. Fahey started *Maria Duce*), mostly because of pressure from Church authorities due to his criticism of the Roosevelt Administration and his supposed "anti-Semitism," Fr. Fahey continued his activities despite a growing coolness by Irish ecclesiastics to his endeavors.

Fr. Fahey understood better than most how the media of film, television, radio, music, and the print industry were being used by the enemies of Christ the King to subvert society. Through *Maria Duce*, he sought to challenge and oppose these media. It would be almost impossible to deny that the cultural revolution sweeping the Western world during the 1960s was brought about, in large measure, by the forces that controlled the mass media. These media outlets, by the mid-20th century, would be just as important in the formation of public opinion, values, and mores as schools, churches, academia, and governments. Yet it was lights like Fr. Fahey and the pre-Vatican II popes who understood what was taking place in their own time and combated it. Unfortunately, that fight went out of the hearts and minds of many Westerners as they left their society defenseless against the onslaught of the cultural Marxists.

As we scan these achievements, one may be



tempted to think of Fr. Fahey as the perpetual opponent, condemning this, deploring that. A closer study of the man and his teaching reveals the logic of that opposition, *i.e.*, his unswerving loyalty to Christ. Perhaps his greatest handicap, humanly speaking, was his wisdom. He knew too much! Some thought he was abnormal. He was heard to say one day, apropos a recent attack, “I have been studying the problem for 40 years and it is just possible I may be right after all.” He realized intimately and almost viscerally, that ideas determine the course of history. Thus, he penetrated effortlessly behind the smokescreen of political propaganda and beheld Satan marshaling his minions for yet another attack on the Divine life of Grace.

## What Can We Learn From His Example?

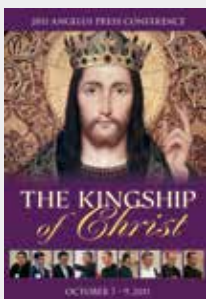
What can traditional Catholics learn from this hero? While the post-conciliar Church erroneously portrays Christ as “milquetoast,”

Sacred Scripture often reveals a combative figure. Not unlike his Divine Master, Fr. Fahey was a fighter. While the world and even Churchmen contradicted him, he continued the struggle. To him, the idea of compromise, no matter what allurements may have been offered, was anathema.

Fr. Fahey understood that if Christ was not King of the hearts, minds, and societies that man created, mankind would eventually be doomed. He grieved over his beloved Ireland as it drifted further and further from the ancient Faith, and he warned that if a spiritual reversal did not come about, his kinsmen would be swept away by the cultural upheavals to come. The sorry state of Catholicism today in the Emerald Island demonstrates just how right the priest was. Today, those who hope once again to make the ideal of Christ the King the governing ethos of society must take on the mindset of the indefatigable Fr. Fahey. This also demands that we get to learn these Catholic principles and that we defend them like the walls of the city.

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## 2011 Conference Audio: The Kingship of Christ



Over the weekend of October 7-9, 2011, Angelus Press hosted its second annual conference on the theme of Our Lord Jesus Christ: The Kingship of Christ. With over 400 attendees from around the country (and some international visitors), some of the greatest minds and speakers convened to examine this doctrine from a variety of angles. The result was an amazing success as those in attendance learned about Christ's Kingship and were spurred on to Catholic Action.

- The Social Kingship of Christ according to Cardinal Pie, by Fr. Juan-Carlos Iscara
- The Queenship of Our Lady, by Fr. Albert
- The Rosary and the Battle of Lepanto, by Andrew J. Clarendon
- Archbishop Lefebvre: A Life for Christ the King, by Bishop Tissier de Mallerais
- The Relationship of Church and State, by Brian McCall
- Catholic Action: Whose Job is it? by Bishop Tissier de Mallerais
- Quas Primas—Pius XI: Christ the King, by Fr. D. Themann
- Conclusion and Farewell, by Fr. Arnaud Rostand
- The Errors of the Modern World, by Dr. John Rao

# Good Works

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by a Benedictine Monk

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In Chapter Four of the Rule of St. Benedict, the monastic cloister is compared to a workshop with its tools. St. Benedict uses a workshop and a cloister as images of a man's soul. The tools are different virtues that the intellect and the will of the soul use for sanctification.

In an admirable way, the human soul was created as the image and likeness of God, Who desires to dwell therein. Original and personal sin have disfigured this image, but God in His compassion desires to restore our souls in an even more admirable way. Through His Passion and Death, He destroys the death of our sins and restores us to life. He takes what is ugly and dead and makes it beautiful and full of life. The Light shines in the darkness and is refused by most, but to those that accept it, He grants the power to become a child of God. Over a period of a lifetime,

this light is offered to our souls and in as much as we put it into practice it transforms our lives.

Our Lord dwells in our souls in order to purify them by His grace. He calls the sinful soul to penance, shows it the light of His doctrine, and promises to be eternally united to the soul that has faithfully fulfilled His commandments. This is the Catholic doctrine found in Scripture and tradition giving us great hope and peace of soul. The Rule of St. Benedict is nothing more than the echo of Scripture encouraging monks to run in the way of perfection with a heart dilated with perfect charity. In the Prologue of the Rule, St Benedict says: "What can be sweeter to us, dearest brethren, than this voice of our Lord inviting us? Behold, in His loving mercy the Lord showeth us the way of life."

One of the most despairing miseries that



Luther left to mankind was his doctrine on the justification of the soul. He states that we are saved by *faith alone* and all works, whether good or bad, have no influence on our salvation. *Faith alone* excludes hope and charity, but also contrition, firm purpose of amendment and any other good work prescribed by God. Simply reading his works, we can conclude that his mind was tormented by anxiety and scruples. Trying to escape his tortured thoughts, he developed a system to establish peace of soul by eliminating all guilt of sin, but without changing the sinner's bad habits. Once man makes an act of faith in Christ as his Savior, he no longer has any responsibility concerning his human actions. Whatever he thinks, says or does has absolutely no value. There can be neither guilt nor merit.

As an Augustinian monk, he preached that there was no difference between venial and mortal sin thus making every fault mortal. He taught that, after original sin, concupiscence is a sin, not only a tendency. He added that, sin is inescapable and that it is not in man's power to avoid it. Even virtuous works are sins because concupiscence taints every human action.

To his friend Melanchthon, struggling with despair, Luther replied: "Be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe more boldly still....We must

sin as long as we are what we are....Sin shall not drag us away from Him, even should we commit murder and fornication thousands and thousands of times a day" as long as we believe we are forgiven. To his disciple Jerome Weller, who was seeking help during a terrible temptation, Luther tells him to sin gravely in order to mock the devil. Jerome would have peace from the temptation if he mocked the devil with his confidence in Christ's forgiveness by committing a grave sin. Luther teaches us to believe in forgiveness and to continue sinning to find peace. This is not peace, but despair.

God asks us to change our lives by accomplishing His will. Christ teaches us to break with sin and practice virtue in order to find peace of soul. Our Lord preached a completely different doctrine in the Sermon on the Mount and other places: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God....What you have done to the least of these you have done to Me....It is not all those who say 'Lord, Lord' who enter the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the will of My Father."

St. Benedict has been compared to Moses because he gave his sons a law encouraging them to practice virtue. Martin Luther despised both Moses and all of the monastic rules of life because of his distorted view of man's justification.



# Mont Saint-Michel

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by Dr. Marie-France Hilgar

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Since the mists of time, this rock has always been sacred. It was a place of Celtic worship. In the 6th century, Christian hermits built two sanctuaries dedicated respectively to St. Symphorien and St. Etienne. The donkey that brought them food was devoured by a wolf. Heavenly wrath exploded and the wolf was made to take the place of the donkey in the hermits' service.

In 708, the bishop of Avranches was visited by St. Michael the Archangel, who ordered him to erect and consecrate a sanctuary to him. The bishop somehow thought it was the devil who had spoken to him. The Archangel appeared again with no more success. At his third appearance, St. Michael put his holy finger on the bishop's head and poked a hole in it through which one could see the brains. Now the bishop was

convinced. He was to edify the sanctuary where a bull which had been stolen and tied up would be discovered. The oratory should be as large as the area that had been trampled by the bull. But a huge stone, probably a dolmen, was standing at the very spot and no one could move it. The 12th son of a worker managed, with his foot, to knock it down. Then the sanctuary could be built. Based on a round plan it can accommodate 100 people. It was consecrated on the October 6, 709. It is Our-Lady-Underground, the Pre-Romanesque church of the 10th century. It was to be merged into the foundations of the abbey church of which it was to support the nave in the 11th century. Our-Lady-Underground has two naves whose choirs are topped with galleries. The two altars were respectively dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and to the Holy Trinity.

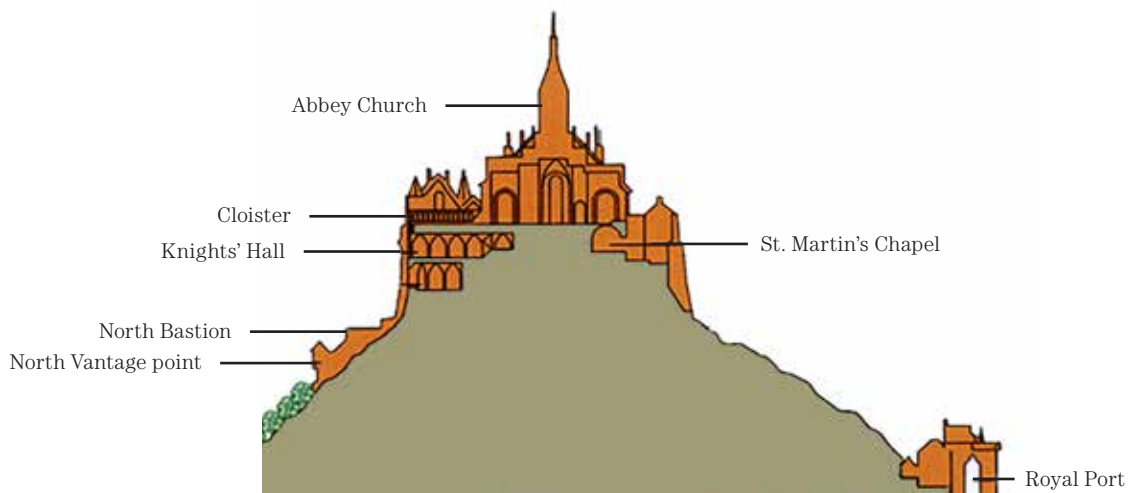




The Mont became Norman in 911. In 966, Richard I, Duke of Normandy, accused the canons of numerous sins and threw them out. Twelve Benedictine monks settled then on the Mont. Over the centuries, the abbey was richly endowed by the dukes of Normandy, not to mention by lords worried about the salvation of their souls, by the gifts of the faithful, and finally by the kings of France. During the Hundred Years' War, all the west of France was occupied by the English except Mont-Saint-Michel. It soon became the symbol of resistance to the English. The king of England desperately wanted to capture the Archangel Sanctuary. The siege lasted over 19 years but the besieged beat off all the assaults and even launched attacks. The heroic resistance of the inhabitants of the Mont reinvigorated supporters of the king of France.

Work on the abbey church started in 1023 and lasted up to 1080. It was built on the originally cone-shaped rock. Since it is 80 meters high, the church was to be 80 meters long. The first difficulty to overcome was to cope with the narrowness of the top by creating a huge artificial platform. The church has the shape of the Latin cross. The middle part, crossing of the transept, lies on the very top of the rock, which has been slightly levelled. Crypts were built on east, south and north slopes so that they supported the choir and both of the arms of the transept. The fourth crypt existed already: it is the pre-Romanesque church. It was strengthened and now supports

the nave, which was originally longer. The nave is typical of Norman naves with its three levels: tall arcades, galleries, and high windows above. It is topped with a beam roof; the use of wood, lighter than stone, allowed the building of tall and very opened walls. Side aisles were covered with groined vaults. The north wall collapsed in 1103. It was rebuilt at a later date. The relieving arches surmounting the high windows of the south wall had been left derelict, and the packing of the first level of the arches with stuffed mortar was replaced by bonded stone. The nave no longer includes seven bays as original but four, which are marked off by the engaged half columns. In 1776, fire damaged the first three bays which were near collapse. Maurists, monks of the Mont at that time, decided in 1780 to pull them down and have the present neoclassical façade with its Romanesque capitals built. The three former bays are now marked by some small rises in the ground. The Romanesque nave was preceded by a narthex. It was modified in the 12th century and set off with two towers. The whole crossing was rebuilt in the 19th century. The north part of the transept had been shortened in the 13th century during the erection of cloisters, but the south arm of the transept remained untouched. In 1421, in the middle of the Hundred Year War, the Romanesque choir collapsed. Raised up to five meters higher than the church entrance, it included an ambulatory. The construction of the present choir took some hundred years to >



complete. On the outside, very graceful flying buttresses support the new choir with fine colonnettes upon the piles of the choir which spring 25 meters high up to the high windows without anything to interrupt their ascent.

One of the first places of pilgrimage for Western Christendom after Jerusalem, Rome, and Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle, Mont-Saint-Michel welcomed more and more pilgrims without succeeding in rivaling with Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle. Whatever the motivation of these men, women, and even children—a spiritual quest, a deep devotion, an offering of thanks, a penance, or a serious offence to expiate—all of them had to face a hazardous crossing full of dangers. “Mont-Saint-Michel in Peril of the Sea” was a justified name. In 1318, in a single day, 13 pilgrims were suffocated to death in the crowd, 18 drowned, and another 12 disappeared in quicksand. A proverb says that little beggars go to Mont-Saint-Michel while the big ones go to Saint-Jacques. The kings of France, up to Charles IX, came and paid homage to the sanctuary of the Archangel. Some of them, like St. Louis, Louis XI, and François I, came several times.

## A Period of Decline and Restoration

A commendam in 1516 led to the decline of the abbey. The abbot was appointed by the king and no longer needed to live on the Mont. Monks were left to themselves and morals loosened. It is only in 1622, when the monks from Saint-Maur settled on the Mont that the abbey restored spiritual and intellectual activities. Louis XI converted a part of the abbey into a prison equipped with an iron cage. In the 17th century, the Mont became known as the Bastille of the Sea. During the Revolution in 1793, three hundred priests who refused to take an oath to the civil constitution were sent to prison there. In 1811, the abbey was turned into a jail, then in 1817 into a prison and reformatory for men and women sentenced to hard labor or deportation. The buildings were arranged into weaving work rooms or hat and shoe factories: the abbey was mutilated. From 1793 to 1863, 14,000 prisoners stayed at the

Mont. The prison was eventually closed in 1874 by Napoleon III despite the petitions sent out by the inhabitants, who feared they might lose a valuable source of income. The beginning of tourism gave a new boost to the village economy. In their own way, people of Mont Saint-Michel perpetuate a millennium tradition in trade and the hotel business.

The Mont is not just two churches but a huge composition of many structures, and is considered to have three levels of buildings, all with architectural wonders. The lower floor includes the Cellar, where supplies were preserved. Its groined vaulting comes down upon square pillars. The original plaster cast realized for the famous statue of the Archangel stands majestically in this room. The Almonry is divided into two naves and roofed with groined vaults. It is characterized by its plainness: capitals are bare. Humbler people were received in this room, probably dating from the 12th century. Also on the lower floor are the Guard room, Abbey dwelling, Dungeons, lodging of the bailiff, a Romanesque entrance, and the Aquilon's room, which is the Romanesque almonry. On the intermediate floor, besides Our-Lady-Underground, are chapels to St. Marie-Madeleine and St. Etienne, more abbey dwellings, the Great Pillars crypt, St. Martin's crypt, and the Promenoir. The Great Pillars crypt is made of huge pillars, nearly six meters round, which stand up as a forest of stones. Ambulatory and radiating chapels reproduce here the plan of the Flamboyant Gothic choir.

Emanating from St. Martin's crypt is an atmosphere which pervades the pre-Romanesque church, Our-Lady-Underground. It supports the south arm of the church transept. It has a half-round apse with an oven vault. The cradle-vault strengthened by a transverse arch spans nine meters. The Promenoir, so-called in the 19th century, answered, in all likelihood, the purposes of refectory, chapter-house, or scriptorium. A row of median columns with monolith shafts parts it into two naves. All that remains in the thickness of the wall is the entrance for a passage. The intersected rib vaults, built after the north wall of the nave had collapsed, are among the very first ones built in Normandy. The Knights' hall



is divided into three naves by stout columns. Sunken moldings are very pronounced, the ornament of the round abacus capitals evokes plants and the profile of arches with very deep grooves. It was assigned to the copying out and illuminating of manuscripts. A heightened gallery is arranged in the south. It was formerly closed by a partition wall so that the guests could go back to the church while respecting the monastic enclosure. The Order of St. Michael Knights gave its name to the hall because it is said that the knights held their first meeting there. The Guests' Hall, a state-room for distinguished guests, is divided into naves by a row of very thin columns. It was richly ornamented with tapestries, paintings and stained glass windows. The floor was paved with enameled tiling emblazoned with the arms of France and Castile: princely ostentation and architectural elegance were reserved for prominent guests. They could meditate in St. Madeleine's chapel before their having their meal. Both of the monumental fireplaces were used as kitchens.

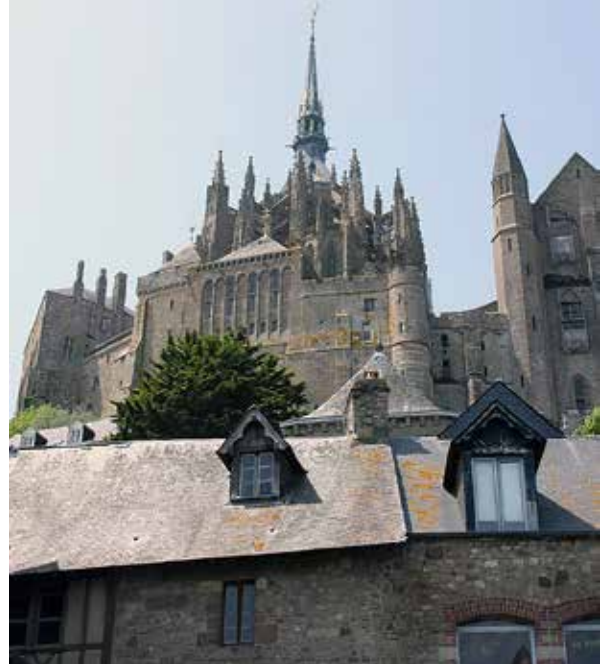
The top floor with the Gothic church includes many chapels: to St. André, St. Scubillion, St. Pierre, St. Anne, St. Martin, St. Pair and St. Aubert, as well as the cloisters, refectory, kitchens, dormitory and infirmary. Building work ended with the construction of the cloisters in 1228. At the top floor of the west building, cloisters are suspended between sky and ground, like a closed space lending itself to meditation, and yet opening up to the sky. Their lightness is enhanced by the fineness of the colonnettes. Set out in a quincunx, their double row makes tripods and ensures an even and light distribution of loads upon the vaults of the lower floor. The frieze, arranged as a tapestry, consists in a multitude of flower and plant motifs and turns the north gallery into a real stone-lace. The openings, glazed by now, bear witness to a project for a third building on the west side which finally was dropped. As far as the refectory is concerned, the eye is at once amazed by the space and luminousness of this room, like a huge vessel made up of only one nave. Side walls look plain. Actually they are pierced by a series of narrow windows which appear only when one walks down the room. Thus pierced with windows,

walls still remain strong enough to hold the weight of the super structure. Monks used to eat their meals in silence, not only feeding their bodies but also their souls. "Recto tono" readings of holy texts were made from the lectern opened into the south wall, on the right (reminiscent of a retreat). The southwest corner led to the kitchen, which was removed by the time of the Maurists. A hoist was set into the stone work and used to bring food down to the almonry.

## A Continuing Symbol of Christendom

All the way on the top, the statue of the Archangel has graced the spire since August 6, 1897. It is 4.50 meters tall and weighs 450 kilos. The chased-copper statue was restored once in 1987 and covered with gold-leaf. The points of the wings and the sword act as lightning-rods, which happens to be very useful in a place where lightning has started many fires over the centuries. It was lowered by a helicopter and carried up again in the same way. (The article in DICI 337, of June 17, 2016, showed that the statue has been restored for a second time.) Because the wings are full of sand, the gold painting of 1897 had practically disappeared, leaving a dull pale yellow. So the statue was taken down again, and for two months, four artisans, two of them gilders, worked to prepare it to face the whims of the weather for at least another 50 years; thicker gold was used. It cost the Center of National Monuments 450,000 euros. The title of the article in DICI announces: "Mont Saint-Michel Celebrates 1050 Years of Monastic Presence." The author probably subtracts the years when there were no Catholic community there. However, according to our sources, in 1966 Benedictines were present on the Mont and since 2001, a community of monks and nuns of the Monastic Fraternities of Jerusalem offer full liturgical services. With two to three million visitors every year, Mont Saint-Michel is one of the most visited monuments in France. It is included in the Unesco's list of World Heritage Sites.







# First Experience with Death

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by SSPX Sisters

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The grandmother so much loved by little Dorothy is very sick. For several weeks, the parents pray for her with their little girl, without revealing to her the gravity of her grandmother's state of health. Indeed, just as the little one would not be able to carry the worries of the parents, so she must not suffer from their sorrow. To the contrary, this young plant needs the sun to be able to flourish and grow more in the Good Lord's garden. But the sickness worsens and Dorothy's mother takes heart and begins gently to prepare the little one. She speaks to her of the loveliness of heaven, our true home, and explains that life here below is only a preparation for eternal life; that our soul yearns for that life, infinitely more beautiful than life on this earth. Finally she speaks about the portal that must be passed through to arrive at this joy...

The souls of little ones are so simple and ready to embrace the reality of death without fear. Because of this, one can speak plainly about death, like the other realities of the catechism. If children then manifest an apprehension, they should be shown the good side about which it is proper to rejoice—to be able to contemplate Jesus. Think about Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, who, at the age of three in an excess of love, told her mother her wish, "Oh! How I would like for you to die, my poor little mother." The child was scolded, but she apologized with an air of astonishment saying, "This is so you would go to Heaven, since you say that one must die to go there!"

Pray for the dying with your children every day. When there is a sacrifice, an effort to make, remind them of those presently dying. Children



must know that this hour is the most important of our life and that they should prepare for it starting now. This is also the occasion to explain to them the last words of the Hail Mary.

When it pleases the good Lord to remove from this earth a friend or a member of the family, go, if possible, to pray beside the deceased, taking your children (without forcing them), after having prepared them. But how can one prepare them? Listen again to Dorothy's parents after the death of the dear grandmother, "When God created Adam's body, it was without life. He had eyes, but he could see nothing. He had a mouth, but he could not say anything. He had legs, but he could not walk. Then God created a soul for him, very much more precious than the body. It was his soul that gave life to Adam's body. And it is our soul too which makes our body live. What happens at the moment of death? The soul separates itself from the body, which loses all life. This is why you will see your grandmother in the coffin, but she can no longer speak to you. She can no longer move and her eyes will remain closed. What you will see is the body of our dear grandmother. But know this, my little one, that her soul is not dead. It will never die. She will always love you and she remains near us. And if we love God, one day we will all be together in

Heaven where nothing more will separate us."

Since actions speak louder than words, take advantage of a visit to a cemetery to show the graves to the children. Thus your children will learn that one must be ready to go at any moment in life! The students in a Society school learned a profound lesson when one of their companions was called back to God. Martin, 5 years old, suffered from cancer and gave us a beautiful example of simplicity!

One day he said: "Mama told me that I would have less strength to fight against the cancer, and I told her that Holy Communion will give me this strength. How I do look forward to my first communion!"

"Martin, what will happen the day when you no longer have the strength to fight?"

Without showing any fear, he answered: "I will die!"

"It that serious?"

"No, it is necessary so as to go to Heaven!"

Another day, during a spiritual communion, instead of repeating the prayer that had been suggested for him, "Jesus, come into my heart!" he said,

"Jesus, come get me!"

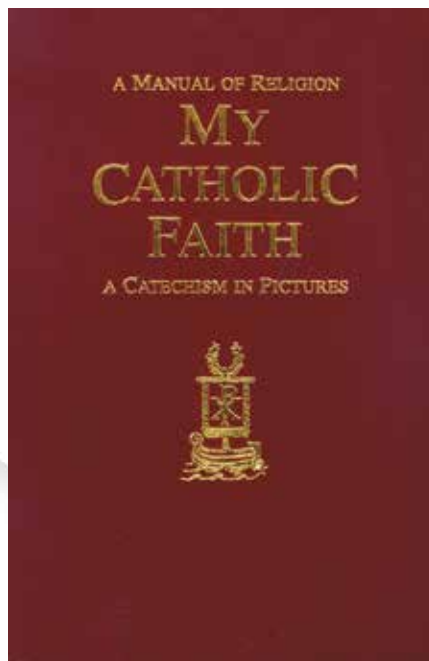
Yes, *maranatha*: these are the last words of the New Testament: "Come Lord Jesus!"

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# Q & A

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by Fr. Juan-Carlos Iscara, SSPX

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## What is the Church's teaching regarding Gregorian Masses?

A “Gregorian Mass” is, in fact, 30 consecutive Masses said for the soul of one deceased person. The practice began with St. Gregory the Great, pope from 590 to 604. In Book IV of his *Dialogues*, he refers to the case of one Justus, a monk in the monastery that St. Gregory himself had founded in Rome. Justus did not keep very well his vow of poverty, and another monk, his friend, feared much for his eternal salvation. For this reason,

Masses were continually said for Justus' soul. On the 30th day, Justus appeared to his friend, stating that thanks to the Masses said, he was then free from Purgatory. Soon, the practice of 30 consecutive Masses for a deceased person became a tradition in Benedictine monasteries, and a pious custom in the universal Church.

The Masses can be offered only for one deceased person in particular—unbroken, for 30 consecutive days, in such a manner that if there is an interruption, the priest celebrating them has to start again with the series of 30. >

## Christian Culture

The Church has not given any official guarantee of the efficacy of this practice, as it relies on the testimony of one monk, who could have been wrong or delusional. At the most, it can be accepted as a private revelation, but even in those cases the Church does not command our acceptance with the fullness her authority. Nonetheless, the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences has said that, being a *pious and reasonable belief of the faithful*, it is to be commended. Moreover, the practice has been sanctioned by the authority of a great saint, Gregory himself.

In the modern Church, the Gregorian Mass has been very much discontinued, as it reinforces the belief in Purgatory and on the consequent need to pray for the souls of the departed—another thing that modern Catholics have forgotten in the wake of the forced optimism of Vatican II and of the ecumenical opening to other Christian confessions that reject the very notion of Purgatory.

Still, even for Traditional priests it is becoming increasingly difficult to offer Gregorian Masses. Such priests are, relatively speaking, few in number, while attending to the spiritual needs of growing numbers of faithful. It is, therefore, hard—but not impossible—for a pastor to engage himself to say Masses for only one intention during a whole month, when such an engagement forces him to refuse to say Masses for other intentions of his parishioners, towards whom he has pressing obligations in justice and charity.

## Are vows different from promises? Is it advisable to make a private vow?

Every vow implies a promise, but not the other way around. The vow is an act of adoration and consecration, made only to God, obliging by the virtue of religion. A simple promise may be made also to men, obliging in virtue of fidelity or justice.

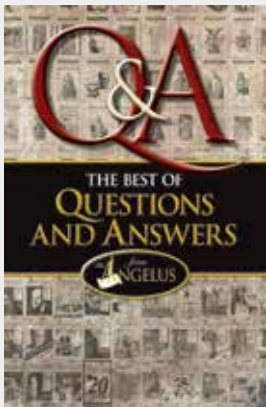
A vow is a deliberate and free promise made to God to accomplish a good that is possible and better (Code of Canon Law [1917], can. 1307). It is a binding promise imposing a true obligation of doing or omitting something in honor of God. By the vow we worship God and acknowledge His supreme dominion. It is not a simple desire or purpose, which properly speaking, does not impose an obligation.

A vow is public if a legitimate ecclesiastical superior receives it in the name of the Church; otherwise, it is private (Code of Canon Law [1917], can. 1308).

Vows are pronounced so as to strengthen our wills in doing what is good. Their object must be not simply something good, but something that is better, while still humanly possible, not only in general, but also within the forces and capacities of the individual making the vow.

A vow binds the person who makes it in such a manner that a failure in fulfilling what has been freely promised is a serious offence against

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God. Therefore, keeping in mind the weakness of our fallen nature, the Church in general advises against making private vows.

In any case, vows must be made, not on a whim or in a state of emotional agitation, but with prudence and discretion, after fervent prayer, long reflection and seeking the advice of a confessor or a spiritual director, who is able to evaluate more clearly our circumstances and our forces. The more important the obligation we assume with the vow, the more careful reflection and preparation it requires.

## How should we go about with our spiritual reading?

Spiritual reading is that reading whose purpose is to assist us in better knowing, loving, and serving God. Many conversions have begun with the reading of a spiritual book, as St. Augustine's, who, on hearing a voice saying *Tolle, lege* ("Pick up and read"), opened the Gospel to a passage that changed his life.

Spiritual reading is necessary as the normal way of nourishing our Christian life, but it should not be undertaken to satisfy our curiosity or to acquire knowledge of theological matters. Its primary purpose is to stir up the affections of our hearts, making us eager for intimacy with heavenly things and longing for virtue, divine grace, and purity of soul. It is akin to actual prayer—in fact, it is itself a manner of prayer, an elevation of our spirit to God.

Thus, we may read Scripture, the lives and writings of the Saints, and those authors praised by the Church for the elevation and soundness of their doctrine; we may also read the history of the Church, for the purpose of discerning in it the unfolding of the designs of God and being reassured of His far-reaching Providence. But whatever our reading may be, it should be selected in accordance with our spiritual condition and needs, for a reading that has no connection with our soul's dispositions and longings at that moment would yield little benefit.

Spiritual reading should be done a little at a time, according to our capacities and circumstances, but consistently, every day

without fail. It should be second in priority only to formal prayer. We should be working on just one book at a time, reading it from beginning to end, because passing from one book to another, after having read a little in each, confuses our minds and hearts and disturbs our peace of soul. If possible, we should be taking notes, highlighting the passages that particularly strike us, so that we may bring those points up in our meditation or in consultation with our spiritual director.

We must not read hurriedly so as to get through a great number of books, as if we were in a race against time to finish a book before the next meeting of our book club, or as if trying to read as many books as we can before we die, or as if in a competition with our fellow parishioners, to see who manages to read the most spiritual books in a year... We must read slowly, at our own pace, lingering where we find nourishment, reassurance, or consolation, and always giving ourselves plenty of time to let what is read sink deeply into the soul.

Being part of our daily prayers—being itself one of our prayers—our spiritual reading should begin with a fervent invocation of God, and be sustained throughout with pious aspirations or ejaculatory prayers. Perhaps we could use this prayer of St. John Chrysostom:

"In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: O Lord Jesus Christ, open the ears of my heart, that I may hear Thy word and understand and do Thy will, for I am a sojourner upon the earth. Hide not Thy commandments from me, but open my eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of Thy law. Speak to me the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom. On Thee do I set my hope, O my God, that Thou will enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of Thy knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them, that in reading the lives, works, and sayings of the Saints I may not sin, but that such may serve for my restoration, enlightenment and sanctification, for the salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of life everlasting; For Thou art the enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from Thee comes every good deed and every gift. Amen."



## St. Patrick's Cathedral New York

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The Diocese of New York, created in 1808, was made an archdiocese by Pope Pius IX on July 19, 1850. On October 6, 1850, Archbishop John Joseph Hughes announced his intention to erect a new cathedral to replace the Old St. Patrick's, located on the intersection of Prince and Mott Streets on Mulberry Street. The "Old Cathedral" had been destroyed by fire in 1866 but was rebuilt and rededicated by 1868. It is still a parish church and is the oldest Catholic site in New York City.

The cornerstone for the new cathedral was laid on August 15, 1858. The cathedral was designed by James Renwick, Jr. in the Gothic Revival style, and the work completed in 1878 and dedicated on May 25, 1879. Its huge proportions dominated the mid-town of that time. The archbishop's house and rectory were added from 1882 to 1884 and an adjacent school (no longer in existence) opened in 1882. The Towers on the West Facade were added in 1888, and an addition on the east, including a Lady Chapel, designed by Charles T. Mathews, begun in 1901. The stained glass windows in the Lady Chapel were designed and made in Chipping Camden, England between 1912 and 1930 by Paul Vincent Woodroffe. The cathedral was renovated between 1927 and 1931, when the great organ was installed, and the sanctuary was enlarged.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City ranked 11th of 150 in the recent list of America's Favorites. The style is a mixture externally of German and French Gothic, and inside more a mix of English and French in feel.



The pietà is three times larger than the Michelangelo's Pietà.



And turning to the woman, He said unto Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with tears hath washed My feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. Luke 7: 47)



Statutes of St. Pius X and St. Joseph



Francis Spellman, then archbishop and later cardinal, undertook a major renovation of the main altar area of the cathedral in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The original High Altar of St. Patrick's is now in the University Church of Fordham University at Rose Hill in the Bronx, N.Y.



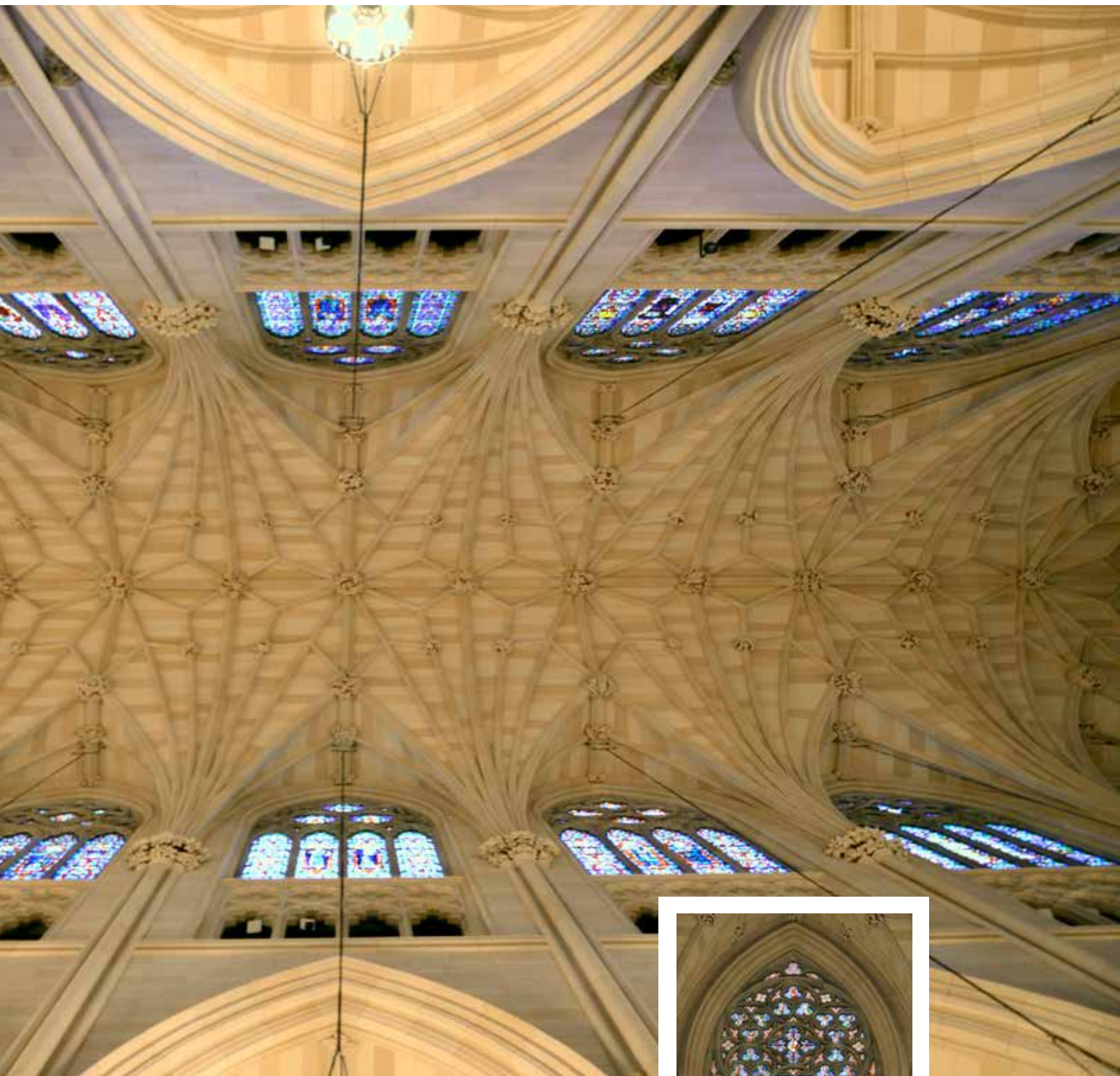


The Stations of the Cross won a prize for artistry at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

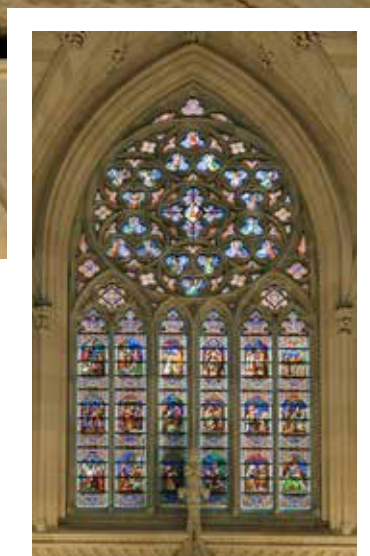


The entire Chancel Organ was restored by Peragallo Pipe Organ Company of Paterson, New Jersey in 1995. The organ work was finished in 1997. The Organs consist of more than 9,000 pipes, 206 stops, 150 ranks and 10 divisions.

St. Patrick's Cathedral is the largest decorated Neo-Gothic-style Catholic cathedral in North America. It is the seat of the archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, and a parish church, located on Fifth Avenue between 50th and 51st streets in Manhattan. It faces Rockefeller Center. An extensive restoration of the cathedral was begun in 2012 and lasted 3 years at a cost of \$177 million.



The windows were made by artists in Chartres, Birmingham, and Boston. The great rose window is one of Charles Connick's major works.



## Extreme Unction for Those Committing Euthanasia?

Bishop Vitus Huonder, of the diocese of Chur in Switzerland, has issued an instruction to the priests of the diocese informing them that Extreme Unction may not be given to those who seek to end their lives by euthanasia. Since becoming legal in Switzerland a number of years ago, the rate of euthanasia (assisted suicide) has risen dramatically with each passing year, with near 1,000 cases seen in 2015. In his instruction Bishop Huonder stated that, “It remains far from us to determine the moment of death. Like murder, suicide is also contrary to the divine order of the world,” and that death “lies within the omnipotence of God: where I die, when I die, and how I die I leave with God’s wise providence.”

The bishops of Alberta, Canada also issued an instruction similar to that of Bishop Huonder and clearly taught that Extreme Unction may not be given to those choosing assisted suicide. Soon after the Alberta bishops made their statement, the bishops of the Maritime Provinces in Canada issued an instruction saying exactly the opposite of their confreres in Alberta and Chur.

Speaking for the bishops of Atlantic Canada (the Maritime provinces), Bishop Claude Champagne of Edmundston, New Brunswick, President of the Atlantic Episcopal Assembly, indicated that the statement made by the bishops of Alberta did not represent the “vision” of all Canada’s bishops. He went on to say: “Our concern is pastoral accompaniment. Pope Francis is our model...we will welcome them [those choosing euthanasia], try to understand and journey with them.”

In their document, the Atlantic bishops state that “[Pope Francis] reminds us that the one who accompanies others must realize that each person’s situation before God and his/her life of grace are mysteries which no one can fully know from without....Consequently,

we must not make judgments about people’s responsibility and culpability. To one and all we wish to say that the pastoral care of souls cannot be reduced to norms for the reception of the sacraments or the celebration of funeral rites[.]”

Needless to say, the position taken by the bishops of Atlantic Canada is clearly at odds with the perennial teaching of the Church and with other bishops. We are in the very odd circumstance of seeing that mortal sin is effectively decided by which diocese you happen to live in, and the situation is made worse by continual recourse to the incorrect statements regarding morality which are found



in the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* of Pope Francis.

One cannot but help recall the words of Our Lady to Sister Agnes Sasagawa in Akita, Japan on 13 October 1973:

“The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see cardinals opposing cardinals, bishops against bishops. The priests who venerate me will be scorned and opposed by their confreres... churches and altars sacked; the Church will be full of those who accept compromises, and the demon will press many priests and consecrated souls to leave the service of the Lord.”

The Rosary and acts of reparation for sinful humanity are needed now more than ever





## The Saving of Medieval Murals

An enormous restoration project is underway in the small Guild Chapel in Stratford-upon-Avon in England. The chapel is home to medieval murals which have been found in excellent condition given their antiquity.



The murals were preserved by the careful attention of John Shakespeare, the father of William, who was bailiff of Stratford during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. He was ordered by the crown to destroy any Catholic artwork in the chapel in 1653 so as to assist in the Protestantization of Catholic England after King

Henry VIII's break with Rome. John Shakespeare made use of white lime wash to cover all the murals in the chapel, thus obscuring them from view and preserving them from destruction. His decision has thus allowed for the unveiling of these significant works of medieval religious art.

Although the murals seem almost cartoonish to the modern artistic eye, they very much show that the Catholic faith had been alive and well in England up to the time of Henry VIII. Many English historians sought to justify the establishment of the Anglican church by depicting an England in which the practice of the Catholic faith was quite lax. The Irish historian Eamon Duffy has debunked this revisionist

view in his landmark work *The Stripping of the Altars*, in which he proves that the faith of the English people was quite fervent until it was slowly destroyed by Thomas Cranmer (the Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII and an ardent Lutheran heretic) and his Book of Common Prayer.

## The Church in Brazil

A survey taken throughout the country of Brazil found that the number of adults who identify themselves as Catholics declined by ten percent from 2014 to 2016. As horrifying as a 10 percent drop sounds, the data becomes even more disturbing when it is translated into real numbers — approximately nine million Catholics have left the Church in two years. It should be noted that this drop of nine million souls comes during the tenure of the first pope from South America, who visited Sao Paulo in 2014 for World Youth Day. It seems that even the presence of Pope Francis was not enough to stem the tide of those abandoning the faith.

Nearly contemporaneous with the release of the data indicating this decline, Leonardo Boff, a

former Franciscan priest who is himself Brazilian and a leading proponent of Liberation Theology, gave an interview in which he indicated that Pope Francis is himself an adherent to Liberation Theology and actually requested material from Boff to assist in the writing of Francis' environmental encyclical, *Laudato Si*.

If Pope Francis' adoption of Liberation Theology is true, this would once again pit him against his immediate predecessor Benedict XVI, who silenced Boff in 1985 while Prefect of the Congregation of the Faith. The silencing came directly from Boff's teaching of Liberation Theology. After reading the interview, it becomes quite clear that the large exodus from the Church in such a short time should be no surprise.

### Pope Francis Portrayed as Martin Luther



The photo, in which the face of Pope Francis has been Photoshopped onto the iconic image of Martin Luther, would, in more normal times for the Church, have been thought to be the work of anti-Catholic bigotry. Unfortunately, or more precisely, we are living in very strange times in the Church and the above image was created by and posted on the website of the German edition of Vatican Radio along with the caption: “Also a nice variant. We wish you a restful Sunday.”

Although one would imagine that the posting was meant to be a joke (though certainly a poor one since it is disrespectful of the Papal office), given the words and actions of Pope Francis over the past months in reference to Martin Luther, this posted image of the Holy Father as Luther may well carry a deeper meaning for whoever created it. One should recall that Pope Francis traveled to Sweden on October 31, 2016 in order to be part of a joint Catholic-Lutheran prayer service of thanksgiving for the “gift” of the Reformation to the Church on the 500th anniversary of Luther posting his *Ninety-Five Theses*. Additionally, he also received a statue of the arch-heretic Luther with honor at the Vatican and passed the comment that “Luther was right” (although, as is his usual *modus operandi* of vagueness, he never really said what Luther was right about). There is also talk that Pope Francis may well somehow intend to rehabilitate Luther (i.e., remove the excommunication) during this year as an ecumenical gesture towards the Lutherans.

What then are we to make of the posting of this image? Sad to say, it seems to be less of a poor comedic exercise and more likely an attempt to make light of the heresies of Luther and the fractioning of the Church which he began, and that somehow the Church misjudged this “reformer” 500 years ago. In addition, it also seems to be one more bit of evidence of the syncretism which has infected the Church since the onset of the faulty ecumenism of Vatican II.

### Pope Francis—Where is Your Mercy?

On Sunday, February 5, 2017, the citizens of Rome woke to find some 200 posters plastered in various public places throughout the city. The people of Rome have a penchant for expressing their opinions on placards, particularly regarding the political scene in Rome and in Italy. What made these posters make news headlines throughout the world was that they were about Pope Francis and were decidedly uncomplimentary. Featuring a photo of the pope scowling at the viewer, the posters had a caption reading: *Ah Francis, you’ve taken over congregations, removed priests, decapitated the Order of Malta and the Franciscans of the Immaculate, ignored Cardinals...but where’s your mercy?*

While the identity of those who created and hung the posters is unknown, there can be little doubt that the image Pope Francis has tried to create of himself as being the humble and merciful

“servant of the servants of God” has become rather tarnished in the eyes of many, at least in Italy. In fact, as the caption clearly indicates, the actions of the pope have shown the pope to be sinisterly authoritarian and ruthless in persecuting any religious order, group, or person who disagrees with him and his remaking of the Church in his “image and likeness.”

Since those who placed the posters did not obtain the required permits from the city government, they were quickly partially covered by workman with another paper sign stating “unlawful posting.”

This did not, however, stop the more inquisitive from simply lifting the additional posting and reading what was underneath.

As a number of commentators have noted, this type of poster being critical of the pope has not been seen within the City of Rome in over a



century. Those that appeared then were critical of the pope not for any issue relating to the faith, but rather about his actions as the ruler of the Papal States, which ceased to exist after the unification of Italy under Giuseppe Garibaldi in the 1860s. The fact that posters appeared being critical of ecclesiastical actions of Pope Francis clearly indicates that many have grown weary of

his attacks on the faith of many Catholics whom he considers to be, in his own words, “rigid, Rosary counting, neo-Pelagians.”

Although most of the posters had been removed by the following day, the reaction from the legions of Pope Francis sycophants was immediate and condemnatory. Because the caption on the poster was written in an older Roman dialect of Italian, some Vatican insiders stated that the posters must have been the work of “conservative” Catholics unhappy with the changes being introduced by Pope Francis.

Cardinal Ouellet, the Prefect of the Congregation of Bishops who hails from Canada stated that, “These methods of anonymous posters are a work of the devil, who wants to divide us. They are not the methods that should be used in the life of the Church.” His Eminence made no mention, of course, of how the recent actions of the Holy Father have severely divided the Church nor that those action may indeed be the work of the devil. Sad to say, Cardinal Ouellet is considered to be one of the more “conservative” within the College of Cardinals.

While the placing of these posters was, when viewing the larger picture of the situation in the Church today, a rather insignificant occurrence, there is no doubt that they represent a general weariness on the part of many Catholics with the less than edifying antics of the Bishop of Rome. Although Pope Francis was said to have not been upset by the posters, his previous reactions to personal criticism indicate that he will be ruthless in finding those responsible and deal with them harshly.

## Evangelical Seminarians Becoming Catholics

In a new book entitled *Evangelical Exodus: Evangelical Seminarians and Their Paths to Rome*, the book’s author, Mr. Douglas Beaumont presents the conversion stories of many of the students, alumni, and professors of the Southern Evangelical Seminary (SES). From 2004 to 2014, dozens of those connected with the SES have chosen to become Catholics, often

at great sacrifice to their careers and family relations. The book tries present an analysis of this phenomenon by speaking with the new converts themselves.

What seems quite interesting is that the SES was founded by an Evangelical Protestant who wrote apologetic texts which were critical of Catholicism. The seeming connection between



the various converts is that through study of the origins of the Canon of Sacred Scripture as well as Church history, there came to be a general questioning of the two main tenets of Protestantism, *Sola Scriptura* and *Sola Fide*, which eventually led to Catholicism.

Given their lack of any sort of liturgical tradition, it may seem odd that evangelicals are coming to the true faith, since the central act of worship of the Church is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Because evangelicals have effectively become much more in tune with Catholic teaching in terms of the moral life, their reticence to embrace the liturgical tradition

of the Church is fading. In fact, in terms of moral teaching, evangelicals are much closer to the true faith than most main line Protestant denominations (*i.e.*, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Anglicans, Methodists).

There is, of course, the entire question of how much of the traditional Catholic faith these converts have accepted. It would certainly be interesting to examine where these converts are in terms of their faith journey in five or ten years' time. It would seem that since their intellectual pursuits led them to the Church they may well "read" themselves into Tradition. We can certainly hope that this is the case.

## Christmas Celebrated in the Middle East

While many of us were enjoying the celebration of our Lord's Nativity with Holy Mass and festive family gatherings, the Christians in war-torn Syria and Iraq were not as fortunate given the blatant (but often ignored by Western Governments) persecution by Mohamadans and ISIS. This year, though, there were some signs of relief, as ISIS has begun losing ground in many areas.

Although still in exile from their homes, the Christians of Mosul are hopeful that this year they will be able to return to their city. One small sign that ISIS is being pushed back is that a Christmas tree was erected in the city and was not immediately destroyed by terrorists.

In the historic Christian town of Qaraqosh, 10 miles east of Mosul, originally taken by the terrorists back in 2014, Mass was held on Christmas morning for the first time in three years. Sadly, Midnight Mass was not possible due to the continued danger of traveling at night. Additionally, though the Christians of Qaraqosh were able to have Mass in their parish church, most of their homes had been burned to the ground by the ISIS terrorists as they fled the town. Despite the destruction, there was a joy in celebrating the birth of Our Savior while seeing that the rebirth of their town was now possible.

While some Iraqi Christians were able to return to their home towns to celebrate Christmas,



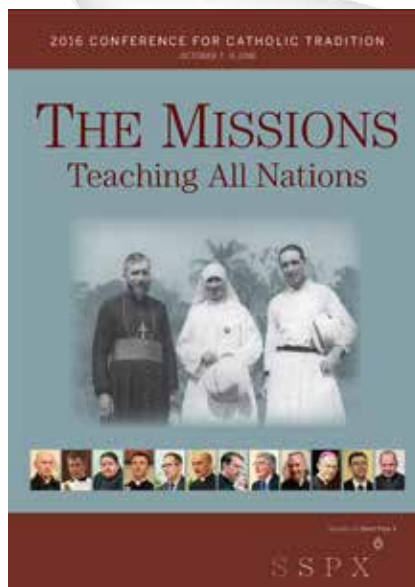
others were still forced to remain in camps set up to house the refugee Christians who were driven out by ISIS. An 80-year-old woman by the name of Victoria Behman Akoum from the town of Karamlis said "I just want to go home...They [ISIS terrorists] asked me to convert to Islam, but I told them I will die a Christian and that they can kill me if they want to." The pastor of the parish in Karamlis, Fr. Khouri Youssef stated simply, "We miss praying in our churches, sitting outside our homes in the summer evenings, tending our gardens and living in our homes... We bear the wound in our hearts, but life goes on."

Prayers must continue to be offered for these fellow Catholics whose fidelity and bravery in the face of the murderous Muslims should insure us to live our faith more boldly.

2016 Angelus Press Conference Audio Recording

# The Missions: Teaching All Nations

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The 2016 Angelus Press Conference presented 11 important lectures from traditional Catholic speakers. Topics included, The Three Ages of a Mission's Life, The Jesuit Missions in Paraguay, Decline of the Missionary Spirit Since Vatican II, The Gate of the Beautiful: A Conversion Story, Islam and the Middle East, A Traditional Approach to Protestantism Today, The Jesuit Response to Protestantism, Mexico and Central America, Archbishop Lefebvre, the Missionary, Charles de Foucauld, The Catholic Church as the New Israel and Round Table Q&A.



# Pastoral Council Open for Debate

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Conference Given by Bishop Fellay, October 8, 2016, Port-Marly (France)

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Editor's Note: During Tradition Days, Bishop Bernard Fellay, Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X, gave a conference, the second part of which is transcribed here, on the present state of relations with Rome. In order to preserve the distinctive character of this conference, the spoken style has been kept.

## Can a Pastoral Council be Debatable?

All of a sudden, more than a year ago, Rome made us a new proposition. They were really stuck because we were saying “No.” We cannot say that the Council is traditional. We cannot. And then this new Mass, we cannot say that it is good. Well, then, all of a sudden, they made us a new proposition, and you can understand what happened through certain interviews given by Archbishop [Guido] Pozzo. He explains to us that, at the start, they wanted to make us accept everything and that that plan did not work. They asked themselves, therefore, how to get out of the predicament, since everything was blocked, and it seems that they found the method:

It was to distinguish within the Council some more important parts and others that are less important. The first time Archbishop Pozzo spoke about this was in February of 2016. But you see, that was already almost nine months after they had made us their proposition.

In effect, they dropped some rather important things. They no longer ask us to recite the “profession of Cardinal Ratzinger.” Precisely where Archbishop Lefebvre had stumbled on a remark by Cardinal Ratzinger that had added something to the usual profession of faith. And this addition concerns what we call the authentic Magisterium. Cardinal Ratzinger, at that time, had explained that with this



addition they were asking for religious submission to the documents of the authentic Magisterium, obliging Catholics to accept the Council.

This can be debated: it is true per se that we owe respectful submission to magisterial documents, an Encyclical for example. It is normal to receive this document respectfully, since it is issued by the supreme authority. In itself the phrase is not shocking, it is even Catholic. But of course, when you make the connection with this Council, it starts to become more awkward.

And therefore we truly balked at this profession of faith. Well, as it turns out, they no longer demand it of us! They ask us to recite the old one that is called the Tridentine profession of faith of Pie IV. In the document they call it the “profession of the Council Fathers.” Yes, the Council Fathers—in other words, all the bishops gathered at Vatican Council II—made, at the beginning of the first session, a profession of faith that is the traditional profession of faith. Just as the Mass that was celebrated during the Council was the old Mass....

### Different Degrees of Authority

The second point is that they had crossed out everything concerning religious liberty and ecumenism. They no longer demanded anything of us. That is interesting! Why are they doing this? In this first interview granted to *Zenit* [on February 28, 2016] we see that it is necessary nevertheless to accept the whole Council. But in fact there are degrees. And this idea will be clarified in April (*La Croix*, April 7, 2016). And here this becomes particularly interesting, because all of a sudden they go and tell us that what was produced by the Council but is not dogmatic, in other words, all the Declarations—the declaration to the world, etc.—are not criteria for being Catholic, according to Archbishop Pozzo. What does this mean? “You are not obliged to agree in order to be Catholic.” That is what he started to say when speaking about the Society. And to us, explicitly, he said: “On religious liberty, on ecumenism, on *Nostra Aetate*, on the liturgical reform, you can maintain your position.” When I heard that, I found it so amazing that I told him, “There is a possibility that I may have to ask you to come and tell us that, because our confreres are not going to believe me.” And still today, I think that it is legitimate to ask the question: is this serious? Is it true or not? Archbishop

Pozzo actually gave several interviews. I quoted for you the one in April, then there were the ones in July (*Zenit*, July 4, 2016, and *Christ und Welt*, July 28, 2016). Between these two dates, in June, his superior, Cardinal Müller, said the contrary (*Herder Korrespondenz*, June 2016). Therefore you have on the one side Archbishop Pozzo who is the Secretary of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission, who said in public (in *La Croix*, April 7, 2016): “‘The statements of articles of faith and of sure Catholic doctrine contained in the documents of Vatican Council II must be accepted according to the degree of adherence required,’ The Italian bishop continued, restating the distinction between dogma and certain Decrees or Declarations containing ‘directives for pastoral activity, guidelines and suggestions or exhortations of a practical and pastoral character,’ as is the case especially with *Nostra Aetate* that inaugurated dialogue with non-Christian religions. The latter ‘will constitute, after a canonical recognition as well, a subject for discussion and more in-depth study with a view to greater precision, so as to avoid misunderstandings or ambiguities which, we know, are widespread in the contemporary ecclesial world.’” That is very interesting.

But these are words that are not always very clear. Depending on whether you are on one side or the other, Archbishop Pozzo finds himself in a bit of a pinch. To us he says, “You have the right not to agree and still to be Catholic.” However, if that is said too loud in the world of the modernists, there will be revolution. Why? Because—and we have always said this—these infamous germs that are lethal to the Church were introduced by the Council in these documents on ecumenism, religious liberty, and in *Nostra Aetate* on relations with non-Christian religions. It is indeed there, and in *Gaudium et spes* too, that we find expressed most forcefully this positive approach to the world. This is why we have always said that we are against these documents. In the Council, surely, we find repeated a great number of dogmas; it says that there is the Holy Trinity, that Our Lord Jesus is God, it says all that! They even say, in the Council, that in order to be saved, one must go through Our Lord. That is said in the Council. There was even someone who had fun demonstrating that we were more faithful to the Council than the Jesuits.

But the problem is not the good things that

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you can find in it, which actually exist. The problem is the bad things! If you put a drop of cyanide in the soup, what difference does it make if you add good vegetables, good stock, the best water that you can find; the soup is inedible because of the poison. That is what happens at the Council. That is why we say that the Council is inedible. Not because of the good things that you can find in it, but because of the poison. And to be precise, this poison is not concentrated everywhere but in a certain number of these documents about which Archbishop Pozzo says to us today: "You are not obliged to accept them in order to be recognized as Catholic."

Once again, the great majority of the people who are in the Church today think exactly the opposite. In other words, they see in these documents the foundation of their Church, what is called the conciliar Church. The modernists live precisely on that. One part of our campaign is to say what I am saying to you in a way that is plain enough to see how the modernists are going to react, because—being what they are—they have to react. They cannot let that slide. They must react to Rome and they must say to the authorities: "It is not possible." Somewhere there is going to be an ultimatum: "It's either them or us." It is irreconcilable. We will see what happens.

## A Pastoral, Not Dogmatic Council

Cardinal Müller insisted, saying: "No, the Society must accept the whole Council!" And he even spoke about unrestricted commitment with regard to ecumenism. But not only that.... He speaks about the liturgy, about religious liberty. And afterwards his subordinate repeats the contrary, in July. What disorder! Whom are we to believe? It is unthinkable that Archbishop Pozzo would say these things if he had no support. And in fact the one supporting him is the Pope. Obviously these are improbable situations. As for me, I am waiting to see, because there have already been contrary actions. There were, for example, some German laymen that joined a Jewish association (domradio.de, May 19, 2016) in making a public statement that said: "Readmitting the Society without *Nostra Aetate* is unacceptable." Pure and simple. A German theology professor (Jan-Heiner Tück, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, May 23, 2016, and *Salzburger Nachrichten*, July 5, 2016) made a statement in Vienna, saying: "If they let the Society back into the Church without the Council, it will be

the Trojan horse in the Church." And that was even reported by Vatican Radio. There were other documents, notably the one by the representative of the American Jewish Committee in Rome (Lisa Palmieri-Billig, *Vatican Insider*, July 28, 2016, *Editor's note*). She commented on Archbishop Pozzo's article from July, in which he rightly and very clearly maintains that, no, *Nostra Aetate* and ecumenism are not criteria of Catholicity, that one has the right to disagree with them and to be Catholic anyway. And the article, which is written very intelligently, cites a rabbi, a professor of theology, and a Muslim who says: "We are following very closely this story about the Society and Rome, about its relations, because we too are involved." An article written very intelligently that is a very clear warning to Rome.

There were still other publications...notably one by a Swiss Jesuit (Christian Rutishauser, S.J., *Tages-Anzeiger*, September 30, 2016) who is one of the members of the committee that advises the Pope in his relations with the Jews. He just declared in a newspaper in his country that he is going to speak to the Pope, because it is absolutely unacceptable to receive the Society without obliging it to adhere to *Nostra Aetate*. And so therefore it is reasonable to think that there will be enormous pressure to revise these judgments that are now public, such as the statement that certain conciliar documents are not obligatory in order to be Catholic. Well, we will see; it will be very interesting.

We will see what the authority will do. Whether the authority upholds the principle, even without saying who is right or who is wrong.... For the simple fact of saying that you have the right not to disagree is a screw coming loose on the Council or a bolt that is removed. Therefore this is becoming extremely interesting. This may be the beginning of the end of the Council, since the Church is saying that it is not obligatory. Which in itself is true: it is not obligatory. For the authority to say so could well be a very interesting start. It is not the end of the battle, but it restores an extremely important principle by saying: "No, those documents are not obligatory."

## A Vague Magisterium

This idea of non-obligation is a new way of thinking; I am not saying that it is good, but we have seen signs of it for several years now, and it is extremely important for the future. In 2014, when





we were having discussions with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, we tried to show that there was a major problem at the level of teaching in the Church, at the level of the Magisterium. And I had mentioned several examples. For instance the statement by the Holy See about the Mass of the Chaldeans called the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, which is a Mass during which the non-Catholic Chaldeans do not use the words of consecration. Now you have a Roman declaration that states that this Mass is valid. Then I told Rome that this completely destroys sacramental theology. Do you know what they told me? “This document does not come under the Magisterium.” And yet it teaches everyone that a “Mass”—which in fact is not a Mass—would be a valid Mass, without the words of consecration. And afterwards, when someone makes a complaint, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith replies that it does not come under the Magisterium. Well what is it then, if it is not part of the Magisterium? They said that it had not been produced by one of the magisterial authorities, but by a “Council.”

Another example: The Balamand Declaration (June 23, 1993). This is a declaration composed by delegates from the Holy See, some cardinals and some Orthodox. The Church promises not to convert the Orthodox. And it even condemns trying to convert them, which it calls “Uniatism.” Once again, the Holy See’s response was to say: “That is not from the Magisterium.” And quite recently you have a document published by Cardinal Koch on relations with the Jews (Document of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, December 10, 2015). It is a terrible document, completely heretical, which claims that the Jews can be saved without coming through Our Lord (par. 36). Exactly the opposite of what Sacred Scripture teaches us, along with the first pope himself, Saint Peter, who says this to the Jews: “There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). In other words, there is no other means of being saved except through Our Lord. And here Cardinal Koch thinks that you can make a statement saying the contrary. But, he tells us in black and white (in the Preface): “This is not doctrinal teaching.”

But then what game are they playing? They teach without teaching. This causes confusion everywhere. It is a new attitude. Until now it was clear to

every Catholic that when Rome speaks: *Roma locuta est, causa finita est*. Rome speaks, Rome teaches, and that’s the end of the discussion. And here they are telling us that, no, “it is intended to be a starting point for further theological thought.” In many of his Encyclicals, John Paul II even spoke about “meditations.” It is no longer a teaching, it is a “meditation.”

I mention these examples to you to show you the point that we have reached. The doctrinal discussions continue, they are becoming more and more interesting because the authorities are starting to open up the discussion. Until now it was exclusively: “Obey.” They teach and then: be quiet, submit. All of a sudden their attitude has changed. I think that they are forced—this is a kind of conclusion from what Archbishop Pozzo told me—they are forced by the catastrophic situation, the absolutely universal confusion, even in Rome. They are forced to make concessions. They can no longer hold their positions; there is no purpose to it any more. It makes me think about the words of Cardinal Müller in 2014. He told us: “You are obliging the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to devote precious time to you, when there are enormous problems in the Church.” That is interesting, but that is precisely what we are showing them! All of a sudden they are admitting that there are enormous problems. And they tell each other: This Society is not such a huge problem. But they are annoyed because we tell them: “You are the problem.” They no longer know how to take us, and they make concessions. Where will it all lead? We will soon see. But I think that presently the situation is so catastrophic that it is causing an extremely interesting reaction. On several levels.

On the level of the dialogue, all the bishops sent by Rome with whom we have had doctrinal discussions for the past two years told us that the points under discussion—always the same ones—are “open questions.” They all said this, the cardinals included. “Open questions”, meaning that you can debate them. Therefore they are no longer obligatory. And these discussions are bearing fruit. We do not see them yet, because it is at the level of theological reflection. And that takes a lot of time, certainly. There is some stammering that goes in the direction that I have pointed out. Some passages written by Archbishop Pozzo can be interpreted as though he wanted to use these discussions to try to correct >

the aim in the Church. But he does not dare to say it too loud, precisely because there is a majority that is walking in the other direction.

## Unexpected Support

Moreover, with what the pope is doing, there have been protests by cardinals on moral questions, on the question of marriage, on the question of communion for divorced-and-remarried persons. A certain number of them have clearly and openly said that they refuse, declaring: "No, that will not be done." Then there are the African bishops, who have clearly said that there is no question of giving communion to divorced-and-remarried persons. This is a reaction that is saying no to the supreme authority. Which we have been doing for 50 years. This is becoming extremely interesting. We are no longer the only ones.

Then some people say: "Careful! Careful! If you make an agreement, afterwards they will silence you." But that is *passé*! That's over! There are others who are talking. We are no longer the only ones. We no longer have a monopoly on protests. They are not very numerous, but this number is increasing. And then, from time to time, I receive letters. Like this one: I will read it to you in English because it is an image: "Stick to your guns. Always stick to your guns." This means: Keep your hands on your revolvers. Hold them firmly. In other words: "Defend yourselves. Always. And refuse to compromise in these matters that do not really pertain to the substance of the faith: religious liberty, ecumenism, dialogue with non-Christian religions. There are many of us in the hierarchy who think and believe in what you are doing about these questions." It is a bishop who wrote that to me. He does not write "I", he writes that there are many of "us." He wrote other things too that I dare not read to you, they are so laudatory, but here is the gist: "We need voices that tell us the limits of our freedom in those areas." He says that the Church, which teaches the truth, is now lost in the gray areas, in vagueness. "Come to our aid." And also: "Do not let go of anything, continue like this, we need it!" This is new! There was nothing like this before! The bishops used to tell us: obviously there are problems, but at the end of the day.... And here they are telling us: "Resist, we need it!" Actually they do not speak too loud because they know very well that if they do, they will be cutting off their own heads.

But they are working silently, they are working to reestablish the old Mass, like one archbishop who told me: "I have a generation of priests that is lost. You can't do anything with them. What do I do, then? I take care of the young ones." And he gave me two criteria: priestly formation in theology is the *Summa* of Saint Thomas, and in spirituality, in liturgy, it is the old Mass. I am not telling you their names because we do not want to burn out these prelates, but there are several of them. I discover some, just like that, by surprise, and there are a certain number of them! And these are young bishops! And some of them were appointed by Pope Francis! He is not just appointing bad ones! He is all mixed up, like his whole attitude, which has also increased the general confusion. But it is extremely interesting to see that there is this movement, and I am certain that it will no longer stop. Why? Because these bishops see where the truth is, and they will not give in. They are annoyed, they are cornered, because they are in the system, but they will no longer give in. Just like these priests who have discovered the old Mass, they will do all that they can, they are annoyed, cornered, but they will keep it. These are skirmishes that have been won.

## Continue the Fight

There are still major battles ahead of us. But in the midst of a disaster that is truly desperate, enough to make you lose your faith, we must not despair! This Church is God's Church; she has been transformed into an incredible, unprecedented battlefield, but we see—and this is exactly our story, the story of the forty years of our Society—we see how much the good Lord is with us. How much He supports us, how much He blesses us, through all the miseries and misfortunes that we may experience, that others may subject us to. Despite everything the good Lord is there: above these human miseries there is this faith and this work of faith that is growing. Despite everything we are making our way discreetly, gently, in our everyday work. And I invite you to continue.

Obviously these are extremely serious situations. And you too have the obligation to hold fast to the documents that are *sound* and *holy* [*sains et saints*]. All these Encyclicals of the popes until the Council. This is nourishment that protects you against the insane things that are poured out everywhere today.

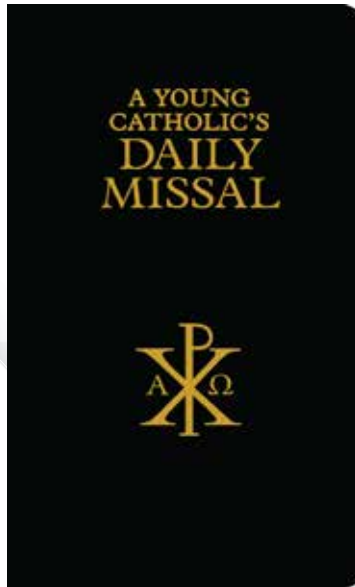


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It is incredible, the stupid things that people can say. And on all sides. Humanly speaking, one may wonder how to escape this situation. But it is not a question of a human battle! And our means are supernatural means! And really, if the Society continues, it is because it is founded on these supernatural means and, above all, as you well know, on the Mass and also on the Blessed Virgin. These two elements are, so to speak, the treasures that Archbishop Lefebvre gave us. The Mass, the priesthood, with all the influence of Our Lord, what we call His social Kingship, and then the Blessed Virgin. And quite simply, if we continue that way, we are right. We must not worry, the good Lord is here. And He shows it every day. Therefore it is necessary to continue.


Do not become preoccupied all the time with these questions: "Will there be an agreement or not?" I myself know nothing about it. We will see! We will not give in, that I know, with the grace of God. May He come to our aid! But little by little we see that work that is being accomplished over time, this crisis is awakening the little remnant. Let us pray for this intention. And to conclude, a big thank-you to Archbishop Lefebvre! We have to be very grateful to him and not forget him. And thanks also to all who support this work, to you, too, dear faithful.

# A Young Catholic's Daily Missal



The Young Catholic's Daily Missal is designed to open up the spiritual treasures of the Mass for young Catholics from the time of their First Communion up through their preteen years. This missal conforms to the rubrics and norms of the 1962 Missale Romanum and includes the full Ordinary of the Mass in Latin and English; the Masses for Sundays and Holydays in English with paraphrases of the Propers. For all the other days of the year there are explanations, printed in smaller type, of the Introit, Epistle and Gospel. These, along with the Communion of Saints, make this missal ideal for daily use. Finally, this missal contains morning and evening prayers; instructions on the meaning of the Mass; and an array of traditional devotions. Illustrated throughout.

42 ORDINARY OF THE MASS




**THE PRIEST KISSES THE ALTAR**

**M**y God, the Priest walks up the steps to the altar, and kisses it with respect. I cannot do that; but yet I should like to assist him. So while he prays aloud and in Latin, I will say the very same thing to myself in English. My God, Thou hast pardoned the Priest his sins, pardon me mine, because I am sorry that I ever did them. I know that I do not deserve Thy pardon, for I always begin again to offend Thee. Do not think of me, but of the Saints whose relics are inside the altar, and of all the Saints in glory. For their sakes pardon me all my sins.

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INTROIT



**INTROIT**

*Read this Introit, if you have not one marked in your little missal. It belongs to the Mass of the Sacred Heart.*

**T**his divine Heart of Jesus loves us; He has delivered us from the sin that kills the souls, and He gives us His graces. You must not think any more of yourself; think of Him Who is about to come as a victim on the altar.

If you wish God to be very much pleased with you, promise Him that you will do everything as well as you can; so that when He comes you may be able to say to Him: My God, I intend to work for Thee, in order to please Thee. Whatever I do will be done for Thee, My Jesus. I give Thee this day.

280 PROPER OF THE SEASON

must love your enemies and pray for those who do you harm. Only then will you be the children of God; for you will do as God does. You know that God does good even to his enemies. God makes His sun rise upon the good and the evil; He gives His rain upon the just and the unjust.

**SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY**

INTROIT: God has heard Me and has had pity on Me, says Jesus, upon the cross. With Jesus let us say: I thank Thee, O God, because Thou hast delivered me from my enemies.

COLLECT: O God, hear our prayer, and help us to keep all the days of fasting well, by making many sacrifices, so that our souls may be made rich by us.

EPISTLE: If you are good to your neighbors, if you are charitable, says Jesus, God will reward you. He brought Jesus back to life after He was dead, and placed Him in heaven; He will give life to your soul, and give you heaven, if you do all you should to honor God, especially on Thursdays.

*Text of Ash Wednesday, p. 277.*


GOSPEL: It was dark at night; the Apostles were in a boat upon the lake, and had great difficulty in walking upon the water, where it was hoarse darkness. The Apostles thought they saw a boat and were afraid. He stepped into the boat and the wind dropped. When they came ashore, people brought the sick to Him and He healed them. Always have confidence in Jesus, and He will always help you.

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

In the city of Rome the Mass is said today in the church of Saint Peter's Letters. The patron of this church are Jesus the Servant and Saint John the Baptist, Jesus, who was baptized by Saint John upon us.

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



**ARCHIBARRICA SANCTISSIMAE SALVAE TORIS**


through baptism. And Lent is to prepare those who are not yet Christians for the sacrament of baptism after the fast in Lent on Holy Saturday, and also Christians for their confessions, through which Jesus saves souls that have fallen into great sins after their baptism.

INTROIT: With Jesus in the desert we pray to God, for He has promised to help us if we say our prayers well.

PRAYERS: O God, every year we begin the holy season of Lent on this day as the Church wishes us to do. Grant that we may be really good, and make our little sacrifices generously.

EPISTLE: Saint Paul repeats what the prophet Isaiah said: Now is the right time to do penance; do not let the chance slip away. Now is the right time to correct our

843 LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME



**VARIOUS DEVOTIONS**

**DEVOTIONS TO OUR LORD**

**Litany of the Holy Name**

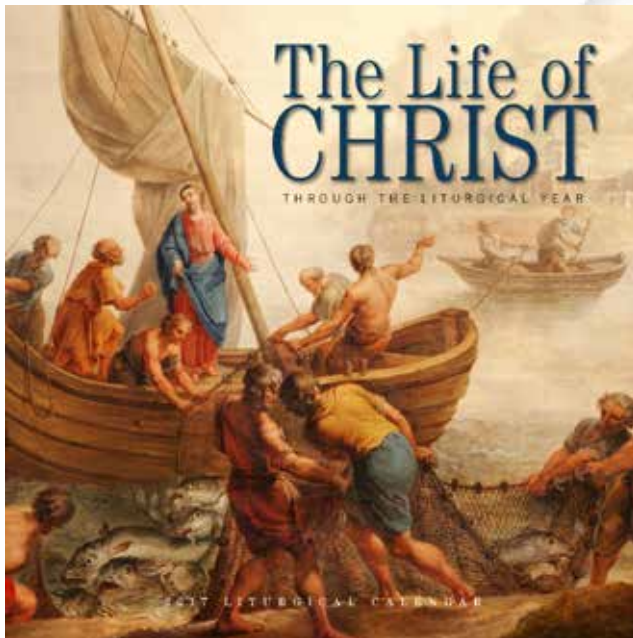
**LORD**, have mercy on us.  
**Christ**, have mercy on us.  
**Lord**, have mercy on us.  
**Jesus**, hear us.  
**Jesus**, graciously hear us.  
**God the Father of heaven**, have mercy on us!  
**God the Son**, Redeemer of the world,  
**God the Holy Ghost**,  
**Holy Trinity**, one God,  
**Jesus**, Son of the living God,

Jesus, splendor of the Father, have mercy on us;  
 Jesus, brightness of eternal light,  
 Jesus, King of glory,  
 Jesus, sun of justice,  
 Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary,  
 Jesus, most lovable,  
 Jesus, most admirable,  
 Jesus, mighty God,  
 Jesus, Father of the world to come,  
 Jesus, Angel of great counsel,  
 Jesus, most powerful,  
 Jesus, most patient,  
 Jesus, most obedient,  
 Jesus, meek and humble of heart,  
 Jesus, lover of charity,  
 Jesus, lover of us,  
 Jesus, God of peace,  
 Jesus, author of life,  
 Jesus, example of virtues,  
 Jesus, zealous lover of souls,  
 Jesus, our God,  
 Jesus, our refuge,  
 Jesus, Father of the poor,  
 Jesus, treasure of the faithful,  
 Jesus, Good Shepherd,  
 Jesus, true light,  
 Jesus, eternal wisdom,  
 Jesus, infinite goodness,  
 Jesus, our way and our life,

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# The Life of Christ

## Through the Liturgical Year



The Life, Death, Resurrection, and Heavenly Glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ is the central focus of every liturgical year. And so it is fitting that the *2017 Liturgical Calendar* should assist the faithful in following the yearly liturgical cycle through some of Christendom's most splendid depictions of Christ's earthly ministry and heavenly reign. These images are captioned by appropriate Scriptural quotations which can serve as sources of meditation throughout each month.

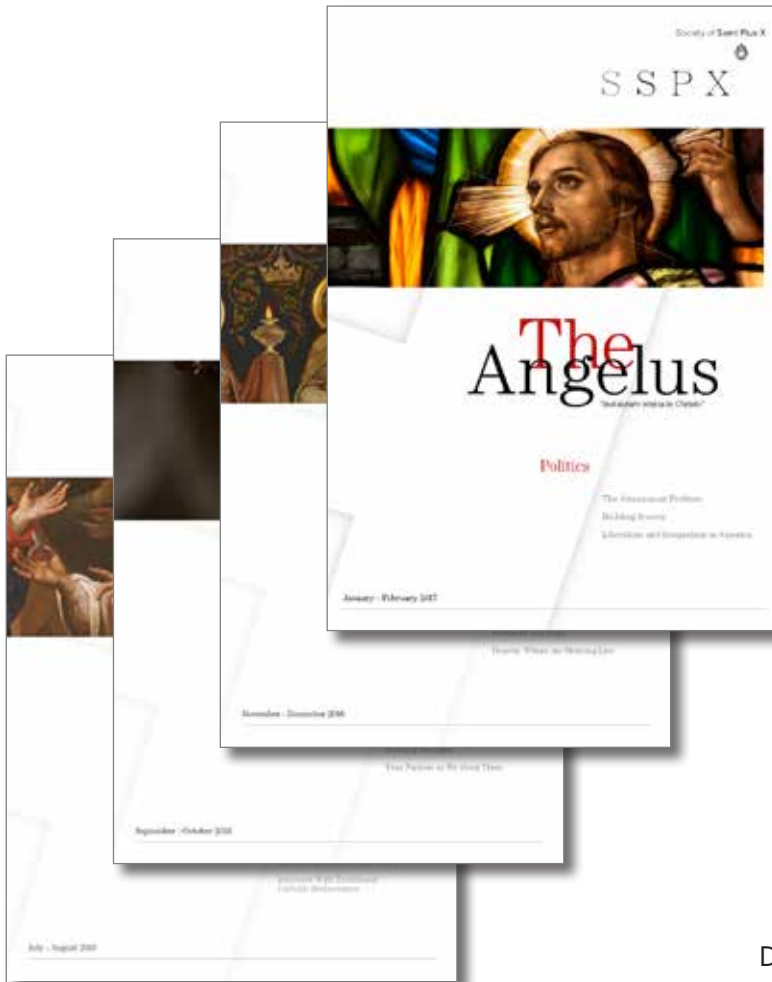


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# The Last Word

Dear readers,

## *Luther, the Mass and Marriage*

God is Providence.

October 13, 1969 was the day Archbishop Lefebvre opened the door of his Don Bosco's Residence for the embryonic Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) in Fribourg, Switzerland. This was six weeks before the New Mass became mandatory. Providence prepared the antidote before the disease arrived.

Recently, one of the most senior SSPX priests remarked that the battle for the Mass in the late 1960s and early 1970s was in fact of greater theological importance than today's battle for marriage. Morality always follows doctrine.

The Archbishop understood that. Many of his talks around the world in the first decade of the SSPX were on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, simply to explain that touching the doctrine of the Mass would have untold, unimaginable consequences for the Church, for the Kingship of Christ. For instance, read his talk entitled *Luther's Mass*, presented in 1975 in Florence.

Luther thought exactly the same. But he rejoiced, whilst the Archbishop mourned. "Having triumphed over the Mass, I think we have triumphed over the whole papacy. For upon the Mass as upon a rock is built the whole papacy with its monasteries, its bishoprics, its colleges, its altars, its ministers, its doctrines, and leans on it with its whole weight" (*Against Henry VIII*, 1522).

The crises of marriage and of the Papacy, which we are witnessing today, are direct consequences of the liturgical reform of 1969. Who sees it? Luther saw it. Archbishop Lefebvre saw it, too.

Let us pray that others in red and in purple will see it as well, and while continuing to fight for the sacred principles of Catholic morality and of marriage under siege at present, they will have the grace to see the logic, cause, and effects which have led to the tragedies we witness today, and act accordingly. Touch the Holy Mass and you touch marriage and the very foundation of the Church.

Isn't the sacrament of marriage great because it signifies the union of Christ and His Church on the Cross, which is the Holy Mass?

*Qui potest capere capiat.*

Fr. Daniel Couture

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Society of St. Pius X is an international priestly society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the priesthood and that which pertains to it.

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