

St. Dominic's Chapel

June 6th, 2015

From the Blue paper # 227

"A difference from 1917's to 1983's Code of Canon Law"

There are some important innovations, not only in matter of discipline but also in reference to theological issues, which are imbued along the 1983 "structure" of the Canon Law. As soon as its regulations went on public, there were some comments against the driving force inspiration of such up-to-date ecclesiastic discipline. Among many others, here is an example of a kind of mixed issues about discipline and common believing principles when interacting with non-Catholics. Do you agreed with Archbishop Lefebvre rejecting this specific Canon? Do you agree with Menzingen Head-quarter with this specific Canon? Their response is not the one of the Archbishop's.

January 25, 1983

THE 1983 CODE OF CANON LAW

Canon 844 (on Eucharistic Hospitality)

(London: Collins Liturgical Publishers, 1983, pp 156-157)

This canon is the most scandalous of the whole 1983 Code of Canon Law. It is the open door to active *communication in sacris*, means an active religious participation with non-Catholics. Canon 1258 of the 1917 Code of Canon Law very strictly prohibited such participation. Rev. Dominicus M. Prummer, O.P., as Swiss professor at the University of Fribourg, gives the very simple reason: "it is needed nothing else than the negation of the Catholic Faith and the acknowledgement of a heterodox worship." Participation in the Sacraments is the most important part of the worship, especially for Holy Communion. Now Christ has founded and espoused only one Church, and the only voice of the Bride is agreeable to the Bridegroom. Only the voice of the Son is agreeable to the Father. The active participation in non-Catholic worship is the practical denial of the nature of the Church.

& 1 Catholic ministers may lawfully administer the sacraments only to Catholic members of Christ's faithful, who equally may lawfully receive them only from Catholic ministers, except as provided in &2,3 and 4 of this canon and in Canon 861, &2.

& 2 Whenever necessity requires or a genuine spiritual advantage commends it, and provided the danger of error or indifferentism is avoided, Christ's faithful for who it is physically or morally impossible to approach a Catholic minister, may lawfully receive the Sacraments of Penance, the Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick from non-Catholic ministers in whose churches these Sacraments are valid.

& 3 Catholic ministers may lawfully administer the Sacraments of Penance, the Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick to members of the eastern churches not in full communion with the Catholic Church, if they spontaneously ask for them and are properly disposed. The same applies to members of other churches, which the Apostolic

See judges to be in the same opinion as the aforesaid eastern churches so far as the Sacraments are concerned.

& 4 If there is a danger of death or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop of the episcopal conference, there is some other grave and pressing need, Catholic ministers may lawfully administer these same Sacraments to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who spontaneously ask for them, provided that they demonstrate the Catholic Faith in respect of these Sacraments and are properly disposed.

& 5 In respect of the cases dealt with in && 2,3 and 4, the diocesan bishop or the episcopal conference is not to issue general norms except after consultation with the competent authority, at least at the local level, of the non-Catholic church or community concerned.

The only Sacraments, which the Church allows to be given by non-Catholic ministers are those, which are absolutely required for salvation, that is, Baptism and Penance. In danger of death and in the absence of a Catholic capable of baptizing, one should ask for this Sacrament even from a non-Catholic. In danger of death, a Catholic who has fallen into mortal sin after his Baptism, non-Catholic priest for the Sacrament of Penance.

For the sacraments not necessary for salvation, the Church never allowed the faithful to go to a non-Catholic minister.

This is particularly required for the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, which is the Sacrament of the unity of the Church. To participate in this Holy Sacrament with someone who does not belong to this unity is to introduce “a lie” in the sacrament, depriving it of its signification. One wonders what “genuine spiritual advantage” can be obtained at such price! Everyone can see on the contrary the havoc wrought by these so-called “inter-celebrations.”

A Catholic priest cannot give the Sacraments to a non-Catholic, for he is outside the unity of the Church, with the sole exception of the Sacraments of Penance or Baptism, given precisely that he might become a Catholic.

The condition put here: “provided that they demonstrate the Catholic Faith in respect of these Sacraments and are properly disposed,” does not render this Canon acceptable. Indeed, either one requires in them the real Catholic Faith, therefore the rejection of these errors and their return to the Unity of the Church, and thus there is no more need of such a Canon, or one requires only that they agree with the Catholic Church on the one particular point of Faith in question. But this latter alternative is insufficient, since the Faith is not divisible; it is one theological virtue. One cannot accept it on one point and reject it on another point.

(From “Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican” by Fr. Francois Laisney, pp 150-151, Angelus Press).