

>From the Pastor's desk Year 6 # 278

“Operation Survival - June 30, 1988”

“At the beginning of the rite of consecration the following dialogue takes place between the consecrating bishops and the Archpriest who presents the bishops-elect for consecration:

Do you have the Apostolic Mandate?

We have it.

Let it be read.

We have this Mandate from the Roman Church, always faithful to the Holy Tradition, which She has received from the Apostles. This Holy Tradition is the Deposit of Faith, which the Church orders us to faithfully transmit to all men for the salvation of their souls.

Since the Second Vatican Council until this day, the authorities of the Roman Church are animated by the spirit of modernism. They have acted contrary to the Holy Tradition, ‘they cannot bear sound doctrine, they turned their ears from the Truth and followed fables,’ as says St. Paul in his second Epistle to Timothy (4, 3-5). This is why we reckon of no value all the penalties and all the censures inflicted by these authorities.

As for me, ‘I am offered up in sacrifice and the moment for my departure is arrived’ (II Tim 4,6). I had the call of souls who ask for the Bread of Life, Who is Christ, to be broken for them. ‘I have pity upon the crowd’ (Mark 8, 2). It is for me therefore a grave obligation to transmit the grace of my episcopacy to these dear priests here present, in order that in turn they may confer the grace of the priesthood on other numerous and holy clerics, instructed in the Holy Traditions of the Catholic Church.

It is by this Mandate of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, semper fidelis (always faithful), then that we elect to the rank of Bishop in the Holy Roman Church the priests here present as auxiliaries of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X:

The Reverend Father Bernard Tissier de Mallerais

The Reverend Father Richard Williamson

The Reverend Father Alfonso de Galarreta

The Reverend Father Bernard Fellay.”

(pp. 633 The Biography Marcel Lefebvre by Bernard Tissier de Mallerais)

The Catholic Church must one day judge whether this act was heroic. To deny that it was thus would be easy: did not Archbishop Lefebvre go in the direction he was tending? His “obstinate” character, his complete trust Catholic principles, his self-confident judgment accordingly to Tradition, and finally his allergy to Liberalism: would all these things not inevitably have inclined him to assume the role of the “lone Knight”?

Was Archbishop Lefebvre a Churchman respectful towards authority, long-sufferingly obedient, loyal to his superiors, an enemy of any conspicuous or scandalous opposition against our Catholic tenets? Was he a man of prayer and wisdom whose only desire was to follow Providence? Is not the Archbishop’s conduct to be explained by a special grace attached to his particular mission? This grace enabled him to meet all the demands of a mission which he clearly foresaw, but which he carried out day by day, cost what it may be according to the indications of divine Providence.

Archbishop Lefebvre always wanted to “follow” divine Providence. However, confidence is not nonchalance. His friend Fr. Calmel was well aware of this: *“Leaving things up to the grace of God is not to do nothing! It is to do everything in our power, while continuing in love.”* Holy abandonment is found *“not in resignation and laziness, but at the heart of action and initiative.”* It would be dishonest to pray to God for victory without actually fighting for it! Here we find magnanimity: responding generously to divine grace. Magnanimity asks us to give something beyond prayer that one must pay for with one’s own person: *“The things I pray for,”* Saint Thomas More prayed magnanimously, *“Dear Lord, give me the grace to work for.”*

Magnanimity means conceiving of and doing great things for some vast and glorious end. It is an integral part of the virtue of Fortitude and helps man not to falter before the dangers involved in carrying out some undertaking. By “great things,” we must understand those things that are worthy of great honor. If doing them

incurs some undeserved dishonor, the magnanimous man is not discouraged, but scorns such fate. Thus, to do what is truly great, he confronts danger, not through love of risk like the foolhardy but as a man who is unperturbed, the opposite of the timorous soul who only becomes timid through some blameworthy action. A strong man is as determined to persevere in difficult undertaking, as he is to bear with painful set-backs. If he thinks himself worthy to do great things, it is because of the gifts that God has given him, for as a humble man, he is aware of his faults, and sees himself as nothing. Therefore, magnanimity combined with humility becomes Christian virtue.

Of course, it belongs to the virtue of Fortitude not to falter in doing good in spite of contradiction. But as for fully accomplishing some good work and coming thereby to eternal life – the ultimate end of all good works – that is a gift of the Holy Ghost, who alone infuses into the soul such confidence, which drives out any contrary fear.

Does not Our Lord Jesus Christ promise beatitude to the magnanimous? Since they aspire to, and labor for, the great works of justice, they are assured of seeing their desires fulfilled both in this world and in the one to come: *“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill.”* (Mt. 5, 6).

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre was careful not to humiliate other people and not to hurt his subordinates. He suffered when he had to point out to them their failings or move them from one assignment to another. In such case, he said: *“I did not sleep for nights. I was as if the sword of Damocles were hanging over my head before I took the decision to move him away.”*

The excessive delicacy was of a particular kind since it did not affect him in public, but only in personal relations. He had some difficulties in communicating when what he said would show a loss of respect for his neighbor. But this was the strength of the way he governed others, and of his perseverance in negotiating with the authorities of the Conciliar Church.

What is admirable in the Archbishop is this contrast, or better even more, this balance between the greatest self-confidence and the most delicate attentiveness to others: it made him a very human and attractive personality who inspired trust and friendship. Numerous Holy Fathers who did not agree with his traditionalism, such as Fr. O’Carroll, said to us: “Oh! How I was attached to that man! I still am.”

None managed to reconcile the two sides of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre: “Your gentleness is hard,” Jean Guiton said to him before the consecrations. Others said: “He is over-proud!” “No,” replied Fr. Louis Carron, “personally he is humble. It is his doctrine that is proud. It is a formula...”

Yes, it was well and truly a formula. Archbishop was not Liberal and, nonetheless he was completely charitable by word and deed, and in the way he said and did it.

“No man was ever gentler than Moses, and yet it was he who broke the tablets of the Law in a fit of holy wrath. When a gentle person starts getting tough, he can go very far.” This reflection of Fr. Mehrle, concerning the Archbishop, is very cunning. However, his strength goes back even further to the lively enthusiasm of his youth, when – aged 20 – he received at Santa Chiara the torch whose flame consumed him, and which he was bound to pass on. Then, this “gentle, tough man” with modest reserve attained the stature of a magnanimous giant. The prudent zeal of the religious missionary provided the raw material for the sort of bishop needed by the Holy Catholic Church.

Therefore let us thank Almighty God such a grace given to Tradition of having those Episcopal Consecrations twenty-seven years ago so that the Treasure of the Catholic Faith has been transmitted as off today. One never appreciates what he has until it is gone! Let us continually beg to Our Lord Jesus Christ to give us the virtue of humility and magnanimity in order to keep lighted the torch of the Catholic Faith until our death.

Viva Cristo Rey!

Father Zendejas