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“I am not the good shepherd, John Paul II, December 8, 1985”

On January 25, 1985, at Saint Paul Outside the Walls, John Paul II announced the meeting of an extraordinary Synod of bishops for the twentieth anniversary of the closing of Vatican II. It would examine how the Council was being applied, and “promote its constant implementation in the life of the Church.” Reacting to this, Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer wrote to the Sovereign Pontiff to warn him solemnly. They denounced religious liberty and its consequences: the predominant and increasing religious indifferentism; the ecumenism spirit, as practiced by John Paul II, and indulgence towards all the enemies of the Church. *“If the Synod does not step back from such errors,”* the two bishops would be led to conclude that *“the members of the Synod no longer profess the Catholic Faith”* and John Paul II *“is no longer the good shepherd.”*

The Synod ended on December 8th, 1985: “unanimously to continue along the road that the Council pointed out to us.” An anecdote: when John Paul II met Bishop Schwery, Bishop of Sion, in the corridor during the Synod, he gave him a wink of eye and said: “Watch out! Now I am no longer the good shepherd.”

Indeed, Archbishop Lefebvre had encouraged to read the “engrossing pages” on the Church written by Father Emmanuel, just one century earlier. The priest had described in particular what dramatic times the Church would endure at the end of the world. *“Since the Church must be like our Lord in everything before the end of the world she will suffer trials that will be a true passion.”* The Archbishop recounted the impression that those pages made on him: *“One can feel in them the breath of the Holy Ghost. Some of them are even prophetic when they describe the Passion of the Church.”*

Further, he wrote to the friends who had suggested this reading to him: *“One has had to live from 1960 to the present moment to discover that Popes can lead the Church to her ruin. Such a thing seemed impossible to us, given the promises of the Holy Ghost’s assistance. ‘Contra factum non fit argumentum.’ Against the fact, there is no argument. The facts are there before our eyes. So, we have to conclude that when our Lord spoke of help until the end of time, he did not exclude periods of darkness and a time of Passion for His mystical Spouse.”*

That’s why the Archbishop warned us - more than once - about the temptation to “compromise,” in regards to the issue of attending the Indult Mass,” at its publication on October 3 1984 (granting freedom to the Traditional Mass on condition of accepting the New Mass). In addition to that publication there was an interview to Cardinal Ratzinger (Prefect of the Faith), given to the monthly Italian magazine *Jesus* in November 1984 - “Why the Faith Is in Crisis.”

As a matter of fact, some traditionalist happily noted that the Mass was being made available, and that the Cardinal recognized and gave a detailed analysis of the crisis in the Church – due in his point-of-view to an “anti-spirit of the Council,” which made him call for “a return to the true in the Council.” “What more can we ask for?” It was the thinking of some traditionalist people: “Let us accept the indult and enter again within the confines of the visible Church once we are within, we will be able to shake things up – from the inside out- and sort them out.” This still is the make-believe solution of some people within the ranks of the traditionalist priests.

In fact, this reasoning is a trap. To such an option the Archbishop expressed:

“We cannot enter into a system under superiors who are in a position to stamp us out. ‘Once we are recognized,’ you say, we will be able to act from within the Church. This is completely wrong; it is totally a misunderstanding in the minds of those who are in the present hierarchy. To realize this, one only needs to read that much talked about the remarks of Cardinal Ratzinger in his interview.

“The prelate said that the challenge of the 1960’s was to take on board the best values from the two last centuries of liberal culture. Even if these values were not born in the Church, once they are purified and corrected, they can find their place in the vision that the Church has of the world. This is what was done. It is true that the results have disappointed some hopes that were perhaps naïve. This is why there is a need to find a new balance.”

The Archbishop’s commentary was clear and direct. So, the Cardinal recognized that the crisis within the Church

is due to the Council's attempts to marry the Church and the Revolution, and bring together Catholic principles and liberal "values:" ecumenism, the Declaration of the Rights of Man disregarding his obligation to the Creator, the religious liberty... Archbishop Lefebvre said, *"It is terribly serious. It condemns everything he says in his interview. It is at the heart of his ideas, and it is such conclusion that we do not want..."*

"...We cannot place ourselves under an authority whose ideas are liberal and who little by little would condemn us, by the logic of the things, to accept these ideas and their consequences, and firstly the New Mass." As for the indult, "it has not been created for us." Because it gives the Traditional Mass to those who accept the New Mass." Mr. Madiran who always sums things up so well, has written: 'In short, the Roman circular (indult) enables those who wanted to suppress the Traditional Mass to permit its celebration by those who show they have no reason to want it.'"

So, Cardinal Ratzinger few years later became Benedict XVI, and admitted that such attempts had caused the crisis within the Church. Therefore, he wanted to find a "new balance," which is an impossible balance. [His balance became "hermeneutic of Continuity:" Interpretation of continuity].

Needless to say, Pope Francis is dealing with a very modern novelty from Vatican II Council merging those Post-Conciliar understandings into practical applications of the modern society pastoral challenges. It is voiced out on his "New Evangelization," battle cry. He pretends to draw out liberal pastoral consequences from the imposed opinions of theologians and bishops, exposed during the last 50 years within the drama of the Catholic Church. In this perspective, after the Council three Popes are in-acting one by one those "values" of the last two centuries of Liberal Culture.

Pope Paul VI has installed by word and by writing the teaching of Religious Liberty, not only within the conscience of individuals but also in the public domain, as it was the threat of excommunication he sent to Spain, in particular the President, who had rejected the New Mass for several years. Pope Paul VI installed the Vatican II religious liberty principle throughout the world, which is the value of "Liberty".

Pope John Paul II set on stone the fallacy of ecumenism, using as driving force the practical actions of pagan cults and natural religions into the liturgy of the Catholic Church. He prayed in the Synagogue, he received on his forehead the mark of the "Tilak" (a Hindu practice), he prayed with the Shintoist representative, and so forth... John Paul II installed the liberal principle of Ecumenism, which is the "Fraternity" (brotherhood) value.

Pope Francis is installing the liberal principle of "Collegiality." This is the milestone of teaching – Magisterium. It is also the milestone of the SSPX drama in regards to what are the doctrinal points, which they have to be understood in the light of Tradition. What really is Ordinary Magisterium, not only in the matter of Faith but also concerning who is the qualified Teacher of such Magisterium? And what is the difference between Ordinary and Extraordinary Magisterium? As the Vatican II teaches is the perpetual ordinary magisterium from the bishops all over the world, no matter what do they believe or what do they teach...

Nonetheless, controversy concerning questions of the faith and morals will necessarily arise in the Church. In effect, the history of heresies shows us that such controversies have sprung up at every period. How could they be settled?

Evidently, Jesus Christ has established a perfect solidarity between Himself and those He charged to teach the world the truths of salvation. He has promised us His special assistance and shall last to the end of time.

Let's us not forget: Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd to the end of the world!

Viva Cristo Rey!

Father Zendejas