

The Remnant

(Est. in 1967)

“... At the present time there is a remnant left, selected out of grace.” - Romans 11:5



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From the Editor's Desk...

By Michael J. Matt

A Visit to the Top of the World

Menzingen is a place once visited not soon forgotten. Nestled high in the mountain pastures overlooking Zug, Switzerland, a mysteriously unseen wall seems to have erected itself around this Catholic Brigadoon, shielding it from the soul-killing “progress” of the modern world. The fact that it was originally built as a hunting lodge only adds to its charm. As one strolls the courtyard, he half expects to see a young Emperor Karl of Austria come cantering in at any moment, a brace of hunting dogs at the heel.

Not much to the place, really—a modest chapel, a formidable statue of St. Pius X, a few outbuildings and the main lodge which houses the offices and living quarters of the Superior General and his assistants. Defended by God's own snow-capped battlements, it's the perfect setting for the HQ of the single largest fraternity of traditional Catholic priests in the world.

With the help of a friend who lives in the area, I was able to make contact with Bishop Bernard Fellay's secretary on short notice, just after the Pilgrimage to Chartres this past June. The Bishop was leaving the country the next afternoon but kindly agreed to set aside some time in the morning. My friend, Jamie Bogle (President of Una Voce International), joined me in making the short trip up the mountain by taxi, some thirty minutes from our hotel.

A smiling nun in traditional habit greeted us at the gate and then ushered us into the parlor. Once inside, the old-world charm of the people and the place was so overwhelming that I found myself smiling for no apparent reason, like a child in the candy aisle. The whole place is like something time forgot about.

~ See Editor's Desk/ Page 2

Vandals In Rome

Francis to Sack Christian Marriage?



Brothers in Arms: Cardinal Walter Kasper and Pope Francis

"The Pope is not an absolute monarch whose thoughts and desires are law." - Benedict XVI

Editor's Note: The following article is quite lengthy. But like Chris Ferrara's other more lengthy contributions to this journal, it “reads short” while providing a clear and comprehensive overview of a complex situation. Francis's Blitzkrieg “reform” of the annulment process is a turning point in Church and world history that deserves the thorough treatment it receives here. **MJM**

Introduction

At this point in the progress of Pope Bergoglio's banana republic-style pontificate, no one should be surprised at the canonical sneak attack by which, on only 24 hours' notice to the world, he destroyed the traditional exacting procedure for determining matrimonial nullity with a series of new canons

whose drafting was hidden from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Apostolic Signatura, and every other Vatican dicastery that would ordinarily be involved in vetting proposed universal legislation for the Church. Francis gets what Francis wants. He wanted more and easier annulments in a hurry, knew he couldn't get them with the cooperation of the CDF or the Signatura, and so he created a closed-door commission that threw together a few new canons to make it all happen right away.

We should have seen this coming at the very beginning of the pontificate when Francis declared [during his in-flight press conference](#) on the way from

~ See Vandals in Rome/Page 8

Bracing for the Synod...

Means, Motive, and Opportunity

By Patrick Archbold

A few weeks back, I happened upon an article from Catholic Answer's [own Karl Keating](#) in which he speculated upon the possibility that Pope Francis might resign in a year or so in acceptance of his own limitations and suitability to the role. While that is certainly an interesting topic, it was not that part of the article that greatly interested me.

After making fair and respectful critique of Pope Francis' communication style and general suitability to the role of Vicar of Christ, Mr. Keating makes the following remarks:

I don't think it [retirement] would be before October's synod. He certainly would want to see that project through. Unlike some others, I'm not much concerned about the wayward cardinals and bishops who will be in attendance. I don't think they will come close to having the votes to force through a less-than-orthodox final statement, and I don't for a minute suspect that Francis secretly wants them to prevail.

Nothing in his moral teaching over the years—whether as cardinal or pope—gives any support to such speculation. But I do think Francis wants the synod to be a “success” (however he envisions that)...

With all respect to Mr. Keating, I believe his assertion that there is “nothing” that gives any support to speculation that

~ See Means/Page 5

Dig Up the Bar: A Word on Pro-Life Feminism

by Hilary White

In front of the entrances of many Italian churches, including St. Peter's Basilica, visitors will find a sign that asks them to remember that the building they are entering is not a museum, not a tourist attraction, but a holy place. At St. Peter's the long, serpentine queue is punctuated along its length by signs showing stick figures wearing shorts, short skirts and sleeveless t-shirts covered with a big red slashed circle. Italian churches expect a base-line level of modesty and respect from visitors, even if they are expected to know nothing about the Faith for which they are built.

And the message gets through. By the time the long stream of tourists have made it around the edges of St. Peter's Piazza to the metal detectors in the colonnade, the Vatican gendarmes rarely have to offer the women in tank-tops one of those rather horrible disposable shawl-things to go over their shoulders. Indeed, one of the most bustling street trades around the Vatican for illegal Bangladeshi immigrants is in cheap silk shawls with which it is common to see American women rather shamefacedly and awkwardly draping themselves.

I say “shamefacedly” because until they have been confronted with the unacceptability of their attire for a church, it seems never to have occurred to them. The expression on the faces



of some of the young American ladies when handed these cheap little cover-up things at the Basilica of Mary Major, can be priceless: “You want me to ... to wear this?”

The disgust and angry contempt is only too evident when they come out

~ See Dig up the Bar/Page 7

From the Editor's Desk Continued...

Heavy rugs line the floor, presumably against winter's chill which must be formidable. Period furniture is tastefully arranged as if still there from when it was first set up a century ago. The tick-tock of an old grandfather clock accompanies rays of sunlight as they make their way into the pleasant room. It was as if we'd entered a time warp—a sense that would linger, by the way, even after as the Bishop had entered the room and taken a seat across from us.

I've met Bishop Fellay several times before, and am always struck by his manifest humility. The man seems to have no ego at all, in fact. If a fly on the wall were to tell me that here sits a man of saintly spiritual life I'd be in no sense surprised.

Tea was served, and the three of us were left to converse quietly, the two intruders making rather obvious attempts to learn as much as possible about the historic situation in which the Society of St. Pius X now finds itself.

While the Bishop is a prudent man, I didn't sense he was editing much of what he was saying to the journalist on his right hand and the head of an international Catholic lobby to his left. He answered our questions without hesitation, refreshingly guileless, in fact.

We touched briefly on many topics, and I don't think I'm giving away any secrets when I write that Bishop Fellay seemed as baffled by Pope Francis as the rest of us are, though he did note the irony that Francis is less antagonistic toward the Society than foes and friends may realize. Being the true liberal, the Pope is evidently ready to embrace everyone, even the SSPX.

"What can I do to help you in your work, Your Excellency?" I asked, as our meeting drew to a close.

"Helps us make people understand that we are not in schism." The sincerity in his words was palpable. And he continued in an almost pleading tone of voice: "The Church is ours. It is our castle. It is our home. We will not leave her. We can never leave her."

Clearly, this is a man of faith with a deep and profound love for Holy Mother Church.

I suddenly found myself grateful that God has not asked me to sort out the complicated situation now confronting Bishop Fellay. On the one hand with apostasy and heresy rampant in the Church, it seems positively preposterous to worry about the "irregular canonical status" of the Society of St. Pius X. The letter of the law matters far less in times of tumult than does its spirit—which is first and foremost about the salvation of souls. Why should anyone be in any sense bothered by de facto heretics accusing the SSPX of schism? On its face, the thing is comical.

One needs only briefly consider what happened to the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate to feel justified in pleading with Bishop Fellay: "Don't have anything to do with these wolves!"

But who am I? A layman with a layman's point of view. Because on the other hand, what happens if 600 priests and a million traditionalist faithful were to suddenly shake the false accusation of schism and be given official status that would immediately undermine the entire Neo-Catholic façade? A tempting prospect, to put it mildly.



James Bogle, Bishop Bernard Fellay, Michael J. Matt (Menzingen)

What would I do? What would you do? All that matters is what Bishop Fellay will do if and when the time comes. The Latin Mass is back in nearly every city of the world. The Fraternity of St. Peter is thriving. And thanks to the bizarre antics of Pope Francis, even neo-Catholics are waking up to the myriad problems with the Church of Vatican II. If the SSPX were regularized tomorrow think of what that might mean.

On the other hand, once regularized could the priests of the SSPX do that with which so many other good priests have struggled—continue principled and public opposition to the regime of Vatican II. Or would the SSPX swap Catholic counterrevolution for mere pro-lifeism with a traditional Latin Mass twist?

Again, I don't know. I'm just asking questions that I would imagine Bishop Fellay goes over in his mind every day. I do not believe the SSPX is in schism. They are inside the Church, and Bishop Fellay is exactly right—it is our Church, our castle. It is our birthright, our home. It's our mother—and we have no intention of running off and letting Modernists have their way with her. We stay, suffer with her, keep the old faith, and fight until we get "our buildings" back. The SSPX has always followed the lead of St. Athanasius in this regard, which is why they accept Francis as pope, pray for the local bishops at all their Masses and never tried to create the *petite Église*.

How frustrating it must be for them when little men with little minds and no vision at all nevertheless strut about like bantam roosters, crowing about the "schism" of the SSPX and how they're "outside the Church", "as bad as Protestants" and "leading souls to hell". The Society's principled case against the new orientation of the Church, the New Mass, and the problematic aspects of Vatican II—the very thing which gave us *Summorum Pontificum* in the first place—is routinely dismissed on the grounds that the Society is in schism. Can we blame them, then, for wanting to crush the go-to argument of the neo-Catholics, so filled with venom and so effective in deceiving thousands of well-meaning Catholics who don't know any better?

As I sat in his parlor listening to Bishop Fellay, I felt I was in the presence of a man at a crossroads, wrestling with all of this and so much more. I left Menzingen convinced that I had to do all in my power to help people understand that Bishop Fellay, a manifestly holy man, stands largely alone with a monumental decision to make, now or later—one which will change history either way. Even Michael

Davies used to say that although the SSPX did not fall into schism in 1988, it is true that their irregular canonical limbo could not go on forever lest a schismatic mentality should set in with future generations.

Still, the bottom line is this: At this moment the last of the traditionalist holdouts, the SSPX, is being pushed and pulled in every direction and by friends and enemies in powerful places. Bishop Fellay is selling out to no one. There is no conspiracy here. Rather here is a man attempting to discern God's will so that he can faithfully carry out his duty as a loyal son of the Church. He needs our help and support, not our criticism.

Is now the right time for a reunification of the SSPX with the Vatican? God help us, I can't understand how it could be. Francis is destroying the human element of Christ's Church, and the whole world is about to see that Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre was right all along, that there is indeed a state of emergency in the Church, and that the salvation of souls is of greater moment than any lack of canonical status—a concern which many regard as tantamount to rearranging the deck furniture on the Titanic.

Let's face it, Francis has vindicated Archbishop Lefebvre. When I see clueless neo-Catholics calumniating the legacy of the Archbishop I see demons in disguise, raging against one of the few great men of the last century who did not go along with the revolution but instead followed the *lumen Christi* out of conciliar darkness and into the safe harbor of holy Tradition.

A hundred years from now, assuming the world is still here, Catholics will be telling their children the story of St. Marcel, the hero bishop who, like Fisher before him, stood strong against the apostasy of his day and won the heavenly crown.

Is the situation in the Church any better today than it was in 1988? If it is, then Lefebvre himself would counsel Fellay to go to Rome. But if it is not, then how can Bishop Fellay go to Rome without indicting the Archbishop? This is the dilemma that must keep Bishop Fellay awake at night, which is why we need to pray for him, all of us, inside the SSPX and out, every day. Nothing is clear and everything is uncertain.

The Remnant/SSPX Connection

The main reason The Remnant struggles financially is because ours is among the very few voices raised in regular defense of the Society of St. Pius X against false charges of schism. Our friendship with

the Society comes at a price. But because we see those attacks on the Society as nothing less than attacks on the Catholic counterrevolution itself, we stand with them as brothers. The world, the new Church, the progressives—they don't fear the limited return of the old Latin Mass. It is organized resistance to their Modernist agenda that they will not tolerate. And since the SSPX has long been their most feared nemesis, if you befriend them, if you defend them, you will be condemned along with them.

So readers will notice that this issue of The Remnant, for example, was again delayed. Why? Because of a major computer crash that knocked us off our publishing schedule for a week. Our computer system is old and needs replacing. But The Remnant struggles to keep afloat. Why? Because lobbying for liturgical preference is not what we're about either. What The Remnant is against defines it just as much as what The Remnant is for.

I think I'm on safe ground when I point out that this apostolate provides a vital service. We continue to publish a newspaper twice monthly, even after most newspapers closed their doors years ago.

Our website, according to Alexa, is one of the top Catholic sites in America, and certainly in the top three traditional Catholics sites in the world.

Remnant TV is breaking out in leaps and bounds, with escalating viewership numbers to prove it.

We have two new books ready to go to press this month—one on the Islamification of Catholic Europe and the other a how-to book on homeschooling.

The new Remnant Radio project is only weeks away, and promises to provide yet another service in defense of the Catholic cause at no additional cost to anyone... EXCEPT US.

And finally, our stable is growing rapidly. With some of the best Catholics writers in the world today, an average Remnant article online can easily garner 10,000 hits in the first few days. Our writers need to feed their children too, however. So as laborers are worthy of their hire, The Remnant must find ways to compensate them.

But our editorial vision is broad, too broad some would say. In the spirit of my father and Michael Davies, I use The Remnant to try to "unite the clans", to stand together, to prepare to make war in the name of the old Faith. And while this is appreciated by the battle-scarred warriors that make up our closest friends and allies, it is not at all appreciated by the majority of Latin Mass Catholics who are divided over the question of resistance vs. liturgical preference, counterrevolution vs. restoration. "We have the Mass we prefer," they argue, "and the Remnant must not rock the boat with the bishops who generously give us our Mass. Besides, the SSPX is in schism. Why is The Remnant friendly to them?" You see how it goes? Victims of the divide-and-conquer strategy do not understand (or SUPPORT) The Remnant's point of view.

But as I see it, and despite the limited return of the Latin Mass (for which I'm eternally grateful!), there is no other way. Things in the Church are only getting worse, even if everyone from the Pope on down is telling us how great it all is.

How is it better now than before? They

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The Remnant Speaks

Letters to the Editor can be sent via email to Editor@RemnantNewspaper.com

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never quite get around to explaining that. Empty churches are sold off by the dozen, while new priests grin more broadly than ever from behind their table-altars. What are they grinning at? Nobody knows.

Nuns dressed in dowdier pants suits than Hillary's, tour the world telling everyone how progressive they are, while remaining completely unaware of just how old and passé they have become.

The hierarchy assure us that they care more about poor people than did any of their predecessors back to the Apostles, evidently oblivious to the fact that nobody cares what they care about anymore. Even after the massive clerical sex scandal and cover-up, that these men have become morally and socially irrelevant doesn't even occur to them. The only thing they're dogmatic about is that global warming is real and the SSPX is in schism.

And now we have a humble pope—the veritable embodiment of Modernism—bragging from the red carpet about how he's going to show mercy to the millions of Catholics who were long ago disenfranchised by the very Modernism he himself espouses with every breath he takes. In other words, his big fix is to repeat everything all over again, presumably with some vague hope of achieving a different result. Nobody notices that this fits a textbook definition of insanity? I guess not.

All they know is that the Catholic Church is better off now that millions have apostatized, many more millions don't bother going to Mass anymore, and still more millions reject fundamental dogmas of the Church. This silent apostasy is what they call progress.

Meanwhile, tucked away in broom closets, banished from the holy places, forgotten and ignored, Jesus Christ is subjected to the supreme mockery of His servants attempting to re-create Him in their own image and likeness—a demonic inversion these arrogant men would have the world believe is being done in the name of "mercy".

Faithless and flat, meaningless and moribund, Godless and gutless, this is the New & Improved Catholic-Christian Community of the Second Vatican Council—the very thing against which The Remnant now stands and with which we can never compromise, regardless of how many Latin Masses they bequeath to us.

And the price of this resistance? When our computer crashes we nearly go out of business.

Please, friends in Christ, we need help. This isn't just The Remnant's war. They have declared war on everything in which Catholics must believe in order to be saved. We're all conscripted, we're all "in schism", we're all the sons and daughters of Archbishop Lefebvre, and we're all in this together.

To support The Remnant please send your tax-deductible donations to: **The Remnant Foundation PO Box 1117, Forest Lake, MN 55025.**

Don't leave us to die alone out here. There's a war to win. God bless you, Mary keep, and long live Christ the King. ■

Letters from Prison

Editor, *The Remnant*: I am writing in dire straits. I am calling to any traditional priest in the Pensacola area that would be willing to visit a prison once or twice a month (at least) to offer the Tridentine Mass and hear Confession.

We currently have a priest who comes bi-weekly on Wednesdays, but only offers the Novus Ordo. Furthermore, he allows Non-Catholics to receive Communion. When I asked him, at the end of Mass, to state what the Catholic Church teaches about non-Catholics receiving Holy Communion he said I should not worry about others but myself. Then he stated that we [prisoners] are in a difficult situation [prison], and that others may not have recourse to their service [which is false since they have their own Protestant service].

I then asked about one having to hold the Catholic Faith (belief in Real Presence) to receive Communion, and he replied that it was sufficient that if one shows up for the Catholic service, that in itself is saying "I agree with the Pope and the Catholic Church." Then he reiterated that I should not worry about others, but just take care of myself. But as I see it, the faithful have a RIGHT to be instructed in matters of religion (CCC#3037) and this is not the teaching or practice of the Catholic Church. To defend his position, he asked me, "How else are we to evangelize?" With all due respect to the priest, I did not want to debate him in front of everyone, so I remained silent, but the obvious answer is to speak the truth in love, not to compromise the Faith or teaching of the Church!

For this, I am begging, any Traditional Priest, with permission, to come for Mass & Confession, even if only once or twice a month. Thank you for your time and attention to this most humble request.

Derrick Blair
Black Water River Correctional Facility
BRCF 5914 Jeff Ates Rd.
Milton, FL 32583

P.S. Since I am in prison it's not like I can go to another parish Church. This is the only Catholic Service, so my choice is to go receive Communion and pray with heretics, which is condemned by the Church (See apostolic canons #44, 63, 72 and 73) or omit my Sunday obligation. Tough choice for a prisoner trying to live his faith and atone for a life of sin that led to prison. (See also CCC 2088 and 1400)

Women Wearing Pants

Editor, *The Remnant*: I just wanted to thank you for Hilary White's article "On the Origins of the Sexual Revolution." It was so nice to have some encouragement on the topic of modesty in dress. Sometimes I feel so alone here. I'm one of the only women in this area that I know of that does not wear pants. It sounds silly to say, but it makes me feel so discouraged. Isn't it sad that we live in such times that women are embarrassed to dress like women? I felt

God was calling me to it, so I gave up wearing pants a few years ago. You wouldn't think it was such a big deal, but it caused me some persecution for a while (that, and wearing a veil and going to the Latin Mass). My sister doesn't even speak to me anymore, and the rest of my family just thinks I'm weird!

With all the craziness and androgyny going on in the world I would encourage other women to change the way they dress so as not to be a part of that. Our Lady of Fatima said certain fashions would be introduced that would greatly offend Our Lord. Let's try to be pleasing God in the way we dress, rather than keeping up with today's fashions (which are becoming more disordered and immodest!)

Modesty in dress does not mean wearing frumpy jumpers. Dressing modestly can be beautiful. I believe it's a way to give witness, to fight against the "sloppiness" of our culture, and to make reparation for the sins of immodesty and impurity that are so rampant in our times.

Thanks again for this article and for all you do! It makes me feel less alone. Keep up the good fight!

God bless,
Lorien from IL

Beyond Politics

Editor, *The Remnant*: Thank you for sharing the excellent Ann Roche article on the Remnant website. This inspired me to pick up 'Beyond Politics' by Solange Hertz, from the edition that you published in 2003. I'll leave you to interpret what I found on page 15 from Chapter 1. The quote follows.

The Pope has absolutely no 'privilege of personal infallibility' apart from the Church, but Abbe Roca tells us something of the kind will be invoked to impose the new "Gospel of social redemption" on the public at large. Just as the fallen angels followed Lucifer's personal directives to their damnation and the Talmudic Jews followed the example of Caiphas and Annas against Christ, we can therefore expect the apostates of the latter days to follow the personal directives of the Antichrist in his assault on the Church.

We may be sure, moreover, that his dictates will coincide with men's sinful inclinations if he is to win worldwide support. Like the unjust steward, "Knowing that he has but a short time." (Apo 12:12), he will curry favor while he can by offering lavish permissions to all. Under cover of his authorization, wholesale dispensations from God's laws in the name of religion and human compassion will be granted for the asking. Encouraged to attenuate their relations with God in the same way the debtors in the parable were led to cheat on their accounts, those who accept such favors will automatically labor to uphold an establishment in which they have acquired a vested interest.

Kind regards,
Bill C.

About those Crazy Pelagians?

Editor, *The Remnant*: Here's something to consider. It's from ST. GELASIUS I 492-496 Bishop of Dalmatia, his letter "Licet inter varias" to Pope Honorius, July 28, 493:

161 (1) [For] it has been reported to us, that in the regions of the Dalmatians certain men had disseminated the recurring tares of the Pelagian pest, and that their blasphemy prevails there to such a degree that they are deceiving all the simple by the insinuation of their deadly madness. . . . [But] since the Lord is superior, the pure truth of Catholic faith drawn from the concordant opinions of all the Fathers remains present. . . . (2) . . . What pray permits us to abrogate what has been condemned by the venerable Fathers, and to reconsider the impious dogmas that have been demolished by them? Why is it, therefore, that we take such great precautions lest any dangerous heresy, once driven out, strive anew to come [up] for examination, if we argue that what has been known, discussed, and refuted of old by our elders ought to be restored? Are we not ourselves

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Letters to the Editor Cont...

offering, which God forbid, to all the enemies of the truth an example of rising again against ourselves, which the Church will never permit? Where is it written: Do not go beyond the limits of your fathers [Prov. 22:28], and: Ask your fathers and they will tell you, and your elders will declare unto you [Deut. 32:7]? Why, accordingly, do we aim beyond the definitions of our elders, or why do they not suffice for us? If in our ignorance we desire to learn something, how every single thing to be avoided has been prescribed by the orthodox fathers and elders, or everything to be adapted to Catholic truth has been decreed, why are they not approved by these? Or are we wiser than they, or shall we be able to stand constant with firm stability, if we should undermine those [dogmas] which have been established by them? . . . St. Gelasius I

From Ed in Indy

Is the Novus Ordo Reformable? Teilhard Says, "Ye"!

Editor, *The Remnant*: So asks Dr. Vincent La Vigna in *The Remnant* (8/15/15). Well, the Vatican Curia nervously answers "Yes", without admitting any serious fault with this heterodox rite, nor with its Freemasonic origin (concocted by the disgraced Archbishop Annibale Bugnini). Yes, Novus Ordo is "reformable", just as its origin, "pastoral" Second Vatican Council, is "reformable" — simply by abrogating the whole sorry mess, otherwise, it's just a tinkering with a fatally defective liturgical missal which has utterly ruined the Roman Church—a "Conciliar" Church with blind leaders lurching toward the ditch.

Remove the Novus Ordos' Masonic mask and behold its true mission—which is to refit the Catholic Church to finally serve its new master in the eventual global New Order (a liturgical Novus Ordo with a political New Order). Conspiracy? Of course, go to the head of the class! But no one wants bad news; so forget it, have a nice day.

At the Final Judgment, it may be possible to plead ignorance—which depends upon hope and mercy—the new "reconciliation" wherein all are saved. "Hope", along with "love", seems of importance in the new "reforms" promised in the October Synod. And "faith"? Well, it is not mentioned for possible "reform" in the Synod, but sometimes the Deity surprises.

"Synods" are now almost as important as "The Council" itself, which is almost "infallible", since it is "pastoral", which is good. Of course, today nothing can really be "infallible", inasmuch as such might be in conflict with "Evolution". In the "Reform-of-the-Reform", its justification is really seen as Evolution-in-Action.

Evolution is certain to be very big in the Synod. For 2,000 years Evolution was not fully recognized, until our modern prophet Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., discovered Outer Space. Teilhard's genius was not fully appreciated in the pre-Conciliar era. Some in the Old Curia could not understand Teilhard's new vocabulary, because their orthodoxy could not process the new dimensions

of the Cosmic Christ. But seminary instructors understood the new code, and at least tried to explain it all to these struggling young seminarians. Teilhard may soon be sainted.

Now please be seated, for this may be a shocking revelation. As may have been suspected, there are some Traditionalists, whose privacy must be respected, who would not only reject the "Reform-of-the-Reform", but would even by-pass the liturgical missal of 1962, and take us back 445 years to the infallible and perpetual codification of the Roman Rite by Pope St. Pius V, in the decree Quo Primum, 1570, as authorized by the dogmatic Council of Trent—with a formal CURSE upon anyone of any rank in the future who would deny the right of any priest to use the Tridentine liturgical missal of 1570-AD. This of course requires an unambiguous understanding of the words "perpetual" and "formal curse"—words used for a definite purpose by a dogmatic General Council, and by a Pope acting in his own authority, and the infallible authority of the General Council of Trent. Look around carefully, see the evidence of St. Pius V's formal CURSE being unloosed on the unfaithful Church of Vatican-II and its novel popes.

Can the Novus Ordo be "reformed"? Please! Of course not. Holy Father, Saint Pius V, pray for us that our Divine Worship and sacramental rites be restored according to your standard, and that of Session-22 of the Ecumenical Council of Trent.

Robert K. Dahl
Maryland

Father X Has Had It with Francis

Editor's Note: Just to be perfectly clear, Father X is not SSPX or 'independent'. He is a priest in good standing with superiors who in turn are in good standing with Rome. Though he usually offers Mass in the Traditional Rite, he also celebrates the Novus Ordo. His words indicate that Catholic priests from all walks of life in the Church today are deeply concerned about the new

direction in which Pope Francis seems determined to take the Church we all love. Please pray for the Holy Father. God help us all. **MJM**

Dear Mr. Matt,
Following up [my article in the July 31st Remnant](#) on how Pope Francis 'demythologizes' the miracle of the loaves and fishes, I would like to recommend to readers the following practice, which I myself have recently adopted.

God in his inscrutable Providence and just wrath has evidently decided to punish the weak, corrupt, neo-modernistic post-Vatican II Church: he has allowed a bunch of compromising cardinals to elect one of the most dreadful popes in history.

In Case You Missed It: Cardinal Kasper defends Ireland's gay 'marriage' decision

Therefore, especially in these crucial weeks leading up to the Synod on the Family, instead of the customary Our Father and three Hail Marys for the Holy Father's intentions in your daily Rosary, please consider offering those same prayers as a plea that the Holy Father's intentions be frustrated and thwarted.

After all, ever since early last year Francis has communicated in many ways his intention and heartfelt hope that the upcoming Synod may help him officially introduce the sexual revolution into the Church, in the form of Holy Communion for bigamists (adulterers) and a "welcome" for the "positive values" in sodomite relationships. Talk about the Smoke of Satan.

Father X
via Internet

On Climate Change: Who's on First?

Editor, *The Remnant*: I don't know what is true. I ain't no climate scientist. Both sides seem convincing. I keep on getting told to 'look at the evidence', but which evidence is the true evidence? I

am not a cretin, either. I am probably more informed about this than most of the people who have taken sides. But I remain confounded. Here is my dilemma:

1) The sceptics of anthropocentric climate change appear to be dominated by hardline neo-liberal capitalists ... which makes me suspicious.

2) Proponents of anthropocentric climate change appear to be ultra-liberal secularists with an anti-life/population control agenda ... which makes me suspicious.

I have noticed a lot of traditional Catholics have criticized *Laudato Si* (the Pope's encyclical on this question) which has prompted me to write this letter. I have read/listened to some of the *Remnant's* and *Fatima Centre's* commentary in this. I am still confused.

Sincerely,
Raphael Rickson

Editor's Note: It is confusing, and that's because there's a grain of truth on both sides. But climate change is big business for the powerbrokers who run our world. For the globalists it's the newest power-grabbing hoax, predicated on an anti-God, anti-life, pro-big government, and anti-subsidiarity agenda. That said, raping the land was always something the Catholic Church and certainly Catholic culture condemned. Husbandry of the land, on the other hand, reforestation, and agendas that countered atrocities such as clear-cutting forests and polluting the air would always and forever be in line with Catholic teaching. The climate change Nazis want to protect the right of women to kill their babies in the womb because, we are told, these guys "care about children". What more do we need to know about the evil that drives these people. For more information on the diabolical agenda of the climate control zealots please see *Remnant* website articles by Elizabeth Yore. **MJM**

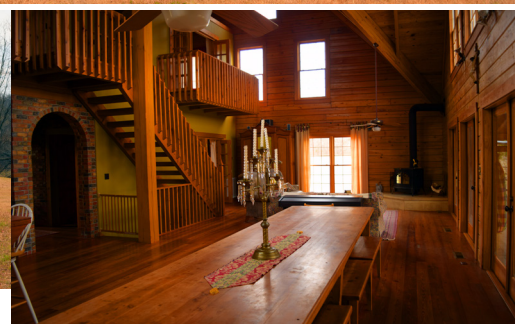
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Means, Motive, and Opportunity

P. Archbold/Continued from Page 1

Pope Francis supports the activities and mission of what Mr. Keating acknowledges are “wayward cardinals and bishops” either displays willful blindness to the implications of basic facts, or a stunning lack of imagination.

I would like to suggest some few “somethings” that suggest at least the possibility that the Pope supports some or all of the agenda of those “wayward cardinals and bishops” and that the Pope not so secretly would like to see them prevail. Further, new information suggests that those “wayward cardinals and bishops” are placing all their bets on the Pope making them prevail.

I take it from the context of Mr. Keating’s remarks that he would wholeheartedly agree that it would be a crime against the Church if the synod produced a “a less-than-orthodox final statement” or in any way undermined the Church’s perennial teaching on the indissolubility of marriage, whether through deliberate ambiguity or changes to immemorial praxis.

To establish the likelihood of this crime being committed, let’s look at whether the potential perpetrators have the means, motive, and opportunity to commit the crime.

So let’s look at some basic facts. It was Pope Francis who called for the Synod on the Family. It is the Pope who is the President of the Synod. It was Pope Francis who selected Cardinal Kasper to deliver the preparatory speech in February of last year, the speech that put the question of communion for the divorced and remarried front and center. The Pope saw and approved the contents of that speech in advance, according to Cardinal Kasper. It was Pope Francis who appointed Italian Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, general secretary of the Synod of Bishops, the Cardinal who later publicly bragged about how he would manipulate the Synod to nefarious ends. It was Pope Francis who appointed the rest of the Synod leadership, the leadership that produced the disastrous and un-Catholic *Instrumentum Laboris* of 2014. It was Pope Francis who approved that disastrous *Instrumentum Laboris*. It was Pope Francis who reviewed and approved the disgusting and heretical *Relatio Post Disceptationem*, a document rightly called by the group Voice of the Family “one of the worst official documents drafted in Church history”.

It was the Pope, who allowed the initial attempt by Cardinal Baldisseri to prevent the reaction to that document by the Synod Fathers from publication, before being shouted down by them and relenting. It was the Pope, who by his sole authority, ordered the publication of troubling non-Catholic paragraphs stricken by the Synod Fathers in the final document of the 2014 Synod.

It was Pope Francis who approved the equally troubling *Instrumentum Laboris* for the 2015 Synod. It was Pope Francis who just this past week ordered changes to the annulment process, changes opposed by many Synod Fathers, which will undoubtedly lead to widespread abuse and the continued weakening of marriage.



And now, if [recent reports](#) are to be believed, these very same Synod leaders who did all of the above, have entirely changed the rules of the 2015 Synod, eliminating entirely documents and discussions of the Synod being published. Instead, there will be no interim document published

(the document which caused all the controversy in 2014). There will be no discussions published; in fact there will not even be any general discussion, but only small groups that cannot communicate with each other. There will not even be a final document voted upon and published by the Synod

Fathers. No, instead, there will only be a closing address by the Holy Father. And that’s it. And then the Pope can do whatever he wants following the Synod.

Why the changes? Why would the very same people with the very same goals as 2014 now change the rules of the 2015 Synod so dramatically and invest all results in the will of the Pope if they did not have at least some confidence that the Pope desires the same ends?

With all respect to Mr. Keating, there are plenty of reasons to suspect that Pope Francis wants the heretical innovators to prevail. There is also good reason to suspect that the innovators have that same expectation.

None of this suggests that I know what the Pope will do. I don’t even know if the Pope knows what he will do. Further, there is always the possibility of a Holy Spirit moment from out of the blue, for which I pray daily. But there are very good reasons to be suspect about the upcoming Synod and what the Pope wishes to prevail. ■

The “Vegetable Gospel”: Saving Souls vs. the Planet

By Magister Athanasius

These days it is not uncommon for a Catholic to hear about the need to care for the flowers, the trees, the birds and other aspects of God’s creation. Yet, those who promote this message in the church often fail to mention the need to convert the countless souls who are in need of salvation. Many wax eloquently about the need to take care of brother tree, sister flower and mother bird, but very seldom about the need for souls to repent of sin and receive salvation. Why? Simply put, many no longer believe there is anything from which people need to be saved.

Does Man Need Salvation?

Does man really need salvation? According to Sacred Scripture, all people are born in sin (Psalm 51:5) and this doctrine is known of “original sin”. Additionally, all are under God’s wrath (Ephesians 2:3) because of their sins. Scripture even says that man is under the domain of Satan (Ephesians 2:2). As bad as this already may sound, Scripture doesn’t stop there; it further states that man, after the fall, is dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1) and alienated from God (Colossians 1:21). If one is to take the Christian faith seriously, then one must clearly affirm that man is in desperate need of salvation, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says:

The doctrine of original sin is, so to speak, the “reverse side” of the Good News that Jesus is the Savior of all men, that all need salvation and that salvation is offered to all through Christ. (389)

Salvation from What?

At this point, it may be necessary to ask:

from what exactly does one need to be saved? Simply put, eternal separation from God, i.e. hell. The Catholic faith teaches that if one dies alienated from God, then they descend immediately into hell, as the Ecumenical Council of Florence says:

But the souls of those who depart this life in actual mortal sin, or in original sin alone, go down straightaway to hell to be punished, but with unequal pains. (Florence, Sixth Session, 6 July 1439.) Scripture itself is filled with warnings about dying alienated from God, saying:

Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:15)

In Matthew 10:28, Jesus says:

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. And Hebrews 10:31 warns:

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Consequently, there is clearly a need to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, as it is the only means by which one may be saved from God’s wrath (John 14:6).

Does Creation Need Salvation?

Does the rest of creation also need salvation? Technically no, creation does not need salvation. It is in need of liberation from decay, as per Romans 8:21, but it is not in need of salvation, since the rest of creation does not have an eternal soul. This is why Christ commissioned the Apostles to go into the world and preach the Gospel to people,

not birds or trees (Matthew 28:18-20).

Which is More Important?

Having briefly considered the vast difference between the plight of creation and the plight of man, one must ask: which is more important, the salvation of souls, or care for creation? Jesus answers this question for us, as He said:

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? (Matthew 6:26).

The priority that man has over the rest of creation is rooted in the fact that he has an eternal soul, whereas the rest of creation does not (angels excepted). Even the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* recognizes the vast difference between man and the rest of God’s creation, saying:

It is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly. It is likewise unworthy to spend money on them that should as a priority go to the relief of human misery. One can love animals; one should not direct to them the affection due only to persons. (2418)

Priorities

All of this is not to say that man should not be a good steward of the creation with which God has entrusted him. Clearly, he should, but there are weightier matters with which man should be more concerned. Given how desperately man is in need of salvation, and the fact that few ever find it (Matthew 7:14), maybe it is time to stop neglecting the “weightier matters of the law” (Matthew 23:23) and start addressing what will truly matter in the end, i.e. the salvation of souls. ■

Hail the Conquering Hero!

A Willful America Prepares to Adulate a Willful Pope

By John Rao, Ph.D

When the “pastoral-minded” pope arrives in the United States on September 22nd, he will undoubtedly receive the thunderous, multi-religious, bi-partisan (dare I say bi-sexual?) welcome due to a conquering hero. This is no wonder, given the fact that he will be visiting a land that prides itself on its “pastoral-minded”, practical, and pragmatic approach to political and social life. For, far from being at odds with one another, America and Pope Francis share the same insistence on the need to separate pragmatic and pastoral *action* from all that silly and disruptive *thought* that the Fathers of the Council of Trent believed to be absolutely necessary to ensure that “pragmatic” and the “pastoral” action actually did, in practice, work in favor of something true and moral rather than against it. This dubious basis for fraternal union is enhanced by the fact that American society and the pontificate of Pope Francis both replace disruptive, uncharitable, Faith-and-Reason shaped meditation with another common guide to their “pragmatic” and “pastoral” action: willfulness pure and simple. And it is the *strongest* expressions of willfulness in any given time or place that ultimately determine what the words “pragmatic” and “pastoral” really mean.

Hail the conquering hero, indeed. Both America and Francis are pathetic victims rather than victors. They are fraternally united in a cancer ward filled with a myriad of fellow patients all manifesting the ravages brought about by that basic willfulness which is the motor force of all of modern pseudo-civilization. And the ticker-tape parade that will begin on September 22nd can be viewed as preparation for the massive, celebratory fireworks that will greet the five hundredth anniversary of the entry of this willfulness into the lymphatic system of Christendom in 1517.

There is no way that one can spell out in a brief commentary decades of explanation of the reasons why the whole American pluralist vision is one enormous fraud. Based originally upon the argument that practical and pragmatic—i.e., pastoral—concerns for social order in a multi-cultural society require respect for the “freedom” of everyone, this seemingly prudential freedom revealed itself to be an iron-clad doctrine of liberty unleashing each and every individual will to wreak its havoc with the body politic—with the disaster that this inevitably ensured restrained temporarily by whatever controls might still be imposed by a “common sense” whose content constantly diminished under the pressure of the strongest and most willful passions. I cannot say how much it frustrates me that this is not obvious in a land where everyone makes reference to the “will of the Founding

Fathers” as a determination for what is right and wrong, and where contending ideological schools battle with one another for the right to elucidate what that “will” actually permits and prohibits.

Who cares what the Founders’ will was, if that will was not in line with Faith and Reason? But in saying that, one, of course, commits the sin against the Holy Spirit. With such a question that evil monster called “thought” has come back into the picture! And thought is not allowed to judge what the willful have already decided must practically and pastorally be done to ensure the charitable satisfaction of their particular passions.

Once again, no one can spell out in a brief commentary decades of explanations of the reasons why the Church had to fall into the same enormous fraud once she went down the pluralist-minded path. The whole gimmick played out perfectly. The pastoral concern for peaceful coexistence in a multi-religious, multi-cultural society turned out to require acceptance of that ironclad doctrine of liberty welcoming into the Camp of the Saints the unleashed individual will—with the havoc that this wreaked temporarily limited only by what the faithful could swallow at the moment.

Alas, the faithful’s capacity for swallowing more and more individual willfulness was stretched ever further by the strongest wills inside and outside the Church. It should be clear by now to anyone with eyes to see that whenever the word “pastoral” is evoked as the grounds for change it means that the lobby for satisfaction of yet another

illicit passion has gained sufficient strength to demand that the weak wait upon their needs hand and foot as an obvious act of charity.

History is filled with popes who are good and bad, intelligent and mentally challenged, efficient and hopelessly incompetent, pastorally calamitous and pastorally fruitful. It was perhaps inevitable that, given the preferential option for pluralism adopted by a “pastoral” Council, the Church would be forced to endure the reign of a willful pope ready to impose his own crochets upon the faithful or voluntarily promote those of others he admires. Proof after proof of that willfulness is offered to us every day, especially with reference to the momentous Synod about to open in Rome.

It is no wonder that American neo-Catholics—trained by their pastoral, pluralist, willful environment not to allow the teeniest sliver of thought to interfere with the desires of the strong—have slavishly lapped up every bit of willful pottage offered from the time of the Council to the present as though it were manna from God. Heaven forbid that they should allow the decrees of past Councils, the pronouncements of past pontiffs, or the text of Holy Scripture and the commentaries upon it by the Doctors of the Church to interrupt their adulation. If the pope wills it, *Deus lo vult!* Don’t tread on him! *Laissez-faire!* This mindlessness will lead them—like the moderate revolutionary *Girondins* who sang the *Marseillaise* on their way to be guillotined—to sing the praises of the coming Synod even if it pastorally decrees the destruction of all that they hold dear today. After all, in the land of pluralist willfulness, the man who is

sacrificed should accept the demise of his intellect as charitable and pastorally essential.

As I intimated above, the problem of willfulness and the willingness of the weak to snap to attention when the dictates of the strong are made known to them, praising them for their charity and vision as they are abused, is not only endemic to pluralist societies. Pluralists are merely more efficient in gaining the victims’ acceptance of their pitiful self-destruction. Willfulness and self-deception are in the lymphatic system of all of modern civilization, in its pluralist and its non-pluralist forms. They entered into the lymph when Luther’s willful distortion of Christianity was injected into the body of Christendom in 1517, bringing with it all of the stimuli to willful, mindless, individual reductionism that had already been fighting the medieval Church’s efforts to transform all of nature under the Social Reign of Christ since the twelfth century. It is Christ as King that is the real target of the willful assault.

Yes, a willful America is now preparing its adulatory welcome for a willful pope. But the parades to come are nothing compared to what is to follow next. Get yourselves ready for the Roman Triumph that will greet the five hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther two years hence. And if the pope wills it, must it not be pastorally good?

Martyrs of the Catholic Reformation, pray for America, pray for Pope Francis, and pray for the final end of this five hundred year Reign of mindless Willfulness. Pray that Christ becomes the King at least of his Church on earth once more.



Dig Up the Bar...

H. White/Continued from Page 1

the doors after their stroll around the Basilica and dump the offending object into the bin provided. It is clear that on some level at least they know they have just been rebuked by a whole country, by Italy, and by the Catholic Church: "Your 'normal' is too scandalous for this church. Clean up your act." It is easy to imagine that the shock comes from the fact that this was the first time in their lives they've heard a word about it.

It's a funny thing about Italy, but even when the culture has almost entirely forgotten its catechism lessons, the rule of modestly covering up inside churches remains deeply engrained. In the town where I live in Umbria, the church on the piazza is very famous and attracts huge crowds of visitors throughout the year. Tour groups troop into the ancient marble church on rotation, often chattering out loud during the monks' Offices, oblivious to the stern looks they get. The Italian habit of treating the Basilica of San Benedetto, and the chanting of the Divine Office, as some kind of Disneyfied theme park ride, marching up to the altar rail to gawk and snap photos, is one that the monks themselves mostly take in stride, however much it may annoy the rest of us.

But in the year I have lived here, I have yet to see any of these worthy ladies in the state of scandalous undress that appears to be the norm for tourists from Anglo nations. All through this ferociously hot summer they have swarmed in, loud and disruptive as ever but not one with bared shoulders, shorts or skirts above the knee. Most of the tourists are middle aged, of the generation that mostly abandoned any similitude of practice of or adherence to the Catholic religion, but none of them would dream of entering a church, even in the sweltering Italian summer, without carrying a scarf in her bag to toss over her shoulders. Hanging about the church steps after Mass one day, one of the monks remarked, "We don't really worry about that much with the Italians. They still know."

In fact, it's a funny thing about Italy as a whole, that the sexual revolution has mainly failed to produce the kind of moral chaos that has so characterized the life of the Anglo, Germanic and other western nations. Why this might be is anyone's guess, but Italy has a comparatively low rate of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and consequently a comparatively low rate of abortion. The rate [had risen](#) from about 6.5% in 1990 to about 17% by 2007, which seems like a lot until you see that in Germany for the same period the numbers were 15.1% to 32%. Britain's percentage of unwed motherhood rose from 11.5% in 1980 to 43.7 by 2006.

This is not to say that things are peachy in Italy. Far from it. The Italian birth rate is unsustainable and marriage has all but dropped off the radar for most young people, even though they mostly come from intact families. Whatever is wrong with Italian society, however, the general western frenzy of all-in promiscuity is, in the main, absent here.

While it may be true that Italian priests don't often preach against

sexual promiscuity or the evils of the Sexual Revolution, the absence of the topic seems to be predicated on the assumption that the congregation already knows. The moral bar in Italy is still sitting at least at knee height, and there are always the nonnas watching

With the general dissolution of the family, and often vast physical distances from the grandmothers, it seems that the moral bar in North American and British Catholic churches is so low we have actually dug a trench and buried it. When was the last time you, a Tradition-minded Catholic who probably attends at least a very conservative Novus Ordo parish, heard a priest condemn as evil, as sinful, as harmful, as morally abhorrent, sexual activity outside marriage? A few times perhaps? In traditionalist parishes perhaps at least a few times a year?

Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women.



Now, how often have we heard our priests joining the general chorus of support for "single mothers, who have, thank God, received the support and care necessary to help her make a decision for life." [Cue mandatory applause.] That is, we praise a woman as "courageous" and "countercultural" for not being willing to have her inconvenient child killed. That, ladies and gentlemen, is where the moral bar sits in the Church now: buried and long since out of sight.

I spent a long time in the pro-life movement, and I met a lot of good people who have given their lives to the struggle against abortion. But among them, I have met very, very few who understood how their own acceptance, whether reluctant or not, of the new mores of the Sexual Revolution have affected them and the movement: the standards of dress and behaviour, the resignation to an expectation of sexual activity before marriage, that is so ubiquitous in our Anglo countries that we hardly even notice it. Most pro-life people simply never stop to consider how the entire package is connected together to produce a culture in which abortion is more or less accepted along with teen sex.

Why have we gone 50 years with abortion? Seriously, think about it. Why have these Christian nations – it is not often remembered that when abortion was legalised in Canada the country was about 50% Catholic – simply shrugged and accepted abortion as an unshakable social reality? Is it possible because the logic is too demanding? Has the realization dawned that the only way to stop abortion is to roll back all the other glorious gains of the entire social revolution of the 20th century?

One of the first things I observed in my working life in the pro-life movement was that the older generation, my mother's age, wanted to cherry pick abortion, to separate it out from the rest of Modernia's New Paradigm, and excise it carefully like a tumor that had

just inexplicably grown from nowhere, preserving all the rest of Modernia intact and untouched. By the late 1990s many of these people who had started the pro-life movement in the 70s, behaved as though they were beaten. There was an aura of depressed and surly resignation among them. They knew that their work had not worked, and abortion rates simply continued to rise, with more and more legal concessions being made throughout the western world.

These were the same people who in the 60s and 70s had helped to usher in the New Paradigm in all its many facets. They were the young women who had abandoned children at home to take jobs. Who took advantage of the new No Fault Divorce laws and were working through their second or third "marriages". They were the supporters of government day care benefits and "equal pay for equal work" and the whole roster of social upheaval that gave us the contemporary situation. For that generation, they entered the pro-life movement as a fight to get a single law repealed. Once this was accomplished, they figured they could all get

back to enjoying the beneficent effects of Modernia. Abortion was just a weird anomaly in an otherwise glorious new world.

During a conversation I had with one of them in Prince Edward Island, one of the last places in the western world where abortion is still illegal, I had to explain that it was Feminism that had ushered in the abortion culture she was fighting. She looked at me dumbfounded, as though I had said the Care Bears were really abortionists. It had never in her decades of work crossed her mind that abortion was not a strange, disconnected legal aberration that had fallen on the world for no apparent reason. The notion that it was connected in any way with the "progression" and "modernization" of society, the "emancipation" of women and the advance of "equality," sounded to her like sheer insanity. And this was someone who went to Mass every week, and always had.

While I was involved in the movement, I saw the explosion of what I have called the "Wailing Women" strategy, in which women who have had abortions stand in front of the microphones at marches and rallies and declare themselves to be the deeply wounded victims of abortion. This weepy strategy came out of the warm friendly non-confrontational end of the pro-life movement, the ones who were tired of being screamed at and called fascists by large bare-breasted women with rings in their tattooed noses. The Wailing Women were proof that we're the nice pro-lifers, interested in the needs of the woman and the deep, deep woundedness of her deeply felt feelings. We're not those mean pro-lifers who are always talking about mean stuff like principles and laws. A manifestation, in other words, of Stockholm Syndrome; pro-lifers turning dhimmi before their feminist superiors.

During the reign of Pope John Paul II, while the pro-life movement – or at least the March for Life in Washington – was somewhat more socially acceptable in

Catholic circles, the Wailing Women strategy flowed out of the pro-life movement and into the general life of the dioceses and parishes. They have indeed been a gift to the bishops, even more valuable in its way than Bernardin's Seamless Garment. Not only can they weave together their (very mild) opposition to abortion with their (VERY LOUD) opposition to immigration restrictions and border controls, now they can do it while standing at the back of the stage at the March for Life and looking deeply, deeply concerned while the poor, poor women wail into the microphone.

And it was eagerly taken up by priests who also didn't like to be shouted at and called fascists, though more usually by the other members of the diocesan councils. Women who have abortions are now victims, competing for a spot on the Church's Victim Hierarchy ladder, and as such, could of course never be held accountable for their own actions or decisions. It was eagerly accepted as a nice spoonful of warm, friendly and deeply, deeply caring sugar, for the nasty, bitter medicine of being forced to be (very, very quietly) against abortion.

Since the Wailing Women have appeared we have seen nearly all of the pro-life work and propaganda of the mainstream Novusordoist Catholic Church consumed by this sweet, sticky pudding of a strategy. It's all about the women, you see. The poor, poor, suffering women who were obviously forced into having abortions, naturally mostly by wicked socioeconomic pressure, that the bishops are only too eager to talk about. What they need is more opportunities! Which the government has to give them! (And no one has to talk about the bitter medicine ever again. Win!)

But what is the actual medicine? Is it even enough to talk about how abortion is a bad thing? When Pope Francis was first elected, and we Traddie reporters were sitting around the table in Roberto's drinking our disbelief away, we started getting emails and text messages of the new pope's previous assertions that abortion is a bad thing. See? Everything's going to be fine! He's pro-life, just like us! Squee!

Mr. Michael Matt, present on the opposite side of the table, was heard to wryly express the misgivings of the rest of us: "I need a little more from a pope than that he thinks it's bad to kill babies." The world, to expand the point, needs a little more from the Church than the occasional reiteration that abortion is a bad thing.

Can we please talk about the way we really should be living our lives? Can we hear now and then that the Sexual Revolution has been a culture-destroying catastrophe that has led to millions of destroyed families, ruined lives and damned souls, and by now, billions of deaths.

Can we hear how we would all be happier if modesty were once again just the normal way of living, and not singled out in homilies like it was a peculiar cultural artifact of Fundamentalist Protestants and Amish people? Can we have some attempt to give young people some idea of how to conduct their daily lives in sexual sanity, with reserve and self-respect and common sense?

Can we please dig up that bar? ■

Vandals In Rome: Francis to Sack Christian Marriage?

C. Ferrara/Continued from Page 1

Rio to Rome:

The Orthodox follow the theology of economy, as they call it, and they give a second chance of marriage [sic], they allow it. I believe that *this problem* must be studied.

And in this also pastoral care of marriage is a factor. And also *the judicial problem of the nullity of marriage, that must be revisited, because the ecclesiastical courts aren't enough* for this.

Francis likes the Orthodox heresy of “a second chance of marriage.” A “second chance of marriage” seems very good to him. The “problem” to be “studied,” as he intimated during the press conference, is how to introduce “a second chance of marriage,” or something like it, into the Catholic Church.

Another Bastion Demolished

Francis gets what Francis wants, and no Gospel or 2,000-year-old Catholic teaching and related discipline on the indissolubility of marriage will stand in his way. In *Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus* (“The Gentle Judge, The Lord Jesus”—get it?), and a corresponding *motu proprio* for the Eastern churches, Francis pays lip service to what he pointedly describes as the “the principle of the indissolubility of the matrimonial bond” (*Mitis*, Preface) while making it all but a dead letter in practice. But that is what Modernists always do: affirm what they deny while denying what they affirm. And Francis is a Modernist. Full stop. There, I’ve said it. We all know it, of course, but the time has come to declare it openly and explicitly so that as many other members of the faithful as possible may awaken to the clear and present danger this dictatorial, megalomaniacal visionary poses to the Church.

Overly harsh? Way over the top? Anyone who thinks so should recall the alarming “dream”—more like a threat—that Francis unbosomed before the whole world in his [sprawling personal manifesto](#), *Evangelii Gaudium*:

I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse *capable of transforming everything*, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world *rather than for her self-preservation...*

More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up *within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe...*

With *Mitis*, then, Francis is only making good on his threat to wreak havoc on the Church. His canonically amateurish “reform” of the process for determining the alleged nullity of marriages demolishes the centuries-old safeguards erected by Benedict XIV in his Bull *Dei Misericordiae* (1741), replacing them with what a professor of canon law at Catholic University of America [called](#) “a path that looks like the Catholic version of no-fault divorce.”

Here are the generally applicable features of this canonical train wreck:

- The traditional three-judge marriage tribunal of canonist-priests is replaced by a panel that can consist of a majority of laymen or laywomen who need not have canon law training, or even by a *single priest*. The rubber stamps are ready and waiting. Can. 1673(4).
- The traditional confirmatory second sentence is abolished, eliminating any check on error at the diocesan level. Can. 1679.
- Appeals from a declaration of nullity may be denied summarily, without a hearing, if deemed “dilatory,” that is, interposed for alleged purposes of delay. Cann. 1680(2) and 1687(4). In practice, “dilatory” will mean simply that the opposing spouse, usually with children in view, is trying to prevent the precipitous nullification of the marriage by exhausting appeals. The potential for cruel oppression of spouses with children, fighting to defend marriages against spouses who have “moved on” to other “unions” and even other children, is obvious.
- Mere uncorroborated statements or admissions by parties seeking nullity will now qualify as “full proof” of a fact asserted or self-servingly “admitted,” even though, under the superseded provision of the 1983 Code of Canon Law (can. 1536, § 2), such assertions did not have the status of full proof unless “there are other elements which *wholly corroborate* them.” Can. 1678 (1) Now, for example, the mere claim or self-serving “admission” that one never intended to be bound for life in Holy Matrimony could be accepted as fully probative of lack of consent. The potential for abuse in this provision alone is staggering.

With these general norms Francis has vastly facilitated the abuse of the annulment process, reversing precisely what Benedict XIV put in place centuries ago to prevent its abuse. And that is just the beginning.

Smuggling the Orthodox Practice into the Catholic Church

The primary novelty of this brutal and disgraceful “reform” is a “fast-track annulment” proceeding that can be completed in as little as 45 days and can be based, as noted above, on nothing more than the uncorroborated statements of the very party seeking the annulment. The new canons provide a mere 30 days’ notice of the evidentiary hearing, now to be limited to a single session whenever possible, and a piddling 15 days for the defender of the bond to present arguments and defenses in favor of the marriage. Cann. 1685-1686

The “fast-track” proceeding is available to couples who agree upon using it—that is, couples who collude in obtaining a speedy annulment. The provision that the parties’ *agreement* should determine the speed and thus the

thoroughness of the manner in which claims of nullity are examined stealthily imports into canon law the civil law concept of consensual divorce. Given the parties’ already suspect agreement to get the annulment over with quickly, the “fast-track” procedure is allowed when one of the following criteria are present:

- *lack of faith* [!] that results in simulation of consent or an error that determines the will;
- *brevity of married life*;
- abortion procured to *prevent procreation* [?];
- stubborn persistence in an extramarital affair at the time of or *just after* the wedding;
- improper concealment of sterility or of a serious and contagious disease;
- concealment of children from a previous relationship;
- concealment of incarceration;
- entering marriage for reasons completely foreign to married life;
- *unplanned pregnancy* of the woman;
- physical violence inflicted to extort consent;
- lack of use of reason proved by medical documents;
- and so on. [!]
Cf. Art. 14, § 1.

In view of the astonishing phrase “and so on”—which has no place in a legal document, especially one affecting the eternal welfare of souls—the result is *no fixed criteria whatsoever* for invoking the “fast-track” procedure. The list is merely suggestive, not prescriptive, and creative bishops will supply any number of other grounds for allowing quickie annulment proceedings. As the internationally respected canonist and civil lawyer Edward Peters, a consultant to no less than the Apostolic Signatura, [observes](#): “Of course, in no time, this list of reasons to hear nullity cases quickly will lengthen greatly. And why not? If physical violence to extort marriage consent justifies a speedy hearing from a bishop, should not physical violence inflicted during the marriage also qualify? If pregnancy at the time of the wedding is grounds for a quick process, should not drug or alcohol or sexual abuse qualify as well?”

Worse, the jumble of criteria for fast-tracking annulments lumps certain traditional grounds for annulment together with novel reasons for invoking the speedy process, thereby creating the impression that *all* the listed criteria would constitute grounds for annulment. What do such matters as an “unplanned pregnancy,” an abortion to “prevent procreation,” the “brevity of married life” or “an extra-marital affair” have to do with annulment proceedings as a search for the truth about the *objective existence* of a sacramental marriage bond arising at the time of vows, regardless of whether parties to a marriage currently feel aggrieved or have a subjective belief that the marriage has “failed”?

And what does “lack of faith” mean? Granted, one who feigns consent to marriage—that is, one who recites the marriage vows with a hidden intention not to be bound and is thus simply a liar—does not validly contract a marriage. Can. 1101, § 2. But this

is not a question of “faith” as opposed to veracity, for the Church has never required more than that the party to a marriage “at least not be ignorant of the fact that marriage is a permanent partnership between a man and a woman, ordered to the procreation of children through some form of sexual cooperation.” Can. 1096 § 2. That is precisely why a non-Catholic, with a special dispensation, can marry a Catholic in the Catholic Church and be perpetually bound by the sacrament without any obligation to profess the Catholic faith. Cann. 1124-1125. My own wife married me under such a dispensation, converting shortly after our marriage and receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation from Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre before his alleged excommunication. (Naturally, she is a better Catholic than I will ever be.)

Nor does [the use of contraception](#), while mortally sinful, ipso facto mean that the marriage as such was invalidly contracted, unless—at the time of the vows and not afterwards—one or both parties had the intention of *never* having children. Indeed, if the use of contraception alone were grounds for nullity, then the vast majority of Catholic marriages would be null despite the presence of a certain number of children, *and any permitted remarriages following a Francis-style annulment would also be invalid for the same reason*. Not even Francis the Merciful would go that far.

To quote Peters regarding Francis’s grab bag of fast-track criteria: “[C]onfusion will—and already has, judging from questions I have already received from the faithful—erupt as to whether these factors are not just reasons to hear a case speedily, but are themselves proof of matrimonial nullity.” Are we now to think that whoever violates the marriage vow in some egregious manner has *ipso facto* given rise to grounds for an expedited *ex post facto* “annulment”—in other words, simply a divorce? Is Francis thus implicitly endorsing the false Protestant and Orthodox interpretation of Matthew 19:9 according to which a spouse’s adultery justifies divorce and remarriage by the offended party? Is he going even further, attempting to insinuate into the Church a functional Catholic equivalent of what he first mentioned during the flight from Rio to Rome: “a second chance of marriage” according to the Orthodox “theology of economy [*oikonomia*]”?

[As the USCCB notes](#) concerning the Orthodox: “the Orthodox Church, following Mt 19:9 (“whoever divorces his wife except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery”), permits divorce under certain circumstance[s], *not only in the case of adultery but also of other serious assaults on the moral and spiritual foundation of marriage...*” By means of a potentially illimitable enumeration of fast-track annulment criteria, Francis would appear to be in the process of establishing *de facto* in the Catholic Church the Orthodox practice of permitting divorce and then a second or even third marriage where one party has committed some kind of grave offense against the prior marriage. The only brake on the process would be

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'Radical Traditionalists'? Really, Francis?

the conscientiousness of a particular bishop-judge, which in many cases will be nonexistent. I agree with [Michael Brendan Dougherty](#) that “Francis deliberately conflates reasons to question the validity of vows undertaken with instances of failure to live up to them. This is ludicrous.”

Amazingly, Francis all but admits in his own *motu proprio* that he has knowingly endangered the indissolubility of marriage with his speedy annulment scheme: “It did not however escape me that a shortened procedure may endanger the principle of the indissolubility of marriage...” Introduction at IV. And what is Francis’s only safeguard against the danger he has caused? Believe it or not, the local bishops! They will act as sole judges in the new quickie annulment proceedings. Can. 1683. Francis assures us that all will be safe in the hands of “the Bishop himself, who by virtue of his pastoral office is, with Peter, the greatest guarantor of Catholic unity in faith and discipline.” Introduction at IV.

Can Francis really have expected this contention to be met by anything but derisive laughter? Many of the bishops to whom he has entrusted the operation of his hastily constructed annulment factory (including Cardinal Kasper and the German cabal) have been agitating for the Church’s outright acceptance of civil divorce and remarriage even without canonical “reform.” Now each of their dioceses can begin churning out pro forma annulments in numbers that will dwarf even the American annulment mills at their peak operation under the American “provisional norms” of the 1970s which, among other things, eliminated the safeguard of the diocesan-level double judgment.

Francis versus John Paul II and Pope Ratzinger

What concerned John Paul II and Benedict XVI was an excess of annulments, which is why the 1983 Code of Canon Law restored the double judgment and John Paul II and the former Cardinal Ratzinger at the CDF made various interventions aimed at curbing the trend toward “Catholic divorce,” including addresses to the Roman Rota. In consequence, the number of annulments declined drastically during their pontificates, especially in America (whose marriage tribunals nevertheless still grant nearly as many annulments as those of all the rest of the world

combined). By the time Francis appeared on the balcony of Saint Peter’s to declare “Good evening!”, the total annual number of annulments worldwide was in the low five figures.

What concerns Francis, however, is the *lack* of annulments following the pontificates of his two merciless predecessors—Francis being the First Merciful Pope, as his courtiers in the Vatican and the adoring mass media endlessly proclaim. Francis wants vastly more annulments as part of his “mercy” offensive, according to which adherence to perennial Church law and discipline in keeping with the Gospel injunctions constitutes cruelty. The head of Francis’s semi-secret commission, Msgr. Pio Vito Pinto, Dean of the Roman Rota, openly admits that Francis *demand*s a huge increase in the number of annulments. Read [the following](#) while trying to restrain yourself from throwing something against the wall:

It is no longer time simply for analyses, it is time for action in order to *begin that work of justice and mercy so long awaited*—by re-ordering the pastoral practice and canon law, to a large extent in effect for almost three centuries....

[W]ith this fundamental law, Francis makes a real beginning [*a beginning?*] to his reform: by putting the poor at the center, that is, the divorced and remarried, considered set apart and distant, and asking bishops for a true and proper *metánoia*. That is to say, a “conversion”, a *change of mentality which convinces and sustains them in following the invitation of Christ, present in their brother, the Bishop of Rome, to pass from the restricted number of a few thousand annulments to that immeasurable [number] of unfortunates* who might have a declaration of nullity—because of evident absence of faith as a bridge to knowledge and thus to the free will [necessary] to give sacramental consent—but are left on the outside by the current system....

What is important is that the spirit of collegiality and communion among bishops under obedience to the Pontiff, begins to permeate the hearts and minds of the shepherds. The faithful are waiting with eagerness and love for such a metánoia and will nonetheless be patient in the

Lord when faced with the good faith of their shepherds. *The Jubilee Year of Mercy expects this sign of humble obedience (on the part of the Churches’ shepherds) to the Spirit who speaks to them through Francis.*

Pinto’s explanation of Francis’s motives will shame the Church until the end of time: Francis makes a *beginning* of his “reform” by setting up the framework for a worldwide annulment mill. He has done this for the benefit of *the divorced and “remarried,”* whom he characterizes as “the poor.” People who put away their spouses and purport to marry another, often leaving devastated children behind, are placed on a par with the naked, the sick and the imprisoned (cf. Matt. 25:34-40). By the way, Francis the Merciful never seems to consider the impact of divorce on the children; it’s all about “the poor” and their crying need for “mercy” in the form of a nullity decree so they can “move on” with the new mates of their choice.

The megalomania at work is as shameless as it is frightening: We are asked to believe that Christ Himself, acting through Francis, is commanding the entire world episcopate to increase annulments immediately by an “immeasurable number.” In “humble obedience” to Francis, all the world’s bishops must undergo a “conversion” that will impel them to open the floodgates of merciful annulment, closed for too long. The “Bishop of Rome” suddenly becomes “the Pontiff” again and is elevated to the status of a gnostic oracle of “the Spirit,” announcing God’s latest instructions. (Not even Pinto has the audacity to place the word *Holy* in front of “Spirit.”)

This same “Spirit” has informed Francis that the Bishops must apply the nebulous new criterion of “absence of faith.” How would one even define this “absence of faith” in a juridically precise and reliable manner, especially given the tendency of people to dissemble when they are hoping to escape a marriage? As Antonio Socci [writes](#):

This will open the door, without a doubt, for millions of annulments. Millions! Since when did you need to be a saint or have a university degree in theology from the Gregorian to get married?

The Church, in order to recognize a sacramental marriage, has always simply asked for the free decision to

marry, according to the characteristics of natural marriage. Further, She has always taught that the spiritual disposition of the spouses (their personal holiness) influences the fruits of the sacrament but certainly not its validity.

Even the resolutely “normalist” and mainstream Catholic Herald [has just published an article](#) entitled: “We’re heading for ‘Catholic divorces’”. That’s the Catholic Herald!

The question now looms large before us: Has this Pope gone mad?

Destroying the Presumption of Validity

But here too Francis is only making good on his own threat. As he declared during the airborne press conference quoted above, to his mind half of all marriages—that’s *all* marriages, anywhere in the world—are invalid due to “lack of faith”:

We are on the path for a more profound pastoral care of marriage. And, this is a problem for all, because there are so many, right? For instance, I’ll tell you of just one, Cardinal Quarracino, my predecessor, said that for him half of all marriages are null. That’s what he said. Why? Because they are married without maturity, they get married without realizing that it’s for an entire lifetime, or they are married because socially they must get married.

How does Francis know that half of all couples who exchange vows in the presence of a priest, usually after a marriage preparation course followed by the signing of a statement that they know what marriage entails, have no idea that “it’s for an entire lifetime”? Francis knows nothing of the sort. He simply *feels* that half of all couples aren’t, you know, *really* married, even if they were married in the Church, have children, and have held themselves out as man and wife for many years. After all, someone else told him it was so. No further investigation is necessary.

By cavalierly presuming the invalidity of half of all marriages, Francis tosses overboard a fundamental principle of canon law and natural justice: the presumption that a marriage was validly contracted. Can. 1060 (“Marriage enjoys the favor of the law. Consequently, in doubt the validity of the marriage *must be upheld until the contrary is proven.*”) Indeed, the whole point of an annulment proceeding on any grounds, including lack of consent, is to attempt to overcome the presumption of validity. Overcoming the presumption requires positive proof giving rise to rise to a *moral certainty* that the marriage was invalid. As John Paul II explained in [a 1980 address to the Rota](#) (citing Pius XII), moral certainty means “the exclusion of *well-founded or reasonable doubt*,” not just any conceivable doubt. Accordingly, he continued:

[p]robability alone is not enough to decide a case. To any compromise in this connection, there could be applied what has wisely been said of other laws concerning marriage; any relaxation contains within it an impelling dynamic: ‘if the custom obtained, the way is paved for the toleration of divorce in the Church, although covered by another name’...

Francis is indeed paving the way for toleration of divorce in the Church,

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Vandals In Rome...

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covered by another name. He has been paving the way almost from the moment of his election. As he himself warned us more than two years ago: “We are on the path for a more profound pastoral care of marriage.”

Where alleged lack of consent in particular is concerned, as already noted all that is required is that the parties “be at least not ignorant of the fact that marriage is a permanent partnership between a man and a woman, ordered to the procreation of children through some form of sexual cooperation.” Can 1096, § 1. Moreover, “[t]his ignorance is not presumed after puberty.” Can. 1096, § 2. In a 1987 address to the Rota, John Paul II aimed to stem abuse of the theory of lack of consent in precisely the way Francis is now abusing it. John Paul insisted that “[f]or the canonist the principle must remain clear that only *incapacity* and not *difficulty* in giving consent and in realizing a true community of life and love invalidates a marriage.” John Paul continued with remarks on incapacity that demolish Francis’s half-baked notions:

Moreover, the breakdown of a marriage union is never in itself proof of such incapacity on the part of the contracting parties. They may have neglected or used badly the means, both natural and supernatural, at their disposal; or they may have failed to accept the inevitable limitations and burdens of married life, either because of blocks of an unconscious nature or because of slight pathological disturbances which leave substantially intact human freedom, or finally because of failures of a moral order. The hypothesis of real incapacity is to be considered only when an anomaly of a serious nature is present, which, however it may be defined, must substantially vitiate the capacity of the individual to understand and/or to will.

Francis, to quote Dougherty, is engaged in “a dramatic reversal of the Church’s traditional position on marriage, which presumes the validity of first marriages made inside the Church or outside it.” Francis’s novel presumption of *invalidity* appears to involve two alternative and equally dubious personal views he has no right to impose on the Church.

The first view would be that half of the time either one of the parties is lying to the priest and to the other party by feigning a willingness to enter into Holy Matrimony, or that both parties are lying to the priest. The lying would go on throughout marriage preparation, where this is required, including the individual interviews with the priest out of the presence of the other party and the signing of a statement acknowledging that the party understands what marriage entails and will raise any children in the Faith. The lying would continue on the altar with the utterance of the solemn vow before God: “I, _____, take you, _____, to be my lawfully wedded (husband/wife), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, *until death do us part.*”

The basis of the petition for nullity in such cases would thus reduce to the contention: I lied during marriage preparation and on the altar, but I am not lying now when I tell you that I lied before. There will be no need to

corroborate that inherently suspect claim under the new Canon 1678, noted above, which allows the acceptance of such statements, standing alone, as “full proof.” As Francis would have it, there are millions of such liars, who go through the motions of being married, pretend to be married for some years, even having one or more children, and then decide to divorce and remarry civilly. But now that they have acquired a new wife or a new husband, they have supposedly discovered a deep and abiding Catholic faith and are yearning to have their second “marriages” blessed by the Church so they can satisfy their desperate hunger for Holy Communion, from which the Church has mercilessly excluded them for so long. And *this* time, most assuredly, we can believe them when they say: “until death do us part.” According to the law of the Church as stated in Canon 1101, § 1: “[t]he internal consent of the mind is presumed to conform to the words or the signs used in the celebration of marriage.” But Francis blithely presumes exactly the opposite, without even bothering to repeal Canon 1101 with a wave of his papal magic wand.

Alternatively, Francis seems to think that millions of seemingly married people were too “immature” to “realize” that “until death do us part” means that marriage is for life, even though the still-effective Canon 1096, reflecting common sense, mandates that such abysmal ignorance is not to be presumed after puberty. Yet, according to Francis, these millions of simpletons wised up after getting divorces and remarrying civilly, so that *now*, conveniently enough, they are sufficiently “mature” to “realize” that the words “until death do us part” mean what they say.

As Dougherty *observes*, Francis’s opinions about the validity of Catholic marriages are “a deeply condescending insult to average Catholics.” The first sentence in Dougherty’s article unmasks what he rightly calls the “vandalism on the sacrament of marriage” involved in this ham-fisted abuse of papal power: “Are you married? You may think so, but the Pope has other ideas.” Other ideas, indeed! Unlike John Paul II, Benedict XVI, or any other Pope going back to Peter, Francis the Merciful is a man of feeling and *action* as opposed to all those bothersome intellectual “analyses,” as Msgr. Pinto calls them. Francis the Merciful is determined to deliver untold numbers of Catholics from what he just knows are invalid marriages. Surpassing all 265 of his predecessors, he will now undertake the “more profound pastoral care” he promised during the plane ride from Rio. He will come to the rescue

of the huddled masses yearning for the annulments so cruelly denied them until now. And what Francis wants, Francis gets. Let no one interfere.

Dougherty assesses what Francis has done with the utter contempt this mockery of “mercy” deserves:

Pope Francis has navigated to his preferred merciful form of laxity on marriage by becoming a marriage perfectionist. He gets to a Catholic version of no-fault divorce by adopting the exacting standards and skepticism about human virtue that characterizes a heresy like Jansenism. This is a common error in the history of the Christian Church: Exalt standards of virtue to such lofty heights that sin becomes inevitable and justified.

Francis has done this in a way that unmasks the pretensions of his pontificate. He has put himself forward as the defender of “collegiality” in decision making in line with the Second Vatican Council’s call for a church in which bishops truly govern alongside the Roman pontiff. But Francis has short-circuited the Synod with his own extraordinary legal authority.

It also puts to lie his pretensions to be anti-clericalist. Marriage is the vocation most Catholics are called to live in, and yet the pope has taken it upon himself to view their marriages as no more certain than betting red in roulette.

A Palace Revolt?

The more orthodox members of the Roman Curia have had enough of Francis’s reckless stomping on everything he does not like. The redoubtable Edward Pentin [has just reported](#) on the emergence of a seven-page dossier in which curial officials—doubtless including one or more members of the CDF—“juridically ‘picked apart’ the Pope’s *motu proprio*... accuse the Holy Father of giving up an important dogma, and assert that he has introduced *de facto* ‘Catholic divorce.’” These officials deplore what Pentin describes as “an ecclesialized ‘Führerprinzip,’ ruling from the top down, by decree and without any consultation or any checks.” The same officials, recounts Pentin (based on the dossier) fear that “the *motu proprio* will lead to a flood of annulments and that from now on, couples would be able to simply exit their Catholic marriage without a problem.” They are “‘beside themselves’ and feel obligated to ‘speak up’...” Hence the dossier.

But Francis doesn’t care. Our Lord condemned the Pharisees because, being hard-hearted casuists, they devised tricky arguments allowing divorce and thus

attacked the indissolubility of marriage. Francis, however, condemns as Pharisees present-day Catholics who, following our Lord, *defend* the indissolubility of marriage and reject the tricky arguments of such latter day Pharisees as Cardinal Kasper and Cardinal Marx. This is pure lunacy.

Conclusion

Fifty years after the imaginary “renewal of Vatican II” began, the episcopal ideologues who have presided over an unprecedented collapse of faith and discipline confront what John Paul II admitted is “silent apostasy” in the once Christian West. Led by Francis, the First Merciful Pope Ever, the same hierarchs are now contriving to accommodate the very apostasy their own negligence has fomented. Having allowed their sheep to wander to the edge of the pit of iniquity in blissful ignorance of the danger, the shepherds now invite them to dive in.

Yet, it is fair to ask, what can we do about it? Considerably more than nothing—more even than prayer and penance, as important as they are. Saint Robert Bellarmine, a Doctor of the Church, tells us what we must do when faced with a Pope who is causing grave harm to souls and the ecclesial common good:

Just as it is licit to resist the Pontiff that aggresses the body, it is also licit to resist the one who *aggresses souls* or who disturbs civil order, or, above all, *who attempts to destroy the Church*. I say that it is licit to resist by not doing what he orders and by preventing his will from being executed....” [Ryan Grant. *De Controversiis: On the Roman Pontiff* (Mediatrix Press: 2015), Book II, Chapter 29, p. 303].

It is no longer possible honestly to deny that Francis, having aligned himself with the Modernists now infesting almost the entire hierarchy, many of whom are his closest advisors, is the very sort of Pope that Bellarmine envisioned: one who “aggresses souls” and “attempts to destroy the Church,” no matter what he thinks he is doing or is subjectively guilty of. Our duty, therefore, which is above all *the duty of bishops and cardinals*, is to resist this Pope by not doing what he wants or approving of it, by objecting to it and militating against it publicly, and by using any licit means at our disposal in “preventing his will from being executed.”

Even if we fail, that duty remains—a sacred duty to Christ and His Holy Church, infinitely surpassing mere human loyalty to a wayward and dangerous pope the likes of which the Church has not seen in twenty centuries. ■

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An Offer You Can't Refuse: *Pius XI at the Movies*

By Jesse Russell, Ph.D.

Neo-Catholics love much of contemporary culture—that is part of what makes them neo-Catholics: they do not mind giving in a little bit to the world and flesh, but, for now, do not embrace the devil outright. Especially in the United States, the “ground zero” of neo-Catholicism, neo-Catholics have done everything possible to baptize contemporary pop culture. From Christopher West’s approval of the Satanist Katy Perry’s music, to pornographic “historical fiction” television programs being praised (and, yes, sometimes condemned) in *First Things* magazine, neo-Catholic media personae have attempted to justify their own vices and curiosity as well as those of their readers by appeals to the aesthetic merit of their favorite teeny bopper singer or sadistic HBO TV show.

Granted, like much of what neo-Catholics do, there is some grain of truth and merit and a precedent in the Catholic tradition to attempting to draw what is good from “pagan” culture and using it in the promotion of virtue and even as a means of salvation. As Americans, our most aesthetically triumphant form of art is film, and many movies present at least some elements of pagan virtue, yet like most of contemporary pop culture, most movies are at best an occasion of scandal. This leaves traditional Catholics in a bit of a quagmire: we are tugged between the outright rejection of most movies *in toto* or a baptizing of most movies even when they are deleterious to our souls. Happily, the Church’s tradition has left us with several guides on how to approach the great American art form.

In defense of pop culture, neo-Catholics often point to the Church’s precedent of drawing from pagan literature, usually citing the Church Father St. Basil’s “Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature.” In this work, St. Basil lays out a guide for the study of pagan literature for youth who are too “immature” to read the Holy Scriptures, which, for Basil, must be the primary guide to salvation. Nonetheless Basil points out that “we must be conversant with poets, with historians, with orators, indeed with all men who may further the soul’s salvation.” Basil points to Moses who studied the Egyptians and Daniel who studied the Chaldeans as Biblical precedents for the study of pagan literature. So far, St. Basil seems like he would be at home in contemporary neo-Catholicism.

However, St. Basil also presents the warning, often overlooked not only by neo-Catholics, but many in the Church’s tradition, that there are numerous passages in even “high” pagan literature, which it is “wise to ignore,” at risk of one’s soul. What is more, St. Basil puts literature within the proper perspective; the point of the Christian life is to get to heaven, and “whatever helps us towards this we say that we must love and follow after with all our might...”

On the other hand, “those things which have no bearing on it should be held as naught.” What is more, St. Basil



warns of the near occasion of sin, and looking upon “bodies which goad one to passion,” viewing “the senseless antics of buffoons,” and listening to “songs which corrupt the mind” must be avoided. It seems to be that *anything* whatsoever that is debasing must be avoided. So, no Katy Perry for our neo-Catholic friends even if there is some aesthetic merit to her works. This call for vigilance toward art that is buffoonish, lewd, or philosophically errant is largely ignored by two of the most popular neo-Catholic movie critics: Steven Greydanus and Fr. Robert Barron.

Obviously not taking St. Basil’s warning against buffoonery seriously, the movie critic Steven D. Greydanus of the neo-Catholic flagship newspaper, *National Catholic Register* is especially enamored by super hero movies and “dumb dad” films like *The Incredibles* and *Despicable Me 2*—he really, really likes *Pixar* movies. Greydanus, in the tradition of the Second Vatican Council and Catholic neo-conservatism in general, walks with a *main tendu* toward postmodernity, praising a film for its moral “commitment” “moral clarity”, its exploration of “the subconscious,” and its “existential force.” Greydanus primarily looks toward a film’s therapeutic value as well as its aesthetic qualities as opposed to its moral qualities or resonance with Catholic theology; in fact, many of Greydanus’ articles and videos are virtually indistinguishable from those of secular critics. Like Pope Francis and John Paul II, the American episcopate, and much of the Catholic left as well as neo-Catholics, Greydanus really wants to fit in with the world, making any compromise possible.

While Greydanus’s work is aimed more at suburbanite parents who never developed past their preteens, the film criticism of Fr. Robert Barron, soon to be Bishop Barron of the archdiocese of Los Angeles, has a much more polished intellectual style, and the movies he reviews tend to be geared toward intelligent young people (for the most part) whom Fr. Barron hopes to evangelize. But like Mr. Greydanus, Fr. Barron wants to concede as much ground to the world as possible and is not afraid to get his (or his audiences) hands dirty.

The theological groundwork of Fr.

Barron’s movie criticism is rooted in semi-pelagian *Nouvelle Theologie* characters like Cardinal de Lubac and the outright heretical and very bizarre Hans Urs von Balthasar—one of Fr. Barron’s most infamous videos teases out the Balthasarian heresy that all men may be saved. Fr. Barron thus sets out to baptize everything from James Bond to Batman as well as a host of other films that would not pass the muster of the Legion of Decency.

What Fr. Barron hopes to accomplish in his “new evangelization” is unclear. Influenced by a decidedly ecumenical view, Fr. Barron presents in his works a contrast between those who believe in a transcendent God (the good guys) and those who do not (bad guys). Those movies that present any sort of redemption or theism tend to be praised while those that are more nihilistic tend to be condemned by Fr. Barron.

Admittedly, Fr. Barron has a noble of task of making the average Joe or Jill a believer of some kind, and to be honest, Fr. Barron would prefer they become Catholic believer. On the other hand, Fr. Barron, like many neo-Catholics, takes the idea of the near occasion of sin too lightly and has too generous a view of many movies that only vaguely and inaccurately contain elements of Christian morality and theology.

Both Fr. Barron and Mr. Greydanus are well intentioned, and, in the case of Fr. Barron, very intelligent and well spoken. The problem is that they both attempt to baptize a culture that is explicitly immoral and anti-Christian and whose purpose is to destroy Christian civilization. More than anything, they like movies. As neo-Catholics, Fr. Barron and Mr. Greydanus are sincerely concerned with “converting” their readers toward a nebulous, modernist and ecumenical “faith” in which they genuinely believe. However, their method is not Catholic.

If Fr. Barron errs in being too quick to baptize dangerous and scandalous movies and Mr. Greydanus takes the wrong route in being too open to silly and infantilizing but nonetheless *still* morally corrosive films, there is an answer. On June 29, 1936, Pope Pius XI promulgated *Vigilanti Cura*, an encyclical condemning the erosion of

films with vice, praising what is good in films, and commanding Catholics to set about a process of selectively judging films.

His Holiness has many good things to say about film both as an aesthetic medium and as a tool for education. It potentially has a “vast influence” for “the promotion of good.” But, even in 1936, His Holiness is concerned about the “lamentable progress of the motion picture art and industry in the portrayal of vice and sin.” Pope Pius further states that “the essential purpose of art, its *raison d’être*, is to assist in the perfection of the moral personality, which is man, and for this reason it must itself be moral.” Like Basil, His Holiness sees the fundamental purpose of art as being the promotion of virtue and holiness.

Pope Pius XI’s clearest words on movie censorship are given in his summary of the March 1930 agreement among movie directors or the Hollywood Production Code by stating that in this code “no film which lowers the moral standard of the spectators, which casts discredit upon natural or human law or arouses sympathy for their violation, will be produced.” His Holiness then lists a catalogue of the specific “occasions of sin” that movies produce “they seduce young people along the ways of evil by glorifying the passions; they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals; they destroy pure love, respect for marriage, affection for the family.” So any movie that contains these elements would be something that most Catholics should avoid.

Pope Pius XI is profoundly aware of the power of the movie as a medium: “the motion picture has enlisted in its service luxurious appointments, pleasing music, the vigour of realism, every form of whim and fancy.” It is because a movie is so enthralling that it is more dangerous than a pagan poem or even sculpture or painting. A film, according to His Holiness, “attracts and fascinates particularly the young, the adolescent, and even the child. Thus at the very age when the moral sense is being formed and when the notions and sentiments of justice and rectitude, of duty and obligation and of ideals of life are being developed, the motion picture with its direct propaganda assumes a position of commanding influence.” Looking at how radically movies and their offspring (TV and the Internet) have corrupted the developed world, one might think that “commanding influence” is an understatement.

Pius XI does not dismiss movies *in toto* but rather suggests that some moral movies are “classic masterpieces” and “original creations of uncommon worth.” He further notes “good motion pictures are capable of exercising a profoundly moral influence upon those who see them.” These good films can “arouse noble ideals of life” and “communicate valuable conceptions” as well as “impart a better knowledge of the history and the beauties of the fatherland and of other countries.” Good movies can “present truth and virtue under attractive forms” and “champion the cause of justice”, giving “new life to the claims of virtue.”

Continued Next Page

Excommunication: *The Real Medicine of Mercy*

By Magister Athanasius

In the Catholic Church today, there are numerous obstinate heretics who actively work against the teachings and morals of the church. Seldom are these dissidents disciplined by the clergy, and when they are, it is extremely rare for them to be excommunicated by the church. Why? Well, because church leaders want to exercise “mercy” rather than “severity”, or so they say. Let’s examine how this practice became popular and then ask if this approach is best.

How Did We Get to This Point?

It would seem that the approach of exercising “mercy” (i.e. negligence) rather than “severity” (i.e. church discipline) in the case of obstinate heretics began with Pope John XXIII, who stated in the opening speech for the Second Vatican Council:

And often errors vanish as quickly as they arise, like fog before the sun. The Church has always opposed

these errors. Frequently she has condemned them with the greatest severity. Nowadays however, the Spouse of Christ prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity. She considers that she meets the needs of the present day by demonstrating the validity of her teaching rather than by condemnations.

I assume good Pope John had good intentions in implementing this new approach. However, in hindsight, this practice did much more harm than good.

A Critique of the Mercy over Severity Approach

On the surface, saying that the church should exercise so called mercy rather than severity sounds good. After all, doesn’t Luke 6:36 tell us to “be merciful”? In fact, it does, but to say that the church should be merciful rather than severe is simply a false dichotomy. St. Paul himself demonstrates that mercy and severity (in this case



Walter Cardinal Kasper

excommunication) are not diametrically opposed to each other, as he said:

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father’s wife. And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. (1 Cor. 5:1-5)

In other words, excommunication is the “medicine of mercy”, as it is designed to wake the person up to the dangerous direction in which they are headed, in order to bring them back to repentance. Much like a father who disciplines his wayward sons, this approach is not meant to be “mean-spirited” or “judgmental” but is meant to charitably apply church discipline in order to save souls, as Romano Amerio stated:

This setting up of the principle of mercy as opposed to severity ignores the fact that in the mind of the Church the condemnation of error is itself a work of mercy, since by pinning down error those laboring under it are corrected and others are preserved from falling into it. (Iota Unum, p. 80-81)

Furthermore, it must be said that if one really believes that the church should exercise so-called mercy over severity, then one is practically indicting the entire church ranging from the Apostles themselves, who insisted on the practice of excommunication, until Pope John XXIII’s opening speech in 1962. Clearly, this is an absurd position to maintain and it is much more likely that, with all due respect, Pope John XXIII’s dichotomy was a false dichotomy, rather than the untenable position that the church was unmerciful from the time of the Apostles until Pope John XXIII’s pontificate.

They Are Already Excommunicated

What is almost always ignored in the case of obstinate heretics is that they are already automatically excommunicated. Heresy is defined as:

Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same (CCC 2089)

Canon Law says that heretics are automatically excommunicated, as it says:

Without prejudice to the prescript of can. 194, §1, n. 2, an apostate from the faith, a heretic, or a schismatic incurs a *latae sententiae* [automatic] excommunication; (1364)

For church leaders to fail to declare public heretics to be excommunicated, they fail to exercise the virtue of charity, as Romano Amerio noted it fails to warn the wayward soul in heresy and fails to warn the faithful of the dangers of heresy.

How Does God View the Mercy over Severity Approach?

One need not speculate as to how God views the practice of turning a blind eye to heretics in the name of a false mercy. God made his view known in such matters in the life of the high priest Eli in 1 Samuel. In this book we read that Eli’s two sons were “scoundrels” who committed many great sins, especially in regards to the liturgy (1 Samuel 2:12-17). Eli failed to restrain his children and consequently God said:

For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them.

Clearly, God isn’t a proponent of the false dichotomy between mercy and severity. Thus, if the Church really wishes to imitate God and to exercise mercy in the case of heretics, it should apply the real “medicine of mercy” in obedience to the words of the Apostle Paul:

hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. (1 Cor. 5:5)b ■

Pius XI at the Movies

J. Russell/*Continued from Page 11*

His Holiness’s recommendations are that those concerned with “the true moral civil welfare of the people to use every means in their power ... to make of the cinema a valuable auxiliary of instruction and education rather than of destruction and ruin of souls.” Pius XI further notes that he hopes that movies “may be ordained to [God’s] glory and to the salvation of souls and may be made to serve in a practical way to promote the extension of the kingdom of God on earth.” This is an extremely powerful charge to film: movies should help in the salvation of souls and the building up of Christendom.

In the end, it is necessary, according to Pius XI, that “in each country the Bishops set up a permanent national reviewing office in order to be able to promote the good motion pictures, classify others, and bring this judgment to the knowledge of priests and faithful.” It is questionable whether the USCCB has done this well or not. There still remains the quandary with which we began: there are great movies that traditional Catholics like to watch that are riddled with error and scandal. There is a real and substantive difference between movies like *The Godfather*, *Unforgiven*, and *Blade Runner*, which contain unchaste scenes, blasphemy, murder, and, yes, even deeply erroneous

philosophical and theological themes intermixed with natural virtues and aesthetic craftsmanship and movies like *Midnight Cowboy* and *The Graduate* whose very core is rotten with baseness and vulgarity and are intentionally set up to destroy and corrode Christianity. If it is possible to edit the films of merit of anything scandalous or deforming of virtue, then perhaps they could be watched by the general public.

However, the answer then seems to be that there are some, a very narrow few, who must wade into the muck of contemporary culture and watch movies or television programs in order to judge their merit and worth. Perhaps, the Church’s tradition may allow more wiggle room for the printed word, which can be more selectively edited, but even then one should exercise extreme caution.

However, for Catholic parents raising their children who want to relax and enjoy an evening in front of “America’s art,” there are very few movies that are both well-crafted and definitively Christian in their substance. It would be far better to go on a hike, play a board game, or some engage in some modest sports together. What is clear is that despite the well intentioned efforts of neo-Catholics like Fr. Barron and Mr. Greydanus, we must look deeper in the Church’s tradition for guidance. ■

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Liberation Theology Survives Discredit and is Alive and Well...

Under the Command of a Corpse

By Olavo de Carvalho

Part I

Why do people still subscribe to liberation theology? Apparently no reasonable person should do that. The doctrine that Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez, and Brazilians Leonardo Boff and Frei Betto have spread throughout the world was already demolished from a theological standpoint by then-cardinal Joseph Ratzinger^[1] in 1984, two years after being condemned by Pope John Paul II^[2]. In 1994 theologian Edward Lynch stated that liberation theology had already been reduced to a mere intellectual curiosity^[3]. In 1996 the Spanish historian Ricardo de la Cierva, whom nobody would deem to be uneducated on these matters, considered it to be dead and buried^[4]. And yet the fact of the matter is that more than a decade and a half after its death, liberation theology is practically an official doctrine in twelve countries in Latin America. What happened?

In order to answer this question properly we need to examine the problem from three different angles:

(1) Is liberation theology a Catholic theology influenced by Marxist ideas, or is it only a communist ruse camouflaged with Catholic language?

(2) What is the relation between liberation theology as a theoretical discourse and as an activist political organization?

(3) Once those two questions are answered, then we will be able to grasp liberation theology as a precise phenomenon and describe the particular *forma mentis* of their theoreticians by means of a stylistic analysis of their writings.

The first question is answered in remarkably uniform fashion by both Professor Lynch and Cardinal Ratzinger, as well as by innumerable other Catholic authors (for example, Hubert Lepargneur's *Liberation Theology: An Assessment* [5], and Sobral Pinto's *Liberation Theology: Marxist Materialism in Spiritualist Theology* [6]). Based on the premise that liberation theology presents itself as a Catholic theology, they proceed to examine it in that light, praising its possible humanitarian and justice-



Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev

"Liberation theology has been generally understood to be a marriage of Marxism and Christianity. What has not been understood is that it was not the product of Christians who pursued Communism, but of Communists who pursued Christians." - **General Ion Mihai Pacepa, highest-ranking KGB official to defect to the West**

making intentions, but concluding that liberation theology is, in essence, incompatible with the Church's traditional doctrine and is therefore heretical in the strict sense of the word. They also add to that assessment a denunciation of some of its internal contradictions and a criticism of its social agenda which is founded upon utterly discredited Marxist economics.

From this they move on to decreeing its death, asserting that (the following words are Professor Lynch's),

Twenty-five years later, however, liberation theology has been reduced to an intellectual curiosity. While still attractive to many North American and European scholars, it has failed in what the liberationists always said was their main mission, the complete renovation of Latin American Catholicism. [7]

All ideological revolutionary discourse can be understood according to at least three levels of meaning, all of which first need to be distinguished through analysis and then hierarchically rearranged when one of them reveals itself to be the most decisive factor in concrete political situations, subordinating the others.

The first level is a descriptive one: the ideological revolutionary discourse presents a diagnosis or explanation of reality, or an interpretation of a previous theory. On this level, the revolutionary discourse can be judged by its veracity, correspondence – faithfulness to facts – according to the current state of available knowledge, or to the doctrine it is interpreting. When the discourse presents a definite proposal for action, it can be judged by the viability or convenience of the action to be taken.

The second level is that of ideological self-definition, where the theoretician or doctrinarian expresses the symbols in which the revolutionary group recognizes itself and by which it can distinguish insiders from outsiders, friends from foes. On this level the ideological revolutionary discourse can be judged by its psychological efficacy

or correspondence with its audience's expectations and longings.

The third level is that of strategic disinformation, providing false clues designed to throw its enemies off course and ward off any attempt that can be made to block the revolutionary proposal for action, or neutralize any other effects the discourse aims to produce.

On its first level, the revolutionary discourse ideally addresses an impartial audience, whose support it intends to win over by means of persuasion. On the second level, it addresses its actual or potential supporters, with the aim of reinforcing their loyalty to the group and obtaining from them their maximum possible collaboration. On the third, it addresses its enemy, the target of the operation.

Practically all the criticisms that Catholic intellectuals levelled at liberation theology have been confined to the examination of its first level of meaning. From an intellectual standpoint, they completely discredited it, demonstrated its heretical character, and pointed out those old flaws that make any proposal for a socialist remodeling of society destructive and inviable.

If the masterminds behind liberation theology were Catholics sincerely devoted to "renewing Latin American Catholicism," even if through the use of means contaminated with Marxist ideology, those devastating criticisms would have been enough to completely deactivate their theology. Once those critical analyses left the field of intellectual debate to become the Church's official teaching, with the 1984 study by Cardinal Ratzinger, liberation theology could be regarded, from a theoretical point of view, as extinct and intellectually overcome.

Now read this testimony given by General Ion Mihai Pacepa, the highest-ranking KGB official who has ever defected to the West, and you will begin to understand why the intellectual and theological discredit of the liberation

theology was not enough to put an end to it. In 1959, as the head of the Romanian intelligence station in West Germany, General Pacepa heard from Nikita Khrushchev himself the following words, "We'll use Cuba as springboard to launch a KGB-devised religion into Latin America."^[8]

And his testimony goes on like this:

Khrushchev called the new KGB-invented religion Liberation Theology. His penchant for "liberation" was inherited by the KGB, which later created the Palestine Liberation Organization, the National Liberation Army of Columbia (FARC), and the National Liberation Army of Bolivia. Romania was a Latin country, and Khrushchev wanted our "Latin view" about his new religious "liberation" war. He also wanted us to send a few priests who were cooptees or deep cover officers to Latin America, to see how "we" could make his new Liberation Theology palatable to that part of the world. Khrushchev got our best effort.

Launching a new religion was a historic event, and the KGB had thoroughly prepared for it. At that very moment, the KGB was building a new international religious organization in Prague called the Christian Peace Conference (CPC), whose task would be to spread Liberation Theology within Latin America. . .

In 1968, the KGB-created CPC was able to maneuver a group of leftist South American bishops into holding a Conference of Latin American Bishops at Medellin, Colombia. The Conference's official task was to ameliorate poverty. Its undeclared goal was to recognize a new religious movement encouraging the poor to rebel against the "institutionalized violence of poverty," and to recommend it to the World Council of Churches for official approval. The Medellin Conference did both. It also swallowed the KGB-born name "Liberation Theology."

That is, in essence, the idea of liberation theology come ready-made from Moscow three years before Peruvian Jesuit Gustavo Gutierrez, with his book *Teología de la Liberación*^[9], presented himself as its original creator, something which probably happened with the approval of its true creators, who were not interested at all in a public acknowledgment of paternity. The legal guardians of the child, Leonardo Boff and Frei Betto (Carlos Alberto Libânio Christo) would come onto the scene even later, not before 1977. Even today popular information sources, such as Wikipedia, repeat like trained parrots that Fr. Gutierrez was indeed the father of liberation theology and that Mr. Boff and Mr. Betto were his most outstanding continuators.

Part II

If the child and even its name came ready-made from the KGB, that does

Continued Next Page

Born in 1947, **Olavo de Carvalho** is a Brazilian philosopher and writer who currently lives in a rural area near Richmond, Va. He taught political philosophy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Parana (in the south of Brazil), was a columnist for some of the major Brazilian media outlets— *O Globo*, *Folha de São Paulo*, *Época*, *Zero Hora*—, and has written fourteen books, among which the best-seller *O Mínimo que Você Precisa Saber Para Não Ser um Idiota* (The Least You Need to Know Not to Be an Idiot) and technical works of philosophy such as *Aristóteles em Nova Perspectiva* (Aristotle in a New Perspective), *A Filosofia e Seu Inverso* (Philosophy and Its Reverse), and *Visões de Descartes* (Views on Descartes). He currently is the President of the Inter-American Institute for Philosophy, Government, and Social Thought, and weekly broadcasts online his "Philosophy Seminar," watched by more than two thousand Brazilian students. Websites: olavodecarvalho.org and theinteramerican.org

Under the Command of a Corpse

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not mean that its adoptive parents, Gutierrez, Boff, and Betto have no merit whatsoever in spreading it throughout the world. On the contrary, they played a crucial part in the victories won by liberation theology and in the mystery of its survival.

The three of them, but mainly the two Brazilians, have always acted on two different levels at once. On the one hand, they produced artificial theological arguments for the consumption of the clergy, the intellectuals, and the Roman Curia. On the other hand, they spread sermons and popular speeches and intensely devoted themselves to the creation of a network of activists which would become well-known as “basic ecclesial communities” [10] and would make up the seed of the Workers’ Party, which has been governing Brazil since 2002.

In his book *And the Church Became People (E a Igreja se Fez Povo)*[11], Boff confesses that the whole thing was a “bold plan,” hatched according to the strategy of the slow and subtle “war of position” advocated by the founder of the Italian Communist Party, Antonio Gramsci. The strategy consisted in gradually infiltrating all the decisive positions in seminaries and lay universities, in religious orders, in the Catholic media, and in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, without making much noise, until the time was ripe for the great revolution to come into view.

John Paul I, soon after the 1978 conclave that elected him pope, had a meeting with twenty Latin American cardinals, and he became astonished at the fact that most of them overtly supported liberation theology. On that occasion, they informed him that there were more than 100 thousand “basic ecclesial communities” spreading out revolutionary propaganda in Latin America. Until then John Paul I had known liberation theology as a theoretical speculation only. He was far from thinking that it could have been transformed into a political force of such dimensions.

In 1984, when Cardinal Ratzinger began to dismantle liberation theology’s theoretical arguments, four years had already passed since those “basic ecclesial communities” were transfigured into a mass political party, the Brazilian Workers’ Party. These activists definitively do not know anything about any theological speculation, but can swear that Jesus Christ was a socialist because that is what the party leaders tell them to believe.

In other words, liberation theology’s feigned theological argumentation had already done its job of being food for debate and undermining the Church’s authority. It was functionally replaced by the overt preaching of socialism, where the apparent scholarly effort to bring Christianity and Marxism together yielded the right of way to the peddling of cheap clichés and slogans in which the majority of activists neither looked for nor found any rational argumentation. They saw only those symbols that expressed and reinforced their fighting spirit and sense of



Pope Francis meets with Communist thug, Fidel Castro (9/21/15).

belonging to a group.

The success of this second enterprise was proportional to the failure of the trio in the field of theology. In the United States or Europe, an opinion-maker who aspires to be a political leader may not survive his own discredit. In Latin America, however, and especially in Brazil, the mass of activists is leagues away from any intellectual concern and will continue to find their leader credible as long as he is backed up by his party and has enough political support.

In the case of Boff and Betto, they received nothing less than formidable support. When the guerrillas which the Latin American Organization for Solidarity (OLAS, founded in 1966 by Fidel Castro) had spread throughout the subcontinent failed miserably, left-wing activists took refuge in non-military leftist organizations, which were putting into practice Antonio Gramsci’s ideas about “cultural revolution” and “war of position.” Gramsci’s strategy made use of massive infiltration of communist agents in all institutions of civil society, especially in the educational system and the media. These implants spread punctual, isolated, non-labelled, communist proposals so as to produce, little by little, an overall effect which could not be identified as communist propaganda. By these means the Party, or similar organization, could end up mentally controlling society with “the omnipresent and invisible power of a divine commandment, of a categorical imperative” (sic). [12]

No other instrument could better serve that purpose than the “basic ecclesial communities,” where communist proposals could be sold with the Christianity label. In Brazil, the overwhelming growth of those organizations resulted, in 1980, in the foundation of the Workers’ Party, which initially presented itself as an innocent pro-labor union movement of the Christian left, and which only gradually revealed its strong ties with the Cuban government and various guerilla and drug-trafficking organizations. The greatest leader of the Party, President Luís Inácio “Lula” da Silva, has always acknowledged Boff and Betto as the masterminds of both his organization and of himself.

The Party, born in the bosom of the Latin American communism by means of the “basic ecclesial communities,”

did not take long to return the favor and established, in 1990, an organization under the anodyne denomination of Foro de São Paulo (São Paulo Forum), whose purpose was to unify the many leftists currents in Latin America and become the strategic headquarters for the communist movement in the subcontinent.

According to Frei Betto’s own testimony, the decision of founding the São Paulo Forum was made in a meeting between Lula, Fidel Castro, and Frei Betto himself, in Havana. For seventeen years the São Paulo Forum had grown in secret, having a membership of nearly 200 organizations. These organizations were a mixture of legally established political parties, and human and drug-trafficking gangs such as Chilean MIR and the FARC— which denied having anything to do with drug trafficking, but traded, every year, 200 tons of Colombian cocaine for weapons that Brazilian drug-dealer Fernandinho Beira-Mar smuggled from Lebanon.

When Lula was elected president of Brazil in 2002, the São Paulo Forum had already become the largest and most powerful political organization that had ever been at work in the whole Latin American territory. Its very existence, however, was totally unknown to the Brazilian people and cynically denied when a researcher would blow the whistle about it.

The general concealment of the São Paulo Forum, an operation to which the entire Brazilian mainstream media contributed for seventeen years with exemplary obstinacy, is one of the most curious and depressing episodes of the history of the press in the world. From that episode one can have an idea of the power that the pool of left-wing parties associated with the Workers’ Party exerts over the entire class of opinion-makers in Brazil. But the curtain of obsequious silence extended far beyond Brazilian national borders: in 2001 during a panel discussion at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C., two “experts in Latin America,” Kenneth Maxwell and Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, openly denied the existence of the São Paulo Forum.

For many years, based upon extensive documentation gathered by Brazilian attorney José Carlos Graça Wagner, I denounced the São Paulo Forum’s activities. But I was the only columnist

of a major Brazilian newspaper to do it, and all kinds of pressure and threats were made against me to prevent me from doing so. I even published online all the minutes of the Forum’s general assemblies since its foundation, but even in face of such irrefutable proofs the slavish self-censorship of the Brazilian journalistic class did not yield even an inch in its obstinacy in denying the facts.

The media blockade reached its peak of intensity when, in 2005, Mr. Lula, already President of Brazil, made a detailed confession about the existence and the activities of the São Paulo Forum. His speech was published on the Presidency of the Republic’s official website, but even so, the mainstream media in full force insisted on pretending that they did not know anything about it.

Finally, in 2007, the Workers’ Party itself, feeling that the cloak of protective secrecy was no longer necessary, came to trumpet the feats of the São Paulo Forum to the four corners of the earth, as if they had always been obvious, banal, and well-known. Only then did the newspapers allow themselves to speak about it.

Why could the secret be revealed at that point? Because in Brazil all the ideological opposition had already been eliminated. What remained as “politics” was only electoral vying for offices and denunciation of corruption scandals coming from within the left itself, whereas on a subcontinental scale twelve countries were already ruled by parties belonging to the São Paulo Forum. The “basic ecclesial communities” had risen to power. At that point who would be concerned with theological debates or ethereal objections made twenty years earlier by a cardinal who took the literal sense of the writings of liberation theologians in a serious manner, but barely scratched the political surface of the problem?

The Workers’ Party, throughout its twelve years in power, managed to expel all the conservative opposition from the political scene. During this time it shared the political arena with some of its more radical allies and a soft center-left opposition, governing the country by means of bribery, murder of inconvenient people, and systematic appropriation of state company funds to finance the growth of the Party. The rise of kleptocracy culminated in the Petrobrás case, where the siphoning of funds from state companies reached the level of billions of dollars, becoming, according to the international media, the largest case of business corruption of all time. This succession of scandals brought about some discomfort within the left itself and also constant complaining in the media, which led the Workers’ Party’s *intelligentsia* to rally in full force to defend their party. Mr. Betto and Mr. Boff have been busy with this kind of activity for more than a decade, and theology, in their business, is only an occasional supplier of figures of speech with which they design to adorn the Party’s propaganda. Liberation theology, at last, embraced its true calling.

To Be Concluded Next Issue

The Canon:

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

By Father Ladis J. Cizik

In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence. Holy silence makes its presence especially known during the Canon of the Mass; just as holy silence prevailed at Mount Calvary on that first Good Friday. Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, spoke just a few words that were audible from the Altar of His Cross; just as the priest, acting *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ), speaks very few audible words at the Altar of Sacrifice during the Canon of the Mass. The disciples of Christ who were present at Calvary, according to Sacred Scripture, spoke not one word; just as the faithful at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass attend to the Sacred Mystery in rapt holy silence.

In his classic work, [The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass](#), Rev. Dr. Nicholas Gihl writes of the Canon of the Mass:

...the silent recitation appropriately indicates that here is a mystery, which the consecrated priest alone can accomplish, not the people. To consecrate the material elements, to offer the Body and Blood of Christ, is a priestly privilege: the congregation present can contribute nothing to the accomplishment of the sacrificial act. This is symbolically indicated by the silent recitation of the Canon.

The Canon of the Mass begins after the Sanctus, during which the server rings the bells three times, alerting everyone that the most solemn part of the Mass is to begin. After the Sanctus, further attention is given to the extreme holy mysteries about to unfold as the Sanctus Candle (aka: Consecration Candle) is lit in some churches on the Epistle side of the Altar or Sanctuary. This Sanctus Candle is set alight in homage to the miracle of Transubstantiation which will take place during the Canon of the Mass. This special candle, dedicated to the Consecration, denotes the Real Presence of the Lord: His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. The objective of using the Sanctus Candle is to incite the faithful to devotion, love and adoration of our Eucharistic Lord. Providing its holy light during the Canon of the Mass, this candle is to be extinguished after Holy Communion at the time when the Tabernacle door is ordinarily closed. Note that while the Sanctus Candle is most often the custom at Low Masses, at High Masses the "Torch Bearers" would serve the same function and the Sanctus Candle would ordinarily not be used.

With this, holy silence now reigns supreme as the Canon begins. The priest is said at this point to be entering "into the cloud," calling to mind Moses, who was alone at the top of the Mount Sinai conversing with Almighty God on behalf of the people:

And when Moses was gone up, a

cloud covered the mount. And the Glory of the Lord dwelt upon Sinai... the sight of the Glory of the Lord was like a burning fire upon the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses entering into the midst of the cloud, went up into the mountain.

(Ex. 24:15-18)

Likewise, the priest of God, at the Canon of the Mass, has entered into "the cloud" not to dialogue with the people but to commune with God alone, to pray and offer Sacrifice for the whole Church, on behalf of the faithful. The "Glory of the Lord like a burning fire" is another reason to utilize a Sanctus Candle or Torch Bearers.

Gihl provides five chief reasons for the Canon being prayed in holy silence:

- 1) "The silent recitation of the Canon betokens the Consecration and sacrificial act to be an exclusively priestly function." It is noted, however, that while these prayers are "silent" to the congregation, they **MUST** be pronounced with the priest's mouth, audible only to the priest himself.
- 2) "The holy silence is quite suited to indicate and to recall the concealment and depth, the incomprehensibility and ineffableness of the wonderful mysteries that are enacted on the Altar."
- 3) "Silent prayer is related to religious silence, and therefore expresses the humility, reverence, admiration, and awe with which the Church administers and adores the mystery of the Altar."
- 4) "...the foreign language (Latin) and the silent recitation serve to withdraw the sacred words of the Canon from ordinary intercourse and to protect them against every desecration."
- 5) Mystical reasons are given for holy

silence, which include: Jesus praying in a low voice on the Mount of Olives, as well as on Mount Calvary; and "the Altar becomes not merely the cross, but also the crib.." as in "deep silence...the almighty Word of God descended from His royal throne in Heaven to the crib at Bethlehem; in like manner the King of Glory at the consecration comes down upon the Altar amid the most profound silence."

The Protestant "De-formation" of the Church, rejected the silent recitation of the Canon, in part because of their rejection of the Sacrament of the Holy Orders. The priest was seen by Protestants as a mere member of the community, a co-equal "presider" over the community worship service, which should be heard and commonly participated in by all of the community.

The Council of Trent, in part, was a response to such Protestant errors. Of holy silence and other traditional features of the Canon on the Mass, the Council of Trent (Session 22, chapter 5) declared that all these things are used such that "the majesty of so great a Sacrifice might be recommended, and the minds of the faithful be excited by those visible signs of religion and piety to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in the Sacrifice." In Session 22, Canon IX, the Council of Trent decreed: "If any one saith, that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the Canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone is to be condemned...*let him be anathema.*"

A false criticism often heard today of the holy silence of the Canon is that because the congregation was not "actively" involved in the Liturgy, people in the pre-Vatican II Church would often pray their Rosary during the Mass. This scornful Modernistic attitude flies in the face of Pope Leo XIII's 1883 encyclical *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*

on "Devotion of the Rosary," which established October as the "Month of the Rosary." In that encyclical (par. 8), and in his 1886 encyclical, *Superiore Anno* (par. 4), Pope Leo XIII asks that the Holy Rosary be prayed (during October) *while Mass is being offered.*

The possibility of praying the Rosary during the Traditional Latin Mass is affirmed by Pope Pius XII. In his 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*, Pope Pius XII commends the use the hand missal for the faithful to follow along with the Mass (par. 105). Today, most of the faithful who attend the Latin Mass regularly have their own hand missal with the Latin on one side and English on the other. The use of a personal missal is commendable and a true form of "active," yet silent participation in the Canon of the Mass. For those unable to use the missal, Pope Pius XII, in that same encyclical (par. 108) makes provision for "...many of the faithful (who) are unable to use the Roman missal even though it is written in the vernacular." He states that they can "lovingly meditate on the mysteries of Jesus Christ or perform other exercises of piety or recite prayers which, though they differ from the sacred rites, are still essentially in harmony with them." This too, can be considered "active" spiritual participation and an endorsement of the possibility of the Rosary being prayed during Mass.

Holy silence during the Canon of the Traditional Latin Mass, should call to mind the Prophet Elijah's experience on Mount Horeb: Almighty God was not in the great and strong wind; He was not in the earthquake; He was not in the fire; but He was in the "whistling of a gentle air" (3 Kgs. 19: 11-13). The priest does not have to be speaking loud or have to be making dramatic gestures for God to be at work.

Call to mind that on Mount Carmel, Elijah prostrated himself on the ground

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Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

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and told his servant to look toward the sea seven times. It was only after the seventh repetition that a small foot-shaped cloud was seen silently rising out of the sea, which would signal an end to the drought (3 Kgs. 18: 41-45). That small cloud has traditionally been interpreted as the foot of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Who would crush the head of the serpent.

At Fatima, Portugal, located in the Estremadura Mountain range, Our Lady appeared on October 13, 1917, at one point during the Miracle of the Sun, as Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Just prior to the appearance of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and likewise seen beside the spinning sun, She also appeared at Fatima that day as Our Lady of Sorrows. Our Lady of Fatima thus beckons us to commune with God in silence as did Elijah at Mount Horeb and on Mount Carmel, and as She did at Calvary. At the Canon of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we are at Mount Calvary with Our Lady of Sorrows in a very real and special way. Traditionally, servants of God commune in silence with the Almighty on holy Mounts. While we are at Mount Calvary, at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, therefore: Let all mortal flesh keep silence.

In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Postscript

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” is a hymn based on the words from the Book of the Prophet Habakkuk (2:20): “But the Lord is in His Holy Temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.” It traces back to the “Cherubic Hymn” in the ancient Eastern Liturgy of Saint James: “Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand in fear and trembling, pondering within itself nothing earthly. For the King of kings and Lord of lords cometh to be slaughtered and given as Food for the faithful.” The hymn’s origins are often ascribed to Saint James the Less, Apostle and first Bishop of Jerusalem.

Let ALL Mortal Flesh Keep SILENCE

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in His Hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth
our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
in the Body and the Blood;
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for Heavenly Food.

Rank on rank the Host of Heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six winged Seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord Most High! ■

The Last Word...

By Father Celatus

For those of you who watch television or movies, have you ever noticed how many TV series and movies with sequels start well but degrade over time? The same is true of some individuals who have a meteoric rise to fame and then ultimately crash. Two examples come to mind: Father Corapi and Subway Jared.

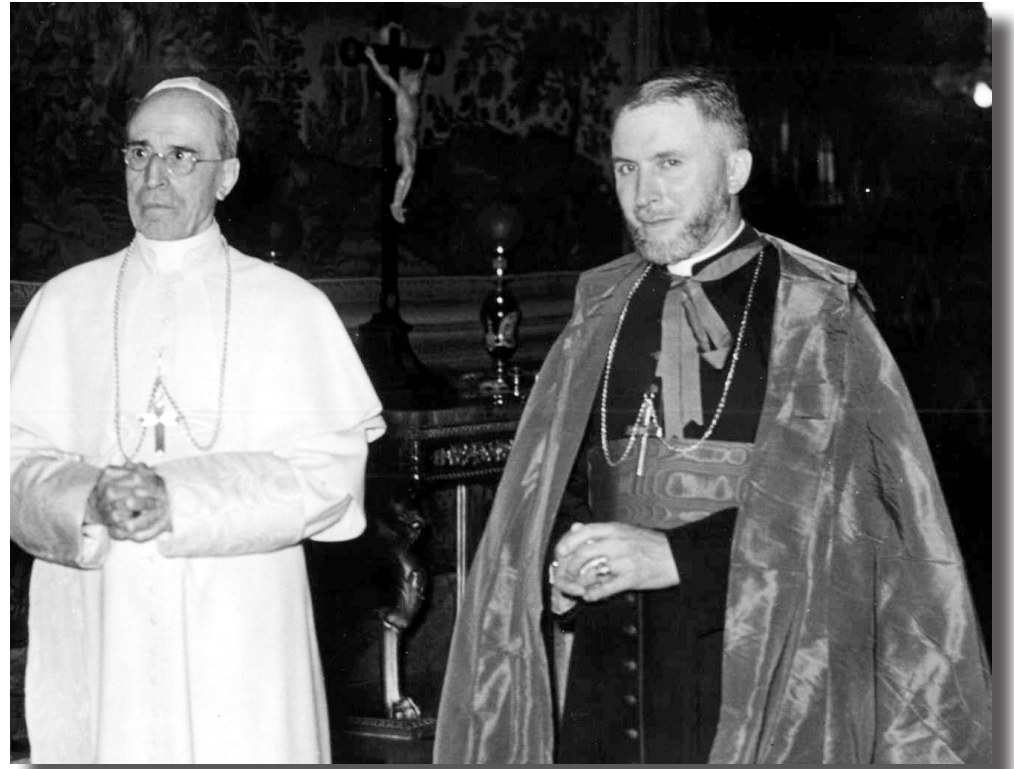
Soon we may have to add another series to those that degrade and name to those that crash: CMTV and Michael Voris. No doubt Michael will take umbrage at the association of his name with Corapi and Jared but it was Voris, after all, who associated two upstanding traditional Catholic writers with pornography:

It is our judgment that most Catholics should not read articles and essays such as those above by Christopher A. Ferrara and John Vennari, nor similarly themed articles and essays available elsewhere. We also believe that such articles and essays should not be published anywhere for public consumption but, rather, reserved for those capable of reading such without risk of damaging their faith in the Church and the Vicar of Christ. We make these recommendations for the same reasons that we discourage people from visiting sedevacantist and pornography web sites: they are potential occasions of sin...

I am not suggesting immorality on the part of Michael Voris by this association with the likes of Father Corapi and Subway Jared but it appears that big public success can often bring with it a big head and bad decisions. Whether Michael has a big head I know not but he certainly has a very big—Trumpesque—hairdo. But unlike *The Donald*, whose hair remains static, the part in *The Michael* hairdo has shifted from one side to the other over the years. In fact, his previous hair part seems to have coincided with his previous position on the *Novus Ordo*, as exposed by Chris Jackson of *The Remnant*. Said Voris in 2010:

Certain individuals at Vatican II set about to destroy the theology of the Catholic Mass which would ultimately destroy the Catholic Church...In fact many of those involved with the deformation of the Mass were not bashful at all about their work...one thing is absolutely certain this one man [Bugnini] set out on a course to so alter the Catholic Mass that at the very least it would lose practically any dimension whatsoever of being authentic Catholic worship...Has the theology behind the Mass been so manipulated twisted and deformed that Catholics going to this Mass miss something of the theology compared to talking about the traditional Latin Mass, the Tridentine Mass...To make a point, you can receive a sacrament validly

Parting Shots: Michael “Flip-flop” Voris Condemns SSPX



Pope Pius XII with Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre—the great prince of the Church YouTube's Mike Voris now condemns to hell.

and in the process still have your Faith endangered. ..We’re talking about, is this authentic Catholic worship? Is what is going on behind the scenes a possible detriment to your Faith? That’s the question! ...According to the man who essentially developed the *Novus Ordo*, the New Mass, the Mass most of us attend each week in our parishes, it had to be stripped of anything Catholic that would be a problem for Protestants...There’s no denying that since the New Mass, the Church, in its Catholic character, in its public worship, the living out the faith of the laity has simply been wiped off the map...In 1967 after a series of small incremental changes, Bugnini unveils his vision for the new mass to a senate of bishops in the Sistine Chapel right under Michelangelo’s glorious frescoes...reports are that this Mass was so repulsive and so disturbing that more than half of the bishops simply got up and walked out of the Mass... Two years later Pope Paul VI officially promulgates this mass, the Bugnini Mass, with little to no changes to the one presented in the Sistine Chapel.

Now that Michael has changed his 2010 part, note his changed views as expressed in his 2015 weeklong video blitzkrieg targeting the SSPX:

A few weeks back, a spokesman priest for the breakaway group the Society of St. Pius X sent shockwaves around Catholic circles when he came out and said the New Mass, the *Novus Ordo*, is an “offense against God” and Catholics should not go to it on Sundays, or any other day. That is the official position of the schismatic group — and they are in schism.

In another CMTV attack video aired during his 2015 *SSPX Schismatic Marathon Week* Voris declared:

Despite various political reasons for not

wanting to come right out with it, the SSPX is in schism. The Society of St. Pius X, a breakaway group established by a French Archbishop who died as an excommunicate, is in schism...Many leaders in the Church these days, as with zillions of other situations in the Church, simply do not want to come out with it and say it like it is...Now there is the objective case of schism, and the legal/subjective case of schism. And we must distinguish between the two...Various people in the Church say, “Well, the Church hasn’t declared them in schism, so they aren’t.” First of all, Pope St. John Paul II did declare them in schism [sic] — but that aside, a person or group does not need to have the actual official declaration of the Church to be in schism. Think, for example, of a man who commits murder. He is caught and put on trial. Objectively, he is a murderer. He can’t officially be called a murderer until the jury says “guilty,” but he is a murderer in the objective truthful sense regardless...Even if the jury were to declare him not guilty, he is still a murderer objectively speaking, and objectively speaking is what we are talking about here — in the objective truthful sense, in the eyes of God, as the situation exists in itself, the SSPX is in schism.

So the Church has not declared SSPX schismatic but they are in schism, as declared by Pope Voris. If that is the case, Michael Voris, then *The Last Word* suggests that you too may be in schism, based on your earlier denunciations of the *Novus Ordo Mass*. Pay attention to where *The Michael* parts his hair, folks, if you want to know where he falls on an issue.

You know, I used to watch *I Love Lucy* for entertainment but now we have something much more entertaining to watch: the *I Hate SSPX* video screeds of CMTV. ■