

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

Viganò, Freemasonry and the Lefebvre Question

The former papal nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, has written yet another letter, this time tripling down on Pope Francis by naming documents proving that Vatican officials, including the pope, had detailed knowledge of then-Cardinal McCarrick's sexual corruption. In this his third communication, written in reply to Marc Cardinal Ouellet's letter to him earlier this month, Archbishop Viganò makes it clear that in peril of his immortal soul, he recognizes an obligation before God to speak out against the culture of corruption in the Church that reaches all the way to the Vatican itself.

Obviously, the Viganò development has now reached historic proportions. In fact, it is unlikely we'll see another perfect storm like this again, where the erstwhile third most powerful man in the Vatican is absolutely committed to exposing ecclesial corruption at the highest levels, including an alleged papal cover-up of abominations such as pedophilia.

Can the Church of Vatican II survive this most dangerous pope?

The allegations contained in the Viganò letters paint a picture of a Church that has now moved well beyond crisis and in the general direction of total collapse. Allegations leveled by such a prominent personage could easily topple

~ See Editor's Desk/Page 2



Pope Paul VI

The Canonization Crisis

BY CHRISTOPHER FERRARA

(Part II)

On October 14, Pope Bergoglio, having already authorized Holy Communion for public adulterers and declared the death penalty immoral—flatly contradicting bimillennial Church teaching and practice in both cases—declared that both Paul VI and Oscar Romero are saints the universal Church must venerate as such. Yet Paul VI unleashed an unprecedented liturgical debacle and the post-conciliar revolution in general, over which he spent the rest of his life weeping and wringing his hands while faith and discipline rapidly collapsed all around him. Whereas Romero, a [complex figure](#) one cannot honestly call a Marxist, was not assassinated on account of hatred of the Faith as such, but rather on account of his public agitation against the government of El Salvador, then in the midst of a civil war with Marxist revolutionaries. [Nor has it ever been determined with certainty](#) which side of the conflict was responsible for his murder, for which no one has ever been prosecuted

or even identified definitively as a suspect.

What are we to make of these canonizations—the latest in the output of what the press mocks as the “[saint factory](#)” put into operation by John Paul II? In considering this question, it would be opportune to conclude the two-part series I began [here in these pages some months ago](#), venturing the opinion of a layman who cannot see how the infallibility of canonizations can be anything but dependent upon the integrity of the investigative process that precedes the papal canonization decree.

In Part I, I noted the decisive role the divine testimony of miracles plays in canonization. I quoted the Catholic scholar Donald S. Prudlo, an expert on the history of canonizations, who observed that because “the problem of canonizing unworthy figures came up repeatedly” with local canonizations by bishops, once Rome had assumed control over canonizations in the late 12th century, “the papacy institute[d] all manner of

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Sede-Vacationism

BY JASON MORGAN

Until recently, “secession” wasn't a word that had been bandied about much since Ft. Sumter. Disgruntled segments of the American electorate occasionally mounted secession referenda in fits of post-election pique, but those quickly died down and people went about their daily business soon enough.

That all changed with the coming of the culture wars. As one issue after another split the American public into opposing camps, our elections became all-out battles over a non-existent center, until now, in 2018, the losing side is carrying out a slow coup against the winning side, and the country is seriously, soberly wondering whether shooting might not break out over something as pedestrian as a judicial appointment. *Marbury v. Madison* was high drama, but with the Brett Kavanaugh saga we saw the Wicked Witch of the West Coast call in her swarms of flying monkeys to try to tear the republic into pieces.

Secession is thus an increasingly popular remedy. There is no more middle ground anywhere, and one side or another is going to have to win the whole game at some point, or else balk and quit the premises before the land war commences. California's bid to split into three separate states was at least a plan for an orderly retreat. Once Civil War II breaks out, we are going to wish we had just let everyone go their separate ways in peace.

But if “secession” is a jarring term to hear in public discussion, then

~ See Sede-Vacationism/Page 4

Cultural Genocide: A Clarification (Part II)

BY DAVID L. SONNIER

Introduction

In Part I of this essay we briefly survey the state of the Catholic Church prior to, during, and after the Second Vatican Council and explore the use of the term “*Cultural Genocide*” to describe the destruction of a distinct international Catholic culture that once existed throughout the world. Prior to the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II – 1962-1965) that culture was characterized by prayer

in a universal language, a common liturgy and liturgical calendar, and common beliefs that transcended national borders. Although it still exists to this date in diminished form under the title “*Traditional Catholicism*,” it was nearly eliminated altogether in the aftermath of this council, a period which has featured a prolonged suppression of this distinct culture, its associated prayer language, and its practices. This discussion does not include the Eastern Rites.

~ See Cultural Genocide/Page 10



Editor's Desk, Continued...

the Revolution of Francis, especially if enough Catholics stand with Viganò in holding the pope accountable.

At this most critical moment in the life of the Church, we call on all traditional Catholics—including the priestly orders

of the Society of St. Pius X, the Fraternity of St. Peter and the Institute of Christ the King—to prayerfully consider expressing public

solidarity with

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò since the condition of the Church is now so critical. As the attorney general in California, as well as the Department of Justice, prepare to open their own investigations, it becomes clear that the future of the Catholic Church in America may well be in peril. And the longer Francis ignores Archbishop Viganò the more serious is his crime against our children. For what will start out ostensibly as a Federal “investigation” could so easily become a nationwide purge of all things Catholic if the Church herself refuses to act. Francis is not only a threat to the souls of his flock, in other words, but now to the very future of the Church herself. We call upon this most irresponsible and reckless pope to either act now or resign immediately.

Lefebvre Vindicated

All of this calls to mind what thirty years ago in these columns was known as the “Lefebvre Question”. Archbishop Lefebvre’s historic stand for Tradition was nothing less than a reaction to the infiltration of evil into the bastions of Catholic priestly formation, centers of higher learning, even the Vatican itself. And, quite obviously, his stand has now been justified by history itself. Archbishop Viganò is proving it right now—that for decades, evil and corruption have been allowed to flourish in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church of Vatican II.

This is so obviously the case, in fact, that one wonders when we get to formally announce the total vindication of Archbishop Lefebvre. In fact, I personally wonder why the Society of St. Pius X has not already done so.

To help make it clearer how complete has been the Lefebvre Vindication, we are reproducing the following Remnant article which appeared in these pages over forty years ago, and in which my father, Walter L. Matt, made the following prediction:

“What it is that still lies hidden behind the so-called ‘Lefebvre question’ is the far more formidable and truly appalling scandal of Masonic infiltration and impenetration of the Church – which, of course, Archbishop Lefebvre himself has repeatedly touched upon... We therefore say what we have said

before: Archbishop Lefebvre’s position at this point in history *will one day be vindicated* – whether by a Third Vatican Council or even by this or a future Pope, remains of course to be seen. It is all in God’s hands.”

Yes, indeed, Dad. You were right, and



your own son has now lived long enough to see your predication come true.

Archbishop Lefebvre, Pray for us.

Freemasonry and the Lefebvre Question

by Walter L. Matt (RIP)

Reprinted from The Remnant, August 21, 1976

Whatever one might think about the “Lefebvre question”, i.e., whether or not he should submit to the demands made of him by Rome, there are two things that must not be lost sight of: 1) He has, as was pointed out in these columns many times before, applied to Rome for a formal hearing or trial, but has been summarily denied his day in court. That being the case, he has in fact been denied even such an elementary right as ‘due process’, to which even the worst kind of criminal is entitled. 2) As one of our correspondents appropriately points out: “Whereas Mgr. Lefebvre has been suspended and forbidden even to say Mass under pain of excommunication, no such disciplinary action has been taken against the Freemason Bugnini.”

The latter has not even been publicly reproved.

Moreover, despite his (Bugnini’s) being subject to automatic excommunication because of his alleged membership in Freemasonry, Archbishop Bugnini continues to exercise a diplomatic function on behalf of the Vatican – and this despite the fact, as the same correspondent shows, that Bugnini, the author of the New Mass, “was sacked in July 1975 when unquestionable proof of his being a Freemason was submitted to the Holy See.”

There are other aspects of the “Lefebvre question” which are alluded to in today’s “The Remnant Speaks” and which need not, therefore, be labored here. Suffice it to say that, before The Wanderer or anyone else dares, as the erudite Catholic lay publisher Hamish Fraser puts it, “to condemn this dedicated Churchman” [Archbishop Lefebvre], they “should first be at pains to indicate the nature and the dimensions of the unprecedented scandal against which he (Lefebvre) considers it his duty to protest, in order to arrest what Pope Paul himself has described as the ‘self-destruction of the Church’.”

Mr. Fraser, writing from his native Scotland, is by no means alone in his expressed thinking anent the “unprecedented scandal against which

he (Lefebvre) considers it his duty to protest”. So, for example, the illustrious French Dominican priest, Fr. R. L. Bruckberger, whose article appears elsewhere in this issue of The Remnant, hammers home the same point:

One fine day, Paul VI discovers, with irrefutable evidence, that this pernicious Bugnini is a Freemason and that there is little room for doubt that he is not the only Mason within the Roman Curia, and within the immediate entourage of the Pope: that this Bugnini is there for one sole purpose: to help in the destruction of the church from within. What does the Pope do? Keep a Freemason in a key position in the Church? Impossible! Bugnini must be interrogated;

his interrogation continues throughout the night. Are sanctions applied to him for his deadly work? Is he suspended from his sacred functions, which one has every reason to believe were sacrilegious? Is he excommunicated? Not on your life! He is appointed pro-Nuncio in Iran, where he represents the Pope and the Catholic Church! And all that he has done during those ten years is allowed to remain; all that he has destroyed during those ten years is allowed to remain destroyed.

Mgr. Lefebvre is accused in some circles of ‘warring against the Church’ or of ‘disobeying the Pope’. Why, pray tell, this accusation is not made, rather, against Freemason Bugnini, or, for that matter,

"Archbishop Lefebvre's position at this point in history will one day be vindicated."

-Walter Matt, The Remnant, 1976

any bona fide Freemason, is anyone’s guess. Are Freemasons not warring against the Church and disobeying the Pope? Was it not Pope Leo XIII, in his Apostolic Letter of March 10, 1902, who told us that “the whole purpose (of Masonry) is to make war against God and against His Church.”? And was it not the same Pontiff, in his encyclical on Freemasonry, who admonished all the Bishops of the world thus: “We wish it to be your rule first of all to tear away the mask from Freemasonry, and let it be seen as it really is; and by sermons and Pastoral Letters to instruct the people as to the artifices used by societies of this kind in seducing men and enticing them into their ranks....” (Humanum Genus, April 20, 1884)

And that being so, would it not be high time, now that the Roman Curia itself appears to have been infiltrated by Freemasonry, that the Holy See and the Bishops and faithful everywhere begin to “tear the mask away” and expose the

scandal come what may? Would not this be a more urgent and honest task than to continue to single out and condemn without trial one man – and only one man! – whose record of faith and fidelity to all things truly Catholic is plain enough and clear enough for all to see?

Clearly, as Fr. Bruckberger so aptly concludes, something is ‘rotten’ somewhere, though not really in Denmark. What it is that still lies hidden behind the so-called “Lefebvre question” is the far more formidable and truly appalling scandal of Masonic infiltration and impenetration of the Church – which, of course, Archbishop Lefebvre himself has repeatedly touched upon but which has likewise been dealt with at length by one of the most widely known and respected European theologians of our day, Dr. Rudolf Graber, Bishop of Regensburg, Germany, in his book, “Athanasius and the Church of Our Time.”

Thus, in the chapter of Bishop Graber’s book, “Secret Societies”, we read inter alia: “It would not be going too far to maintain that many spheres of Catholicism have now begun (1974) to adopt its (Masonry’s and/or the French Revolution’s) main ideas...”

He cites Masonic lenders and writers, particularly the 19th century ex-priests de Guarita and Roca, to demonstrate how Masonry has long been striving not merely to infiltrate the Church, but ultimately to transform her, to establish a “new Church”, which, though stripped of its ancient dogmas and sacred traditions, will still, generally speaking, appear to be the same old Church, though in fact, it will be seriously compromised if not committed to the evil ends and objects of Masonic schemers and kindred revolutionaries.

In this connection, Bishop Graber points out that, although the Popes (Pius X, in particular) had so incisively warned against these developments, they stood virtually alone. The Church as such paid little, if any, heed to them. Hence the long and carefully concealed process of crafty infiltration and impenetration has continued, and, as Bishop Graber observes, “from all the (Masonic) quotations which could be expanded into books, it is not difficult to discover the tactics being employed; to deprive the Church of its supernatural character, to amalgamate it with the world, to interweave the denominations ecumenically instead of letting them run side by side as separate confessions, and thus to pave the way for a standard world religion in a centralized world state. The Church’s predicate of the ‘Only True’ has disappeared from the dialogue...” (p.37)

The point to bear in mind here is that this demolition work, as the Bishop suggests, is really an “inside job” or, as Pope St. Pius X pointed out at the turn of the century, it is a campaign being waged from ‘within the bosom of the Church’, not by outside enemies!

Bishop Graber cites, in this connection, the “change of strategy” adopted by Masonry at approximately the turn of the century, when it decided: “The goal is no longer the destruction of the Church, (at least not for the time being! -Ed.) but to make use of it by infiltrating it”. He

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Continued...

cites Masonic sources to show how they hoped “for the successful outcome of (Pope) John XXIII’s revolution”, i.e., a “revolution” which, as Masonry devoutly wished, would strip the Church of her dogmatic character and bring about her amalgamation with the world.

He cites the 19th century Masonic writer, Antonio Fogazzaro (who has likewise been cited by Archbishop Lefebvre in his latest Letter #10 to Friends and Benefactors, available from The Remnant Press), to show that concealed Masons, priests and laymen both inside and outside of Italy, have been striving for many decades of years to bring about “a reform of the Church”, but without arousing the suspicions of the Church authorities. (!) Their hoped-for “reforms” would center on the Church’s religious instruction program, her liturgy, her disciplines, even her top administration in Rome. The Bishop emphasizes the fact that Masonry schemed to bring about these “reforms” by working from within, clandestinely, even without a tangible kind of organization or fixed apparatus, but always keeping before their minds the one fixed goal: “the establishment of this Catholic Freemasonry” (!). (p.44)

“Catholic Freemasonry”? Like “Catholic Communism” or “Christian Socialism”, this is a contradiction in terms. One cannot be a true Freemason and at the same time a sincere Roman Catholic.

Which brings me back to the “Lefebvre question” and the dilemma faced by this dedicated Roman Catholic priest and prelate. The distinguished Catholic lay editor and publisher of “Approaches” magazine, printed in Saltcoats, Scotland, Mr. Hamish Fraser, advises his friends in a letter dated August 3, 1976:

It is true that in my opinion at the time of writing it, I considered it advisable

for him (Lefebvre) NOT to seek a frontal clash with Rome by proceeding with the ordinations (at Econe on June 13). But in the light of subsequent developments – in particular the scandalous consistorial allocution of May 24, 1976, which was literally studded with blatant falsehoods from beginning to end (I indicated only a few in my hurriedly prepared leaflet – supplement to Approaches 49-50), and the subsequent unilateral action against Mgr. Lefebvre (none against the Freemason Bugnini – not even a public reprimand – who continues to exercise a diplomatic function on behalf of the Vatican despite his being automatically

Pope is himself committed.’ Indeed, I’d unhesitatingly go to the stake rather than put my signature to so monstrous a demand, for to do so would in effect be to approve and connive at the destruction that has taken place since Vatican II. In refusing THIS package, Mgr. Lefebvre deserves the support of the entire, Catholic world.”

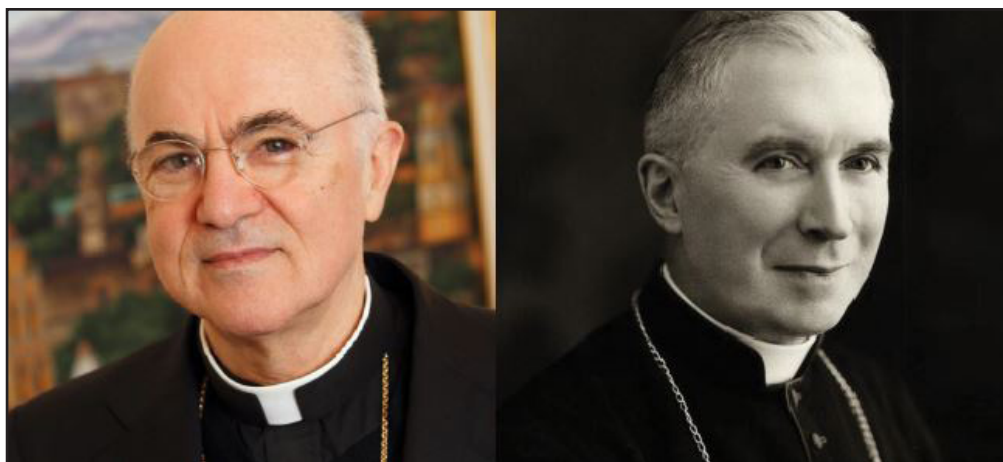
To Mr. Fraser’s statement, I might merely add my own fervent *Amen*. For me to accept THAT kind of package would be, as it is for Mgr. Lefebvre, a fairly clear-cut case of treason not only against the Papacy itself, but against the Bride of

provided a certain amount of justification for those who speak of the ‘spirit of the Council’. (p.66)

But it is precisely this “opalescent ambivalence”, this equivocal language, this ambiguity of textual expression which characterizes Vatican II, that impels men like Archbishop Lefebvre seriously to question some of its key pronouncements. Beyond that, however, it seems to us that if it be true, as Bishop Graber states, that the Council “refrained from making dogmatically binding statements or even dissociating itself, as previous Church Assemblies had done, from errors and false doctrines by means of clear anathemas” – why, then, is Archbishop Lefebvre or anyone else expected to submit to everything the Council said and did, including the infinite varieties of the “post-Conciliar reforms”?

The answer to that question, it would seem to me, is self-evident: It is, simply stated, to expect the impossible. It is too much! We therefore say what we have said before: Archbishop Lefebvre’s position at this point in history will one day be vindicated – whether by a Third Vatican Council or even by this or a future Pope, remains of course to be seen. It is all in God’s hands. Meanwhile, I strongly recommend that we all pray hard for Pope Paul as well as Archbishop Lefebvre, asking God to restore unity and peace and concord to the sorely divided “household of the Faith” which stands today in such great peril. And as we pray, let us implore Him further, not indeed for an ill-defined and shallow kind of ‘Christian unity’ or even the Masonic kind of ‘one world synthesis’, but solely for one world in Christ, one world solidly committed to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church with Christ as its Invisible and Sovereign Head and the Pope as His earthly vicar. For this let us pray to the Lord. ■

(See Page 5 for Viganò’s latest testimony)



Archbishops Viganò and Lefebvre - heroes of our time.

subject to excommunication for being a Freemason, or against heresiarchs such as Kung, etc..) – it would seem to me that the present pontificate [that of “Saint” Pope Paul VI] has lost the very last vestige of moral authority, and is nothing short of a totalitarian despotism. This being so, the cause of scandal is Rome’s totalitarian intolerance of everything authentically traditional. And because of this Mgr. Lefebvre seems to be increasingly cast in the mold of a 20th century Athanasius. Under these circumstances, one’s first duty would seem to be to indicate the true nature and the dimensions of the present scandal. (Which, it goes without saying, has definitely NOT been done to date by any of Archbishop Lefebvre’s detractors. – Ed. The Remnant)

Christ, His Mystical Body. I could not, in particular, accept the ‘post-conciliar reforms’ and ‘orientations’ which, more often than not, in these post-Conciliar days, are not only completely befogged and beclouded by their passage through the ‘intermediary bureaucracies’, but are unmistakably stamped by many of the nefarious hallmarks of “Catholic Freemasonry”, and its evil intents and purposes. For myself, therefore, I will continue to profess the Faith of our fathers as set forth in the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Council of Trent and 1st Vatican Council. As for Vatican II, I accept Bishop Graber’s dictum that the Council was not – certainly not in first place – a dogmatic Council, since it “refrained from making dogmatically binding statements”. (p.66)

Mr. Fraser’s comment, to which the editor of *The Remnant* unhesitatingly subscribes, contains this further statement: “In my opinion, Mgr. Lefebvre cannot be faulted in respect of his refusing to accept the demands made in the name of the Pope: i.e., to accept Vatican II, the post-Conciliar reforms and also the orientations to which the

More explicitly, he writes that “since the Council was aiming primarily at a pastoral orientation and hence refrained from making dogmatically binding statements or dissociating itself, as previous Church Assemblies had done, from errors and false doctrines by means of clear anathemas, many questions took on an opalescent ambivalence which

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Sede-Vacationism, Continued...

“sedevacantism” is enough to knock one clean out of one’s easy chair.

Before 2013, “sedevacantism” was whispered mainly in the fever swamps of the conspiracy theorists. The See of St. Peter is really empty, one sometimes heard mentioned in hushed tones. The real pope is in hiding in Monaco, or is working undercover at a gas station in Monterrey. Whoever the fellow in the white hat walking around the Vatican is, he isn’t the legitimate successor of the Apostle.

Well, OK. Whatever floats your boat.

But whether one subscribes to the sedevacantist position or not, one has to admit that the word is being used a lot more these days than just five years ago. Serious theologians (and, yes, by “serious theologians” I exclude all Jesuits) and Church historians are wondering what, exactly, one is supposed to do when a papacy has gone off the rails, plowed through the town, knocked over the water tower, blown up the power plant, sent a whole flock of chickens skedaddling in a tizzy of feathers and frenzied clucking, and plunged over the cliff in a spectacular, elegant free fall down, down into the icy deep below.

We may not want to admit it yet, but the Francis Papacy is an unqualified disaster. If we had elected Bart Simpson as pontifex maximus we would not be experiencing nearly the level of five-alarm calamity that greets us every time Jorge Mario Bergoglio speaks into a nearby microphone. Sedevacantism sure would be easier than dealing with a man who apparently learned theology from Bazooka gum wrappers and organizational management from Don Corleone.

As much as we might like to complain about the American system, it has one big advantage over the papacy (besides not having to borrow an Alitalia plane): if we don’t like the person using our White House, we can chuck him to the curb and have someone else do the presiding for us.

For example, let’s suppose—and this is purely hypothetical—that we had elected a serial rapist from Arkansas who spent most of his time in the Oval Office molesting interns. Or a madrassa

student who let Americans die in, say, Libya and then lied about what had happened in order to avoid discomfiting his Muslim allies. Not that Americans would ever choose such lowlifes, mind you. But if they did, then our crack team of “journalists” in the media would be on the story like hounds on a skunk trail, and before long the truth would be revealed and we would never, ever give such people a second round in office.

The papacy is different, though. It’s like buying a car in Cuba. If you don’t like your purchase, well, sorry, but there’s nothing else. Have a nice day. You don’t get to redo papal elections, and there’s no Vatican Bureau of Investigation whose members are on-call 24/7 to stage a Bogota-style in-house takedown so the Deep State skulduggery can go on as before. Once you elect a pope, you have him. There is no papal farm league whither you can send a dud pontiff and have him work on his motu proprios and his changeups until he’s ready for the big leagues again.

Which brings us to Francis. Francis is the Milli Vanilli of the apostolic succession. We thought we were getting one thing, but it turns out it was all a charade. We thought Francis was a Catholic. Nope. He’s just a Soros globalist who happens to enjoy wearing long white smocks. Girl, you know it’s true. Francis is a walking bill of goods. And now that we’ve got him, we can’t send him back.

The obvious solution to all this is just to invoke sedevacantism and say that Francis is a usurper. (Politely left unsaid in this is that we are just waiting for the old man to die so we can get our do-over and try to elect someone halfway competent next time.)

But this creates all kinds of problems. Let’s sum up the bad things in one word: Avignon. Enough said.

However, this just brings us right back where we started. If we balk at sedevacantism, then St. Peter’s is still under the thrall of a man who is about as papabile as Big Bird. What do we do?

I propose here a new, hipper form of



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SEDEVACANTIST HEAVEN

sedevacantism: sedevacationism. It’s like sedevacantism, only that it conceptually splits the pope from his pronouncements. Doing so allows us to cancel the papacy at whatever point the pope announces his firm and considered adherence to heresy. Once he does this, then, yes, he is still pope, but in permanent lame duck mode. Everything he says and does from the moment he affixes his seal to heresy is null and void, written on the wind, written on the running waves.

A sedevacationist pope still gets to meet with Bono and Michael Moore and Leonardo DiCaprio, still gets to invite Jeffrey Sachs to the Vatican to talk about how sterilizing Africans and Asians is somehow neither horrific nor racist, still gets to tool around in the popemobile, and still gets the folks in the funny-colored, billowing clown getups to guard him when he makes the rounds of St. Peter’s, blessing the atheistic Chinese tourists who got visas to Europe because they weren’t Catholic, unlike the Chinese Catholics whom Francis

condemned to imprisonment with his latest papal “deal”. Still pope in outer appearance, in other words. Still the guy who gets his picture on the cover of *Time* magazine.

But from the moment a pope makes clear that it is his considered will to remain in heresy, he is theological and pontifical toast. Nothing he says, signs, or decrees has any weight with any practicing Catholic. In fact, to listen to a man who is both a heretic and a pope is blasphemy, so Francis would have to be renamed Pope Pyrrhic I. His station is empty. He’s still on the See of Peter, but in substance he is on extended leave. Not sedevacantism, sedevacationism. The king’s two bodies, the pope’s two selves. Problem solved.

All that remains is the detail of when Francis finally and firmly indicated that he intended to persist in heresy. I leave this to the good readers of the Remnant to decide. There could even be an ecclesiastical trial to establish, for all candid minds to review, the moment when Francis objectively fell into heresy. (This will later be known as The Great Theological Turkey Shoot of 2018.) Whatever the proven date and time, from thence on, and until Francis relents and revokes all heretical statements, he is pope in name only.

Sedevacantism is a recipe for out-and-out schism, ecclesial civil war. Sedevacationism lets us throw the division back onto its source, Bergoglio, saving the Church while muting the screeching sound of our ongoing papal train wreck. ■

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Here is Viganò's third courageous testimony, a response to the open letter of Cardinal Ouellet. Please read it in its entirety, this good man needs our prayers and support. MJM

On the Feast of the North American Martyrs

To bear witness to corruption in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church was a painful decision for me, and remains so. But I am an old man, one who knows he must soon give an accounting to the Judge for his actions and omissions, one who fears Him who can cast body and soul into hell. A Judge who, even in his infinite mercy, will render to every person salvation or damnation according to what he has deserved. Anticipating the dreadful question from that Judge — “How could you, who had knowledge of the truth, keep silent in the midst of falsehood and depravity?” — what answer could I give?

I testified fully aware that my testimony would bring alarm and dismay to many eminent persons: churchmen, fellow bishops, colleagues with whom I had worked and prayed. I knew many would feel wounded and betrayed. I expected that some would in their turn assail me and my motives. Most painful of all, I knew that many of the innocent faithful would be confused and disconcerted by the spectacle of a bishop's charging colleagues and superiors with malfeasance, sexual sin, and grave neglect of duty. Yet I believe that my continued silence would put many souls at risk, and would certainly damn my own. Having reported multiple times to my superiors, and even to the pope, the aberrant behavior of Theodore McCarrick, I could have publicly denounced the truths of which I was aware earlier. If I have some responsibility in this delay, I repent for that. This delay was due to the gravity of the decision I was going to take, and to the long travail of my conscience.

I have been accused of creating confusion and division in the Church through my testimony. To those who believe such confusion and division were negligible prior to August 2018, perhaps such a claim is plausible. Most impartial observers, however, will have been aware of a longstanding excess of both, as is inevitable when the successor of Peter is negligent in exercising his principal mission, which is to confirm the brothers in the faith and in sound moral doctrine. When he then exacerbates the crisis by contradictory or perplexing statements about these doctrines, the confusion is worsened.

Therefore I spoke. For it is the conspiracy of silence that has wrought and continues to wreak great harm in the Church — harm to so many innocent souls, to young priestly vocations, to the faithful at large. With regard to my decision, which I have taken in

conscience before God, I willingly accept every fraternal correction, advice, recommendation, and invitation to progress in my life of faith and love for Christ, the Church and the pope.

Let me restate the key points of my testimony.

- In November 2000 the U.S. nuncio Archbishop Montalvo informed the Holy See of Cardinal McCarrick's homosexual



Archbishop Viganò and Cardinal Ouellet

behavior with seminarians and priests.

- In December 2006 the new U.S. nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, informed the Holy See of Cardinal McCarrick's homosexual behavior with yet another priest.
- In December of 2006 I myself wrote a memo to the Secretary of State Cardinal Bertone, and personally delivered it to the Substitute for General Affairs, Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, calling for the pope to bring extraordinary disciplinary measures against McCarrick to forestall future crimes and scandal. This memo received no response.
- In April 2008 an open letter to Pope Benedict by Richard Sipe was relayed by the Prefect of the CDF, Cardinal Levada, to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Bertone, containing further accusations of McCarrick's sleeping with seminarians and priests. I received this a month later, and in May 2008 I myself delivered a second memo to the then Substitute for General Affairs, Archbishop Fernando Filoni, reporting the claims against McCarrick and calling for sanctions against him. This second memo also received no response.
- In 2009 or 2010 I learned from Cardinal Re, prefect of the Congregation of Bishops, that Pope Benedict had ordered McCarrick to cease public ministry and begin a life of prayer and penance. The nuncio Sambi communicated the Pope's orders to McCarrick in a voice heard down the corridor of the nunciature.
- In November 2011 Cardinal Ouellet, the new Prefect of Bishops, repeated to me, the new nuncio to the U.S., the Pope's restrictions on McCarrick,

and I myself communicated them to McCarrick face-to-face.

- On June 21, 2013, toward the end of an official assembly of nuncios at the Vatican, Pope Francis spoke cryptic words to me criticizing the U.S. episcopacy.
- On June 23, 2013, I met Pope Francis face-to-face in his apartment to ask for clarification, and the Pope asked me, “*il cardinale McCarrick, com'è* (Cardinal McCarrick — what

do you make of him)?” — which I can only interpret as a feigning of curiosity in order to discover whether or not I was an ally of McCarrick. I told him that McCarrick had sexually corrupted generations of priests and seminarians, and had been ordered by Pope Benedict to confine himself to a life of prayer and penance.

- Instead, McCarrick continued to enjoy the special regard of Pope Francis and was given new responsibilities and missions by him.
- McCarrick was part of a network of bishops promoting homosexuality who, exploiting their favor with Pope Francis, manipulated episcopal appointments so as to protect themselves from justice and to strengthen the homosexual network in the hierarchy and in the Church at large.
- Pope Francis himself has either colluded in this corruption, or, knowing what he does, is gravely negligent in failing to oppose it and uproot it.

I invoked God as my witness to the truth of my claims, and none has been shown false. Cardinal Ouellet has written to rebuke me for my temerity in breaking silence and leveling such grave accusations against my brothers and superiors, but in truth his remonstrance confirms me in my decision and, even more, serves to vindicate my claims, severally and as a whole.

- Cardinal Ouellet concedes that he spoke with me about McCarrick's situation prior to my leaving for Washington to begin my post as nuncio.
- Cardinal Ouellet concedes that he

communicated to me in writing the conditions and restrictions imposed on McCarrick by Pope Benedict.

- Cardinal Ouellet concedes that these restrictions forbade McCarrick to travel or to make public appearances.
- Cardinal Ouellet concedes that the Congregation of Bishops, in writing, first through the nuncio Sambi and then once again through me, required McCarrick to lead a life of prayer and penance.

What does Cardinal Ouellet dispute?

- Cardinal Ouellet disputes the possibility that Pope Francis could have taken in important information about McCarrick on a day when he met scores of nuncios and gave each only a few moments of conversation. But this was not my testimony. My testimony is that at a second, private meeting, I informed the Pope, answering his own question about Theodore McCarrick, then Cardinal archbishop emeritus of Washington, prominent figure of the Church in the US, telling the Pope that McCarrick had sexually corrupted his own seminarians and priests. No pope could forget that.
- Cardinal Ouellet disputes the existence in his archives of letters signed by Pope Benedict or Pope Francis regarding sanctions on McCarrick. But this was not my testimony. My testimony was that he has in his archives key documents — irrespective of provenance — incriminating McCarrick and documenting the measures taken in his regard, and other proofs on the cover-up regarding his situation. And I confirm this again.
- Cardinal Ouellet disputes the existence in the files of his predecessor, Cardinal Re, of “audience memos” imposing on McCarrick the restrictions already mentioned. But this was not my testimony. My testimony is that there are other documents: for instance, a note from Card Re not *ex-Audientia SS.mi*, signed by either the Secretary of State or by the Substitute.
- Cardinal Ouellet disputes that it is false to present the measures taken against McCarrick as “sanctions” decreed by Pope Benedict and canceled by Pope Francis. True. They were not technically “sanctions” but provisions, “conditions and restrictions.” To quibble whether they were sanctions or provisions or something else is pure legalism. From a pastoral point of view they are exactly the same thing.

In brief, Cardinal Ouellet concedes the important claims that I did and do make, and disputes claims I don't make and never made.

There is one point on which I must absolutely refute what Cardinal Ouellet wrote. The Cardinal states that the Holy

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Hidden Gems of Catholic History: Madagascar

BY MICHAEL MASSEY

Every Catholic child is taught the stories of the persecution of the Church under the Roman Empire, every Catholic knows the history of the Reformation and every traditional Catholic knows of the modernist infiltration of Rome. While these are undoubtedly essential pieces of Catholic history to know, there are many more inspiring, yet little-known pieces of Catholic history which would benefit us to learn. The *Kulturkampf* persecution of the 1870s, the martyrs of the Boxer Rebellion, the somewhat comical Synod of Sutri are among the countless other interesting and inspiring pieces of Catholic history. Outlined below is the history of the Church in Madagascar and the terrible persecution it suffered under Queen Ranavalona I.

Before the introduction of Christianity to Madagascar, the natives practiced a form of monotheistic paganism, which manifested itself in idolatry, witchcraft and other forms of fetishism. The first Catholic missionaries to Madagascar were a group of Portuguese priests who arrived in the 16th century, but were massacred shortly after landing.

They were followed by some Jesuits and Lazarists in the 17th century during the period of French colonisation, however, with the failure of the French colonies, the missionary effort also failed. It wasn't until the 19th century that Christianity was reintroduced with the arrival of protestant missionaries in the 1820s under the rule of King Radama I, who had a fondness for Christian culture, ended the slave trade and encouraged Christian evangelisation. The first Catholic missionaries of this period did not arrive until 1832 under the leadership of Monsignors de Solages and Dalmond. The Catholic and protestant missionaries set up schools and initially had great success in converting the native population, however, as more natives accepted Christianity, they began abandoning their ancient pagan customs which greatly angered many of the pagans.

In 1828 Radama I died without any heirs, which created a power vacuum and a struggle for the crown. According to custom the crown should have passed to Radama's nephew, Rakotbe, who had been educated by protestant

missionaries, however, Radama's scheming wife, Ranavalona, had different plans. Obtaining the support of several high-ranking military officers, Ranavalona seized the throne and began systematically assassinating all political rivals, including Rakotbe and even the majority of her own family. Rejecting her husband's policy of friendship with Western nations, she expelled foreign traders and missionaries began promoting the ancient Madagascan pagan religions. Ranavalona became concerned at the number of her officials and soldiers who converted to Christianity and saw the growing Christian population as a threat. She began to consult with the *ombiasy* (soothsayers) and promptly set about repressing Christianity in Madagascar. She began by prohibiting Christian marriages and forbidding all missionaries left in Madagascar to preach, then forbade the baptism of all infants and soldiers. Finally, on March 1st 1835 she decreed:

"I have to tell you that I will not pray to the ancestors of the Europeans, but to God and my ancestors. It is thanks to this

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In the 19th century, Madagascar was known for Ranavalona and her sadistic cruelty.

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See was only aware of "rumors," which were not enough to justify disciplinary measures against McCarrick. I affirm to the contrary that the Holy See was aware of a variety of concrete facts, and is in possession of documentary proof, and that the responsible persons nevertheless chose not to intervene or were prevented from doing so. Compensation by the Archdiocese of Newark and the Diocese of Metuchen to the victims of McCarrick's sexual abuse, the letters of Fr. Ramsey, of the nuncios Montalvo in 2000 and Sambini in 2006, of Dr. Sipe in 2008, my two notes to the superiors of the Secretariat of State who described in detail the concrete allegations against McCarrick; are all these just rumors? They are official correspondence, not gossip from the sacristy. The crimes reported were very serious, including those of attempting to give sacramental absolution to accomplices in perverse acts, with subsequent sacrilegious celebration of Mass. These documents specify the identity of the perpetrators and their protectors, and the chronological sequence of the facts. They are kept in the appropriate archives; no extraordinary investigation is needed to recover them.

In the public remonstrances directed at me I have noted two omissions, two dramatic silences. The first silence regards the plight of the victims. The second regards the underlying reason why there are so many victims, namely, the corrupting influence of

homosexuality in the priesthood and in the hierarchy. As to the first, it is dismaying that, amid all the scandals and indignation, so little thought should be given to those damaged by the sexual predations of those commissioned as ministers of the gospel. This is not a matter of settling scores or sulking over the vicissitudes of ecclesiastical careers. It is not a matter of politics. It is not a matter of how church historians may evaluate this or that papacy. This is about souls. Many souls have been and are even now imperiled of their eternal salvation.

As to the second silence, this very grave crisis cannot be properly addressed and resolved unless and until we call things by their true names. This is a crisis due to the scourge of homosexuality, in its agents, in its motives, in its resistance

to reform. It is no exaggeration to say that homosexuality has become a plague in the clergy, and it can only be eradicated with spiritual weapons. It is an enormous hypocrisy to condemn the abuse, claim to weep for the victims, and yet refuse to denounce the root cause of so much sexual abuse: homosexuality. It is hypocrisy to refuse to acknowledge that this scourge is due to a serious crisis in the spiritual life of the clergy and to fail to take the steps necessary to remedy it.

Unquestionably there exist philandering clergy, and unquestionably they too damage their own souls, the souls of those whom they corrupt, and the Church at large. But these violations of priestly celibacy are usually confined to the individuals immediately involved. Philandering clergy usually do not recruit other philanderers, nor work to promote them, nor cover-up their misdeeds — whereas the evidence for homosexual collusion, with its deep roots that are so difficult to eradicate, is overwhelming.

It is well established that homosexual predators exploit clerical privilege to their advantage. But to claim the crisis itself to be clericalism is pure sophistry. It is to pretend that a means, an instrument, is in fact the main motive.

Denouncing homosexual corruption

and the moral cowardice that allows it to flourish does not meet with congratulation in our times, not even in the highest spheres of the Church. I am not surprised that in calling attention to these plagues I am charged with disloyalty to the Holy Father and with fomenting *an open and scandalous rebellion*. Yet rebellion would entail urging others to topple the papacy. I am urging no such thing. I pray every day for Pope Francis — more than I have ever done for the other

popes. I am asking, indeed earnestly begging, the Holy Father to face up to the commitments he himself made in assuming his office as successor of Peter. He took upon himself the mission of confirming his brothers and guiding all souls in following Christ, in the spiritual combat, along the way of the cross. Let him admit his errors, repent, show his willingness to follow the mandate given to Peter and, once converted let him confirm his brothers (Lk 22:32).

In closing, I wish to repeat my appeal to my brother bishops and priests who know that my statements are true and who can so testify, or who have access to documents that can put the matter beyond doubt. You too are faced with a choice. You can choose to withdraw from the battle, to prop up the conspiracy of silence and avert your eyes from the spreading of corruption. You can make excuses, compromises and justification that put off the day of reckoning. You can console yourselves with the falsehood and the delusion that it will be easier to tell the truth tomorrow, and then the following day, and so on.

On the other hand, you can choose to speak. You can trust Him who told us, "the truth will set you free." I do not say it will be easy to decide between silence and speaking. I urge you to consider which choice — on your deathbed, and then before the just Judge — you will not regret having made.

+ Carlo Maria Viganò
Arcivescovo tit. di Ulpiana
Nunzio Apostolico
19 Ottobre 2018, Feast of the North American Martyrs

You can console yourselves with the falsehood and the delusion that it will be easier to tell the truth tomorrow, and then the following day, and so on...or you can choose to speak...

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custom that the twelve kings reigned and that I have reigned myself. Your own ancestors respected this custom. My people, I shall put to death anyone who practiced the new religion, because I am heiress of twelve kings."

Ranavalona's bloody repression began with the immediate execution of approximately 200 Christians, and during the next few years almost 3,000 Christians were executed. Many Catholics were killed in this repression and the protestant population was almost completely wiped out. With the missionaries gone, and countless Christians slaughtered, many of the remaining Christians abandoned their faith. A small group of Catholics, however, were saved by a royal princess, Victoria, who had secretly converted and embraced the Catholic faith. She protected these brave Catholics, hiding them from Ranavalona's soldiers. These few Catholics remained and spread their faith, all the while suffering horrific persecution and martyrdom. Under her protection, these brave Catholics held onto the faith and transmitted it to others while under threat of horrific torture and execution if caught. Ranavalona then ordered that every person found with Christian books be killed in horrible ways. Any Catholic found was condemned to death simply for professing the Catholic faith. Those who were caught were dressed up in the bloody skins of recently skinned animals and set upon by hunting dogs, others were tied up in jungles and left to die of starvation, more were buried alive in great pits or burned alive at stakes, while others still were ordered to be thrown off cliffs with their families forced to watch.

It was not just Christians who suffered

"Never say, 'she is only a feeble and ignorant woman, how can she rule such a vast empire?' I will rule here, to the good fortune of my people and the glory of my name!" -Queen Ranavalona



under her rule, however. Ranavalona instituted forced labour to clear forests and increase production of natural resources and engaged in military campaigns against her enemies. The conditions in which the labourers worked were so poor and the punishments meted out to them so severe that millions died from disease, exposure and torture. Between the years 1833 and 1839 alone, more than 2.5 million of her own people died, placing her in the annals of history's greatest mass murderers.

With M. de Solages having died earlier, M. Dalmond was left in charge of all missionary work, however he was soon expelled from Madagascar. Instead of returning to Europe, however, he remained on a nearby island converting the few natives there, while waiting for his opportunity to return to the Madagascar mainland. In 1843 he returned to France to request another missionary trip to Madagascar, where he was granted permission to take 8 priests and two lay brothers with him. On arrival, however, they were discovered. Fearing reprisals from European powers if she continued to kill foreign citizens, Ranavalona had abandoned her practice of executing foreigners and opted instead to simply expel them. As such, M. Dalmond and the other missionaries were denied entry to Madagascar. Instead of turning back to Europe, however, they made their way to the island of Reunion and began proselytizing there. It wasn't until 1855 that another Catholic priest finally set foot on Madagascar again, with Fr. Pere Finaz secretly landing at the capital, Tananarivo. Upon landing he declared:

"I am at Tananarivo, of which I take possession in the name of Catholicism."



Disguising himself as an ordinary European traveller, Fr. Finaz covertly began his missionary work. He quickly began a program to endear himself to the population, first by constructing a hot-air balloon, which astounded the city, then by creating a miniature railroad, building a telegraph and acting in stage productions. These activities not only endeared him to the local populace, but also granted him access to high-ranking officials within the Madagascar royal court. Through his influence, Fr. Finaz was able to persuade local officials to allow two more incognito priests, Frs. Jouen and Weber, to enter the country by posing as assistants to a French doctor. The three priests continued to evangelise in secret, their greatest success being Ranavalona's own son, Radama II.

While most others were taken in by their deception, the paranoid Ranavalona was suspicious and ordered the expulsion of all Europeans from her kingdom, including the three priests.

After this last anti-European act, the French and British determined to end Ranavalona's rule. Desiring to both exploit the natural resources of Madagascar and allow their missionaries back into the country, Joseph-Francois Lambert, the French envoy to Madagascar, engaged the assistance of Radama II to instigate a *coup d'état*. In 1857, Radama II, tired of seeing the common Madagascan people suffer under his mother's barbaric rule, and wishing to allow Christianity back into the country, agreed to the plan. Unfortunately, however, word of the plot was leaked to Ranavalona, who allowed the conspirators to continue their plan in order to test her court's loyalty. Once the coup was ready, troops loyal to Ranavalona sprang into action, rounding up the conspirators, who were promptly executed. Ranavalona did not have the heart to execute her own son, however, and he remained under her watchful eye for the next four years.

In 1861, Ranavalona became ill and different factions began vying for power. Supported by several high-ranking members of Ranavalona's court, the Queen's nephew, Ramboasalama sought to claim the throne, however Radama II also asserted his right to the throne. Ramboasalama was cast from the same mould as his aunt – a Madagascan 'traditionalist' opposed to Europeans and Christianity. While this gave him favour among many of the royal court, others had come to tire of Ranavalona's policies. Rainivoninahitriniony and Rainilaiarivony, the Prime Minister and head of the army, however, desired to open Madagascar up to the world and engage in

trade with France and Britain and so opposed Ramboasalama. In order to prevent him from obtaining the throne, they supported Radama, who was duly crowned King Radama II upon Ranavalona's death in August, 1861.

Upon Radama's accession to the throne, Frs. Jouen and Weber, along with other Jesuit priests and Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, returned to Madagascar. Instead of coming under false pretences as before, this time they came openly proclaiming the Gospel. Radama II quickly authorised the Catholic Church to establish missions all throughout the country and the evangelisation of Madagascar finally began in earnest. Radama II was tragically assassinated in 1863, but in his short reign he provided for the salvation of countless souls. The Catholic missionaries vied with protestant missionaries in the proceeding years, with the protestants initially having greater success, but in 1866 the Christian Brothers arrived and set up a great many schools through which they converted a great number of souls. Fr. Finaz then returned in 1868 and established 22 chapels, 25 schools and a leper house and finally constructed a stone cathedral in Tananarivo. By 1893, Catholicism had taken firm root in Madagascar. A protestant British Admiral, Sir Gore Jones famously declared:

"...working silently in Madagascar, [Catholic missionaries] were planting a tree far superior to all others."

Thanks to the work of these brave Catholic missionaries, almost 9 million Madagascans practice the Catholic faith today, approximately 40% of the entire population.

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Canonization Crisis

C. Ferrara/Continued from Page 1

safeguards to ensure veracity and holiness, such as lengthy investigations of life and *miracles*.” In that regard Prudlo cites Pope Innocent III (r. 1198-1216), who declared in his historic Bull canonizing Homobonus of Cremona that “Two things are necessary for one who is publicly venerated as a saint in the Church militant: the power of signs, namely works of piety in life and *the sign of miracles* after death.” As Prudlo was at pains to note: “While Innocent avers that only final perseverance is absolutely necessary for sainthood simply considered, he maintains that the public veneration of such a person *requires divine testimonies*. Both are required for sanctity, ‘for neither are works sufficient by themselves, nor signs alone.’”

Viewing the canonizations of Paul VI and Romero under the aspect of the purported medical miracles attributed to their intercession—an indispensable element of the process as it has developed under papal authority—one cannot fail to note that, based on the information made publicly available, none of them satisfies all of the [traditional criteria](#) for verification of a miracle as a divine testimony of sanctity. Those criteria are (1) a *cure* that is (2) instantaneous, (3) complete, (4) lasting, and (5) scientifically inexplicable, meaning not the result of treatment or natural processes of healing but rather an event originating outside the natural order. (Once such a medical miracle is verified according to these criteria, it must further be determined that it occurred “[solely through the intercession of that particular candidate for sainthood](#)” as opposed to prayers in general or prayers to other intercessors.)

It should be obvious that no purported miracle failing to meet even one of these criteria could rationally be considered a divine testimony of the candidate’s sanctity. If there is no cure as such then there is no miracle at all. If the cure is merely partial, it is not miraculous. If the cure is not instantaneous but only gradual, then non-miraculous natural processes of healing or medical treatment could account for it. If the cure is only temporary and the condition returns, nothing miraculous has

occurred.

Let us look, then, at the “miracles” attributed to the intercession of Paul VI and Oscar Romero. As to Paul, [the first purported miracle](#), which supported his beatification, “concerned an unborn which was found to have a serious health problem that *could mean* brain damage. Doctors advised that it be aborted, but the mother entrusted her pregnancy to Paul VI. The child was born healthy.” The purported miracle [has been more fully described thus](#):

The attributed miracle involves an unborn child, who was found to have a serious health problem that posed a high risk of brain damage, in the 1990s in California. The child’s bladder was damaged, and doctors reported ascites (the presence of liquid in the abdomen) and anhydramnios (absence of fluid in the amniotic sac). Physicians advised that the child be aborted, but the mother entrusted her pregnancy to the intercession of Pope Paul VI, who succeeded St. John XXIII on June 21, 1963, and served until his death on Aug. 6, 1978.

The mother took the advice of a nun who was a friend of the family and had met Paul VI. The mother then prayed for Paul VI’s intercession using a fragment of the pope’s vestments that the nun had given her.

Ten weeks later, the results of the medical tests showed a substantial improvement in the child’s health, and he was born by Caesarean section in the 39th week of pregnancy. He is now a healthy adolescent and considered to be completely healed.

The Italian postulator said it is not possible to give more details about the case in order to “respect the privacy” of the

family and the boy concerned.

Where exactly is the miraculous cure? What is described is a good outcome from the aggressive fetal treatment typical in such cases, including [this one](#), where the neonate was in even greater danger from such conditions, was treated in the womb and delivered alive. He was later reported to be “a 5-year-old [who] develops normally, but still remains under regular neurological, cardiologic and ophthalmologic control.” Indeed, the alleged beneficiary of the miraculous intercession of Paul VI was likewise monitored until he was “a healthy adolescent and considered to be completely cured.” There is not even a claim of an instantaneous medical cure in the Vatican’s ambiguous explanation of “substantial improvement” of the child’s condition *in utero* and the avoidance of a *risk* of brain damage, not a cure of same.

The [second purported miracle](#) attributed to Paul’s intercession involves another ambiguously described fetal crisis: “the healing of an unborn child who was suffering from a *potentially fatal disease*. Shortly after Pope Paul VI’s beatification, the child’s mother travelled to Brescia, the former Pontiff’s hometown, to pray for healing. The child was eventually born in good health.” How is that outcome different from the innumerable other cases when a child in danger in the womb is, against the odds, born healthy despite a grave prognosis? The medical literature and our common experience are replete with such cases. Again, where exactly is the *miraculous cure* of a seemingly incurable condition? Here too there is only a *potentially fatal disease*, another risk avoided, not the instantaneous cure of an otherwise fatal condition.

In both cases, one has the unmistakable sense of a stretching of the medical facts to reach the desired result: It’s a miracle! Proceed immediately to canonization! (We are not even considering here the other indispensable requirement of heroic virtue. Suffice it to note that “heroic” does not seem applicable to a weeping Pope who rued the results of his own reckless permissions for unheard-of innovations of the Church, which he nonetheless obstinately refused to admit were his own catastrophic blunders.)

As for [the one miracle attributed to the intercession of Oscar Romero](#)—only one sufficing given his prior designation as a “martyr”—here too, curiously enough, we encounter yet another ambiguous pregnancy-related medical emergency. In this case we are informed that the purported miracle is that after giving birth, a woman named Cecilia developed HELLP syndrome, a condition related to preeclampsia which involves hemolysis, elevated liver enzymes and low platelet count. In an effort to address threatened organ failure and other problems seen in the worst cases of this condition, she was placed in an induced coma—falsely described in some accounts as “slipping” into a coma as if to increase the drama. The claim is that after prayers to Romero, the woman saw a “dramatic recovery” over the next 72 hours and was discharged

from the hospital a few days later, fully recovered from the effects of HELLP syndrome.

But recovery from HELLP syndrome



Paul VI and Mons. Oscar Romero

after an induced coma, which constitutes aggressive medical treatment under the standard of care, is precisely what has happened in other such cases, as we see [here](#) and [here](#). There is nothing miraculous about a very good medical outcome from very good medical treatment. As the husband said of the outcome in the second linked case: “It’s a miracle. I thought I was losing both of them.” There is no sign that Oscar Romero or any other purported Catholic saint was involved in that happy result. In fact, overall the mortality rate for HELLP syndrome is reported to be [only 1.1-3.4%](#), with good treatment, and only [25% globally](#), including many cases with no treatment at all. Moreover, the fetal mortality rate from HELLP syndrome is [much higher](#) than the maternal mortality rate, but the child in the Romero case had already been born normally without his purported intercession. Was that normal birth, with much greater odds against survival, a “miracle”?

The criteria for an authentic medical miracle supporting beatification or canonization have elsewhere been described thus: “1. Serious medical condition; 2. Condition not likely to disappear on its own; 3. Instantaneous; 4. Lasting; 5. Complete; 6. No other disease or incident can occur which may have caused the condition to disappear; 7. No medical treatment relative to the cure.”

That description appears in [an article](#) on the two miracles attributed to the intercession of the Fatima visionaries Jacinta and Francisco in connection with their beatification by John Paul II and their canonization by Francis. The first miracle involved the recovery of a paraplegic, who was able to walk normally again, and the second the recovery of a brain-damaged boy who had fallen 20 feet, landed on his head, fractured his skull and lost brain tissue, yet walked out of the hospital following prayers to the visionaries, with no signs of brain damage or loss of physical or mental function. In other words, both cases involve actual *cures* of otherwise incurable conditions, not merely the avoidance of a risk of harm or recovery after aggressive treatment.

With good reason did the post-Tridentine Church institutionalize strict verification of purported medical miracles as scientific knowledge advanced. Urban VIII (r. 1623-1644) and later Prospero Lambertini, who became Benedict XIV (r. 1740-1758), established the framework under which, via the function of the “devil’s advocate”

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(*promotor fidei*), which Lambertini had exercised before his pontificate, the Church “leaned toward refuting miraculousness by means of natural explanations.” Accordingly, “especially since Pope Urban VIII’s reforms in the first half of the seventeenth century, medical judgment was given an increased role in evaluating claims of miracles.” But even as early as the thirteenth century—the very century in which the debate over the infallibility of canonizations was at its height, as I showed in Part I—“a chief expression of such skepticism has been the consultation of physicians to examine proposed miraculous healings and decide if they had natural causes.”

Natural explanations are plainly available for the “miracles” attributed to the intercession of Paul VI and Oscar Romero, none of which actually involved an outright and instantaneous *cure* in the first place as opposed to avoiding a medical risk, however serious, and reaching a good outcome while under aggressive, state-of-the-art medical treatment.

It appears, then, that these canonizations are yet another hasty product of the high-speed assembly line in the “saint factory” established by John Paul II. Not only did John Paul reduce the number of required miracles from four (two for beatification and two more for canonization) to only two (a mere one each for beatification and canonization), but the traditional role of the *promotor fidei* has effectively been eliminated so that there is no longer a truly adversarial procedure in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, involving an institutionalized *contradictorium* by an official we know as the “devil’s advocate.” As one scholar on the subject observes:

The observations of the Promoter of the Faith and the responses of the advocate have disappeared, as the Promoter of the Faith receives the cause for study only after the position [brief advocating sainthood] has been completed. In the current law, the Promoter of the Faith does not participate in a formal *contradictorium* with an opposing party, but rather presents his opinion regarding the cause when it is evaluated by the theologians. As the Roman phase is studied, it must be considered whether the Promoter of the Faith exercises even an informal role in the *contradictorium*....

From these observations it can be concluded that there is not



Paul VI Offers First New Mass, All But Destroys Roman Rite, Becomes Papal Catalyst for Mass Defection and Apostasy

a clear contradictorium in the current legislation, since the party who stands in the second position in opposition to the cause remains obscure....

As a defender of the “streamlined” process [writes](#) regarding this practical elimination of the “devil’s advocate”:

Pope John Paul II changed that role to a great degree.... but contrary to popular belief... it was not eliminated.... His authority to ‘veto’, or cancel, a cause is gone. He does not provide a list of objections and complaints, he provides a report of what his findings are, but that report does not mandate there be a satisfactory answer to each objection. Thanks to Pope John Paul II, the process of canonization was transformed from a type of trial by fire form of scrutinization to a committee or business type meeting.

In other words, the devil’s advocate *has* been eliminated—not only his decisive veto, but his role as such. He is now, at most, just another member of a committee whose function is essentially to “make saints” as requested by generating the appropriate findings, including a finding that cures readily explicable by natural means, and indeed frequently observed without any invocation of a purported saint, are “miracles.”

In Part I of this series, I posed the following *dubia*, given that the infallibility of canonizations remains only a probable theological opinion and not an article of faith:

- Could the validity of a canonization, even if it cannot be called an error as such, be doubted if it could be shown that the investigation of the candidate has been compromised by human error, bias or mendacity?

- Would a papal act of canonization by way of recitation of the canonization formula during the canonization rite be infallible *ex sese* (of or from itself) even if there were no prior investigation of the candidate?
- If the papal act of canonization is infallible *ex sese*, is there any necessity for the investigatory process preceding canonization—developed by the Popes themselves to provide safeguards to ensure the veracity of miracles and the holiness of a candidate; and if it is necessary, why is it necessary?
- If a papal act of canonization is not infallible *ex sese*, then is the integrity of the investigatory process preceding it not essential to the claim of infallibility, and if not, why not?

These questions, I noted, “can be answered definitively only by the Magisterium.” The Church has never declared that they may no longer be discussed. Quite the contrary, they have never ceased to be matters for debate. From which follows another related *dubium*, as suggested by this Part II:

If the integrity of the investigatory process is essential to the infallibility of a canonization, and if the process examines purported medical miracles, is not the quality of evidence in support of the alleged miracles also an essential element, such that plainly dubious miracles readily explainable by natural means, including modern aggressive medical treatment, would tend to undermine confidence in the validity of the canonization and give grounds for reasonably doubting its validity?

I can only agree with the view expressed by Peter Kwasniewski [yesterday](#): “With the greatly increasing number of canonizations; the removal of half of the number of miracles required (which are sometimes even waived); the lack of a robust *advocatus diaboli* role; and, at times, the rushed manner in which documentation is examined or at times passed over (as, apparently, has been the case with Paul VI), it seems to me not only that it has become impossible to claim that today’s canonizations always require our assent, but also that there may be canonizations about which one would have an obligation to withhold assent.”

What Dr. Kwasniewski is saying is that in recent decades the very nature of canonization appears to have changed so that it may well be we are no longer dealing with the same thing that gave us the likes of Pope Saint Pius X and that we would be violating conscience if we blindly accepted every result of the current process. What seems to have replaced the

traditional exceedingly rigorous process is a kind of weighty honorific bestowed by a committee predisposed to grant it without serious opposition.

In short, no longer do we have the *reasonable* perception of an ironclad, infallible determination that every candidate approved by the “saint factory” has not only attained beatitude but is a model of virtue for the universal Church who *must* be venerated by all the faithful because of his splendid example of conformity to the divine will. Who can say that with any honesty concerning Paul VI? As Dr. Kwasniewski observes:

Paul VI did not helplessly watch the Church’s “autodemolition” (his own term for the collapse after the Council); he did not merely preside over the single greatest exodus of Catholic laity, clergy, and religious since the Protestant Revolt. He aided and abetted this internal devastation by his own actions....

Many Catholics are rightfully anxious about Pope Francis. But what he has done in the past five years is arguably small potatoes compared with what Paul VI had the audacity to do: substituting a new liturgy for the ancient Roman Mass and sacramental rites, causing the biggest internal rupture the Catholic Church has ever suffered.

This was the equivalent of dropping an atomic bomb on the People of God, which either wiped out their faith or caused cancers by its radiation. It was the very negation of paternity, of the papacy’s fatherly function of conserving and passing on the family heritage. Everything that has happened after Paul VI is no more than an echo of this violation of the sacred temple. Once the most holy thing is profaned, nothing else is safe; nothing else is stable.

Finally, in concluding this series, I can only adopt as my own the limited conclusion expressed by John Lamont [in August](#): “[W]e need not exclude all canonisations whatsoever from the charism of infallibility; we can still argue that those canonisations that followed the rigorous procedure of former centuries benefited from this charism.... [A] return to the former approach to canonisation would mean recovering the guidance of the Holy Spirit in an area of great import for the Church.”

Perhaps that conclusion is wrong. But let the Magisterium, in a definitive and binding pronouncement, tell us so. Let it declare, in other words, that any and all canonizations pronounced by a Pope are infallible *ex sese* even if the preceding investigation is patently flawed or corruptly motivated, which would mean that the investigation is ultimately superfluous.

Until then neither Paul VI nor Oscar Romero will figure in this poor Catholic’s invocation of the saints. I reserve the right in conscience, not to deny, but to doubt where doubt is still permitted rather than doing violence to reason itself. ■

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Cultural Genocide: A Clarification, Part II, Continued...

D. Sonnier/Continued from Page 1

Cultural Genocide

Cultural genocide is defined [1][2][3] as subjecting a people to:

- (a) Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;
- (b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources;
- (c) Any form of population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;
- (d) Any form of assimilation or integration by other cultures or ways of life imposed on them by legislative, administrative or other measures;
- (e) Any form of propaganda directed against them.

The first component (a) of this definition was addressed in Part I. The remaining components are now addressed.

(b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources

Examples:

- Causing a scarcity of priests through abuse of authority (forced retirement, administrative transfer, consignment to mental institutes, or excommunication) or corruption of the seminaries
- Loss of Church properties as a result of the "shortage of priests"
- Not permitting Mass in the traditional rite or according to traditional custom
- Disallowing the traditional Mass in military chapels; allowing only the revised missal
- Denying Catholics who petition for the traditional Mass the use of diocesan churches

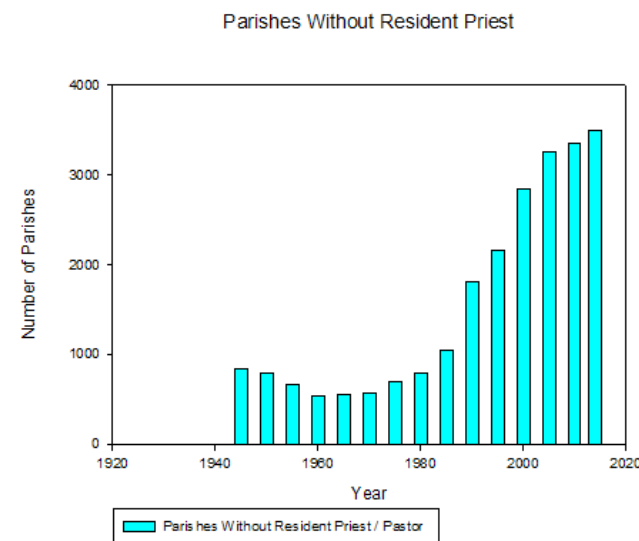
When we speak of dispossessing people of their resources as an act of Cultural Genocide, the first thing that comes to mind is *material* resources such as lands and territories, but often the most valuable resources are *human* resources. It seems odd to speak of a priest as a "human resource" for those of us who understand the infinite value of a priest, but in the secular terms that this definition of Cultural Genocide is based on, priests are "human resources."

Throughout the period from 1965 to the present it has become increasingly well-known and understood that the imposition of the new rite caused a collapse of vocations. There is no longer any serious debate this point [4][5][6]. In the drive to repeal the old rite, the role of the seminary shifted from formation and sanctification to one of "managing change." Those in positions of authority refused to ordain young men who were predisposed to traditional Catholic thinking, liturgy or doctrine, and often such men were removed from the seminaries as soon as they were discovered. It is well documented that this became the norm after Vatican II. A set of case studies is found in *Good Bye, Good Men*, [7] written by and about potential

seminarians who were not even necessarily considered "traditional" from the point of view of having a goal of restoration of the traditional rite; they were just normal young men who adhered to traditional teachings. The immoral conditions in some of the seminaries played a major role in the loss of vocations during the aftermath of Vatican II; this has been well covered in the news media lately, but it has been a secondary result that came later as the mission of the seminary shifted.

This purge of the priesthood was led by men who were not patient enough to just purge the seminaries and wait for the future. They also went after those already ordained and in active ministry, seeking out priests considered to be too conservative or too traditional and removing them using whatever means necessary: forced retirement, administrative transfers, or consignment to mental institutes. Stories of the "Saint Luke Institute" are emerging, and will likely continue to emerge over the coming years. [8]

The result of this post-conciliar loss of clergy, as well as the loss of religious sisters, brothers, nuns, and entire religious orders, has been the selling off of properties (churches, schools, etc.) which had been purchased by previous

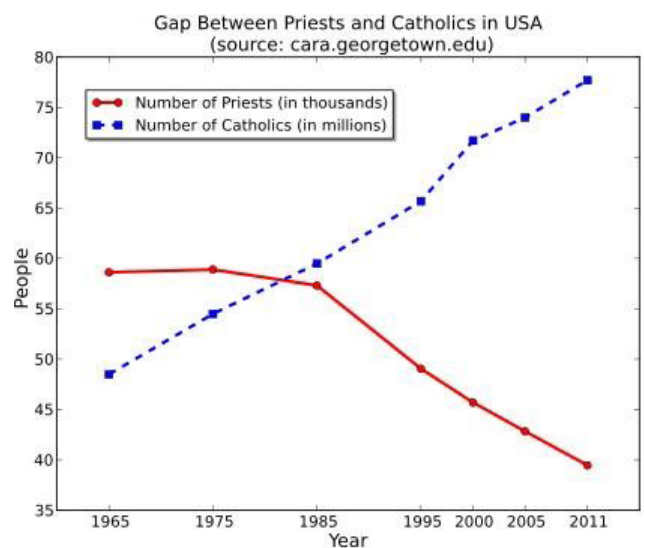


generations of Catholics at great sacrifice. Figure 1 shows the growing number of Catholic churches without a resident priest in the USA. Figure 2 shows the increasingly low ratio of priests to laity. [9] Those in positions of authority, whether rectors of seminaries, bishops, or anyone in pastoral care of future priests, who denied zealous young people the vocations to which they had been called, are culpable, on this point, of dispossessing Catholics of their "lands, territories and resources." Since this loss of vocations and property is a direct consequence of the manner in which the Church leadership chose, and continues to choose, to implement the Second Vatican Council, bishops and clergy of the Roman Rite since 1970 are directly responsible to the extent that their actions have resulted in this loss.

Aside from the loss of property, the forbidding of the traditional Mass and the imposition of an alien rite, in and of itself, is an act in which Catholics are being dispossessed of their resources. They are deprived of the edifices of the Church, which are not allowed to be used for their intended purposes. Those who

sought to eliminate access to the old rite were so determined that in some cases, for example, after *Ecclesia Dei* (1988), thousands of signatures were not enough to result in a single instance of the old rite in an entire diocese. This was the case in the Diocese of Arlington, VA through 1990's.

To those committed to purging the world of traditional Catholicism after Vatican II, the primary obstacle was bishops who were either tradition-minded by nature or committed to saving souls (and therefore willing to provide a place for tradition-minded priests and laity in their care). In the immediate aftermath of Vatican II, French seminarians whose desire was to be priests like the ones they had known growing up approached retired Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and asked him for assistance. The rest of the story of the founding of the SSPX is well documented, although the mainstream version of it is highly distorted. It is important to note, however, the astonishing difference with which discipline was invoked in the case of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and in the other well-documented cases of pederasts using the seminaries for their perverse personal pleasure. This double standard only makes sense if the ultimate goal of those carrying out the disciplinary measures was to destroy a culture, a civilization, and a way of life. The old rite had to be suppressed, and to do so this Archbishop Lefebvre had to be removed at



any cost. The continuation of the old rite is only possible with bishops who ordain priests who know, understand and live their spiritual patrimony. Now that the excommunications have been lifted and it is clear that every priest has a right to offer Mass in the old rite, one would think that the case is resolved. Not at all; in fact, a priest who asserts his rights on this point is still subject to disciplinary or administrative proceedings for some other reason. Since 2013, many bishops sympathetic to *Summorum Pontificum* have been removed. As for the SSPX, the chapels, seminaries, and everything else under the society founded by Absp. Lefebvre, they all remain in a nebulous canonical status. Nevertheless, they stand as a reminder of the Catholic civilization that once existed universally and continues to exist, held together to a great extent by people who have been dispossessed of their parishes. Responsibility for the purge of the priesthood, as well as the resulting schism, rests on the shoulders of the postconciliar popes and the bishops since 1971 to the extent that they participated in

it.

(c) Any form of population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights

Examples:

- Required relocation to be within reasonable distance of a Traditional Mass
- Elimination of the old rite by transferring a priest with no intention of continuing the Latin Mass he has been providing for a group of the faithful

Even ten years after *Summorum Pontificum*, many who know and understand the seriousness of the current crisis in the Church have no choice but to either move or to make long commutes to a distant "Latin Mass Community." This is a form of population transfer. In order to have access to their liturgical and cultural heritage, those unable to convince a hostile bishop of the need for preserving Catholic tradition in a church within a reasonable distance are forced into this decision. The choice is between "population transfer" and "forced assimilation," which is to be addressed in the next section.

Prior to *Summorum Pontificum* (2007), bishops often boldly responded to petitioners with a suggestion to "move somewhere else." Now that they are

required under the provisions of *Summorum Pontificum* to at least make some provision to these petitioners, this requirement is satisfied by herding the traditional Catholics into an unsafe or inconvenient location where the diocesan approved Latin Mass can be found. Then, at

some point the priest who is making the traditional Mass available is transferred and replaced by one who refuses to have anything to do with it. Families must, once again, find a parish through which they can have access to their liturgical and cultural heritage. Perhaps this means moving.

One could argue that such self-imposed population transfer by those with an unhealthy attachment to "the past" is voluntary, but the alternative they face is to remain and be forced to assimilate or integrate into what has become the mainstream part of the Church, abandoning Catholic tradition, culture, the entire Spiritual patrimony and ultimately Catholic doctrine. Forcing Catholics to choose between population transfer and assimilation is *Cultural Genocide*.

(d) Any form of assimilation or integration by other cultures or ways of life imposed on them by legislative, administrative or other measures

Examples:

Continued Next Page

Continued...

- Requiring children to attend catechism classes taught by people hostile to (or ignorant of) Catholic tradition as a prerequisite for a "Latin Mass Community"

- Forbidding the old rite in military chapels

- Forbidding the old rite in the vicinity of colleges and universities

- Disallowing young men predisposed to Catholic tradition to enter the seminaries, discouraging them from doing so, or dismissing them

“You are welcome to serve in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines, if you are qualified, but you may not invite a priest of the Fraternity of Saint Peter to offer Mass in the chapel at your installation even though a number of these priests are veterans. This is forced assimilation.”

For those engaged in *Cultural Genocide*, to impose an alien rite upon the faithful and at the same time disallow their culture and way of life within diocesan or parish life is not enough; the young people must be removed from their parents and re-educated. To give a recent example, following the publication of *Summorum Pontificum* (2007) a group of Catholics who had been driving a long distance to attend Mass decided to petition for the use of a nearby parish church that had no traditional Mass. In order to have a bi-monthly traditional Mass, one of the numerous requirements placed on the group was that the children would be required to attend religious education classes taught by people who had openly expressed hostility to the traditional Mass. Of course they did not subject their children to these classes, and after a short period of time, this was used as a reason to terminate the Mass. At that point the group resumed their long commutes. [10] Forced assimilation typically includes steps such as this to ensure that the only alternatives for parish life and parish schools are something that their Catholic ancestors would not have even recognized as being Catholic. Again, the decision that heads of families ultimately must make is to either accept forced assimilation or voluntarily displace themselves and their families (“population transfer”).

In the example cited above, students from a nearby college had begun regularly attending the traditional Mass. Some were seeing it for the first time. To those engaged in a war against Catholic heritage it became a matter of urgency to terminate the bi-monthly Mass before too many students learned about what was being hidden from them.

The forbidding of the traditional rite to servicemen is a particularly egregious example of forced assimilation. By Department of Defence policy, the use of military chapels for prayer is extended to any group, whether they are Christian or not. Despite outward expressions of openness to the needs of military personnel, great effort has been exerted to ensure that there is no presence of a Tridentine Mass in military chapels. At this time there is none anywhere, worldwide. The persistent denial of this

resource (military chapels) to Catholic servicemen is well documented in [11] and subsequently in [12]. It should be noted that the Archdiocese for Military Services has complete autonomy on this question, and has chosen the course of action they have taken without any pressure from the Department of Defence or those legislators who exercise oversight for military affairs. In other words, any religious group is allowed to use military chapels except for those who choose to pray as, for example, the Catholic soldiers who participated in the Normandy invasion. You are welcome to serve in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines, if you are qualified,

but you may not invite a priest of the Fraternity of Saint Peter to offer Mass in the chapel at your installation even though a number of these priests are veterans. This is forced assimilation.

Summorum Pontificum made it clear that any priest has a right to offer Mass in the old Rite, and that any group of faithful have a right to request it. *Universae Ecclesiae* made it clear that that such requests must be taken seriously. Despite these long-awaited instructions, numerous communities based on the old Rite have ceased to exist during the pontificate of Pope Francis. Entire orders, such as the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate [13] had this basic right taken away, and bishops who were sympathetic to *Summorum Pontificum* / *Universae Ecclesiae* were sacked, as previously mentioned. This is forced assimilation.

The disallowing of young men predisposed to Catholic tradition to enter the seminaries, or discouraging them from doing so, or dismissing them was addressed previously. It should be considered again as an act of forced assimilation, but one that has caused infinite damage. Clearly the effort to remodel the Church by turning young men against their past has failed. There has been a widespread loss of appeal to young men; seminary enrolment has plummeted, and it continues to fall for good reasons. Young men are unwilling to commit their lives in the service of a Church whose liturgy and doctrines can be changed on a whim. If such things are ever-evolving, what is it that they are committing to? In a few years it could evolve into something they find absolutely abhorrent. The vicious cycle continues; forced assimilation has led to a shortage of priests; this same shortage is frequently used as the rationale for the denial of petitions for the traditional Mass, the loss of which is at the very heart of the problem.

(e) Any form of propaganda directed against them

The media campaign against the old rite and those who protect it could be the subject of an extensive study in

propaganda. Initially the propaganda themes supported the radical (but unauthorized) modifications of the liturgy, such as the forbidding of Latin. Then it shifted to the themes of “how much better off we all are thanks to Vatican II,” as religious orders were collapsing, vocations were plummeting and the pews were emptying. In recent years this propaganda campaign has been led by the Pope himself. Since there are no longer any logical arguments left to make, the propaganda theme has shifted to dehumanizing anyone capable of thinking clearly about what is going on. A partial list of demeaning and derogatory insults hurled at those who keep the old Faith includes the following:

- Ideological Christians
- Rosary counters
- Restorationists
- Pelagians
- Self-absorbed promethean neopelagians

The words directed by Francis toward the many young people who are attracted to the traditional Mass, spirituality and culture of the Church have been particularly harsh:

“And I ask myself: Why so much rigidity? Dig, dig, this rigidity always hides something, insecurity or even something else. Rigidity is defensive. True love is not rigid.” [14]

Now that Catholic culture, practices, devotions, and language have been largely abolished, this particular propaganda campaign seems to have the goal of breaking down resistance to altering Catholic doctrine.

Culpability

The loss of a way of life can take place through gradual, natural processes; history provides us with many examples. Modernity, in particular technological advances, can quickly bring about the end of a way of life. Some will argue that this is what has happened with traditional Catholicism. On the other hand, the elimination of a way of life can be forced on a group of people in an act of *Cultural Genocide*. To determine whether or not a way of life was lost through natural processes, we can ask a simple question: *was coercion used?* Or did something else, such as advances in technology or some modern circumstances demand or bring about the change? Clearly it has been forced, and equally clearly modern technology has prevented an outright extinction of traditional Catholicism. Were it not for the indispensable means of organizing and distributing information provided by digital media, any vestiges of preconciliar Catholic life would, quite possibly, have ceased altogether to exist by now. Many Catholics now happily living with pre-conciliar Catholicism would never have found out about it were it not for the numerous blogs and social media, often used effectively to counter the propaganda of the perpetrators. It is not by chance that the regions of the world in which the old rite has been best preserved are those in which people have been free in recent years to use technology for information sharing.

Clarification

In the immediate aftermath of Vatican II most Catholics, clergy and laity alike, eagerly followed along in the destruction, including many who now regret it. Well-meaning people can be duped into the destruction of their own civilization; history is full of examples. What were the motives of these popes and bishops that led the effort? Were they responding to some external forces that mandated the actions they took, or were they willing participants? Were they ignorant or foolish?

The implications are difficult to bear. People are, hopefully, uncomfortable with the possibility that they have unwittingly played some role in the attempted purge of a way of life. Given that the destructive act was never completely accomplished, preconceived notions should be put aside, and one should step back and look at the situation as an impartial outsider, a mere spectator, or from the point of view of a future historian. The status of the old rite has been clarified. It is well known that the suppression of the Tridentine Mass was brought about by bishops and popes, and that traditional Catholicism only began to re-emerge on any large scale after the 2007 landmark decree by Pope Benedict XVI.

What is the right thing to do right now? Along with the clarification of the status of the old rite that we find in *Summorum Pontificum*, it is necessary that we use clear and accurate terms, so that those in positions of responsibility may understand the gravity of their actions and the grave judgement they will undergo. When you encounter *Cultural Genocide*, call it what it is.

In 1971 very few had the wisdom and foresight to see what would happen. Slowly, over the years since then, people have come to understand the tragedy unfolding all around us. It is likely that at this point millions of people throughout the world would gladly add their signatures to those of Agatha Christie, Malcolm Muggeridge *et. al.* who from the beginning called to the attention of the Holy See “... *the appalling responsibility it would incur in the history of the human spirit were it to refuse to allow the Traditional Mass to survive, even though this survival took place side by side with other liturgical forms.*” ■

Notes:

- [1] <http://jughaculturalgenocide.blogspot.com/2010/12/about-cultural-genocide-what-is-it.html>
- [2] Article 7, United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (26 August 1994).
- [3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_genocide
Examples cited in literature include the suppression of native languages during the Japanese occupation of Korea and the German occupation of Poland.
- [4] “The Priest Shortage: A Manufactured Crisis?” www.christendomrestoration.org, January 2015.
- [5] <http://www.catholic.org/vocations/story.php?id=73299>
- [6] <http://www.christendomrestoration.org/blog/evidence-of-the-devastated-vineyard>
- [7] *Good-bye, Good Men: How Liberals Brought Corruption into the Catholic Church*, by Michael S. Rose. Barnes & Noble, 2002.
- [8] <http://cal-catholic.com/are-some-bishops-singling-out-conservative-priests-for-psychiatric-treatment/>
- [9] Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (cara.georgetown.edu).
- [10] For details, send a request to david.sonnier@lyon.edu
- [11] *Rightful Aspirations*, Goretta Publications
- [12] <https://onepeterfive.com/military-archdiocese-better-no-priests-traditional-ones/>
- [13] <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/1350567bdc4.html?eng=y>
- [14] <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=29904>

Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st Century Church

BY GEORGE WEIGEL

REVIEWED FOR THE REMNANT
BY VINCENT CHIARELLO

Full disclosure: If one is to critique a book, the reviewer's previous or present association with the author should be mentioned.

For a while, I knew George Weigel fairly well after meeting him in 1990 while I was assigned to the U.S. Embassy to The Holy See. At that time, he was doing research in the Vatican archives that would lead to publication in 1999 of *Witness to Hope*, the first installment of his biography of Pope John Paul II, Weigel's candidate for the pope of the century. Currently, Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, and the major media networks' "go to guy" in explaining Vatican policy. Despite what follows, I will say that, other than the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, Weigel was the most impressive intellect I encountered in nearly three decades in the U.S. diplomatic service.

In 1992, I invited him to speak to an audience of foreign journalists in Washington about the role of religion in our politics and national elections, which was so informative that they wrote stories in their newspapers about the talk. Although we no longer meet, in the intervening years, I've come to believe that Weigel's Catholic mindset has developed in ways different from mine. Part of that difference was reflected in his recent column in *The Wall Street Journal* regarding the homosexual priestly "cover-up" scandal that has now enveloped the Church.

"Little wonder, then, that some of my fellow-Catholics have taken to the internet and the op-ed pages, not just to condemn gross failures of Catholic leadership but to confess to a crisis of faith. In this summer of nightmare, with the bad news by no means all out, the gag reflex of many Catholics is entirely understandable. But that doesn't, or shouldn't, make it a crisis of faith."

To the contrary, my sense is that the current crisis of not only "gross failures of Catholic leadership," but the lack of truthful response by the Vatican to the malaise, including the attempt at defaming Archbishop Vigano', and the apparent whitewashing of those implicit in that gross failure, including Cardinal Wuerl, have, indeed, resulted in a crisis of faith among untold numbers of Catholics. Keep in mind that, although this book was published five years ago, the column was written recently,

and both publications provide a window through which we can examine the Catholic mindset of George Weigel.

I cannot move on, however, without this comment: why a purported "Conservative," but not Traditional, Catholic, who has written 20 books about the Church and the Faith, would begin, for whatever reason, his book with a lengthy quote from the disgraced Karl Rahner, S.J. is beyond my comprehension. Why would Weigel invoke the name of the prelate who the late Malachi Martin claimed was a member of, "...the wolf pack of Catholic theologians who, since 1965, have lacerated and shredded not merely the flanks but the very substance of Catholicism?" The same Karl Rahner, S.J. carried on a "connection" with a widow and two time divorcee, a "relationship" that produced 4000 (no typo) love letters from 1962 (while he served as a "periti" or expert to the German delegation to Vatican II) to his death in 1984. This is the same Karl Rahner, S.J., who refused to defend Catholic teaching on contraception, despite the pleas of the pope, and, Malachi Martin claims, was off-heard saying, "I will not serve," which does bring a certain comparison to mind. Not a wise choice to begin your book about "reform" in the Church. To begin at the beginning.

To set the table, Weigel begins by instructing the reader of his purpose in writing this volume: not only to "reform" the Church, but for a "deep reform" of it. Knowing those words will invariably bring on semantic problems such as what is meant by "deep" reform, he begins by citing Vatican II: "...there is general agreement that 1962-65 - the years of the Second Vatican Council - were the years in which the problems and promise of twenty-first century Catholicism took shape." And that shape was "...the birth of a new moment in Catholic history: the era of Evangelical Catholicism."

The coda to that statement, one expected from reading previous Weigel books, follows: "But across the spectrum of opinion, ecclesiastical or secular, **it is generally agreed that Vatican II was**

where twenty-first-century Catholicism began... (emphasis mine)." The fruits of Vatican II are, therefore, the key to understand how "deep reform" of the Church is essential, but how can it be

achieved? Weigel's answer is direct: through what he calls "Evangelical Catholicism," which becomes the focus of the entire book.

Well, what does Weigel mean by "Evangelical Catholicism" in the Church of Rome? His response is lengthy and quoted here in part: "Evangelical Catholicism is the Catholicism that is being born, often with great difficulty, through the work of the Holy Spirit in prompting deep Catholic reform - a reform that meets the challenges posed to Christian orthodoxy and Christian life by the riptides of change that have reshaped world culture since the nineteenth century."

Weigel begins his trek through the Catholic historical past seeking to find the threads upon which to base his "deep reform," and through the prism of subsequent Church developments sees in the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII, "...through which the Second Vatican Council ...brought to a moment of high drama the dynamic process begun by Leo's reforms: the process of moving Catholicism beyond the Counter-Reformation." What was wrong with "Counter-Reformation Catholicism?" Weigel's response is both terse and questionable: "Counter-Reformation Catholicism created Catholic cultures (or microcultures) that transmitted the faith as if by osmosis," which "crumbled in the turbulence of the 1960s..." But Weigel is hopeful: the demise of the outdated Church "...is clearly a sign pointing toward the emergence of Evangelical Catholicism...a new outpouring of missionary energy for a new historical and cultural movement."

From the outset to the conclusion of this book, the role of Tradition is condemned as an "implausible, indeed, impossible model for living Catholicism." Weigel, who has openly criticized "Lefebvrists" in his talks and articles, calling the SSPX, a "schismatic variant of traditionalism," believes that because of the SSPX's being "stuck" within the Counter-Reformation model, it will go the way of "fossils in amber." Weigel believes the Society's emphasis on tightening up and ratcheting down the rules and the catechism are simply unworkable in our modern society.

No damning with faint praise here.

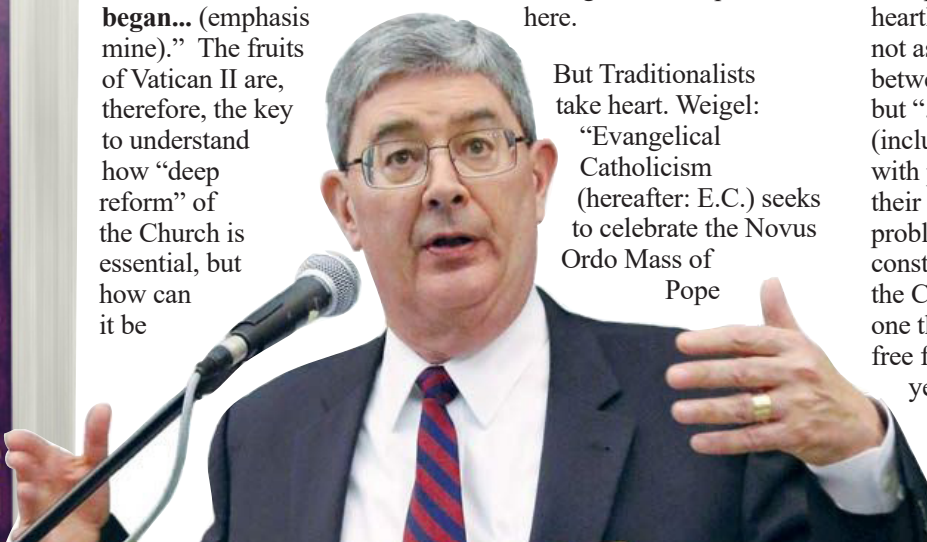
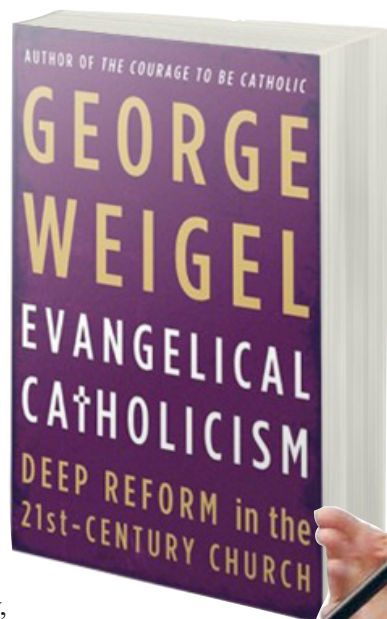
But Traditionalists take heart. Weigel: "Evangelical Catholicism (hereafter: E.C.) seeks to celebrate the Novus Ordo Mass of Pope

Paul VI, inaugurated in 1970, in such a way as to incorporate within that rite the richness of the ancient liturgical tradition of the Church. Thus E. C. **welcomes the availability of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass** (emphasis mine) that emerged in the Counter-Reformation - because an experience of that older form of the one Roman Rite will accelerate a reform of the reform of the liturgy, bringing the post-Vatican II Novus Ordo to its proper splendor, and furthering the noble aims of authentic liturgical renewal."

But Weigel goes even further when he states that E. C. has more in common with Katherine Jefferts Schori, born Catholic, but later the presiding bishop of the U.S. Episcopal Church, than with either Traditional or "Progressive" Catholics. Weigel: "Hers is a more coherent and honest position..." presumably than that of the Trad's, for she and the Church Progressives are strikingly similar in their approach to their respective churches. **Hmmmm.**

But there are other troublesome aspects of Weigel's rendering of Church teachings. For example, he writes: "...in every age including this age of the 'New Evangelization' called forth by Blessed (now Saint) John Paul II and Benedict XVI, in response to the Second Vatican Council, the Gospel is a matter of conviction, not convention." It is unclear if Weigel is actually repeating the Evangelical Protestant belief in individual interpretation of the Gospel, or a new version of counter Counter-Reformation dogma of Biblical exegesis. Weigel claims that both Pope JP II and Benedict XVI were on board with this exegesis, but were they? Roberto de Mattei, in his magisterial, *The Second Vatican Council: an Unwritten Story*, writes: "Benedict XVI today, in contrast, is the most renowned representative of those who, **in view of the self-destructive reality of the post-conciliar period**, (emphasis mine) changed their judgment on the council over the years, proposing that it be interpreted in the wake of tradition." But this is not the end of such confusion; not by a long shot.

Another reason for the necessity of E.C. is described by Weigel thus: "Western Europe, Christianity's historical heartland, has seen Catholicism's demise not as a result of the internecine battles between Liberals and Traditionalists," but "...because the people of the Church (including the clergy) ceased to believe with passion and conviction - and sought their happiness elsewhere." An immediate problem arises from this religious construct: in describing the "demise" of the Catholic Church in Western Europe, one that Weigel contends has been in free fall throughout the post-conciliar years, the reader will note that "free fall" and the "post Conciliar Church" are intertwined; yet,



Continued Next Page

Yo Soy El Camino: A Journey Back in Time

BY CLARE WILSON

Legend has it that in the year 814, a Spanish peasant and hermit named Pelayo had a vision of a star falling into a field in Northwestern Spain, near the insignificant town of Compostela. He informed the local bishop, Teodomir, and shortly thereafter a marble sarcophagus containing the remains of St. James the Greater, Spain's original evangelist, were unearthed in the field. A few years later, Alphonso II, called 'The Chaste,' King of Asturias, journeyed from the city of Oviedo to Compostela, thus establishing the first pilgrimage to the tomb of St. James. Later this path would gain international fame as El Camino de Santiago, Le Chemin de Saint Jacques, Il Cammino di Santiago, Jakobsweg—or, in English, The Way of St. James.

For centuries, hundreds of pilgrims walked or rode or sailed from their homes all over Europe to this venerable shrine. In 1387, the writer Geoffrey Chaucer mentioned the Camino while describing the Wife of Bath, whom he represents as a sort of medieval pilgrimage aficionado: "At Rome she had been and at Bologna, / in Galicia at Saint James and at Cologne" (Canterbury Tales, General Prologue, ll. 467-468). Even into the twentieth century, occasional pilgrims still made their way towards Santiago de Compostela to honor the apostle,

although the old paths and infrastructure of monasteries and churches, which opened their doors to travelers along the way, had almost disappeared.

Luckily, though, in the 1960s, an organization called Los Amigos del Camino de Santiago was founded, whose members took it upon themselves to provide scholarly and political support for the reestablishment of the four or five most traditional routes of the Camino through Spain. Then in the early 1970s and throughout the 1980s, a Franciscan monk at the monastery of Santa Maria a Real at O Cebreiro, 150 kilometers from Santiago, was inspired to begin the work of recovering the ancient Camino. After restoring the monastery of O Cebreiro as a pilgrim hostel, Don Elias Valiña Sampedro, who had written his doctoral thesis on the pilgrimage and also composed a guidebook for pilgrims, himself traveled the path from the Pyrenees to Santiago, painting yellow arrows as way-markers to assist any intrepid pilgrim who braved the poor conditions, and welcoming anyone who did make it into his tiny, ancient town at the top of a mountain.

In 1980, around 1200 pilgrims made the journey. In 2017, 300,000 people traveled along the Camino Francés, Camino Primitivo (Alphonso II's original route), Camino del Norte, Camino Portugués, or Via de la Plata



Remnant columnist, Clare Wilson, on the way

to reach Santiago. Some pilgrims have come all the way from Belgium, or Le Puy in France and have been walking for two or three months. Occasionally a traveler will even show up at the Pilgrimage Office in Santiago with a pilgrimage credential that proves he started his journey 2,400 kilometers away, in Rome.

Today, the most common starting points for pilgrims are the larger cities along the Camino Francés—the route through Spain used by the French during the Middle Ages. St. Jean Pied-de-la-Porte, just inside the French border, is commonly named as the correct beginning; pilgrims will also start at Pamplona, Burgos, León, Astorga, or

Continued on Page 14

Book Review, Continued...

Weigel will not connect, even remotely, that those conditions were the result of the Second Vatican Council. (I stopped counting how many times those last three words are used.)

There is another aspect of this book that brings into question Weigel's interpretation of the current situation in the Novus Ordo Church, which seeks to attain a "...new outpouring of *missionary energy* (emphasis mine) for a new historical and cultural movement." However, I do not believe that is a realistic assessment of the current situation. I have in the pages of *The Remnant* written of the lack of "missionary activity" in both Japan, and, more recently, in Scandinavia. In Japan, the late Fr. Peter Milward S.J., in a direct response to my question, said that the Jesuits, the earliest Catholic missionaries of those islands, had, for all intents and purposes, decided to scrap all missionary activity. The burden then fell on the Japanese man or woman to come and ask for instruction. The result, according to Fr. Milward, "was 5 or 6 people come to the rectory a year." That cannot be said of Mormon missionary efforts in Japan: one of the largest temples outside of Salt Lake City now dots the Tokyo skyline, and there are two other temples as well. One need not be Nostradamus to know why.

In May of this year, I also reported

that, during visits to Norway and Sweden, the diocesan representatives in both Stockholm and Oslo made non-proselytizing even more apparent: "The Catholic Diocese of Stockholm gives a high priority to ecumenism, so *we are very much against proselytizing*. (Emphasis mine) We oppose it within our Diocese and we oppose it when we notice that other churches do it. "Perhaps I am missing something, but I see no "missionary energy" in those places. My impression is that the SSPX, and only the "fossil in amber" SSPX, is active in Catholic missionary work in Scandinavia.

Weigel's position on the priesthood is detailed in a separate chapter, entitled: *The Evangelical Catholic Reform of the Priesthood*. It is difficult to reconcile his contention that the newly formed priest of the emerging E.C. will, "...be the role models for those entering seminaries and houses of priestly formation," with this: "More men left the active ministry in the years immediately following the Second Vatican Council than at any comparable since the Reformation" It appears that nothing of the "self-destructive reality" of the post Vatican II era seems ever to enter Weigel's mind.

One aspect of the current crisis in the priesthood does emerge: "...men who should never have been ordained *slipped through* (emphasis mine) the

seminary system." Weigel's explanation, which includes "media distortion and exaggeration," does not suffice: the priestly scandal of 2002 pales by comparison to that of today, and the current crisis has demonstrated that the list of those who should "never have been ordained" reaches those who choose seminarians, as well as those in the Vatican dicasteries (departments). That situation cannot be the result of continued Counter-Reformation Catholicism. To the contrary, the most traditional societies, especially those in Africa, have not seen many of its priests disgraced by scandal. In the "fossil in amber" SSPX, formed in 1989, one example of priestly scandal was identified in 1997; the other, shortly thereafter, and both were permanently removed from the Society.

Weigel's claim that "Calls for the abolition of celibacy as a requisite for priestly ordination in Latin-rite Catholicism have been a staple of the waning Counter-Reformation Catholicism in the post-Vatican II period" is ludicrous. As to its "waning," according to the German government, the current German Catholic Church hierarchy, the most notable adherents to "Vatican II" orthodoxy, lost 167,504 former parishioners last year. In the U.S. and abroad, the "fossil in amber" SSPX continues to grow.

In several portions of this book, Weigel's

writing strikes me as if he has been affected by "Newspeak." Note the wording when he claims that Evangelical Catholicism is not "nourished by the simple formulas of the Baltimore Catechism," but "by the *mystagogical reflections* of the ancient Jerusalem Catecheses, which invited Christians to immerse themselves deeply into 'the mysteries' that are the sacraments, and to have the entirety of one's life formed by them." To me, these words are more likely to have come from a guru than a man steeped in the history of the Church.

Regarding Weigel's unshakable belief in the glory of the Second Vatican Council and our current Church situation, de Mattei has a far more realistic and accurate assessment: "...the crisis in the Church unfortunately has not come to an end in the last three decades, nor will it be possible for it to come to an end until its profound causes have been eliminated." For Weigel, there is virtually nothing to eliminate. In attempting to summarize Weigel's enthusiastic embrace of E.C. and the discarding of "Counter-Reformation" Catholicism, I am reminded of an Italian proverb, which I translate: Whoever forsakes the old way for the new knows what he is losing, but not what he will find."

George Weigel has written many good books, but this is not one of them. ■

Yo Soy El Camino, Continued...

C. Wilson/Continued from Page 13

Sarria (this city being the last from which pilgrims can earn the certificate stating they completed the hundred kilometers required to be counted a true pilgrim).

On the evening of August 3, I arrived in Pamplona and set out alone on the Camino de Santiago the next morning at six A.M. Twenty-five days and some 710 kilometers (~440 miles) later, I arrived at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela at 9:30 A.M. and wept unabashedly as I stood in the square, prayed inside before the main altar, and later meditated in the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

Perhaps weeping seems an odd reaction at such a moment of success, but the Camino de Santiago is one of the most visceral and simultaneously most Catholic experiences a person can have. I say this as someone who has attended many pilgrimages. In my school days, I went every year on day-pilgrimages of around 15 miles to local holy sites. In more recent years, I have walked fifty miles to the shrine of the Sacred Heart near the town of Post Falls in Idaho; traveled to take part of Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco; even joined a 280-mile trek up the coast of California to visit seven of the Spanish missions along the way. All these were beautiful experiences. None of them compared even a little to the transcendent experience of the Camino de Santiago.

As I walked the Camino during the entire month of August, I wondered what exactly was so special about this particular path uncoiling in endless white dust before my feet. I could feel its effect on me, but I was unsure why it was so strong. The formula of everyday life did not seem that extraordinary. I would pray for several hours while I marched through the cool morning hours; during the hot afternoons, I would ease the journey either by talking with other pilgrim companions, or else thinking alone about the patterns into which my life has fallen. In the evenings at the pilgrim hostels (albergues, in Spanish), I would perform simple chores like laundry and cooking, talk to new travelers, and attempt to snatch some sleep in a room of up to ninety exhausted, hot, and probably snoring fellow pilgrims. In the mornings, anytime between 5 and 6:30, I would jump up and repeat the entire process. Occasionally a week-day pilgrim Mass would be available, or I would stumble into a city at exactly the right time to attend Sunday Mass at the local Cathedral. Life was very simple.

At the same time, it was unbelievably painful. A pilgrim generally carries a pack containing all his or her necessities. This means an additional weight of some fifteen to twenty pounds strapped on the back. The path meanders up and down, sometimes gaining thousands of feet of elevation in a few hours, and then rapidly dropping through narrow stony paths that seem fit only for mountain-goats back. In August, the daily temperatures average around ninety-two degrees, with not a few days spiking

above 100. The combination of extra weight, constant walking, limited time each day to recover, and unrelenting heat meant that feet were likely to blister, tendons to strain, joints to swell. I was lucky that I only had to deal with blisters (even if many!); other pilgrims walked with tendonitis in their ankles for days on end or wore knee braces on both knees just to get through each day.

In spite of all these privations, though, everyone kept going. Moreover, almost without exception, every pilgrim was kind, considerate of others' needs, and reliably full of good cheer. One would think that with poor sleep, uncomfortable lodgings, and physical discomfort, there would be a lot of grumbling and resentment, but in fact on the Camino there is an abiding atmosphere of joy. Almost everyone I met, whether their motives were religious or spiritual or personal or academic or athletic, repeated a thought-provoking refrain: "The Camino provides."

About half-way through my own pilgrimage, I stopped in a small town called Santa Catalina del Tomaso—not a particularly common resting-place for pilgrims, and so not a location where I expected any notable interactions or revelations. However, I was standing at the outdoor laundry sink scrubbing my socks when a woman of about seventy appeared at my elbow. "Do you speak English?" she asked in an obvious American accent. When I replied, "Oh yes, I'm from the States," she was so happy that she spontaneously hugged me (there are few Americans on the Camino in August!). We ate dinner together and she revealed that she was Episcopalian, but as proof of the idea that providence is always at work on the Camino de Santiago, truth was still able to make its way to me using her as a channel. Over our meal she pointed out a thought that had been transmitted to her a few days before by another pilgrim. It turns out that if you translate Christ's famous words from the Gospel of Saint John into Spanish, He says, "Yo soy el camino, la verdad, y la Vida."

I am the way.

When walking on the Way of St. James, the Camino de Santiago, it is hard not to take this idea that Christ is the way, el camino, very literally. And indeed, I think this is the point of pilgrimage. In general, Catholics are far removed from Christ's physical life. Catholic art, more intent on honoring the majesty and beauty of the Godman, does not necessarily help us imagine His real life more clearly, since we mostly find images of a Christ clad in clean white and red, glowing amid the shadows of more ordinary people. Even depictions of the Crucifixion are not often very graphic, despite what work they do to illustrate at least the desolation of Christ's Passion.

On a five-hundred mile pilgrimage, however, the human body itself becomes an image of Christ's life. You walk for miles, and you pray, and you converse with both believers and unbelievers about God and truth and faith. You endure great pain, drag a

heavy burden, seldom rest comfortably. You throw away excess baggage, both actual and spiritual; you embrace a state of voluntary poverty. You offer your sufferings for others; you befriend people and end up with a close-knit band of companions; in tiny towns without cafés or shops, you give your extra food to pilgrims who forgot to bring any. At every step you think: Christ did all this and more.

In his human life, after all, Christ was poor and sought no wealth. He multiplied food to feed hungry travelers who followed His word; later He gave Himself as the bread of life. With His apostles and disciples, He traversed the Holy Land, conversing with Jew and Gentile alike. He withdrew from company at times to speak directly to His Father. He had no fixed home; He bore the burden of man's redemption both spiritually and embodied in the cross; He suffered more than any other being in order to save us. Christ was like all the pilgrims on the Camino. He was *the Pilgrim*, one could say. And if we follow Him, He also becomes our Way, our Truth, our Life. Christ is the Camino.

It only makes sense, therefore, that the Camino is full of love. As I mentioned before, pilgrims take care of each other. The hospitaleros at the parish albergues also feed travelers nourishing meals for often no more than a donation, offer blankets, suggest advice about the best tactics to endure the path for one more day, invite everyone to pray in common at Mass and before meals. And then there is the almost miraculous occurrence of providential moments along the way: just when you are loneliest, a companion appears; just when your feet hurt most, a bicycle pilgrim notices your hobble and offers all her ointments because she doesn't need them; in a town where you had no idea of the Mass schedule, you stumble into the Cathedral just as the Sunday high Mass begins. The Catholic pilgrim becomes constantly aware of God's loving presence at his or her side on the journey.

When I arrived at Santiago, therefore, and entered the Cathedral where Christ and His Apostle James are honored, I had the sensation that I had come home at last—doubtless a promise of the joys of paradise, when, journey ended, faithful Catholics will rest in the heart of God. I wept with joy to have survived the ordeal, to be at peace in the presence of God. As I knelt in the Blessed Sacrament chapel, I noticed that the arch around the monstrance was engraved with the following words: *Sic Deus dilexit mundum ut suum Unigenitum daret.* "God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son."

The thought occurred to me:

the only reason I am here is because Christ is here. This is true, not only of the Camino de Santiago, but also of life itself. Christ loves me, and so I exist and walk this Camino and attempt to save my soul through the Catholic Church.

Perhaps because this particular pilgrim path through Spain is so rooted in the centuries of Catholic history and the age-long tradition of Catholic charity—both to God and to neighbor—it leaves an indelible mark on the soul. Removed for weeks at a time from the habits and distractions of daily life, the pilgrim lives purely in the presence of God. Thus the Camino grants an understanding in body and soul alike that the pilgrim's suffering and triumph, equally overwhelming and elevating, are both indispensable graces bestowed by the love of God. More than in other pilgrimages, perhaps, the pilgrim learns that salvation is a matter of constantly walking with God and because of God, following Christ who is the Camino toward heaven. ■



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Bergoglio Barometer

BY FATHER CELATUS

Back in the days before smart phones and apps and 24-hour cable television, if you wanted to know what temperature it was outside you peered out a window to view a mercury thermometer attached to your house. And if you were wondering what weather changes might be coming you checked a barometer hanging on a wall, which measures changes in atmospheric pressure to help predict or forecast the future. Barometers are important devices for forecasting the weather but ultimately only God knows the future.

The Last Word has gone modern, in a limited way, by now using apps for the weather but we still make use of an instrument that detects changes and trends, which we call the *Bergoglio Barometer*. The *Bergoglio Barometer* is not affected by changes in the atmospheric pressure but it is affected by changes in pressure related to Jorge Bergoglio, aka Francis of Rome. The *Bergoglio Barometer* has an ascending scale on it that reads from *Highly Probable* to *Highly Improbable* with regard to the validity of Bergoglio's papacy.

Like weather barometers, the *Bergoglio Barometer* is not infallible and so the forecast is only probable. No one knows for certain whether we will have sun or storm, and no one knows for certain whether Jorge Bergoglio is actually a pope or an anti-pope. As is fitting we gave him the benefit of the doubt on the day his election was announced, and so he started in the *Highly Probable* zone; but since then the needle of the barometer has moved dramatically to the other end of the scale, now well into the *Highly Improbable*.

What are the sorts of pressures that are driving the needle of the *Bergoglio Barometer* toward the *Highly Improbable* zone regarding the validity of this papacy? We can group the pressures into three categories, the first of which are various deductive arguments which have been offered by various Catholic sources.

First among these is the argument that as a consequence of a coordinated conspiracy among cardinals to elect Jorge Bergoglio as pope, these cardinals and Bergoglio himself were ex-officio excommunicated by the very act of the conspiracy; therefore Bergoglio was not and is not a Catholic and as a consequence he is ineligible to be

elected pope. This conspiracy was spearheaded by a mafia style group known as Saint Gallen and it was conspiring already in the dying days of Pope John Paul II to insure Cardinal Ratzinger would not be elected and that Jorge Bergoglio would prevail as the next pope. If true—and there is good reason to believe it so—that means Bergoglio was excommunicated long before Pope Benedict abdicated.

Another argument is that the abdication of Pope Benedict is not valid. There

are two reasons offered in support of this position. The first is that the Pope acted out of force or fear, probably based in the homo networking of high ranking clerics in the Church who have infiltrated the Vatican in large numbers. In light of the fact that Benedict abdicated only days after receiving a report on corruption in the Vatican and in light of the credible testimony of Archbishop Vigano, there is good reason to suspect force or fear.

Others argue that the abdication of Pope Benedict is not valid because he did it improperly. Perhaps most notable along this line of argument is that he has split

the office of the papacy in two, keeping a sort of contemplative side for himself and giving the active pastoral side to his successor. There is no historical or biblical basis for this and the presence of two valid popes, in title and dress, is simply unprecedented.

Yet another argument against the validity of Bergoglio is based upon heretical statements which he has made—or are alleged to have been said by him. These include statements that souls that fail to achieve the beatific vision

are just a few samples to consider:

- Washing of the feet of women and infidels in the Sacred Liturgy of Maundy Thursday, multiple times;
- Disparaging remarks made regarding spiritual bouquets of Rosaries offered for him when elected;
- Stealing the crucifix from a Rosary that had been placed in the dead hands of his priest confessor;
- Stating that the Blessed Mother wanted to accuse God of lying and cheating her for the death of her Son;
- Insulting continually devout Catholics who are practicing the Faith as it comes to us from the Apostles;
- Resorting to words such as “coprophilia” and “coprophagia” (eating excrement) to describe fake news;
- Reassuring a woman living in adultery that she may continue her lifestyle and receive Holy Communion;
- Promoting homosexual clerics to high positions within the Vatican and elsewhere and protecting them;
- Wearing a rainbow-colored pectoral cross and carrying a Wiccan stang in place of a shepherd's crosier...

Unlike deductive arguments, any one of which might prove the invalidity of this papacy, the argument by induction is not grounded on a single instance but in this case there is a cumulative effect. This leads us to a third category of pressures that are spiking the needle of the *Bergoglio Barometer*: the *Sensus Fidelium*.

Among traditional and conservative Catholics, there is an ever-increasing number of the faithful and priests who now doubt or at least question the validity of the papacy of Francis. Many are asking how we can reconcile divine guidance and

protection of the Church in the face of attacks upon Catholic faith and morals that are perpetrated by a Vicar of Christ, who demands that his heresies be regarded as magisterial.

Folks, the fact is that while my *Bergoglio Barometer* leads me to believe that Jorge is likely an anti-pope, neither I nor anyone else can have absolute certitude in this matter. We leave that to divine providence to someday manifest. Meanwhile all traditional Catholics, regardless of their personal views on the validity of Francis, should be united in opposing and exposing the damage that Bergoglio is doing to the Church. ■



are annihilated and statements making allowances for adulterers to remain sexually active and to receive the sacraments of the Church, to include Confession and Holy Communion. The argument is that by holding to heresies, either materially or formally, he excommunicates himself by that very fact.

The next category of pressures that affect our *Bergoglio Barometer* comprises Jorge's own words and deeds. We call this *Inductive Pressure*, along the lines of inductive arguments, the strength of which depend upon the sampling employed to reach any conclusions. Here

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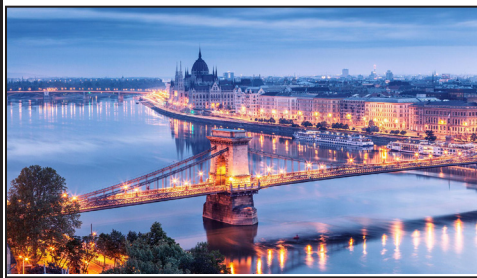


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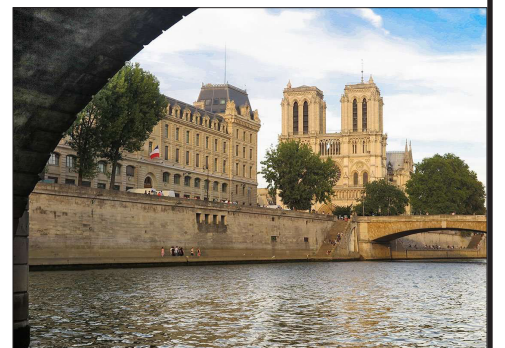
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