



Fiddling While Rome Burns:

# Vatican II in Retrospect

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by Martin Blackshaw

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By way of introduction, I wish to declare with all faithful Catholics who value their eternal salvation my absolute fidelity to the Holy See of Rome and my unceasing prayers for our Holy Father, Francis. I make this declaration so that no one may misconstrue or misrepresent what my duty as a Catholic now obliges me to write in charity and with the greatest respect concerning the reigning Pontiff and his immediate conciliar predecessors.

St. Pius X said at the beginning of the twentieth century that the main cause of the loss of souls was religious ignorance, ignorance of the truths of the faith. Sadly, this ignorance is everywhere in the Church today and it is getting worse as the decline in priests and sound Catechetics continues apace.

One of the principal errors to have arisen from this ignorance in our times is the belief, in thought if not by open declaration, that the pope is not just sometimes infallible but rather at all times impeccable. Therefore, no matter what the pope says or does in the exercise of his ordinary magisterium it is incum-

bent upon all to blindly obey him. A similarly erroneous thought is held with regard to the bishops.

How far this mistaken belief is from the teaching of the Church, however, is exemplified by St. Paul in Galatians 2: 11-13, who recounts how he “withstood Peter to his face because he was to be blamed.”

## A Right to Resist

Commenting on this Scripture passage, St. Thomas Aquinas writes: “There being an imminent danger to the Faith, prelates must be questioned, even publicly, by their subjects. Thus, St. Paul, who was a subject of St. Peter, questioned him publicly on account of an imminent danger of scandal in a matter of Faith...” (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 33, a. 4).

St. Robert Bellarmine concurs with St. Thomas in this matter and distinguishes for us between legitimate resistance and forbidden judgment. He writes: “Just as it is licit to resist the Pontiff who aggresses the body, it is also licit to resist the one who aggresses the soul or who disturbs civil order, or, above all, >

who attempts to destroy the Church. I say that it is licit to resist him by not doing what he orders and preventing his will from being executed; it is not licit, however, to judge, punish or depose him, since these are acts proper to a superior" (*De Romano Pontifice*, lib. 2, chap. 29, in *Opera Omnia* [Paris: Pedone Lauriel, 1871], vol. I, p. 418).

In his Encyclical Letter *Pastor Aeternus*, Pope Pius IX gives a certain rule by which the faithful may gauge the fidelity of popes to the primary duty of their sacred office. He writes: "The Holy Spirit has not been promised to the successors of Peter to permit them to proclaim new doctrine according to His revelations, but to keep strictly and to expound faithfully, with His help, the revelations transmitted by the Apostles, in other words the Deposit of Faith."

## Retrospect

I now propose by this rule to present a painful insight into the crisis of faith in the Church today, a crisis which is the result of fifty years of radical conciliar alteration of our Catholic religion.

On the election of John XXIII to the papacy in 1958 the Church was in a very healthy state. Her seminaries and religious houses were full, vocations were booming, city parishes each had at least three priests and three Sunday Masses to meet high attendance numbers, the foreign missions were converting millions to the true religion and Anglican intellectuals were leading an exodus of Church of England affiliates back to Rome.

In addition to this, when the Holy Father spoke the world listened. Such was the respect commanded by the Holy See globally that only a very few non-Catholic men of influence dared to put themselves in public opposition to the Church's moral teaching.

Inside the Church it was unheard of that any Catholic, clerical or lay, questioned the infallible teaching of the Magisterium, much less dissent from it as is so widespread at present, and sound Catechetics were everywhere forming the souls of our Catholic children in faith and virtue.

In every part of the world there was unity among Catholics. They were unified in faith, in doctrine, in morals, in the sacraments and by the same ancient universal liturgy and liturgical language that could be traced in its essentials all the way back to St. Peter himself.

As in other ages of Church history, however, all was not perfect; there were certainly issues within and without the walls of the Church that afflicted her to some degree or another. But the popes were strong in teaching authority, condemning and proscribing by various authoritative Encyclicals and Syllabi the grave errors of the times while re-affirming the divine truths of the Catholic religion and the indispensability of membership of the Church for salvation.

Such was the confidence of the faithful in the reigning popes and bishops to uphold the Deposit of Faith, personally as well as in their official capacities, that very few clergy or laity felt it necessary to acquaint themselves with past magisterial teaching, much less with the wisdom of the great saintly theologians and Doctors of the Church.

## "Renewal"

Hence it was that when the Second Vatican Council, the first Pastoral Council in the Church's history, commenced, it was pretty much expected that matters would be settled quickly without serious alteration to the everyday life of Catholics. How wrong this assumption was!

At the very first session of the Council, on October 11, 1962, all the documents prepared by the Preparatory Commissions over a three-year period for consideration by the Fathers were rejected at the behest of a liberal faction of theologians, a faction that was much larger and more organized than anyone had expected.

Although Pope John had made it clear that the Council was intended to be purely pastoral in nature, remaining on a "modest level, not treating of doctrine," it soon became evident that others had an altogether different agenda, a program to open the Church entirely to the spirit of a modern world then on the brink of cultural revolution and rebellion against God.

What resulted from this "Renewal" experiment was later described by Cardinal Suenens as "The French Revolution in the Church."

It is a great tragedy that so many Catholics were ill-prepared for the onslaught that was to follow in the wake of Vatican II. If only more had been familiar, for example, with the prophetic wisdom expressed by Pope Gregory XVI in his 1832 Encyclical *Mirari*



Vos, who wrote: "To use the words of the Fathers of Trent, it is certain that the Church 'was instructed by Jesus Christ and His Apostles and that all truth was daily taught it by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.' Therefore, it is obviously absurd and injurious to propose a certain 'restoration and regeneration' for her as though necessary for her safety and growth, as if she could be considered subject to defect or obscurity or other misfortune. Indeed these authors of novelties consider that a 'foundation may be laid of a new human institution,' and what Cyprian detested may come to pass, that what was a divine thing 'may become a human Church'..."

Contrast these words of Gregory XVI with this astonishing declaration of Pope Paul VI in his closing speech to the Council:

"Profane and secular humanism has shown itself in its own terrible stature and has in a sense defied the Council. The religion of God made Man has come up against the religion of man who makes himself God....You can be grateful to it [the Council] for this merit at least, you modern humanists who deny the transcendence of supreme things, and learn to recognise our new humanism: we too, we more than anyone else, subscribe to the cult of man."

This statement of Paul VI is all the more worrying when considered together with an earlier action of the Pontiff, as I shall now relate.

For more than a thousand years up to Vatican II, newly elected popes underwent a coronation ceremony in which a triple crown was placed upon their heads with the words: "Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art father of princes and kings, ruler of the world, vicar on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom is honour and glory for ever and ever."

The ceremony was of course primarily supernatural—the crown and the words of coronation symbolizing the reality of the universal Kingship of Christ and of the spiritual primacy and authority of the Petrine See instituted by Him.

Imagine the dismay, then, when, at the end of the second session of the Council in 1963, Pope Paul VI descended the steps of the papal throne in St. Peter's Basilica and ascended to the altar, on which he placed and renounced the pontifical tiara as a gesture of papal rejection of worldly power and honour.

It was a significant act of misplaced humility which His Holiness would soon equal in respect to charity when, in 1969, he supplanted the Church's ancient Latin Liturgy with a new Protestant-friendly vernacular Mass to complement conciliar ecumenism.

Suddenly, the pre-Council fear expressed by Pope Pius XII took on prophetic significance: "I am worried by the Blessed Virgin's messages to Lucy of Fatima. This persistence of Mary about the dangers which menace the Church is a divine warning against the suicide of altering the Faith in her liturgy, her theology and her soul....I hear all around me innovators who wish to dismantle the Sacred Chapel, destroy the universal flame of the Church, reject her ornaments and make her feel remorse for her historical past. A day will come when the civilised world will deny its God, when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted. She will be tempted to believe that man has become God" (Msgr. Roche, *Pie XII devant l'histoire*, pp. 52-53).

Discounting bad will on the part of Paul VI, the inference from this Pontiff's ill-judged acts was that his predecessors throughout the ages had indeed been, as the Church's hereditary enemies always claimed, corrupt men attached to earthly power and wealth which expressed itself in the pomp and splendor of meaningless ceremony.

Pope Francis, by similar poor judgment today, speaks of it as a Church "closed within herself," populated with "narcissists," "Neo-Pelagians" and men of "spiritual worldliness." It's almost as if the Holy Spirit is considered to have been absent from the Church until Vatican II.

In this respect, it is noteworthy that while the present Holy Father makes numerous references to Vatican II and its popes in his lengthy Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, he omits altogether any reference to pre-Council magisterial teaching.

Also worthy of note is that each of the conciliar popes from John XXIII to John Paul II has had his process of beatification and/or canonization accelerated beyond that of the last of the pre-Council popes, Pius XII, whose cause, the late Bishop Canisius van Lierde assured me during a meeting in the Vatican in 1992, is long proven and ready.

The most questionable of these hurried causes is that of John Paul II which has proceeded from >



zero to imminent canonization in just nine years; and on the basis of a significantly weakened post-Vatican II process stripped of Devil's Advocate and including only a single controversial miracle that has hardly stood the test of time.

Likewise in the case of John XXIII, Pope Francis has dispensed altogether with the required canonization miracle on the grounds that his predecessor's initiation of the Council is proof enough of his great sanctity. Worryingly, the Anglican Communion agrees and has already instituted a feast day for Pope John.

Taken together, these various signs are of great concern to many of the Catholic faithful who look beyond human emotion to a candidate's practice of heroic virtue, particularly his fidelity to the integrity of the faith.

For these troubled faithful such hasty proceedings give the impression that the Church's traditionally cautious and solemn processes have been replaced with something akin to a religious Academy Awards system that scores candidates more on their human popularity than their supernatural qualities.

I emphasise here that I am neither insinuating nor asserting deliberate bad will on the part of the conciliar popes. Rather, I am attempting to demonstrate that there exists a significant rift in mindset between the pre-Council Pontiffs and their post-conciliar successors, the latter representing that Modernist school of thought so ably dissected and refuted by St. Pius X in his Encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*.

Sorrowful as it is to admit, Cardinal Suenens was correct when he stated that Vatican II renewal was the French Revolution in the Church. Pope Paul VI had already inferred as much in his closing speech to the Council when he spoke of "the cult of man." Tragically, His Holiness later failed to make the connection when, in 1975, he lamented: "Through some fissure in the walls, the smoke of Satan has entered the Church and set her on a path of auto-destruction."

## The French Revolution in the Church

This "smoke of Satan," predicted by Our Lady of Fatima as "a diabolical disorientation," consists in the principal liberal tenets of the anti-Catholic

French Revolution—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity—being adapted to our holy religion post-Council and promoted as Religious Liberty, Collegial Equality and Ecumenical Fraternity.

Concerning the most damaging of these principles, religious liberty, it is asserted that "the dignity of the human person" is the basis upon which each man is free to hold inwardly and outwardly to whatever religion he chooses.

This is in contrast to the Church's perennial teaching on "Religious Tolerance," which states that the "dignity" of man depends on his fidelity to truth—as Our Lord said "the truth will make you free." There can be no dignity, then, where truth is compromised or absent, particularly in religion, for this would be to accord dignity to error, nullifying both the First Commandment and the infallible dogma "outside the Church no salvation."

The dignity of man was lost with the Original Sin committed by Adam and Eve. It can only be restored by the grace of the Redemption wrought by Our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. As St. Paul reminds us in Acts 4:12: "...there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Consequently, to reject Our Lord and the Church founded by Him is to reject the only source of man's true dignity, the dignity of the redeemed "sons of God."

Only those in "invincible ignorance," says the Church, those who through no fault on their part are prevented from explicitly entering the true Church but who nevertheless belong to her implicitly by reason of their seeking to do God's will and keeping the Commandments written in the hearts of all men, will have the great mercy of Our Lord extended to them.

Concerning these souls, the Church allows that they can be saved in their false religions but not by their false religions. What conciliar religious liberty does is turn this teaching on its head so that the exception becomes the general rule.

Hence the seriousness of Pope Paul's renunciation of the papal tiara representing the universal Kingship of Christ in favor of a "new humanism" that recognizes the right of all to hold to their false religions on the basis of the "dignity of the human person."



### Truth Sacrificed

We see the consequences of this grave error today in those many statements of senior prelates distancing themselves and the Church from any intention to convert non-Catholics and non-Christians. It was also most notably evident in the unprecedented actions of Pope John Paul II who kissed the Koran, received on his forehead the mark of a Hindu deity, participated in Animist rites in Togo and finally orchestrated those Assisi gatherings of the world's religions, during which the Buddhists worshipped an image of their false god atop a tabernacle while other pagans ritually slaughtered chickens on a Catholic altar.

In light of these very grave actions one wonders why the Christian martyrs chose death rather than burn a grain of incense before the false "gods of the Gentiles," which St. Paul called "demons." To quote one senior Church prelate in relation to this incredible development: "The martyrs sacrificed their lives for the truth. Now they sacrifice the truth."

### Modernist Confusion and Contradiction Today

And on the subject of truth, here is a comparison of pre- and post-Vatican II papal quotes demonstrating that the same Modernist confusion and contradiction continues under the present Pontiff.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis, in keeping with conciliar teaching on Religious Liberty, writes: "The Synod Fathers spoke of the importance of respect for religious freedom, viewed as a fundamental human right. This includes 'the freedom to choose the religion which one judges to be true and to manifest one's beliefs in public.'"

However, in his Encyclical *Quanta Cura* of 1864, Pope Pius IX writes: "They do not fear to foster that erroneous opinion, most fatal in its effects on the Catholic Church and the salvation of souls, called by Our predecessor, Gregory XVI, an insanity, viz., that 'liberty of conscience and worship is each man's personal right, which ought to be legally proclaimed in every rightly constituted society'...But, while they rashly affirm this, they do not think and consider that they are preaching liberty of perdition...."

The same contradiction is found in respect to Ecumenical Fraternity. In *Evangelii Gaudium* Pope Francis writes: "Commitment to ecumenism

responds to the prayer of the Lord Jesus that 'they may all be one' (Jn. 17:21)." Yet, in his 1928 Encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, Pope Pius XI declares:

"When there is question of fostering unity among Christians, it is easy for many to be misled by the apparent excellence of the object to be achieved. Is it not right, they ask, is it not the obvious duty of all who invoke the name of Christ to refrain from mutual reproaches and at last to be united in charity? Dare anyone say that he loves Christ and yet not strive with all his might to accomplish the desire of Him who asked His Father that His disciples might be 'one'? (Jn. 17:21)...If only all Christians were 'one,' it is contended, then they might do so much more to drive out the plague of irreligion which, with its insidious and far-reaching advance, is threatening to sap the strength of the Gospel. In reality, however, these fair and alluring words cloak a most grave error, subversive of the foundations of the Catholic religion..."

We have seen this error with our own eyes these past fifty years since Vatican II in a series of compromises on the part of Catholic ecumenists that have not been reciprocated by their Protestant interlocutors.

### From Ecumenism to Silent Apostasy

Hence, we now have a liturgy and liturgical practices that mirror very strongly the Protestant meal service, "subversive of the foundations of the Catholic religion" to the extent that seminaries and religious houses everywhere are closing for want of vocations, millions have abandoned the practice of the faith, reverence for the Blessed Sacrament is greatly diminished, the Sacrament of Confession is largely ignored, as is the Church's moral teaching, and children no longer receive even basic catechetical formation.

Further, in the name of "dialogue" we have seen actual interfaith worship with Protestants take root at every level in the Church, including, sadly, such unprecedented spectacles as Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio a few years ago kneeling before 7,000 witnesses in Argentina to receive the blessing of Protestant pastors, and the recent scandal of Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston "re-affirming" his baptism at the hands of a female Pentecostal minister.



How opposed these actions are to the teaching of Gregory XVI, who wrote in *Mirari Vos*: “With the admonition of the Apostle that there is ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4:5), may those fear who contrive the notion that the safe harbor of salvation is open to persons of any religion whatever. They should consider the testimony of Christ Himself who said ‘He that is not with me, is against me’ (Luke 11:23), and that they disperse unhappily who do not gather with Him. Therefore “without a doubt, they will perish forever, unless they hold the Catholic faith whole and entire...”

To use the measure of orthodoxy given us by Pope Benedict XVI, there is, in fact, no “Hermeneutic of Continuity” between pre- and post-conciliar teaching on Religious Liberty and Ecumenism. That’s why no pope or council prior to Vatican II is ever quoted in a post-conciliar document or speech in reference to these innovative doctrines.

## From Autocracy to Democracy

Nor is there continuity with the past in respect to Collegiality. In his *Open Letter to Confused Catholics*, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre explains that Our Lord instructed individuals, not a collectivity, to tend His sheep. The Apostles obeyed Our Lord’s orders, and until the twentieth century it remained thus. The pope alone enjoyed supreme power and jurisdiction over the universal Church, and each bishop, subject to this Petrine authority, enjoyed full power within his diocese.

Then the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* appeared hinting at a new democratic structure of government, according to which the College of Bishops together with the pope exercises supreme power over the Church in habitual and continual manner.

It was a novel idea of double supremacy that ran contrary to the definitions of Vatican Council I and to Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical *Satis Cognitum*.

Notwithstanding this contradiction, however, and largely dismissive of the footnote of correction attached at the end of the conciliar document in question, the post-conciliar Church has since witnessed a universal transformation of National Bishops’ Conferences from those purely consultative bodies approved by St. Pius X to decision-making entities operating on the principle of the democratic vote and ‘majority rule’; whereby the government of the

pope and that of each bishop in his diocese has frequently been trumped in practice by pressure from the presbyterial college.

Hence the universal imposition and extension against the expressed wishes of the popes of such abuses as Communion in the hand and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the scandal of U.S. marriage annulments that rose from 700 in 1969 to more than 50,000 by 1995, the introduction of doctrinally unsound Catechisms into Holland, Canada and France without corrections ordered by the Holy See having been made, etc.

I could quote many such examples, but perhaps the most revealing proof is the letter of explanation Pope Benedict XVI felt obliged to issue to the various Episcopal Conferences in an attempt to soothe a less than favorable reception of his 2007 *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum*.

What this letter highlighted was the pressure the popes have experienced since the advent of Collegiality; reducing them to issuing reassurances, suggestions and advice instead of issuing the orders needed to get the Church back on the right track, condemning when necessary, as the popes have hitherto done as primary guardians of the deposit of faith.

Well did Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani once observe that the only recording in history of Collegiality at work among the Apostles was when they collectively abandoned Our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane!

Adding further to the confusion is the teaching of the new Code of Canon Law (1983) that power resides in the “people of God.” This tendency towards what they call bringing the base into sharing the exercise of power can be found all through present structures—synod, episcopal conferences, priests’ councils, pastoral councils, Roman commissions, national commissions, etc.; and there are equivalents in religious orders.

So now pastoral councils instruct the priests; the priests’ councils instruct the bishops; the bishops’ vote in the conferences and the conferences dictate to the pope. In effect, it is authority turned on its head so that what was once a top-down structure of Church government has become a bottom-up structure of so many contradictory opinions and methods that it can truly be stated that collegiality of the magisterium has resulted in paralysis of the magisterium.



This great tragedy was further compounded when Pope Benedict XVI “resigned” his papal office in 2013. Never in the sacred history of the Church has a pope “resigned.” Two have abdicated for very serious reasons, but none has ever resigned.

Resignation is proper to the CEO of a corporate company, not to the one who sits on the divinely instituted Chair of Peter. And so now we have the unprecedented and demeaning spectacle of two living Popes in the Vatican at the same time, one reigning and one emeritus, both “inaugurated,” not crowned, according to the new ceremony introduced by Pope John Paul II to better reflect the Socialist norms of the modern world.

For his part, Pope Francis has taken the innovations even further by recently appointing a Council of eight Cardinals to assist him with the running of the Church. His Holiness makes no secret of his intention to continue down the road of Collegiality even though it ultimately undermines the supreme and unique authority of the Vicar of Christ, as we already see by the Pontiff’s preference to refer to himself constantly by his lesser title of “Bishop of Rome.”

So we may say that in just four steps since Vatican II—i.e., renunciation of the papal tiara, introduction of Collegial Equality, more power to the people and the first ever “resignation” of a pope—the autocratic structure of Petrine authority instituted by Our Lord for His Church has been transformed into a Socialist democracy by which papal teaching accrues in practice to little more than just one amongst many varied opinions. And why not, since the popes themselves no longer preach or write in the clear, concise and authoritative Petrine tone of their pre-conciliar predecessors.

#### “Turned unto Fables”

On the contrary, Pope Francis’s recent “Who am I to judge?” statement to the press in relation to homosexuals did more to promote the gay lobby than that aggressive lobby could have hoped to achieve itself by decades of campaigning.

Perhaps the faithful will now understand why there was barely a whimper of protest recently from the Church’s hierarchy when secular governments unilaterally moved to impose gay marriage on society.

Wherever we look in the Church today all we see

is this invasion of the secular, rebellious spirit of the world constantly in search of novelty, constantly “renewing,” constantly chipping away at the last remnants of the Traditions handed down unaltered through the generations until Vatican II.

Quite how this “pastoral” Council, declared to be non-doctrinal and non-infallible, came to impose a new ecclesiology, a new liturgy, a new Code of Canon Law, a new Catechism and a new orientation centered on the “dignity of the human person” rather than on baptism in Christ through His Church, is a mystery known only to the Almighty.

God knows, it has been a whirlwind of evolution which for forty years has sown confusion in the true Church of Our Lord. It has eroded authority, suppressed dogmatic teaching, disrupted unity, left many Catholics bewildered, broken many hearts and resulted in mass apostasy from the faith. There simply is no more diplomatic a way to put it.

And now Pope Francis seems to be focussing on even more radical changes that will see greater deterioration take place.

All the talk is about the poor, the hungry and the marginalized, and about pursuing social justice and global peace through greater “dialogue” with other “faith traditions.” At no time in *Evangelii Gaudium* does the Pontiff make reference to the great Social Encyclicals of his pre-Vatican II predecessors, such as Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, or of the fact that the Church has championed the cause of the poor and marginalized for two thousand years through the missions.

It is almost as if His Holiness considers that legacy to be tainted on account of the traditional theology underlying it, a theology which identified the worst poverty of all to be that of the absence of Christ and His grace from souls, and which condemned and proscribed interaction with false religions under the pretext of improving man’s condition on earth.

To be fair to Pope Francis, he does say some very good things in *Evangelii Gaudium* that are perfectly in line with Catholic teaching. But it is this apparent disdain for the old Church Militant in favor of a kind of United Nations of inter-religious social work which is of particular concern.

The Church does not exist on this earth primarily to feed the poor, clothe the hungry and win justice for the downtrodden, noble as these corporal works



of mercy are. Rather, the Church exists principally for the true worship of God and to convert souls to the Catholic religion that they may be saved for all eternity.

Hence, this novel idea of a “poorer Church for the poor,” a Church which follows the Puritan model of cutting down the great tree of authoritative Catholic teaching and liturgical majesty for a return to the simplicity of the mustard seed is an illusion that does injustice to Christ the King and great harm to souls.

The examples of Sts. Francis of Assisi and Jean Marie Vianney (the Curé of Ars) should help to demonstrate what I mean by this. Both of these saints were renowned for their personal lives of holy poverty and penitential austerity in imitation of Our Lord, the poor carpenter of Nazareth. Yet, both insisted on the most expensive and exquisite adornments that could be afforded to beautify their respective parish churches, wherein Christ the King resided in the Blessed Sacrament.

What these examples of the saints highlight is that our Catholic religion is first a supernatural religion instituted for the true worship of God and the preaching of divine truth both “in season and out of season,” as St. Paul said, for the salvation of souls. Any social program for the betterment of humanity on earth is by far subordinate to this principal mission.

Consequently, this post-Vatican II reorientation of the Church is, with the very greatest respect to those responsible, a madness exceeding that of Nero who fiddled while Rome burned.

Surely forty years of devastation of the Catholic religion together with an exponential increase in global violence, poverty and immorality is evidence enough of the futility of trying to adapt the divine Catholic Faith to the spirit of the world and the “cult of man.”

There can be no spiritual renewal, no lasting world peace and no global social justice attained by such a union; much less by a continued promotion of false Religious Liberty and Ecumenism, which doctrines equate to mere human respect denying to our non-Catholic and non-Christian neighbor the greatest act of charity, namely, the truth that they must embrace Christ and His Catholic Church for salvation.

In his Encyclical *Quas Primas*, Pope Pius XI puts

it this way: “As long as individuals and States refuse to submit to the rule of Our Saviour, there can be no really hopeful prospect of a lasting peace among nations. Men must look for the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ...His Church, the one source of salvation.”

How different this fearless teaching is to post-Vatican II Religious Liberty, which has seen our popes address Jewish and Islamic congresses as fellow “children of Abraham,” believing in the same one true God as Catholics.

But how can such statements find justification in Our Lord’s own testimony, who said: “Abraham saw my day and was glad...” (John 8:56); and: “He who rejects me, rejects the one who sent me” (Luke 10:16)?

Equally at odds with Our Lord’s testimony is this new conciliar process of sending Vatican greetings to the representatives of other non-Catholic religions, those of pagan origin such as Buddhism, Shintoism and Hinduism, on their various religious feast days as though they were somehow pleasing to the Holy Spirit and conducive to holiness and salvation.

I have already highlighted this syncretist mentality as it manifested itself in the Assisi gatherings organized by Pope John Paul II.

Again, I ask how any of this is justifiable in light of the First Commandment and the infallible dogma “outside the Church no salvation”? Where are these dangerous novelties condoned anywhere in the bimillennial teaching of the Popes and Councils, or by the teaching of the saints? Did not our Saviour Himself admonish that “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5)?

The faithful have the right and a duty to ask these questions of the shepherds entrusted by Our Lord with the care of their souls. Many indeed have asked but, alas, the response is usually silence or an unjust command of obedience to the Council.

Since Vatican II was not a Council bearing the hallmark of the extraordinary magisterium, however, and since none of these modern novelties have been imposed formally by the extraordinary magisterium on the faithful, which would be impossible in light of two thousand years of contrary infallible teaching, then troubled and discerning Catholics, myself included, have chosen to side with Tradition and reject





these destructive innovations.

### **The Rule of Resistance**

Yes, for the love of Our Lord, His Holy Church, our holy Catholic religion and the Petrine See, we follow St. Paul's respectful example and "resist Peter to his face" in these matters of very grave scandal threatening the faith, following as our method of resistance the recommendation of St. Vincent of Lerins.

Having fresh in his memory the devastation wrought in the Church in the fourth century by the Arian heresy, a devastation so great that St. Jerome felt constrained to declare "the whole world awoke and groaned to find itself Arian," this fifth-century saint proposed the following question and answer for future generations who might be faced with similar tragedy:

"But what if some novel contagions try to infect the whole Church, and not merely a tiny part of it? Then he [the Catholic] will take care to cleave to antiquity, which cannot now be led astray by any deceit of novelty" (The Vincentian Canon, in *Commonitorium*, ed. Moxon, Cambridge Patristic Texts, chap. IV, 434).

Since divine faith is a higher virtue than obedience, it follows that no man, however exalted, may legitimately command obedience of Catholics in matters that endanger their faith. Hence, there can be no such thing as schism on the part of subordinates who respectfully refuse the dangerous religious innovations of their superiors in favor of the security of antiquity, regardless of hysterical assertions to the contrary.

Sadly, the same cannot be stated with any confidence in respect to those who choose obedience to men above obedience to God. In this regard, Archbishop Lefebvre lamented after Vatican II that "Satan's masterstroke has been to sow disobedience through obedience."

I think it fitting to leave the final word to St. Paul as food for thought: "...Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables..." (2 Timothy 4:2).