Pope Francis On “Intolerable Burdens”

“...evil pastors lay intolerable burdens on the shoulders of others...”

Pope Francis, Homily, Opening Mass, Synod on the Family
Religious freedom in Scotland: A legal proposal

A group of academics has called for religious freedom to be fully recognised in Scotland.

A new paper on Religious Freedom in Scotland offers a legal contribution to the debate. It outlines the protections contained in international and European legal instruments and in national constitutions. The paper also makes a set of proposals for ensuring the protection of religious freedom in Scotland.

The document highlights key areas in which effective legal protections are particularly crucial to religious communities: Freedom of expression, family life, education, and employment.

A set of proposals suggests how the right to religious freedom could be enshrined in a future Scottish constitution or other fundamental rights document. The paper suggests protections for religious freedom that include the right of religious believers to transmit the beliefs, values and traditions of their communities to their children; the accommodation of religious observance and practice in the workplace; and support for publicly-funded faith schools.

Dr Deirdre McCann of the Durham University’s School of Law said: “Whatever the outcome of the referendum, it is time to think seriously about how religious freedom can be protected in Scotland. Effective protections will allow religious communities to continue to flourish within Scotland’s pluralist society.”

Among the academics who have endorsed the proposal are Scotland’s leading historian, Professor Sir Tom Devine, and one of the world’s leading experts in the law of religious freedom, Professor Ian Leigh.

A spokesman for the Catholic Church said: “Full religious freedom is one of the foundations of any stable society. A reasonable starting point for the constitution of an independent Scotland would be Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states: ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.’” Scottish Catholic Observer (SCO) 12/9/14.

The only inevitable necessity in the history of mankind is that Jesus Christ must reign.

Freedom is not the fundamental principle, nor a fundamental principle in the matter. The public law of the Church is founded on the State’s duty to recognize the social royalty of Our Lord Jesus Christ! The fundamental principle which governs the relations between Church and State is the “He must reign” of St. Paul (1 Cor. 15:25) - the reign that applies not only to the Church but must be the foundation of the temporal City. That is what the Church teaches...

The Church has been teaching for nineteen centuries that her public law is as unchangeable as her faith, because it is founded on it, and that the only inevitable necessity in the history of mankind is that Jesus Christ must reign...

The Church, which is a perfect society by the same title as the State, has of herself all the means for a stable existence and for the independent attainment of her end. And as the end to which the Church is tending is by far the noblest of all, so her power surpasses all others and can in no way be inferior or subject to the civil power. (cf Immortale Dei, PIN, 134).

Extract, Apologia pro Marcel Lefebvre: Volume 2, Chapter XV, Archbishop Lefebvre Concerning Religious Liberty, 26 February, 1979

Catholic Truth… Keeping the Faith, Telling the Truth - a bi-monthly newsletter for informed Catholics
Tribute to Anthony Fraser RIP, Editor of Apropos…

Editor writes…

Although I’ve had the privilege of meeting Tony Fraser, son of the famous Communist convert Hamish, I can’t claim to have known him well on a personal level. However, Tony was always supportive of Catholic Truth: he gave ready permission to use material from Apropos (see below).

Tony died on 28th August, 2014, and we immediately arranged for Holy Mass to be offered for the repose of his soul, although the news arrived too late to be included in our September edition. We extended our sincere condolences to the family, which we repeat here. May Tony rest in peace.

What follows is some background information about Tony’s work as Editor of Apropos - taken from the Apropos website which you may visit at http://www.apropos.org.uk/

Apropos is the successor magazine to Approaches which was edited by the late Hamish Fraser (1913-1986), a convert to the Catholic Church from Communism. Approaches was dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and in Hamish Fraser’s own words was:

“First inspired by the need to promote Catholic lay initiatives in the temporal order: initiatives juridically distinct from the hierarchy yet in a spirit of uncompromising fidelity to the authentic social doctrine of the Teaching Church.”

Post-Conciliar Anarchy

However, Fraser soon realised that a revolution had been unleashed within the Catholic Church itself following the Second Vatican Council. Although Approaches still had the primary aim of promoting lay initiatives, it became clear, increasingly so as time went on, that not only was the authentic social doctrine of the Church under attack from within the Church itself, but also the very tenets of faith and morals. Thus the aim of Approaches was extended. As Hamish Fraser stated: ‘However, so long as post conciliar anarchy continues to engender the subversion of both Church and State, which is inevitable until Russia is collegially consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the first priority of Approaches must be to rally support for the authentic Pontifical Magisterium as a means of containing disorder in the Church, and simultaneously to expose the various forces of organised naturalism engaged in totalitarian subversion of the temporal order.’

Out in the Cold

This latter expression of aims did not mean that Hamish Fraser was a papalistic. His use of the adjective “authentic” in relation to the Pontifical Magisterium meant that he was not to accept uncritically any papal or episcopal policy. Indeed in the climate of Modernism within the Church he often attacked and uncompromising stand brought him into conflict with ecclesiastical authorities. In the early years he ploughed a lone furrow and he became increasingly isolated as his traditionalist stance (in fact nothing less than the Faith he had been baptised into) was abandoned by his peers who progressively embraced the neo-Modernist changes forced upon the Church in accordance with the so-called “spirit of Vatican II”. These included changes in the liturgy and catechism not to mention the policies of appeasement vis-à-vis Communism and liberalism arising from the Council’s decree on Religious Liberty. Many have acknowledged that Hamish Fraser provided the basic nucleus of post-conciliar resistance to neo-Modernism in the Anglophone world and there is no doubt that many traditionalist initiatives were inspired by his example.

APROPOS

Following Hamish Fraser’s death on 17th October 1986, his son Anthony, and Geoffrey Lawman, who had co-operated with Hamish for many years, undertook to continue the work of Approaches as far as they were able. They did so by publishing the review Apropos which is dedicated to the memory of Hamish. Apropos was edited by Anthony, with Geoffrey as co-editor. It made its aims those of Approaches and further dedicated itself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in admiration of Hamish’s great devotion to the Sacred Heart and of his admiration for that great lay apostle of the Sacred Heart, and martyr, Gabriel Garcia Moreno, President of Ecuador. Indeed to his family it was of no little significance that Hamish died on the feast of St Margaret-Mary Alacoque that great apostle of the Sacred Heart. Geoffrey Lawman died in 1995 and Apropos is dedicated to his memory also. Apropos continued to be edited by Anthony Fraser.

Apropos ceased print publication in February 2013 but will continue, as far as possible, on the web. Articles will be posted on-line both from the archive and from new contributions.

• Apropos was not a weekly, monthly or quarterly review. It was a periodical in the true sense in that it appeared periodically. It has a close association with the French review Action Familiale et Scolaire and published translations from that prestigious journal on a regular basis. Contributors to Apropos included Arnaud de Lassus, Michael Davies, Solange Hertz, and Professor Robert Hickson among others.

• Apropos is not associated with any particular groups within the Catholic Church and Traditionalist movement. However it does call for the unrestricted use of the Tridentine Mass and reiterates that call to the Pope made by the great French Catholic writer, Jean Madiran: ‘Give us back the Mass, the Catechism and the Scriptures’. Apropos therefore supports all those who have like aims.

• Apropos is therefore counter-revolutionary in both religious and political arenas. It is traditionalist in terms of the Catholic Church in that it seeks the restoration of order within the Church, the social Kingship of Christ the King and a return to sound doctrine and the traditional liturgy of the Church. It is also loyal to the authentic Magisterium of the Church.

Anthony Fraser

2 February 1949 - 28 August, 2014

We make our own, the following tribute from the well known American traditional Catholic newspaper, The Remnant...

Anthony Fraser [was] the indefatigable editor of Apropos - the UK’s premier traditional Catholic magazine... Tony was the quiet but formidable soldier of Christ we are proud to boast of as ‘one of ours’. Tony, son of Hamish, was an ally and brother to those of us privileged to call him friend. We will miss him more than we can say, and we extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Janice, and the entire Fraser family. Requiescat in Pace.
Mr (now Bishop) Arthur Roche had acknowledging the breaking of vows of chastity acknowledged at that time, in commenting on the routine arrival, CO, Jan. 1997.

"Six Bishops and a Funeral: Why The Common Good was Dead on temptation and grave scandal a priest "keeping company" places himself, a blind eye to the "occasion of sin" in which scandal, I explored how British bishops turn around the time of the Roddy Wright resignation of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton, Kieran Conry (pictured below) following tabloid revelations of his affairs was "stunned".

Why? Why are Catholics stunned at this news when it's been around - albeit not in the detail - for years?

We have quoted the Christian Order expose at length more than once, most recently in our October 2013 edition following the then Bishop's blatant attack on Catholic teaching on contraception, In quoting his attack on contraception, we repeated a popular Catholic Truth theme: "…there has to be something wrong in [bishops'] own personal lives for them to be so far away from the truths of the Faith in their beliefs and, generally speaking, morals - for when the Faith goes, the morals usually follow. After all, why would anyone adhere to "Catholic sexual morality" (as God's law has come to be known) if they do not believe either in God Himself or in the Church's divinely bequeathed role to guard and proclaim the natural moral order?"

There's no need to repeat the gory details of Bishop Conry's double life here - the Daily Mail exposed the facts in their several reports on the subject, so we'll dispense with providing source references here, due to shortage of space. For our purposes, the key points to note are as follows.

Bishop Conry, it is widely believed, was known to have been promiscuous and yet his brother bishops remained silent. One Daily Mail report quoted the extract from Christian Order which we published in this newsletter in October 2013: "Several years ago, around the time of the Roddy Wright scandal, I explored how British bishops turn a blind eye to the "occasion of sin" in which a priest "keeping company" places himself, tempting fate and grave scandal ("Six Bishops and a Funeral: Why The Common Good was Dead on Arrival," CO, Jan. 1997).

At that time, in commenting on the routine breaking of vows of chastity acknowledged by the hierarchy in a message to the Pope, Mgr (now Bishop) Arthur Roche had assured The Times that “… the bishops of England and Wales are realists. ‘Just how ‘realistic’ they are is indicated by relating, among other cases, the example of the London priest well known to be living with his Pastoral Assistant, who he took along to Deanery meetings at the Bishop’s house! In that context, Mgr Conry ‘merely’ keeping regular company in such public fashion is hardly surprising. Yet even if such increasingly common ‘relationships’ are purely platonic, the point is that scandal is given, above all to those of simple and delicate conscience who are offended by it and interpret it in a bad sense… [Does this situation] not leave the gravest questions about ecclesiastical propriety? Not to say about his prudential judgement and ability to offer wise moral leadership and counsel to others? Especially when shortly before his episcopal consecration, Mgr he is seen in Italy strolling hand in hand and enjoying leisurely outings with his lady friend at Palazzola, the residence on Lake Albano belonging to the English College.

Again, it was the appearance of scandal that upset those who viewed the liaison, including one priest who was sufficiently disgusted to make representations to a Vatican Congregation. Word quickly spread and it is said that Church authorities may have queried Mgr Conry about the matter. Whatever the case, it is a measure of the unqualified protection afforded to Modernist cronies that not only did Mgr Conry’s less than discreet romantic entanglement not disqualify him from consideration for a bishopric in the first place, but that the Palazzola coup de grace did not even delay his elevation by a single day. It is especially shocking in light of the numerous sexual scandals in recent years which have caused such harm to the Church in general and episcopate in particular, and which, one might have thought, would have seen Rome acting swiftly to snuff out the slightest possibility of further tabloid headlines…

Most commentators made excuses for the women involved with the Bishop, arguing that there was/is a “power imbalance” in these situations, with the Bishop abusing his power over “vulnerable” women.

The question needs to be asked, however, as it was on the Catholic Truth blog, why any woman approaches a priest for “counselling” about marriage (or any other) problems in the first place. Also, arguably, at least, women are generally more in control of romantic entanglements than men and, certainly before the contraceptive pill made it easier to sin without apparent consequences, they knew how to say “no” and mean it. So, while we deplore the Bishop’s promiscuity, we do not believe that he took advantage of vulnerable women. At least one of his affairs involved a married woman with children. Her infidelity is also unconscionable and yet seems to have gone largely un-remarked.

Women today insist on equality with men, so they ought not to claim “vulnerability” and “abuse of power” in situations where they freely embark in an affair with a clergyman.

Do you agree with the views of our England Correspondent on the women involved with clergy? Write to us - contact details on page 8.

Fatima: Our Lady to Blessed Jacinta, through sins of the flesh, than for any other reason…”

Footnotes:
1 Michael McGrade: Cronies, Crooks and Crisis Popes, Christian Order, January, 2002
2 Conry says Catholics should follow their consciences on contraception, The Tablet, 7/9/13
4 This priest is now a bishop, according to one Daily Mail report.
Letter To A Papal Nuncio
Parishioner’s concerns about Bishop Conry

Monday, 29 September 2014

In the light of the recent scandal surrounding my bishop - Kieran Conry, I have had my share of battles with him in the past. I have often written to him to complain about the dreadful Catechesis and Catholic education in our Catholic schools, which I am passionate about. Our children are deprived of the teachings of the Church and this is the biggest scandal. How dare Bishop Conry neglect these little ones! Often I have written to Cardinal Vincent Nichols about the dreadful Catechesis in this country and I have never had a reply from him either. I expect they see me as a little nuisance in the countryside.

Well I am sick to the back teeth of this hierarchy and the way they operate. Arrogance springs to mind and swishing hierarchy and the way they operate. I have never had a reply from him either. I write in the capacity of a qualified catechist, having completed my training some 10 years ago, and also having completed 2 years of the BA Divinity course at Maryvale Institute in Birmingham. Hence I know what the Church teaches!

I live in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton and I am rather concerned about Bishop Conry on a number of points. I have also written to him, and I am awaiting a response.

First concern - Bishop Conry has recently undermined the Church’s teaching contained in Humanae Vitae. This was in “The Tablet” a few weeks ago. He said that Catholics have enough burdens and therefore don’t need to adhere to the teachings in this encyclical - in other words, he is saying that conscience is King over Church teachings. That is very disturbing indeed. It is frankly appalling. Catholics in the UK are woolly enough on their faith without further confusion from the Bishop - who incidentally is in charge of evangelisation and catechesis in England and Wales! It renders one speechless with dismay. I just want to cry. How am I - a catechist supposed to do my job of giving Catholic doctrine with my bishop undermining what the Catholic Church teaches. Can you see my situation? My tears go up to Our Lord in my grief.

Second concern. The dissenting group “A Call To Action” (excommunicated in America) have been given a platform in Catherham parish, Surrey. The parish newsletter advertises this event as having Bishop Conry’s approval. As you probably know - this group wants everything in the Church changed (women priests to Church teachings. That is very disturbing indeed. It is frankly appalling. Catholics in the UK are woolly enough on their faith without further confusion from the Bishop - who incidentally is in charge of evangelisation and catechesis in England and Wales! It renders one speechless with dismay. I just want to cry. How am I - a catechist supposed to do my job of giving Catholic doctrine with my bishop undermining what the Catholic Church teaches. Can you see my situation? My tears go up to Our Lord in my grief.

Third concern. The gay activist group “Quest” is in talks with Bishop Conry about having masses for gays in Arundel and Brighton. “Quest” was banned from the Catholic directory by the late Cardinal Hume. It dissents against Church teaching in this area.

Fourth and final concern - but very very grave indeed. On the Arundel and Brighton website - the diocesan bookshop is promoting (and has been for the last 7 years) the heretical First Holy Communion course - “I Belong” - written by the Redemptorists. It is totally deficient and what I would call “cotton wool theology”. It is depriving young Catholics of the Truths of the Faith. This is surely a mortal sin. I wrote to Bishop Conry about this 7 years ago and I even listed the errors of this course. I absolutely refuse to use this course for my teaching purposes. The confirmation course is not much better.

I am only a lay person - I have no authority at all. But surely bishops can do fraternal corrections of brother bishops - a precept of charity. Indeed, to do nothing implies consent to this grave situation. One can only assume that Bishop Conry went to a poor seminary and had deficient formation - so he could be invincibly ignorant. What a sorry state of affairs!

But this situation can’t carry on - many souls are being led astray. I urge you to look into this situation as a matter of extreme urgency.

Yours sincerely,
Dominie Mary Beatrice Stemp

St. Augustine of Hippo, speaking in the 4th century captured the role of the bishop - quoted by an American Archbishop...

“Jerusalem had watchmen who stood guard. And this is what bishops do. Now, bishops are assigned this higher place - the bishop’s chair in the basilica - so that they themselves may oversee and, as it were, keep watch over the people. For they are called episkopos in Greek, which means ‘overseer,’ because the bishop oversees; because he looks down from [his chair] . . . And on account of this high place, a perilous accounting will have to be rendered [by the bishop] - unless we stand here with a heart such that we place ourselves beneath your feet in humility . . . It’s crucial for those of us who are bishops not simply to look like bishops but to truly be bishops. Otherwise, we’re just empty husks — the kind of men Augustine meant when he said, “You say, ‘He must be a bishop for he sits upon the cathedra.’ True — and a scarecrow might also be called a watchman in the vineyard.”

Archbishop Chaput, Sermon for his installation in the Cathedral Basilica in Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Dominie Stemp (left) is a parishioner in the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. In September, 2013, she wrote to the Papal Nuncio with her concerns about how the then Bishop Conry was failing to do his “job” properly. Following the revelations of his double-life, she published the letter on her blog, where you can read the original material.

http://dominiestemp.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/the-letter-i-wrote-to-archbishop-menini.html
Wanted: Copy-Cat Catholics

After publishing the letter from Mr Caffery in Issue No. 84, in which he cheered us up with the news that he wanted extra copies of the newsletter to distribute to friends, we thought it would be of interest to report that three more readers have been telling us that they make good use of their copies of Catholic Truth in various ways.

One elderly reader - we'll call him Sam (not his real name) - has made up a little packet of key papers on assorted subjects which he hands out with the aim of alerting fellow Catholics to various aspects of the crisis in the Church, notably Communion in the hand and the, as yet, incomplete Consecration of Russia. The front page of his packet is a copy of the front page of a previous edition of our newsletter, which carries our website address so that the more intelligent of his recipients have a means of learning more about the issues if they so choose. ¹

A young female reader followed through on a conversation with her beautician when she was engaged in the self-evidently crucially important task of having her nails painted, by handing in an envelope containing Fatima material and copies of Catholic Truth.

Some time later, the recipient contacted our reader to arrange a meeting.

Another young (male) reader who told me about a great conversation he'd had with another young Catholic man, asked for some assorted back numbers and contact cards to give out when appropriate in such situations in the future.

If YOU can think of ways to educate Catholics with whom you come in contact, let us know - we're keen to learn about new and imaginative apostolates from "copy-cat Catholics".

Footnote:

¹ See article Whatever Happened To Una Voce Scotland opposite for one example of the kind of unpleasant response which Sam has suffered in conducting his apostolate.

Whatever Happened To Una Voce Scotland?

Sam used to be friends with Mr Fred Stone, Chairman of Una Voce Scotland - equivalent of the Latin Mass Society in England. Intermittently, Mr Stone would ring him with bits and pieces of information which he thought were of interest. Nothing terribly important, unless you're crazy about keeping track of which church has installed which stained glass window, that sort of thing, but Sam was always too polite to say "I'm not crazy."

Imagine Sam's surprise, then, when, one cold October day, he stood outside St Andrew's Cathedral in Glasgow city centre distributing his leaflets (see column 1) before the lunchtime Mass only to find himself blandly snubbed by Mr Stone who refused the packet offered to him, walking past without so much as a "did you hear about them painting over the beautiful Assumption triptych above the sanctuary in St Mary's Abercromby Street?" ²

Sam was astonished. He decided to contact Fred - His letter is dated 16/10/14:

Dear Fred, At a time when the defenders of our holy Faith have no voice either in the "Catholic" press or the secular media, desperate measures, such as old men like me standing outside St Andrew's Cathedral in Clyde Street, with a fistful of leaflets, have to be resorted to.

Consequently, I now feel morally obliged to ask why - without a word - you refused to accept from me the now enclosed dossier of urgent Catholic information? To avoid any danger of me misquoting you, please do not phone me in reply, but respond, rather, in writing. Yours sincerely.

Sam's letter contained his full postal address, was signed by him and, in addition, he published his postal address - "as sender" - on the back of the envelope.

Expecting a courteous reply, perhaps an apology for having ignored Sam outside the Cathedral ("I was having a bad hair day" or whatever excuse men make for being rude...) Sam was astounded when the letter was returned to him as follows.

The top right hand corner had been torn away and the letter was returned to him as follows.

"I was having a bad hair day" - without a word - you refused to accept from me the now enclosed dossier of urgent Catholic information? To avoid any danger of me misquoting you, please do not phone me in reply, but respond, rather, in writing. Yours sincerely.

Sam's letter is also inexplicable … unless there's something niggling at his conscience which caused him to erupt in fury and act somewhat irrationally. But what? Drum roll…

Sam (like myself) has questioned Fred in the past about the fact that he fulfils his Sunday Mass obligation, not at the Una Voce Traditional Latin Mass in Sacred Heart, Bridgeton, but at the Jesuit Church of St Aloysius in Garnethill. I once asked him how he could expect other Catholics to go to quite a bit of trouble to attend Mass in Bridgeton when he takes himself into town to attend a novus ordo Mass celebrated in a city centre parish notorious for its modernist clergy. His response was a contemptuous "It’s nobody’s business."

"On the contrary", I replied: "it’s everybody’s business.” If he is happy to fulfil his Sunday Mass obligation at a novus ordo Mass in a parish which has featured for its dissent in this newsletter more often than the saintly Miss McMoneypenny prays her rosary, then he has, surely, no right to continue in post as Chairman of Una Voce Scotland. The Una Voce website has not been updated since December, 2013 and gives no information about the availability of the TLM anywhere in Scotland, begging the question: just what IS the purpose of Una Voce post Summorum Pontificum? And, given his apparent aversion to all things truly Catholic, shouldn't Fred Stone resign as Chairman - like, yesterday?

Footnote:

1) Do not communicate with me again.
2) Any and all anonymous items are disposed of, unread.

Clearly, Sam's communication was not anonymous. The fact that Fred should accuse him of sending anonymous material when his address was all over it, is inexplicable. That he didn’t even read Sam’s letter is also inexplicable … unless there’s something niggling at his conscience which caused him to erupt in fury and act somewhat irrationally. But what? Drum roll…

Sam hoped to help counter by disseminating factual literature giving the authentic teaching of the Church. One crucially important and easy to read page contained “Statements from Popes, Saints & Church Councils” to provide irrefutable evidence that “Communion on the Tongue Is an Apostolic Tradition” ²

Incredibly, Mr Stone returned Sam's envelope without reading the contents, or even opening the envelope beyond tearing the corner where the stamp had been. He obviously knew that the material came from Sam, because the "sender's" name and address was written in full on the back of the envelope; yet Fred put the following two notes on Sam's envelope before placing it in another envelope and returning it to him:

Footnote:

1) See report on p.17 Another Glasgow Church Vandalised In The Spirit of Vatican II…
2) Taken from the Fatima Crusader, Autumn 2012.
Synod on Family  
Pope Mocks “Traditionalists” (Again…)

Staff Reporter

Since his election, Pope Francis has made known his disdain for those of us now dubbed “traditional” Catholics. Prior to Vatican II, there were no other categories of Catholic available. He shared his concerns with some Religious: “There are some restorationist groups. I know some, it fell upon me to receive them in Buenos Aires. And one feels as if one goes back 60 years! Before the Council... One feels in 1940... An anecdote, just to illustrate this, it is not to laugh at it, I took it with respect, but it concerns me; when I was elected, I received a letter from one of these groups, and they said: "Your Holiness, we offer you this spiritual treasure: 3,525 rosaries.” Why don't they say, we pray for you, we ask..." but this thing of counting...”

Pope Francis took aim again at ‘traditionalists’ during the Synod on the Family, reported in the National Catholic Reporter: “…calling [the Synod on the Family] 'a journey of men,' the pope said ‘there were also moments of desolation, of tension and of temptations, of which you could mention some possibilities.’

Listing those temptations, the pope began with ‘the temptation of the hostile rigorist.’

Such a person, he said, has ‘the desire to close inside the script (the letter) and not be surprised by God, from the God of surprises (the Spirit); inside the law, inside the doctrine applicable to all times and to all men...’

A number of online publications and blogs (including the Catholic Truth blog) discussed the Synod vigorously, with the pope’s apparent aversion to Catholic Tradition being a hot button topic.

That a number of cardinals spoke out to oppose the liberal proposals of Cardinal Kasper prior to the Synod, and the Pope’s apparent aversion to Catholic Tradition that there is a major split within the Church. The document produced to summarise the ideas from this first part of the Synod, and spark debate in the second part in 2015, brought things to a head, with calls for Pope Francis to speak out in defence of traditional Christian teaching on sexual morality. His support for Cardinal Kasper prior to the Synod and his silence throughout the widespread speculation fuelling hopes of a change in Church teaching on divorce and “re-marriage”, homosexuality etc. led one African cardinal to call him “an agent of disruption”.

The Church is in turmoil following this Synod, with Pope Francis’ reputation enhanced in “liberal” circles but in tatters as far as “traditionalists” are concerned.

False hopes were raised during the week that Catholic teaching might be changed on matters relating to sexual morality and the danger remains that there will be a weakening of the discipline on reception of Holy Communion, always withheld from public sinners such as co-habitees, including divorced and “remarried” Catholics, plus couples living in same-sex relationships.

Astonishingly, at the time of going to press, the Pope had still not responded to a request from Cardinal Burke to speak out in defence of traditional marriage. The Cardinal said in an interview with BuzzFeed News online that the Pope had “done a lot of harm” by not making his position clear. An example of this harm is evident in the transcript opposite (see column 3), where well known dissident, Clifford Longley, announced on UK radio that those who adhere to the Church’s authentic teaching on sexual morality are now in the minority.  

Footnotes:

1 Pope on Traditional groups: “Pelagian current. It’s like turning back 60 years! They count rosaries... Please, don’t laugh.” Rorate Caeli website, 6/10/13
3 The Backlash Against the Manipulated Synod of Francis - Snippets from a Rome in Disbelief after 18 Months of Fear Under Pressure, Rorate Caeli website 18/10/14

Although it fits neatly into a headline, the word “split” is not quite the right one to describe the state of play inside the Roman (sic) Catholic Church. The extraordinary synod of bishops which has just ended in Rome, failed to reach a consensus on two of the most contentious questions it faced, over divorced and remarried Catholics, and over homosexuality. Although a majority of the bishops supported a liberal position, they did not have the two-thirds majority that had been set as the definition of a consensus.

So what happened over these two weeks was a convulsion rather than a revolution, a profound disagreement rather than a division - for that would imply two sides each going their separate way. Whereas, in truth, the battle between them has just been joined. There is to be another synod - facing the same questions in a year’s time, and in between, the whole Catholic Church, that is to say all its 1.2 billion members, are being invited to join the debate.

But in my view the very fact of discussing these things, changes them. Everyone now knows that a substantial proportion of the Church’s international leadership thinks that gay and lesbian Catholics should be welcomed into the life of the church, and that their relationships - and we’re not just talking about platonic friendships here - should be valued. Two years ago such progress would surely have been unthinkable. Similarly we know that a majority of church leaders think divorced Catholics who marry again should not automatically be barred from participating in the sacraments.

The minority position is also trying to tell us something important. It fears that the misuse of sexuality - when things go wrong instead of right - lies at the heart of much suffering and damage for the children and adults concerned. Sexuality may be God’s gift, they are saying, but it can get us into a whole lot of trouble.

The idea that Catholic leaders should just rubber-stamp an anarchic or utilitarian approach to sex, marriage and family life, would have been not only unrealistic but a betrayal. Their duty is to say something wiser and more constructive, to help us live better lives. The challenge to the conservative minority now is to turn their negative position into something positive. We know what they are against, but what are they for? They badly need to refresh their arguments, or they will surely lose in the end.
Thank you for sending Issue No. 84 of Catholic Truth. I really appreciate each copy I receive. Enclosed [donation] to help your funds. Please keep on printing CT, it is the only Catholic literature I trust. May God guide and protect your work.

Mary Birkett (Mrs) Blundellsands, Crosby, England

To all the wonderful CT Staff… Just [a note] to enclose my (embarrassingly) small donation towards your fantastic magazine. I so wish we had more to offset all your fantastic work for the faith and to help everyone who receives Catholic Truth. I wish we had a [Catholic Truth team] over here! Patricia Shepherd, Eire

Ed: thank you most sincerely for your most generous donation - there is no such thing as a “small” donation let alone an “embarrassingly” small donation. We live in very difficult economic times and we are always humbled by the generosity of our wonderful supporters. So, God bless you for your charity, not least your charitable and encouraging words which we greatly appreciate.

Please note, other readers have sent donations from Ireland and the USA but without anything in their letters for publication, so think about including a few words of commentary - preferably on one of the issues raised in the newsletter - when you send a donation. Apart from anything else, when you see your name in print, at least you can be sure that your donation reached us!

My conscience finally woke up so many times I’m embarrassed, but hope you will accept my apologies for not sending help towards the costs of your mailing me such an informationally (is that a word?) publication.

The September issue was full of data I hadn’t known (even spending bug-eyed hours in front of my computer-news).

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I always look forward to getting your publication and hope you continue because it must have weighty influence as the information [in Catholic Truth] is probably not published anywhere else in Scotland, England or Ireland. M. Anne McCay, Texas, USA

Ed: again, thank you, too, for your generous help with mailing costs - and again, no need to be “embarrassed”. There is no such thing as a “small” donation - every penny, euro and dollar, helps! God bless you.

Regarding the Synod of Bishops on the Family, can you imagine a synod of Bishops considering whether to admit to Communion, burglars perjurers and murderers? As for the concept of ‘compassion’ which the Church ‘should be showing’ - does that extend to the wives abandoned by their spouses? There is indeed a place for the concept of ‘charity’ here, and it comes in the marriage ceremony when the husband promises before God to love his wife till death do part forsaking all others. That commitment is the only place where ‘charity’ is relevant. Iain Colquhoun, Wales

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I always look forward…

Before you get busy writing to Santa, why not contact us with your views about the reports and articles in this edition? We’d love to hear from you…

Write to us to share your thoughts - contact details opposite. Keep your letters short to avoid editing.

Sincere gratitude to everyone who donated to our funds following the September edition. We are, as ever, deeply impressed and touched by your generosity. A special word of thanks goes to those who, most generously, sent euros from Ireland and dollars from the USA. Thank you very much indeed.

To save postage, we no longer write letters of acknowledgement for individual donations although if you include an email address, Editor will thank you personally. Email addresses are included with all PayPal donations online.

And, of course, a special word of gratitude goes also to our Standing Order donors because these regular donations very much help us with our planning. Our postage costs are rising steadily, so be assured that your generosity is greatly appreciated.

E-mail List
Due to steeply rising postage costs, we are asking online readers to read the newsletter on our website where it is published in full. So if you can, please transfer to our e-mail list by contacting editor@catholictruthscotland.com

Thank you.
Miss McMonypenny.

Please note: the next edition of this (normally bi-monthly) newsletter will be published in February, 2015, not January.

Letters & Donations

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The UK & Irish Bishops plus the Pope and Prefects of every Vatican Congregation receive this publication. If it contradicts Catholic teaching, we invite the Hierarchy to correct us in accordance with their duty under Canon Law # 823
News From Cyberspace

There are things going on in the Church and in the world that you won’t read (uncensored, if at all) in the press. Thanks to the internet, we can bring you this ARTICLE...

Normally a synod of Catholic bishops does not provide fireworks rivaling the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where Mayor Richard Daley’s boys in blue ran up the score on the radicals in Grant Park.

But, on Oct. 13, there emanated from the Synod on the Family in Rome a 12-page report from a committee picked by Pope Francis himself — and the secondary explosions have not ceased.

The report recognized the “positive aspects of civil unions and cohabitation” and said “homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community.” As for Catholics who divorce and remarry without an annulment, we must avoid “any language or behavior that might make them feel discriminated against.”

Hailed by gay rights groups, the document stunned traditionalists.


He was echoed by Cardinal Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature. “The document lacks a solid foundation in the Sacred Scriptures and the Magisterium,” said Cardinal Burke. “It gives the impression of inventing … what one Synod Father called ‘revolutionary’ teaching on marriage and the family.”

Cardinal Burke called on the pope for a restatement of Catholic teaching on marriage and morality, saying, “It is long overdue.” The pope has relieved Cardinal Burke of his post.

Voice of the Family, a coalition of international pro-life groups, calls the document a “betrayal.”

Irish representative Patrick Buckley said it “represents an attack on marriage and the family” by “in effect giving tacit approval of adulterous relationships.” The report, he adds, “fails to recognize that homosexual inclination is objectively disordered.”

Cardinal Walter Kasper has been the prime mover of the liberalization of Catholic teaching on sexual morality. When an African bishop objected to the report, Kasper retorted, “You can’t speak about this with Africans. … It’s not possible. … It’s a taboo.”

Hearing this insult, Burke went upside the head of his brother cardinal:

“It is profoundly sad and scandalous that such remarks were made by a cardinal of the church. They are a further indication of the determination … to advance Cardinal Kasper’s false positions, even by means of racist remarks about a significant and highly respected part of the Synod membership.”

In the report voted on by the full synod and released this weekend, the language most offensive to orthodox Catholics was gone.

But the synod meets again next year, and the stakes could scarcely be higher for the church and pope.

In his remarks at the synod’s close, Pope Francis mocked “so-called traditionalists” for their “hostile rigidity.”

That is one way of putting it. Another is that traditionalists believe moral truth does not change, nor can Catholic doctrines be altered. Even a pope cannot do that...

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The Catholic Church is not the Democratic Party of Obama, Hillary and Joe, where principled positions on abortion, homosexuality and same-sex marriage “evolve.” And when did flexibility in matters of moral principle become a virtue for Catholics?

Indeed, it was in defense of the indissolubility of marriage that Pope Clement VII excommunicated Henry VIII who held the title “Defender of the Faith” for refusing the heresies of Luther.

When Henry wished to divorce Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn, Pope Clement said this was not possible. His stand for marriage caused the Catholic Church to lose England.

One wonders what this pope thinks of Pope Clement’s “rigidity.”

While Francis I has neither denied nor sought to change any doctrine, Cardinal Burke is correct. The pope has “done a lot of harm.” He has created confusion among the faithful and is soon going to have to speak with clarity on the unchanging truths of Catholicism.

In his beatification of Paul VI on Sunday, Pope Francis celebrated change. “God is not afraid of new things,” he said, “we are making every effort to adapt ways and methods … to the changing conditions of society.”

But among the social changes since Vatican II and Paul VI have been the West’s embrace of no-fault divorce, limitless promiscuity, abortion on demand and same-sex marriage.

Should the church “adapt” to these changes in society?

Should the church accommodate itself to a culture as decadent as ours? Or should the Church stand against it and speak moral truth to cultural and political power, as the early martyrs did to Rome?

Pope Francis is hugely popular. But his worldly popularity has not come without cost to the Church he leads and the truths he is sworn to uphold.

“Who am I to judge?” says the pope. But wasn’t that always part of the job description? And if not thee, Your Holiness, who?

News From Cyberspace

When Irish Eyes Are NOT Smiling

The Catholic Church in Ireland was moving from a rigorous tradition to one that is more lax, the Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin said in Rome today.

He was also critical of the slow pace of annulment procedures in the Irish Church.

Archbishop Martin represents the Irish Episcopal Conference at the extraordinary synod of bishops currently underway in Rome.

Speaking in the Holy See press office at a media briefing on synod discussions, he remarked how Pope Francis in his interview with Italian Jesuit magazine La Civita Cattolica had spoken about “rigorism and laxism and we have both in the church”.

The Archbishop said: “We come in my country from a very rigorist tradition. Maybe we’re moving into a laxist tradition. But most people live their lives in the grey area between those two and we have to exercise our pastoral responsibilities in the grey area not falling into either extreme. That again is something I think we have to learn.”

Religion & Beliefs, Irish Times, 11/10/14
The Priesthood
The Dignities and Duties of the Priest
by St. Alphonsus Liguori C.SS.R. Doctor of the Church

Idea of the Priestly Dignity

In his epistle to the Christians of Smyrna, St. Ignatius, Martyr, says that the priesthood is the most sublime of all created dignities: “The apex of dignities is the priesthood,” St. Ephrem calls it an infinite dignity: “The priesthood is an astounding miracle, great, immense… and infinite.” St. John Chrysostom says, that though its functions are performed on earth, the priesthood should be numbered among the things of Heaven.” According to Cassian, the priest of God is exalted above all earthly sovereignties, and above all celestial heights-----he is inferior only to God. Innocent III says that the priest is placed between God and man; inferior to God, but superior to man. St. Denis calls the priest a Divine man. Hence he has called the priesthood a Divine dignity. In fine, St. Ephrem says that the gift of the sacerdotal dignity surpasses all understanding. For us it is enough to know, that Jesus Christ has said that we should treat his priests as we would his own person: “He that heareth you, heareth Me; he that despiseth you, despiseth Me.” Hence St. John Chrysostom says, that “he who honours a priest, honours Christ, and he who insults a priest, insults Christ.” Through respect for the sacerdotal dignity, St. Mary of Oignies used to kiss the ground on which a priest had walked.

Importance of the Priestly Office

The dignity of the priest is estimated from the exalted nature of his offices. Priests are chosen by God to manage on earth all his concerns and interests. “Divine,” says St. Cyril of Alexandria, “are the offices confided to priests.” St. Ambrose has called the priestly office a Divine profession. A priest is a minister destined by God to be a public ambassador of the whole Church, to honour Him, and to obtain His graces for all the faithful. The entire Church cannot give to God as much honour, nor obtain so many graces, as a single priest by celebrating a single Mass; for the greatest honour that the whole Church without priests could give to God would consist in offering to Him the sacrifice of their lives. By a single Mass, he gives greater honour to God than all the Angels and Saints, along with the Blessed Virgin Mary, have given or shall give to Him; for their worship cannot be of infinite value, like that which the priest celebrating on the altar offers to God. Moreover, in the holy Mass, the priest offers to God an adequate thanksgiving for all the graces bestowed even on the Blessed in Paradise; but such a thanksgiving all the Saints together are incapable of offering to Him. Hence it is, that on this account also the priestly dignity is superior even to all celestial dignities.

All the lives of men and Angels are not capable of giving to God an infinite honour like that which a priest offers to Him by a single Mass.

Besides, the priest, says St. John Chrysostom, is an ambassador of the whole world, to intercede with God and to obtain graces for all creatures… The priest, according to St. Ephrem, “treats familiarly with God.” To priests every door is open. Jesus has died to institute the priesthood. It was not necessary for the Redeemer to die in order to save the world: a drop of His Blood, a single tear, or prayer, was sufficient to procure salvation for all; for such a prayer, being of infinite value, should be sufficient to save not one but a thousand worlds. But to institute the priesthood, the death of Jesus Christ has been necessary. Had he not died, where should we find the victim that the priests of the New Law now offer? a victim altogether holy and immaculate, capable of giving to God an honour worthy of God. As has been already said, all the lives of men and Angels are not capable of giving to God an infinite honour like that which a priest offers to Him by a single Mass.

Grandeur of the Priestly Power

The dignity of the priest is also estimated from the power that he has over the real and the mystic body of Jesus Christ. With regard to the power of priests over the real body of Jesus Christ, it is of faith that when they pronounce the words of consecration the Incarnate Word has obliged Himself to obey and to come into their hands under the Sacramental Species. We are struck with wonder when we hear that God obeyed the voice of Josue-----The Lord obeying the voice of man-----and made the sun stand still. But our wonder should be far greater when we find that in obedience to the words of his priests-----HOC EST CORPUS MEUM-----God Himself descends on the altar, that He comes wherever they call Him, and as often as they call Him, and places Himself in their hands, even though they should be His enemies. And after having come, He remains, entirely at their disposal; they move Him as they please, from one place to another; they may, if they wish, shut Him up in the tabernacle, or expose Him on the altar, or carry Him outside the church; they may, if they choose, eat His flesh and give Him for the food of others. “Oh, how very great is their power,” says St. Laurence Justinian, speaking of priests. “A word falls from their lips and the body of Christ is there substantially formed from the matter of bread, and the Incarnate Word descended from Heaven, is found really present on the table of the altar! Never did Divine goodness give such power to the Angels. The Angels abide by the order of God, but the priests take Him in their hands, distribute Him to the faithful, and partake of Him as food for themselves.”

With regard to the mystic body of Christ, that is, all the faithful, the priest has the power of the keys, or the power of delivering sinners from Hell, of making them worthy of Paradise, and of changing them from the slaves of Satan into the children of God. And God Himself is obliged to abide by the judgment of His priests, and either not to pardon or to pardon, according as they refuse or give absolution, provided the penitent is capable of it. “Such is,” says St. Maximus of Turin, “this judiciary power ascribed to Peter that its decision carries with it the decision of God.” The sentence of the priest precedes, and God subscribes to it, writes St. Peter Damian. Hence, St. John Chrysostom thus concludes: The sovereign Master of the universe only follows the servant by confirming in Heaven all that the latter decides upon earth.” Priests are the dispensers of the Divine graces and the companions of God.” Consider the priests,” says St. Ignatius, Martyr, “as the dispensers of Divine graces and the associates of God.” They are,” says St. Prosper, “the glory and the immovable columns of the Church; they are the doors of the eternal city: through them all reach Christ; they are the vigilant guardians who to whom the Lord has confided the keys of

Continued on p.11
the kingdom of Heaven; they are the stewards of the king's house, to assign to each according to His good pleasure His place in the hierarchy.

We were the Redeemer to descend into a church, and sit in a confessional to administer the Sacrament of Penance, and a priest to sit in another confessional, Jesus would say over each penitent, "Ego te absolvo," the priest would likewise say over each of his penitents, "Ego te absolvo," and all the penitents of each would be equally absolved.

How great the honour that a king would confer on a subject whom he should empower to rescue from prison as many as he pleased! But far greater is the power that the eternal Father has given to Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ has given to his priests, to rescue from Hell not only the bodies but also the souls of the faithful: "The Son," says St. John Chrysostom, "has put into the power of his priests all judgment; for having been as it were transported into Heaven, they have received this Divine prerogative. If a king gave to a mortal the power to release from prison all prisoners, all would pronounce such a one happy; but priests have received from God a far greater power, since the soul is more noble than the body."

The Dignity of the Priest Surpasses all Other Created Dignities

Thus the sacerdotal dignity is the most noble of all the dignities in this world. "Nothing," says St. Ambrose, "is more excellent in this world." It transcends, says St. Bernard, "all the dignities of kings, of emperors, and of Angels." According to St. Ambrose, the dignity of the priest as far exceeds that of kings, as the value of gold surpasses that of lead. The reason is, because the power of kings extends only to temporal goods and to the bodies of men, but the power of the priest extends to spiritual goods and to the human soul. Hence, says St. Clement, "as much as the soul is more noble than the body, so much is the priesthood more excellent than royalty."

"Princes," says St. John Chrysostom, "have the power of binding, but they bind only the bodies, while the priest binds the souls." The kings of the earth glory in honouring their subjects: "It is a mark of a good prince," says Pope St. Marcellinus, "to honour the priests of God."

"They willingly," says Peter de Blois, "bend their knee before the priest of God; they kiss his hands, and with bowed down head receive his benediction."

"The sacerdotal dignity," says St. Chrysostom, "effaces the royal dignity; hence the king inclines his head under the hand of the priest to receive his blessing."

The holy king St. Boleslaus had so great a veneration for priests, that he would not dare to sit in their presence. The sacerdotal dignity also surpasses the dignity of the Angels, who likewise show their veneration for the priesthood, says St. Gregory Nazianzen. All the Angels in Heaven cannot absolve from a single sin. The Angels guardian procure for the souls committed to their care grace to have recourse to a priest that he may absolve them: "Although," says St. Peter Damian, "Angels may be present, they yet wait for the priest to exercise his power, but no one of them has the power of the keys----of binding and of loosening."

When St. Michael comes to a dying Christian who invokes his aid, the holy Archangel can chase away the devils, but he cannot free his client from their chains till a priest comes to absolve him. After having given the order of priesthood to a holy ecclesiast, St. Francis de Sales perceived, that in going out he stopped at the door as if to give precedence to another. Being asked by the Saint why he stopped, he answered that God favoured him with the visible presence of his Angel guardian, who before he had received priesthood always remained at his right and preceded him, but a superior of the Congregation, having perceived, that in going out he stopped at the door, and refused to go before him. It was in a holy contest with the Angel that he stopped at the door. St. Francis of Assisi used to say, "If I saw an Angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and then to the Angel."

Besides, the power of the priest surpasses that of the Blessed Virgin Mary; for, although this Divine Mother can pray for us, and by her prayers obtain whatever she wishes, yet she cannot absolve from even the smallest sin. "The Blessed Virgin was eminently more perfect than the Apostles," says Innocent III. "It was, however, not to her, but only to the Apostles, that the Lord entrusted the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." St. Bernardine of Sienna has written: "Holy Virgin, excuse me, for I speak not against thee: the Lord has raised the priesthood above thee."

The Saint assigns the reason of this, by stating the superiority of the priesthood over Mary; she conceived Jesus Christ only once; but by consecrating the Eucharist, the priest, as it were, conceives Christ the Redeemer as often as he wishes, so that if the person of the Redeemer had not as yet been in the world, the priest, by pronouncing the words of consecration, would produce this great person of a Man-God. "O wonderful dignity of the priest," cries out St. Augustine; "in their hands, as in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, the Son of God becomes incarnate."

Hence priests are called the parents of Jesus Christ: such is the title that St. Bernard gives them, for they are the active cause by which He is made to exist really in the consecrated Host. Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called the creator of His Creator, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates, as it were, Jesus in the Sacrament, by giving Him a Sacramental existence, and produces Him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. As in creating the world it was sufficient for God to have said, Let it be made, and it was created—He spoke, and they were made-----so it is sufficient for the priest to say, "Hoc est corpus meum," and behold the bread is no longer bread, but the body of Jesus Christ. "The power of the priest," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "is the power of the Divine person; for the transubstantiation of the bread requires as much power as the creation of the world."

And St. Augustine has written, "O venerable sanctity of the hands! O happy function of the priest! He that created [if I may say so] gave me the power to create Him; and He that created me without me is Himself created by me!" "As the Word of God created Heaven and the earth, so," says St. Jerome, "the words of the priest create Jesus Christ."

"At a sign from God there came forth from nothing both the sublme vault of the Heavens and the vast extent of the earth; but not less is the power that manifests itself in the mysterious words of the priest." The dignity of the priest is so great, that he even blesses Jesus Christ on the altar as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. In the sacrifice of the Mass, writes Father Mansi, Jesus Christ is the principal offerer and victim; as minister, He blesses the priest, but as victim, the priest blesses Him.

Conclusion.

How great, then, says St. Ambrose, the disorder to see in the same person the highest dignity and a life of scandal, a Divine profession and wicked conduct! What, says Salvin, is a sublme dignity conferred on an unworthy person but a gem enchased in mire? Neither doth any man, says St. Paul, take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. For Christ did not glorify Himself that He might be made a high priest; but He that said unto Him: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Let no one, he says, dare to ascend to the priesthood, without first receiving, as Aaron did, the Divine call; for even Jesus Christ would not of Himself assume the honour of the priesthood, but waited till His Father called Him to it.

From this we may infer the greatness of the sacerdotal dignity. But the greater its sublimity, the more it should be dreaded. "For," says St. Jerome, "great is the dignity of priests; but also, when they sin, great is their ruin. Let us rejoice at having been raised so high, but let us be afraid of falling."
The Logic of Priestly Celibacy
Fr Anthony Zimmermann, S.T.D.

The following article was originally published in Homiletic and Pastoral Review, April 1995

Pope John Paul II, by stating that celibacy belongs logically to the priesthood (General Audience 17 July 1993), challenges us to discern why this should be so. He asserted furthermore—perhaps for the first time in papal parlance—that the twelve apostles likely began the tradition of priestly celibacy: “According to the Gospel, it appears that the Twelve, destined to be the first to share in his priesthood, renounced family life in order to follow him.”

In this remarkable address the Pope offered three basic considerations which render celibacy logical for priests:

1) Celibacy facilitates devotion to Christ by leaving the heart undivided (cf.1 Cor. 7:32-33).
2) Increases availability of the priest for complete service of the Gospel.
3) Enhances the spiritual fruitfulness of the priest’s ministry.

That the Gospel gives evidence of apostolic celibacy is our first consideration. That this has special meaning for the priest is our second point; for the third point we will draw upon an insight of Blessed John Scotus.

The itinerant lifestyle of the apostles excluded marriage

The itinerant lifestyle of the apostles during Christ's three years of public life practically crowded out thoughts about marriage and family life. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said very simply to Peter and Andrew as they were casting their nets. “I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19). They did exactly that: leaving their nets they followed him. That would be quite unusual if they intended to support a family.

Going on from there, Christ saw James and John, also fishermen. Jesus called them too, and “immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him” (Matt. 4:22). We see a pattern developing, of disciples who quit work which is necessary to support a family.

Matthew was sitting in his tax collector’s booth when Christ motioned to him. “Follow me.” Matthew rose and followed him (Matt. 9:9). From the gospel story, we can’t even be sure that Matthew locked up the cash and closed the door behind him. He could hardly behave like that if he intended to lead a normal family life.

Christ eventually filled out the band to twelve whom he then called apostles (Luke 6:12-16). This initial band, according to Matthew, then travelled throughout Galilee preaching the good news of the kingdom. Their home, henceforth, was the road. Their income was alms.

The apostles were homeless

Jesus made no secret about the kind of life he expected of the Twelve. He sent them out to proclaim that “the kingdom of heaven is near” (Matt. 10:7). He instructed them to take no money along to pay for their lodging and food. They were to sleep in any suitable home where the host would welcome them. If the apostles had wives, these spouses might rightly be concerned about where their husbands were sleeping—namely in any house that would accept them. We find no trace of wifely concern about this in the Gospel.

When Christ beckoned, they dropped everything and made him their all.

They had discovered the treasure hidden in the field, the pearl of great price; they stopped looking for anything else.

Normally, married men should inform their wives about their whereabouts, should be breadwinners for the home, should educate their children; and wives should cook for them, do their laundry, keep the house in order. We see that the lifestyle Jesus led with the apostles practically prevented them from leading a normal family life. Family life was not compatible with their itinerant apostolic lifestyle as described in the Gospel.

When the apostles were hungry, they didn’t go back home to get a good meal with wife and children. They could still the pangs by plucking ears of wheat from the fields through which they were walking, and chew on the uncooked grains. Before the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, no wife of an apostle came forward to supply their needs. It was Andrew who found an alert boy who had brought along five small barley loaves and two fishes. The Gospel does not inform us how much Andrew may have paid him. No wives came forward either, to help the apostles distribute the loaves and fishes to the people, as these apparently multiplied in their hands.

It was the ambitious mother of James and John who knelt down before Jesus to ask that her sons might sit, one at his right, the other at his left, in his kingdom (Matt. 20:21). When the other ten heard about it, they were indignant, and Christ had to soothe their anger and put down their political ambitions. We can imagine what a ruckus this might have caused if wives of the apostles were involved, and if Christ would have to calm them down. We see no signs of wifely concern about apostles in this episode nor in any passage of the four Gospel accounts.

At the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee Jesus and his disciples had been invited, but nothing is said about wives of these disciples. Cana is not far from Capernaum—about 20 miles—where Christ healed the mother-in-law of Peter. Had Peter and other apostles been leading a normal family life, we might expect John to mention their presence at the feast, the one at which the wine ran out.

In John Chapter 4 we read that Jesus sat down at Jacob's well in the town of Sichar. He was tired from the journey, a walk of over 20 miles from the depression of the Jordan River, up into the hill country. The apostles left him at the well while they went to town to shop for the noon meal. The episode lifts the curtain on the lifestyle of this itinerant group: the apostles did the shopping for food, and prepared the meals. No wives of the apostles were in the picture. The apostles were not always the best of providers. They were caught several times without due provisions: when in the desert before the multiplication of the loaves and fishes; and when they got into the boat without taking along any bread. Jesus endured this make-shift nomadic life with the apostles, and challenged newcomers to join in if they wished. Some wanted to follow him but not on his terms: Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied: “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead” (Matt. 8:19-22).

A rich young man was told: “Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” (Luke 18:22). That is not the kind of advice one gives to a man preparing for marriage, or to a husband and father who intends to care for a family.

At that point, Peter spoke up, reminding Christ that they had actually made the renunciations which the rich young man had failed to make. Peter said to Jesus: “We have left all we had to follow you.”

Continued on p.13
The Logic of Priestly Celibacy - Continued from p.12

Christ then gave explicit approval to what Peter and the apostles had apparently done: "I tell you the truth: no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life." (Luke 18:29-30).

If the meals they prepared left something to be desired, Christ made the concession of allowing Martha and Mary to prepare something better when they were in the neighbourhood; and if they attended one wedding feast together in Cana, it is not impossible that there were other wedding feasts. Maybe Christ's mother, Mary, got things ready for them when they visited Nazareth.

And perhaps the holy women who were following Jesus knew how to supplement the shopping of the men, so that their meals had more of a variety. At any rate, we read the Gospels correctly, I believe, when we understand that the apostles were living apart from their families and made Christ alone their part and their inheritance: "Dominus pars mea et hereditas mea."

The Gospel also tells us that the disciples made the preparations for the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. Christ ordained them to be priests on this solemn occasion. We do not read about wives participating in the Last Supper.

Perhaps the abandonment of family life helps to explain the attitude of the apostles at the time of Christ's passion and death. They had given their all for life with Jesus. Now it turned out that he was a tragic failure. And they were completely at a loss. They had renounced their property and their homes, also parents, wife and children if they had such.

Peter, following Christ at a distance, was frightened with fear when a maid servant pointed an accusing finger at him: "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." (Matt. 26:69).

Others accused him as well. Peter then fell back into what must have been an old habit: cursing and swearing. By this kind of swagger he sought to bluff his way out of danger and ridicule. For him the end of the swagger he sought to bluff his way out of death. He didn't feel the need to explain anything beyond that. To find the Messiah, and to live with him, that completely filled out their lives. As the Pope said, "According to the Gospels, it appears that the Twelve... renounced family life in order to follow him."

The Priest: Called to be a friend of the incarnate Christ

"I call you friends," said Jesus to the Twelve on the occasion of their priestly ordination at the Last Supper. He disclosed to them that he had given them a personal call to be his friends; friends to whom he can disclose everything; friends who will live as he did, who will devote themselves to the Gospel as he had done, who will be consecrated as he was consecrated and set apart from the world.

"You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you" (John 15:14-16).

To be specially selected friends, then, was one reason why Christ personally chose the Twelve and ordained them to the priesthood. The beloved disciple did not hesitate to use the leverage of this special friendship. For example, at the Last Supper, when Jesus was troubled about the betrayer, the beloved disciple approached Jesus and asked about this very sensitive matter: "He leaned back against Jesus' chest and said to him, 'Master, who is it?'" And, being a true Friend, Jesus gave the cryptic signal indicating who the betrayer was.

In the High Priestly Prayer, Jesus asked the Father to first of all bless this circle of friends, who were now priests: "Consecrate them in truth.... I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth" (John 17:17, 19). By consecrating them with himself, he separated them from secular purposes for an exclusively sacred function—for the function of the ministerial priesthood, which is the heart of the mission of Christ's coming into this world.

"Doctor Subtilis"

Duns Scotus deems that the Son of God became Incarnate to become the priest of the cosmos, to give glory to God from the platform which God would fashion outside of himself. The Son would become man to reflect glory back to the Godhead from the outside, from out of a created world: "God first loves Himself; secondly, He loves Himself for others, and this is an ordered love; thirdly He wishes to be loved by the One who can love Him in the highest way—speaking of the love of someone who is extrinsic to Him; and fourthly, He foresees the union of that nature which

Continued on p.14
The Logic of Priestly Celibacy - Continued from p.13

must love Him with the greatest love even if no one had fallen” (Opus Par. III, d.7 q.4; Eng. trans. Fr. Juniper B. Carol, OFM, The Universal Primacy of Christ; Christendom Publications, 1984).

This insight indicates that Christ became incarnate first of all in order to love God from within the created cosmos. More than that, he is to recapitulate the cosmos into his own mind which spans the cosmic dimensions, and dedicate it all to God with love during his immobilation. The Son of God offers back to God the cosmos, through his obedience as the Word Made Flesh. Through this dedication of the cosmos by Christ in whom the universe is recapitulated, the world again belongs to God and sings his praises. The world has lost its insular secularism, and is now integrated into the praises of God, having been purchased by Christ, and delivered to the Father.

The cosmos has been created, in this concept, not for its own sake but to give glory to God. And Christ is the priest who takes this cosmos into himself as his own, and makes the entire universe sing its obedience to God to give him glory.

The priest, who is called to Christ’s side to be his chosen friend, participates in this priestly function of dedicating the universe to God. Like Christ, the priest is consecrated—set aside from secular purposes—to live the cosmic consecration to God. The priest should not marry then, and have children. That is a proper pursuit of the ongoing cosmos, that cosmos which the priest must consecrate to God in himself. All that is precious in this secular world is recapitulated in the priest who offers it to God, who is doing so in persona Christi.

The priest has no need to contribute to the continuation of the cosmos itself, by taking a wife and begetting children. Other people are commissioned by God to “Be fruitful and multiply” to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28). Christ chooses the priest to be his friend, to recapitulate this cosmos in his life and thoughts, to offer it to God in obedience, for the praise of his glory.

The priest continues to perform in the person the cosmic priesthood of Christ. He gazes at the stars at night to praise the Lord Creator. He calls his fellow men to “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” He rejoices in the Spirit because God has revealed to little ones what he has hidden from the great. He salts the earth with truth, and with rebukes when necessary. He lays down his life for love of his friends. And he immolates himself for the Church, as Christ who prayed on the cross when the pains were reaching their tingling climax: “I will proclaim your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you ... I will exalt the name of the Assembly; I will exalt the name of the Lord.” (Ps. 22).

To gather up the cosmos and dedicate it to God, that, in the mind of Scotus, was Christ’s primary mission. We can add that he brought this mission to a climax and to completion when he consecrated the Bread and Wine at the Last Supper, then fulfilled the pre-signified offering on Calvary, at his Resurrection, and by his Ascension. The evil which flooded over him and overwhelmed him on Calvary—the pain, thirst, loneliness, abandonment, sense of betrayal—were but grist to be milled by his determination into obedience to the Lord. Through it all he held firm, and made the universe obedient to God forever and ever. Love prevailed over hate, obedience over rebellion. Now the universe was his, and he offered his prize to the Father as he rose again, and ascended to his side.

The Church considers that celibacy belongs to the logic of priestly consecration and to the total belonging to Christ resulting from it.

Pope John Paul II

The priest, friend and companion of Christ, also rejoices with the good things of life as Christ did, to make all belong to God. And he meets all the temptations that the world and his flesh can throw at him; with Christ the priest turns it all into God’s into God’s praise. Is celibacy a sacrifice, a daily cross, a challenge? All the more, then, does he bring his performance into action, to recapitulate the best things of the world into himself, to offer all to God in praise of his glory. For: “God ... wishes to be loved by One who can love Him in the highest way—speaking of the love of someone extrinsic to Him; and speaking of the ministerial priest who loves God out of this cosmos with the love in which he personifies Christ.” Rightfully did the Pope state that celibacy belongs to the priesthood by a law of logic: “These observations help us to understand the reasons for the Church’s legislation on priestly celibacy. In fact, the Church has considered and still considers that it belongs to the logic of priestly consecration and to the total belonging to Christ resulting from it” (General Audience, 17 July 1993).

And gentle Pope John XXIII asked that priests continue to struggle to keep the obligations of celibacy, especially when the Church needs heroic people to be the salt of the earth: “It deeply hurts us that ... anyone can dream that the Church will deliberately or even suitably renounce what from time immemorial has been, and still remains, one of the purest and noblest glories of her priesthood. The law of ecclesiastical celibacy and the efforts necessary to preserve it always recall to mind the struggles of heroic times when the Church of Christ had to fight for and succeeded in obtaining her threefold glory, always an emblem of victory, that is, the Church of Christ, free, chaste, and catholic” (John XXIII, to Roman Synod, January 26, 1960).

Sixteenth hundred years ago, in the year 390, a group of Bishops was gathered at Carthage to discuss celibacy. Presumably, they had much the same problems with it as the clergy will always have. At the end of the session these Bishops renewed their resolution with memorable words: “What the apostles taught and what antiquity itself observed, let us also continue.” Today, 400,000 priests around the globe stand proud to repeat these words, mindful that Christ has selected them to be his close friends.

Footnote
1 Surnamed DOCTOR SUBTILIS, died 8 November, 1308; [John Scotus] was the founder and leader of the famous Scotist School, which had its chief representatives among the Franciscans. Of his antecedents and life very little is definitely known, as the contemporary sources are silent about him. It is certain that he died rather young, according to earlier traditions at the age of thirty-four years The birth-place of Scotus has been the subject of much discussion and so far no conclusive argument in favour of any locality has been advanced. The surname Scotus by no means decides the question, for it was given to Scotçhmen(sic) Irishmen, and even to natives of northern England. The other name, Duns, to which the Irish attach so much importance, settles nothing; there was a Duns also in Scotland (Berwick). Moreover, it is impossible to determine whether Duns was a family name or the name of a place ... It would not [however] be amiss to regard Scotus as a native of Scotland...

Read entire entry on BI Duns Scotus at the Catholic Encyclopaedia Online

http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05194a.htm

Catholic Truth... Keeping the Faith, Telling the Truth - a bi-monthly newsletter for informed Catholics 14
In October 2014, Pope Francis convoked an extraordinary session of the Synod of Bishops on the theme of “Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelisation.” There are high hopes amongst liberals, fuelled by comments made by Cardinal Walter Kasper, that the Extraordinary Synod will permit divorced and “remarried” Catholics to receive Holy Communion. I aim to look at the Church’s teaching on Marriage and explain why her doctrine will not, and cannot, be changed.

Marriage is one of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. Our Lord elevated Marriage to the dignity of Sacrament. Ephesians chapter 5, verses 31-33 states, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the church. Nevertheless let every one of you learn in all places to live as the Apostles did.” Marriage is, by its very nature, a public act. The couple marry in public, with public witnesses. Marriage serves the public good through the raising and education of children. However, Marriage is also a public witness to the love and fidelity Christ has for His Church.

A ratified and consummated Marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power, including that of the Supreme Pontiff. Where a valid marriage occurs, no second “marriage” is ever possible. The Church’s annulment process does not dissolve a first marriage, but rather investigates and determines whether or not the marriage was consummated. It is extremely important to note that it is for the legitimate Church authorities to determine if a marriage is, or is not, valid. Individual, private judgement cannot be tolerated and cannot be the basis for setting aside a marriage and embarking on another.

The Church teaches that anyone who divorces and remarries is guilty of adultery (sixth commandment). Our Lord gave his definitive interpretation of the sixth Commandment in Luke’s gospel, chapter 16, when, similar to the quote above from the Gospel of Mark, He says, “Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.”

Separation of spouses is allowed as a result of infidelity but this does not allow recourse to divorce (and remarriage). Not only has this teaching been reiterated by modern day popes, but also Clement VIII, Urban VIII, Benedict the XIV and Pius VII.

It is important to note that divorced and remarried Catholics who live together for the sake of the children are permitted to receive Holy Communion, provided that they live a chaste life as brother and sister. All people are called to live a chaste life and chastity is at the heart of Our Lord's teaching on Marriage and conjugal love. Chastity is possible, even in very difficult circumstances outlined above. Those who call for the admittance of divorced and “remarried” Catholic to Holy Communion without the need to remain chaste, are attacking the teaching of Our Lord on Marriage and chastity.

For those who have fallen – perhaps are divorced and have entered into a second “marriage” - forgiveness is always possible. However, forgiveness must be accompanied by the sin purpose of amendment and penance. Church doctrine is absolutely clear – if a Marriage is valid, but a person divorces, enters into a second “marriage” and engages in marital acts, he or she is guilty of adultery.

A person must be in the state of grace to receive Our Lord in the Sacred Communion. Those who receive Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin are guilty of the sin of sacrilege. The Church could not possibly allow a person who has abandoned a valid first Marriage and has entered into a second “marriage” to receive Holy Communion. This would completely undermine the Church’s teaching on Marriage and Holy Communion.

Divorce and remarriage also gives public scandal. Scandal encourages others to do evil. I have already shown that divorce and remarriage is a grave sin, as is receiving Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin, so if the Church to allow divorced and “remarried” Catholics to receive Holy Communion this would inevitably encourage others to abandon valid marriages and enter into adulterous second “marriages”.

The doctrine of the Faith cannot change. Those hoping for a change in the Church’s teaching will ultimately be disappointed. The synod on the family should reiterate the Traditional teaching of the Church. The Holy Ghost will protect Christ’s Church and ensure that His Sacraments are free from corruption. The Church is now the only force defending the traditional family unit and this will not change. May Our Lady, Queen of the Family, protect us in these days of attacks on the family.

Extract From Pope Francis’ Homily at the Beginning of the Synod of Bishops - comment added.

“…The temptation to greed is ever present. We encounter it also in the great prophecy of Ezekiel on the shepherds (cf. ch. 34), which Saint Augustine commented upon in one his celebrated sermons... Greed for money and power. And to satisfy this greed, evil pastors lay intolerable burdens on the shoulders of others, which they themselves do not lift a finger to move (cf. Mt 23:4).”

Ed: the Pope seems to be suggesting that for two thousand years the Church has been placing an “intolerable burden” on people by refusing Communion to the divorced and “remarried” and, therefore, logically, that Our Lord placed an “intolerable burden” on His followers by prohibiting divorce and “remarriage” in the first place. As for Moses and the Ten Commandments? Don’t let’s even go there...

We too, in the Synod of Bishops, are called to work for the Lord’s vineyard. Synod Assemblies are not meant to discuss beautiful and clever ideas, or to see who is more intelligent... They are meant to better nurture and tend the Lord’s vineyard, to help realize his dream, his loving plan for his people. In this case the Lord is asking us to care for the family, which has been from the beginning an integral part of his loving plan for humanity.

Ed: again, there appears to be an implicit suggestion here that the Church has not always cared for the family.

We too can be tempted to “take over” the vineyard, because of that greed which is always present in us human beings. God’s dream always clashes with the hypocrisy of some of his servants. We can “thwart” God’s dream if we fail to let ourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives us that wisdom which surpasses knowledge, and enables us to work generously with authentic freedom and humble creativity.

Ed: once more, there appears to be a suggestion that the Holy Spirit is only now revealing God’s will for the family.

For more on the Synod, see News From Cyberspace, p.9. and Editorial, p.20.
Jobstears on
Bishop Conry
Resignation...
I don’t think that letter of ‘apology’ should have been read publicly, least of all at Mass. As for the age of transparency, I think that has become an excuse to lift whatever restraints there might have been, so that now anything and everything can be talked about anywhere! There is no sense of delicacy or even common decency left.

From the Blog…

Olaf answering Jobstears above…
Absolutely, that statement should never have been read out in public. It’s an utter disgrace as it is without scandalising those who otherwise would not have known about it [including young parishioners].

Leo on
Vatican: Climate Change is Man-Made (Ed: say that with a straight face…) A few weeks before the Murphy Report concerning the handling of clerical abuse cases in the Archdiocese of Dublin was published in 2009, the Irish Bishops Conference issued “The Cry of the Earth – A Pastoral Reflection on Climate Change”: talk about misplaced priorities. Anyway, here’s a little sample of the contents, to be skim read:

“Global climate change is one of the most critical issues of our time.”

“For followers of Jesus Christ, climate change raises urgent spiritual and moral concerns.”

“The implications of climate change for humanity and for our planet are so serious that we should take the warnings of science seriously and make changes to our behaviour.”

“We believe that the Holy Spirit, the “Lord and Giver of life”, is now inspiring people to dedicate themselves to “renew the face of the earth” by serving others in solidarity and by living a more just and sustainable lifestyle rooted in the principles of Catholic Social teaching.”

“As the bread and wine is transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ for our nourishment, we are also drawn into ever-deeper communion with the Blessed Trinity, with humanity, past and present, and with all God’s creation.”

“One of the great legacies of Francis (of Assisi, note no mention of his title of saint) is that he expanded the concept of “neighbour” to include not only the human race, but the whole of creation and all its creatures.”

“Time is running out. We need to act now for ourselves, for future generations and for the future of our planet.”

Under the section entitled “What Can Our Parish Do?”, we are told the following:

“Conduct an “Environmental Audit” of your parish. This might include: Establishing a group with responsibility for auditing current environmental practice; Drawing up an environmental policy; Monitoring targets and promoting good practice in the parish.”

“Join with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CBTI) each year in celebrating the “Creation Time” in initiative.”

“Enrol in the Eco-Congregation Ireland environmental programme for Churches. “Include the theme of care for God’s creation in homilies, prayers of the faithful and examinations of conscience.”

“Use recycled and recyclable materials wherever possible: For example: Refrain from using disposable plastic cups and other utensils at parish functions;
Use recyclable shrine candles. Ask your supplier to provide them;
Use more of your page when typing letters or other documents. Review the default margin settings on your computer software to use more of the page.”

I think everyone will have had enough by now. Is anybody else thinking pantheism, naturalism, immanentism? Remember this was the Bishops Conference of Ireland speaking. So much for Collegiality. These men are the successors of the Apostles in Ireland.

At the time of the above was written, we had apostasy affecting nearly every family in the land, the aftermath of an appalling series of abuse scandals, open and unfettered dissent amongst a large section of the clergy, ever decreasing religious observance, plummeting priestly and religious vocations, dire catechesis and religious knowledge among the vast majority of the population, rejection of the Ten Commandments and Church teaching, withdrawal of the Church from Education and Health provision, constant attack by a virulently anti-Catholic media. Since then we have had the legalizing of the butchering of unborn children, attempted state usurpation of the role of parents, and the constant promotion of sodomy by the minions of lucifer. Saving all those oh so friendly polar bears can, I think, be put on the back burner. I couldn’t help laughing at some of the stuff I was reading- recyclable shrine candles and default margin settings. Some of the rest is just plain disturbing, or worse. No elaboration needed.

Neither could I avoid the thought that this was scrupulosity for New Age tree-huggers.

“Examinations of conscience”- Puh-lease, Your Lordships.

Therese People do not have access to water because of WARS and GREED, NOT because there is too little to go around.

Summa on Catholics MUST Boycott SVP…
- Catholic leaves estate to fund St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)
- SVP uses money to fund Homosexual Meeting Spot
- Bishop complains, to no avail

The issue is one of betrayal to the memory and good will of a SVP benefactor who probably would not in a zillion years leave money to a Catholic organisation, if she knew that the money would be going to support a group whose members practised sins that cry out to heaven for vengeance.

DomStemp on We Need Multiple New Masses - Jesuit…

Is this a joke or what?

Athanasius answering DomStemp above…
There’s no doubting that the Devil is having fun with the Jesuits today. Once the great champions of Catholic orthodoxy, they’re now the apostles of apostasy. I suppose that’s what happens when intellectuals lose their humility. Whenever I hear the word Jesuit now I instantly think heresy. Tragic but true.

To sign up for our blog visit http://catholictruthblog.com/ or, if you require help, email editor@catholictruthscotland.com
News Round-Up

Galloway Priest Conducts Humanist-Style Funeral

A shocked Protestant reader alerted us to a Humanist-style funeral conducted by a priest of the Diocese of Galloway, Fr Eddie McGhee, following the death of the footballer, Ian Redford, who was found dead in woods on 10 January.

A regular columnist in Scotland’s only national Catholic newspaper, the Scottish Catholic Observer, Fr McGhee, quoted in the Daily Record, urged mourners to ask why Ian had died and to help others in their “darkest hours”... [He added] A lot of good things have been said about Ian by a lot of people and he was fundamentally a good person. We have to trust that he is now at peace." Fr McGhee quoted from the Book of Wisdom and mentioned TS Eliot’s poem, ‘Anekkeus’. And he said Ian’s life could be summed up by these words – passion, determination and stubbornness. ¹

Comment: it is surprising, to say the least, that anyone organising a Humanist funeral would invite a Catholic priest to officiate and utterly shocking that any priest would accept such a Godless task.

Footnotes:
¹ Old team-mates and managers say farewell to ex-Rangers and Dundee United star Ian Redford at Old team-mates-managers-pay-respects.3055929

It’s a Dog’s Life

for anyone who opposes Communion in the hand...

Recently, at Mass in the Carmelite Monastery, Dysart in Fife (Archdiocese of St Andrew’s & Edinburgh), a lady sat in the front pew with a not too large dog. During the Mass the dog on a “longish” lead constantly moved up and down the pew not on the seat but floor. Each time it was yanked back from by the lady and either patted or petted. As Holy Communion time approached she allowed the dog to “snuzzle” her hand leapt out of the pew received our Blessed Lord in her hand consumed the Host immediately and went back to the pew where the dog was treated to a great cuddle and much petting. This seemed to happen all in one action. Neither the priest nor the sisters and not one of the people saw this as a problem.

The reader who alerted us to this scandal wrote “the priest has informed me that I am too sensitive and should rather respect and appreciate diversity in faith but I just get so annoyed.”

Comment: And so would any Catholic with an ounce of faith in the Real Presence.

Another Glasgow Church Vandalised In The Spirit of Vatican II

St Mary’s Abercomby Street, also known as St Mary’s, Calton, is the second oldest church in the Archdiocese of Glasgow and acted as the pro-Cathedral of the Archdiocese from 14 August 2009 to April 2011, during the restoration of St Andrew’s Cathedral. The church building, completed in 1842, is protected as a category A listed building.

Perhaps that’s why it was one of the few churches to escape the ravages of Vatican II – until recently. Readers contacted us with concerns when they discovered that the beautiful tryptic depicting, centre, the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven, with angels on either side had been replaced, in August, 2014, with a new tryptic. The original beautiful picture of the Assumption was painted over so that now the tryptic shows another, less attractive Assumption image, with saints on the panels on either side as well as the two twentieth century popes, John Paul II and John XXIII.

The Council of Trent dogmatically defined Catholic belief that Our Lord Jesus Christ is present in every part of the Blessed Sacrament. The Council taught infallibly:

“If anyone denieth that, in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, the whole Christ is contained under each species, and under every part of each species, when separated: let him be anathema.”

In other words, the Church teaches that Our Lord is present in each and every particle of the Host, even in the smallest particle. Thus the reverence that we owe to the Blessed Sacrament requires that we take immense care to ensure that there is no risk of desecration to the Host in any way, not even to the smallest particle.

Saint Thomas Aquinas taught that “out of reverence for this Sacrament, nothing touches it but what is consecrated.” Thus, he said the sacred vessels of the altar are consecrated for this holy purpose, but also, the priest’s hands are consecrated for touching this Sacrament. And St. Thomas said that it is therefore not lawful for anyone else to touch it, except to save it from desecration.

(Summa, III, Q. 82. Art. 3)

What The Papers Say

The Scottish Catholic Observer recently contained an article by Ronnie Convery, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Glasgow, designed to make us all realise that being lapsed from the practice of the Faith is no big deal. This is achieved by a nice wee story about a nice Italian Catholic family, because in Italy they have a more casual approach to the Sunday obligation. I once knew someone who married an Argentinean and she did the same thing. Oh, they don’t go to Mass regularly, it’s a cultural thing...[and to pot with Canon Law and the Commandments.]

Thus, the story recounted by Convery is typical of this mentality. A “dear” priest friend of his regularly bought fish and chips from a shop run by a lapsed Italian Catholic family in the hope of winning the owners back to the Church. Didn’t work and when the priest finally spoke to the man about his duty to practice the Faith, the man replied: “But Father, I have a shop to run and besides...God understands.”

Convery’s response to this nonsense was the typically indulgent and ignorant reply of the faithless, which wouldn’t fool even the author of Theology for Dummies: “My priest friend was left without a reply... could he really say: “God doesn’t understand?”

If this priest friend actually exists outside of the Convery imagination, then he should know that it’s not a question of God “understanding” anything, but of God not tolerating sin. And it is still, is it not, a grave sin to deliberately miss Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation without any good reason. Running a chip shop might not count - and it’s odd that any Catholic, Italian or not would want to gamble his eternal salvation on a fish supper.

Mr Convery concludes, hilariously, that Pope Francis is not a “liberal” or a “conservative”: “he is far more subtle, far more sophisticated than such pigeon-holing...Jorge Bergoglio is not a liberal Pope or a conservative Pope (but) an Italian Pope from Argentina” (Key to understanding Francis: He’s an Italian from Argentina, SCO, 17/10/14)

Earth to Convery: Keep Calm & Don’t Eat Chips...
Morality
Matters
Your Problems Answered

Aunt Evangeline

Angus, Stirling writes...

I have a friend who is an atheist and he just can't see how a good God would allow all the wars and suffering in the world today. I keep saying it's humans, not God, causing the wars and suffering but he won't buy it.

He says if God wanted to, he could have created a world without suffering. His biggest problem is when good people who believe in God suffer. I've run out of answers - can you help?

Aunt Evangeline replies...

This is the popular non-argument against the existence of God. The answer which you have given, that humans exercising their free will cause suffering in the world, not God, doesn't satisfy people who reject God because they don't want to believe. St Thomas Aquinas tells us that we must embrace the Faith - then the answers come. That is to exercise faith! We don't wait till we have all the answers lined up to the satisfaction of our (limited) human intelligence and then say "I believe". That's the wrong way round. And it's not 'faith'.

Your friend is correct to say that if God wanted to, He could have created a world without suffering. In fact, that's what God wanted to, He could have created a world without suffering. His biggest problem is when good people who believe in God suffer. I've run out of answers - can you help?

As for your friend's point about why good people suffer; Christ Himself was wholly innocent and yet was persecuted, tortured and put to death on trumped up charges. We know that there was more to it, of course, that His death is part of God's plan of salvation and so it is with the suffering which comes to each of us.

Great saints and mystics of the church have always urged us to unite our sufferings to those of Christ in recognition of the truth that, by our resignation to all that God permits, we can win grace, and help save souls, in imitation of Christ.

Conference:
Remembering Michael Davies

Ellen Ward

There are great men and there are giants. Michael Davies was a giant, a giant fighter for the true Catholic Faith. On Saturday 4th October in St Mary's Hall Moorfields, London, a group of traditional Catholics got together to remember him ten years after his death. They came from near and far to honour this man who did so much to awaken the consciences of Catholics, both lay and clergy and even episcopacies to what was really happening in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. His son, Adrian, chaired the meeting and described how his father converted to Catholicism at the age of nineteen. He saw immediately that the changes to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass would change the whole Church for ever. But he assumed that the clergy would also see this clearly and would resist the changes. As we all know now only a small number of people stood up for the Faith. These included those who have gone to their final reward, Archbishop Lefebvre, Dr Dietrich Von Hildebrand, Hamish Fraser, and Walter Matt.

Among those who continue the fight today, Dr John Rao, Michael Matt, Christopher A Ferrara and Jamie Bogle gave their reminiscences of Michael and the efforts he made to enlighten everyone, especially through his many books and articles. They also gave their insights into the battle within the Church today to recover Tradition.

Dr Rao highlighted Michael’s great work the famous trilogy, Cramner's Godly Order, Pope John's Council and Pope Paul's New Mass. He said that what we experienced in the 1970’s was not new. Michael revealed this by comparing the assault on the Mass in Cramner’s time with what happened at Vatican II and the changes to the Liturgy. In these books he carried out detailed analysis of all that took place during the Council. Dr Rao compared Michael to Moses, the strength and fearlessness he showed in defending the assault on the Mystical Body, leading the people to awaken them to the reality. And like Moses was unable to enter the Promised Land of ‘Summorum Pontificum’ and the lifting of the ‘excommunications’ of the St Pius X bishops. He concluded his talk by speaking of his son Nicholas’s memories of Michael and how he taught him the delights of Scotch whisky at the age of five. Nicholas, none the worse for this, is now enjoying life at the Catholic University of America and recently contributed his first article to the Remnant.

Michael Matt, editor of the Remnant was the next speaker. He endorsed the “Moses” metaphor, saying how great Michael was. He said that he was convinced that the many meetings Michael had with the then Cardinal Ratzinger must have led to Summorum Pontificum. But alas, Michael did not live to see that day.

The most rousing of the talks was given by Christopher Ferrara, the talk was entitled ‘Viruses in the Mystical Body’. He compared coincidental happenings on the 13th of October in various years. From the vision of Pope Leo XIII in 1884 after which he instructed the prayers including the St Michael prayer to be said after each Mass. The immune system of the Church was damaged at the time of the Council by the viruses of Ecumenism, Dialogue and Collegiality. On 13th October 1962, the day after the opening of the Second Vatican Council the infamous incident of the interruption by Cardinal Lienart, which changed the direction of the Council, took place. He then spoke of the novelties that have been introduced to the Church since the Council, comparing them to viruses and the damage they have inflicted on the Mystical Body of Christ. He said that an antidote had been given by Pope Benedict XVI with Summorum Pontificum, but this has been ignored by the majority of the episcopate. So the Mystical Body's condition is worse. The only hope lies in the consecration requested by Our Lady at Fatima. Pope Pius XII had warned that it was dangerous to alter the Liturgy.

The final speaker of the day was Jamie Bogle who chose to talk of Religious Liberty and the Right to Religious Freedom. Some people today think that Human Rights laws are more important than our duties to Christ the King. He cited examples from Nazism, Communism and extremist forms of Islam and the incidents at Waco with the members of the Jim Jones cult. The Conference was recorded, so if anyone wishes to view all the talks further details can be had from the Latin Mass Society www.lms.org.uk I thoroughly recommend them.

Attendance at such conferences are a great means of meeting other like-minded people. I love having the opportunity to meet with others, old friends and new alike. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of young people who were there and when I got chatting to them was further surprised that they had never met Michael Davies in person but had discovered him through his writings. One young man was eager to tell me that he and his friends are also avid supporters of Catholic Truth.

A Solemn High Requiem for the repose of Michael Davies was held immediately following the conference. A most fitting conclusion to a very inspiring day. 🍀
**Dumb and Dumber**

**Four Weddings and a Funeral...**

This will be a busy week...
We're having four weddings, and a funeral...

**No Rest for the Wicked...**

However, the funeral won't involve God...
So we won't need readers or servers...

**The Real Good News...**

That commandment about not stealing is just an intolerable burden on any burglar.

There are too many hostile rigorists in the legal profession, that's why they keep sending me to jail. Not fair...

**Create Your Own Commandments...**

**Out of the Mouths of Religion Students...**

I wonder why Jesus said it was adultery to divorce and re-marry? I don't like that bit.

I think he could have just let people do what they wanted to do as long as they gave money to the poor, like Jesus said.

So, yes, I think Jesus was too strict. But Cardinal Kasper is sorting it all out... Miss said so, do you remember?

Religion Lesson: is Jesus too strict? Discuss

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Catholic Truth... Keeping the Faith, Telling the Truth - a bi-monthly newsletter for informed Catholics
"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness" (Is 5:20).

Cardinal Raymond Burke, an American who has the Vatican's highest court of canon law [spoke out during] a two-week Extraordinary Synod on the Family [because] an interim report of the discussions, called the Relatio, produced a widespread backlash among "conservative" bishops who said it suggested a radical change to the church's teaching on questions like divorce and homosexuality, and Cardinal Burke has been among the most publicly critical of the bishops picked by Pope Francis to lead the discussion.

Cardinal Burke said the Pope had "done a lot of harm" by not stating "openly what his position is," Burke said the Pope had given the impression that he endorses some of the most controversial parts of the Relatio, especially on questions of divorce, put forward by the German cardinal, Walter Kasper who suggested a path for allowing people who had divorced and remarried to receive communion; amazingly, the Pope appointed Cardinal Walter Kasper, to open the synod's discussion.

The Pope, more than anyone else as the pastor of the universal church, is bound to serve the truth," Cardinal Burke said. "The Pope is not free to change the church's teachings with regard to the immorality of homosexual acts or the indissolubility of marriage or any other doctrine of the faith."

In the interview with BuzzFeed News, Cardinal Burke confirmed publicly for the first time the rumors that he had been told Pope Francis intended to demote him from the church's chief guardian of canon law to a minor post as patron to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

Read the full transcript of Cardinal Burke's BuzzFeed interview at www.buzzfeed.com

The sacrament of Matrimony, which symbolizes the union of Christ with the Church, will be thoroughly attacked and profaned [in the 20th century]. Masonry, then reigning, will implement iniquitous laws aimed at extinguishing this sacrament. They will make it easy for all to live in sin, thus multiplying the birth of illegitimate children without the Church's blessing....

Our Lady, Quito, 17th Century (approved apparition)

Footnotes:
1 The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see cardinals opposing cardinals, and bishops against other bishops. The priests who generate discord are going to get rid of those who please the Holy Father Francis to the Synod Fathers, 6/10/2014, published on Vatican website, Daily (Synod) Bulletins.
2 Synod 14 – first General Congregation: Words of the Holy Father Francis to the Synod Fathers, 6/10/2014, published on Vatican website, Daily (Synod) Bulletins.
3 IMPORTANT: The Backlash Against the Manipulated Synod on the Family [because] an interim report of the discussions, called the Relatio, produced a widespread backlash among "conservative" bishops who said it suggested a radical change to the church's teaching on questions like divorce and homosexuality, and Cardinal Burke has been among the most publicly critical of the bishops picked by Pope Francis to lead the discussion.
4 The Extraordinary Synod on the Family, a meeting of the world’s bishops held in Rome 5 – 19 October, made history. That cardinals opposed cardinals and bishops spoke out against other bishops1 (including the Bishop of Rome, described by the president of a Conference of Bishops in a large African country as “an agent of disruption,”)2 made headlines around the world. Pope Francis has been described in reports across the internet as “crafty” and “Machiavellian” for his blatant attempts to fix the outcome of the Synod even before it began, by inviting the well known “liberal” retired German Cardinal Walter Kasper to address the world’s cardinals at the Extraordinary Consistory of Cardinals in February (20-21, 2014).
5 Since it is well known that Cardinal Kasper has been advocating for years that divorced and “remarried” Catholics should be allowed to receive Holy Communion, a scandal which is the norm in Germany, it is self-evident that the Pope’s personal esteem for Kasper, together with his repeated public exhortations to (a false) “mercy” in the pastoral care of those in immoral sexual partnerships, place the pontiff firmly on the side of those seeking to change Catholic teaching through changes in practice at parish level - a charge he has not denied.
6 Picture the scene: parishioners get used to seeing co-habitees, the divorced and “remarried” and even homosexual couples approaching for Holy Communion. Soon we forget all about the silly notion that Jesus taught us to adhere to the Commandments as proof of our love for Him, and the even siller notion that He actually meant it when He warned that men and women who divorce and then “remarry” commit adultery. Indeed, Cardinal Kasper argues that to use language such as “adultery” is to “insult” and “offensive”. Too bad. In fact, tough. I agree with Pope John Paul II, who, when, reminding us that abortion is murder, said: “now, more than ever, we need to call things by their proper name...” (Evangelium Vitae # 58).
7 In his opening address at the Synod Pope Francis exhorted the bishops to speak their minds without fear of offending him - that was the only “rule”: A general condition of the base is this: speak out. Let no one say: “I can not be said, think of me this way or that...”, You have to say everything that you feel with parresia [honestly, freely]... And at the same time, you should listen with humility and accept with an open heart what they say, the brothers. With these two attitudes is exercised collegiality. 3 Thus, in the name of a fundamental error of Vatican II - collegiality - the scene is set for the chaos to follow, and for the biggest betrayal of the papal office, ever. Peter, remember, denied Jesus out of human weakness, for fear of persecution and death, not because he thought he could improve on the Ten Commandments, or that Christ had placed “intolerable burdens” on the shoulders of His followers.
8 No ideas were off limits to the bishops discussing the situation of public sinners during the Synod, making it a virtual liberal-fest. The one condition, that they should speak their minds without worrying about offending the Pope, is utterly scandalous. The world is in the wrong state of repulsion against God’s Law. The Pope has missed a golden opportunity to change that. Instead, he’s made things much worse.
9 That Pope Francis chooses not to correct Catholics living in immoral partnerships, but implicitly condones their sin by providing a forum to allow the bishops to vote down God’s Law is bad enough, but to insult priests who try to be faithful to the Church’s eucharistic discipline in respect of public sinners by labelling them evil pastors who lay intolerable burdens on the shoulders of others” is to risk the wrath of God, as warned by Isaiah against those who “call evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20).
10 Almost as shocking as Pope Francis’ dereliction of the papal duty to guard Faith and Morals through his exhortation to the bishops to “speak your mind”, is the fact that he didn’t mean it. Check out his sacking of Cardinal Burke for doing just that - see column 3. Happily, Cardinal Burke was not alone in rejecting the Kasper proposals. Despite going along with the New Mass, new everything, this attempt at imposing a New Morality proved to be a step too far for some, at least; the fact is, however, that more than half of the bishops voted with Kasper. “Apostates” you say? You betcha!
11 Cardinal Burke deserves credit for risking his Vatican post rather than go along with the evil attempts at Synod to change Church teaching. Will any UK bishop take a similar stand in the concluding episode of the Carry on Kasper farce scheduled for 2015? Will they reject the false “mercy” peddled by Pope Francis, knowing full well that there is nothing merciful about sending souls to Hell? One is not holding one’s breath. Might be worth contacting your bishop, though, to ask him not to “vote for Kasper” next time around. And do I really need to suggest we all offer prayers, by the truckload, for this very dangerous pope? Oremus! ☪

20

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