



# si si no no

"But let your speech be, 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no,' and whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37)"

October 1993 No. 4

## La Civiltà Cattolica Puts Out the Fires of Hell!

### A PRELUDE

On April 18, 1992, the Italian journal *Civiltà Cattolica* ran an editorial entitled "*The Preaching of Hell Today*." In it we read the following:

"The Church's Solemn Magisterium (teaching) on the question of hell, nearly always refers to the existence of a fiery torment. However, it does not expressly say that this is a real fire. Nor does it state that this 'pain of the senses' could not be reduced to a mere 'pain of loss,' while still recognizing the distinction between the two penalties.

"However, in the teachings of the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church, there is no metaphorical 'watering-down' of the fires of hell. On the contrary the distinction between the fires of hell and the pain of loss is quite clear!"

On the same page (p. 113) we also read:

"It is always good to remember the importance and dignity of the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church, wherein the frequent repetition of the same teachings demands, from the minds and hearts of Catholics, a holy respect and adherence to those teachings."

Unfortunately, as we shall see a little further on, the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church turns out to have a role far distant from the role of importance mentioned by the *Civiltà Cattolica* - which merely stops at Vatican II and its *Lumen Gentium*, ignoring all previous teaching!

In fact the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church can, of itself, elevate a truth to the status of a divinely revealed dogmatic truth. It does not need the assistance of any solemn definition. Remember, that the Church wasn't initially formed through solemn papal or Church Council definitions. In his book, *The Ordinary Magisterium of the Church and its Organs*, J. M. Vacant says "*that the Church established itself and the doctrine of Christ was given to the world before the solemn definitions and pronouncements of Pope and Council and (the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church) is the primary rule of faith whose authority was constantly invoked by the Fathers of the Church.*"

### THE SURPRISE

We don't know why the *Civiltà Cattolica* deliberately alluded and stressed the importance of the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church, because its readers were in for a surprise. The fact is that, two months later the *Civiltà Cattolica* published another editorial entitled: "*The 'heaven' of Paradise and the 'fires' of hell - Symbols and Realities.*"

In this second editorial on heaven and hell, the reality of the fires of hell mentioned in the first editorial, now becomes a mere symbol of fire, which "*serves to illustrate, not some physical pain which accompanies the exclusion from the Kingdom of God, but rather the emptiness of life without communion with God.*" Instead of the Ordinary Magisterium's "*clear teaching on the real and non-metaphorical sense of the 'fire' of hell*" the editorial now speaks of a symbolic, metaphorical fire of hell.

We read that "*Man wrapped up in the selfishness of his sins, whom death has taken by surprise, now eternally loses all contact with the Lord. Consequently, man, who wanted to be the center of his own life and the creator of his own personal law, will now eternally find himself isolated and alone in the egoism or self-centeredness he had chosen.*" This novelty that extinguishes the fires of hell, obviously met with approval on the part of both the world's press and the pseudo Catholic press.

According to *Civiltà Cattolica*, this interpretation still conserves the distinction between the pain of loss of God and the pain of the senses inflicted by the "fires" of hell. Yet in reality, this interpretation is a denial of the reality of the fires of hell. Even though there has been no solemn Magisterial pronouncement on the fires of hell, the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church has always taught that the fire of hell is real, not metaphorical.

### REAL FIRE - REAL BURNING

This fire of hell is not the only pain of sense suffered by the damned, but it is the principal pain of sense endured by the damned. This is the teaching of Christ as related by the Gospels. This is the unanimous teaching of the Church. The Church Fathers taught this. So did all the various schools of theological thought throughout the history of the Church. In 1890, the Sacred Penitentiary ruled that penitents who denied the existence of the fires of hell were not to be absolved from their sins. There exists a real fire in hell, even though its nature might not be exactly the same as earthly fire; it is nevertheless a real fire. Consequently, Catholic theology has always rejected, as contrary to Faith, any interpretation such as the Dominican Politi's, which held the fires of hell to be a metaphor or a symbol of the psychological sufferings of the damned.

How can this material fire, felt by the senses, torment souls and demons - which are spirits, not bodies? There rests a mystery, but nevertheless still a reality. Just because it is a mystery, it is does not permit us to come up with a metaphorical or symbolical explanation, simply because we cannot fully understand the mystery. Theologians have discussed this question and it remains open. However, Catholic theologians have never felt themselves authorized to explain away the fires of hell symbolically. Yet this is what the *Civiltà Cattolica* has taken upon itself to do, in order to appease proud minds that refuse to bow down before a mystery of God's. In this way, Modernism is slowly coming to the stage where, by the erasure of mysteries, it will erase the whole of Divine Revelation.

### THE EDITORIAL APPROACHES HERESY

It is a fact that the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church can impose upon the faithful a truth that must be believed - if that truth has been constantly and universally taught by the Church. To oppose such a teaching would be to commit a grave sin against the Faith. The teaching on the fires of hell falls into this category. Some theologians even argue that, since this teaching on the reality of the fires of hell is accepted by almost all theologians, it is a revealed truth, though not yet officially defined as such by the Church. Such a solemn definition would make it a dogma. In the theological classes of the Jesuit Order at Wurzburg, we read that the fires of hell are "*certain and clear in the judgment of the Church, even if it has not yet been expressly defined as such.*" It is, therefore, a truth close to being defined as "*of faith*" and thus the denial of something close to being "*of faith*" is consequently close to being heretical. This is the case with the above quoted editorial of the *Civiltà Cattolica*.

### TOWARDS PROTESTANTISM

The more the novel opinions of the *Civiltà Cattolica* drift away from certain Catholic truths, the more it drifts towards the errors of Protestantism - which makes the fire of hell to be a merely metaphoric fire. Thus we have here, as also in the New Order of Mass and Bible exegesis, as well the whole of this *New Theology*, a remarkable abandon of Catholic theology, which now finds itself sliding down towards the errors of Protestantism. Msgr. Heiner, referring to Modernists, wrote in 1908: "*These people have one foot in the Catholic Church and the other in Protestantism, whose essence is subjectivity - which is a religion without any religious authority.*" Today, Neo-Modernism is leading us that same goal - a religion with no religious authority. The way to get there is to use the same system used by the *Civiltà Cattolica* in extinguishing the fires of hell:

- starting with the theory, you belittle and knock down the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church in making people believe it is inferior to the solemn Magisterium of the Church, then
- you put this theory into practice and openly ignore the Ordinary Magisterium as though it did not oblige in conscience and as though it did not even exist at all!

### AN UNACCEPTABLE ATTACK ON THE FAITH

This is all very grave when we remember the true teaching of the Church. Truths revealed by God, which we must accept and believe, can be and are presented by the Church to us in two equivalent ways:

- in an **extraordinary manner** when dealing with difficult or controversial questions. This is done by a solemn definition of Pope or Council, or
- in the **ordinary manner** through the constant and universal magisterium, which nevertheless is no less forceful or obligatory than the solemn and extraordinary magisterium. Nor is it any less infallible.

The dogmatic Council Vatican I (1869-70) solemnly defined that "*We must believe with a faith both divine and Catholic, all that is contained in the word of God, whether written or otherwise, and which is presented to us by the Church as being divinely revealed, either by solemn definitions or by its ordinary and universal magisterium.*" (Denzinger 1792). This indicates the fact that the Ordinary infallible Magisterium of the Church is on the same level of authority as the solemn definitions of Popes and Council, even if it is not as solemn in presentation as the latter. To deny or refuse to believe in truths constantly and universally presented by the Ordinary Magisterium as divinely revealed, is as serious a heresy as it is to deny the solemnly proclaimed truths of Pope and Council.

That is not all! The "*deposit of Faith*" is a vast field of definable and well-defined truth. These truths are *all* and *always* explicitly presented. Furthermore, the "*deposit of Faith*" is not made up of only solemnly defined truths, it also consists of truths presented for belief *semper et ubique* (always and everywhere) by the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church - not only explicitly (e.g. catechism, sermons, etc.), but also implicitly (liturgical practices, disciplinary norms, etc.) and even the silent teaching drawn from examining historical monuments, churches, cathedrals, works of art or the lives of saints.

The liberal and modernist pretension of reducing our obligation to believe "*with faith*" only those truths that have been solemnly defined by the extra-ordinary magisterium of the Church is, therefore, **an unacceptable attack upon the deposit of the Faith**. Such a pretentious attitude would have expelled from the deposit of Faith such dogmas as the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption, etc. before they were solemnly defined dogmas, and only implicit objects of faith. This same expulsion they accord to a host of other dogmas, even though they have been taught *semper et ubique* (always and everywhere) - just because they have never been solemnly defined by Pope or Council.

### PAPAL BRIEF DEFENDS THE FAITH OF ALL TIME

On the eve of Vatican I (1869), Pope Pius IX reacted strongly against such liberal and modernist pretensions. In his *Brief* to the Archbishop of Monaco, of December 21, 1863, Pius IX echoes the whole of Catholic Tradition when he demands that the modernist German theologians submit themselves to:

- the ordinary magisterium of the Church
- to the unanimous opinion of Catholic theologians
- to the common and constant Catholic belief.

This latter point, *the common and constant Catholic belief*, is a faithful reflection of what the Church has always and everywhere taught through its Ordinary Magisterium. It is this fact that shows a truth as belonging to the "*deposit of the Faith*." Truths that are subsequently solemnly defined by Pope or Council, first of all found themselves commonly accepted - always and everywhere - in the Church. This was the case with the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven - before the Extraordinary Magisterium had proclaimed the dogma, it had always and everywhere been admitted by the Church. Such examples are numerous.

These few remarks should sufficiently show the gravity of this Neo- Modernist attack upon the Church of *all time* by the Church of *today*. That which has been universally and constantly taught by the Church of all time is and remains the foundation and rule of Faith. These few remarks also authorize us to assess the gravity of the *Civiltà Cattolica's* attack against the fires of hell - which they seek to extinguish. Yet instead of extinguishing the fires of hell, they extinguish the flame of our Faith. The fire of hell is materially a real fire, a fire felt by the senses. Even if it is not identical, only analogous, to earthly fire - it has been taught as such by the Ordinary Magisterium of the Church - a fact proven by the unanimous faith of Catholics of all times and all places. A fact even admitted by the first editorial of the *Civiltà Cattolica* (April 18, 1992) only to be contradicted and later denied by another editorial! It is a tragedy that a journal that was once such a great champion of orthodoxy should now have become the champion of the *New Theology* of Neo-Modernism!

### La Civiltà Cattolica – CATHOLIC OR TRAITOR?

The *Civiltà Cattolica* (Catholic Civilization) is an important Italian journal, founded by the Jesuits in 1850, as a result of the wishes of Pope Pius IX. It was a very prestigious publication until the time of Vatican II - fighting Liberalism, Masonry, Modernism and all modern errors.

In 1910, on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding, Pope St. Pius X sent its editors a letter of congratulation for their "*firmness...and faithfulness in defending and promoting Catholic doctrine...and successfully fighting against the teaching of modernists and modernizers.*"

One of the reasons for its high esteem was the fact that, before going to press, the entire publication was proofread by the Secretariat of State in order to receive its approval. Consequently, the *Civiltà Cattolica* was looked upon as expressing the thoughts of the Holy See. Today, it has become a mouthpiece for the new religion brought about by the *New Theology*. It still is the mouthpiece of the Holy See, but a Holy See far distant in belief and practice to that of pre-Vatican II years.

Here is an extract taken from an editorial of *Civiltà Cattolica* almost 100 years ago, so different to the kind of comments we see in the same journal today:

**"The practical lesson to be drawn from the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII is that Catholic principles do not change - despite changing times, despite changes of country, despite new discoveries, nor do they change for the sake of practicality. They remain the same as taught by Christ, as defined by Popes and Councils, as kept by Saints and defended by the Doctors of the Church. Whosoever accepts them in their fullness and exactness is Catholic; whosoever hesitates, wavers, adapts them to his age, compromises them - this person can call himself what he will, but before God and the Church he is a rebel and a traitor! (Civiltà Cattolica, March 6, 1899)"**

Marcus

Translated from *Courrier de Rome* November 1992

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