

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)"

August 1994 No. 9

They Think They've Won!

Part 7

POPE JOHN PAUL II'S PONTIFICATE:
A PERIOD OF GRAVEST TRIBULATION FOR THE CHURCH

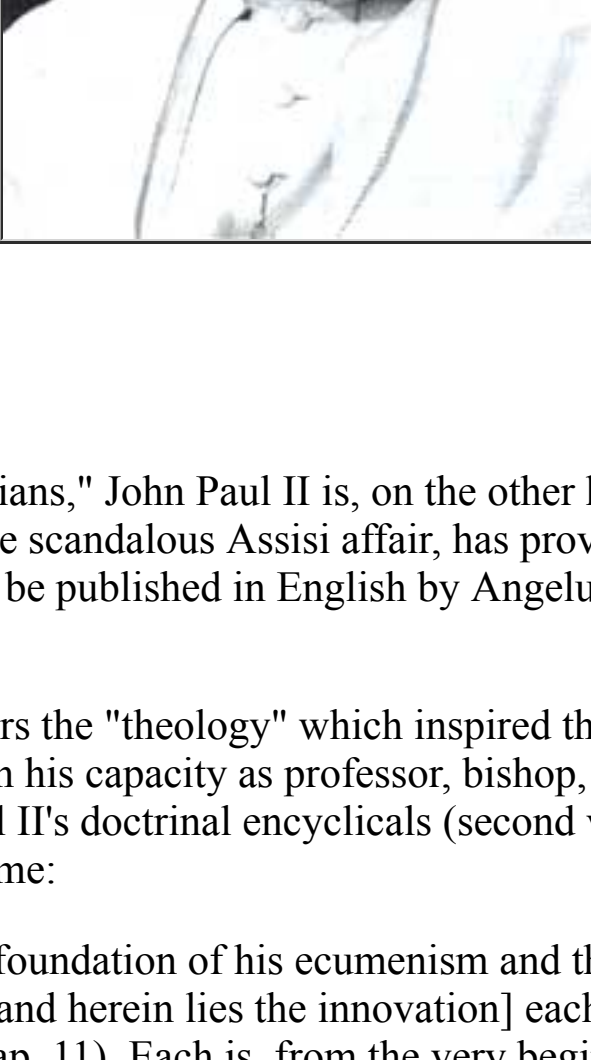
A TREMENDOUS ORDEAL

And in the case where a "new theologian" should one day accede to the chair of St. Peter? In such a case, the Church undoubtedly suffers an unparalleled ordeal of stupendous gravity and proportions. And this for several reasons.

First of all, since it is a question of neo-modernism, "They lay the axe not to the branches and shoots, but to the very root, that is, to the Faith and its deepest fibers" (St. Pius X, *Pascendi*). Moreover, these theological errors are destined to profoundly influence the Catholic world, since Catholics are quite used to the (mistaken) idea that the pope's personal faith is identified with the Faith of the Church.

Also to be noted is the fact that in the Catholic Church, more than in any other society, has been borne out that old saying, *Ad instar Principis totus componitur orbis: (The whole world falls into line with the see, the seat, of the Prince - Peter)*. And for this reason, a pope is able to impose *de facto*, without any formal imposition whatsoever, a heretical orientation to the entire Church. We have witnessed this with Pope Paul VI's "discreet" activities favoring neo-modernism or the "new theology."

The test we are now facing is one of tremendous proportions, but in no way is it insurmountable. Let us proceed step by step.



KAROL WOJTYLA AS A "NEW THEOLOGIAN"

If Pope Paul VI proved to be a authentic admirer of the "new theologians," John Paul II is, on the other hand, personally quite in favor of the "new theology." Fr. Johannes Dörmann, the famous German theologian, absorbed in thought over the scandalous Assisi affair, has proven this to be true in his dispassionate, objective and scientific study of Karol Wojtyla's writings, *L'étrange théologie de Jean-Paul II* (soon to be published in English by Angelus Press with the title: *Pope John Paul II's Theological Journey to the Prayer Meeting of Religions at Assisi*).

This work, the first volume of a three-volume series, carefully considers the "theology" which inspired the ecumenical initiative of Assisi. The author finds that this same "theology" was already clearly evident in Wojtyla's writings whether in his capacity as professor, bishop, or cardinal. Fr. Dörmann then sets out to demonstrate that the self-same "new theology" constitutes the core recurring theme in John Paul II's doctrinal encyclicals (second volume) and has also served to inspire his pastoral trips to Africa and Asia (third volume). We will now outline the contents of the first volume:

The basic error in Pope John Paul II's "theology," which serves as the foundation of his ecumenism and therefore of the Assisi initiative, is expressed in the following: not only did Jesus Christ die for all men [as the Catholic Church teaches], but [and herein lies the innovation] each and every human being is "whether he knows it or not, whether he accepts it or not, in the faith" (K. Wojtyla, *Segno di Contraddizione*, chap. 11). Each is, from the very beginning, since his birth, in a state of effective redemption even if he is unaware of this fact. And this holds true for all men of all ages and places.

This thesis fits in the very face of Holy Scripture, Tradition, as well as the Catholic Church's dogmatic teachings, and according to Fr. Dörmann's personal judgment, has no solid base even in the texts of the last Council. It is, on the other hand, found to be tied in with the "new theology" which affirms the unconditional salvation of all mankind, a universal redemption not only objective but subjective as well. Not only can everyone be saved, but all are, as a matter of fact, already saved (this reminds us of Von Balthasar's "Hell does indeed exist, but it is empty"). This "new" conception of subjective redemption or universal justification has served as a springboard to launch a "new" ecclesiology together with a new concept of Revelation and Faith.

A NEW ECCLESIOLOGY

If the Son of God, as Wojtyla the "theologian" would have it, has, by His Incarnation, united Himself to "every man," if "existence in Christ" is the religious "dimension of every human being, of every real and historical man" from the very first instant of his existence "whether he wants it or not, whether he accepts it or not" (and therefore independently of the Faith or of Baptism) is supernaturally united to Christ, it must then follow:

1. that every human being belongs, in some way or other, to the {Catholic} Church;
2. that the Church coincides with all of humanity, which, with Christ, constitutes an organism naturally supernatural, so to speak.

It is evident that the resulting notion of the Church is essentially changed under these conditions while the distinctions between nature and grace, between Church and humanity, are utterly destroyed. All of which, we might add, Blondel and De Lubac were possibly aiming at all along, since the modernists, going against the teachings of the Church considered such a distinction as an intolerable "dualism" to be discarded at all costs.

A "NEW" NOTION OF REVELATION

Thus, according to John Paul II's "new theology," there remains no essential difference between the Church and humanity in their "profound being" since the same "profound being" is the very same "existence in Christ." They can only be distinguished by the degree of awareness they have of their profound being (this is in substance, Karl Rahner, S.J.'s theory of "anonymous Christians" as well as Von Balthasar's "anonymous Christianities"). And here we behold the emergence of a "new" notion of Revelation.

Neo-modernism would have us believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ did nothing else than "fully manifest man to himself," not at all by revealing to man (as the Catholic Church has always done) his original state of sinner as well as his radical and essential need of redemption, which he is able to attain only through Baptism and the true Faith. Contrary to the Church's constant teaching, modernists want to make us believe that Our Lord came to make known to men their original state of unconscious but automatic and real redemption, that is, their state of being naturally "supernatural." As a matter of fact, neo-modernism claims that it is only this state of unconsciousness, which distinguishes the Christian from the non-Christian. This external "revelation" of Christ is considered to be of secondary importance and not at all strictly necessary, since there may exist, and there also does indeed necessarily exist, an interior revelation, common to all men (faithful as well as infidels) and to all religions (amongst which, therefore, we are no longer able to distinguish the true one from the myriads of false ones).

A "NEW" NOTION OF FAITH

In such a fool's paradise, "faith" becomes nothing more than a vague awareness of that which pre-exists in man, of some innate original "supernature" implicit in human nature. This same awareness may occur, yes, thanks to Christ's revelation, but it also may occur and indeed does necessarily manifest itself in the "faith" of the "anonymous Christians" (who, therefore, are no longer infidels) as well as in the "anonymous Christianities" (which can no longer, therefore, be considered false religions).

THE "THEOLOGY" OF ASSISI

It is from such a "most admired disorder" that the "irreversible" ecumenical dialogue has come about; a dialogue which, as we must add, constitutes the "new" notion of mission. From these obviously non-Christian origins appeared that scandalous initiative of Assisi, the "spirit" of which is indeed evident in Pope John Paul II's "new theology":

"Universal redemption is the common base... All religions contain true revelations, knowledge and have experience of God. Faith includes all of the 'faithful' of all religions. Faith is faith in humanity. But that 'revelation offered to mankind in Christ,' the Christian Faith, therefore is... the faith which truly and definitively explains the 'mystery of man,' the 'existence in Christ' [whence comes the appeal to Christ in John Paul's final speech at Assisi].

This 'offer' is not, however, at all necessary for salvation, nor is it exclusive or unique. Indeed, there are also to be found in other religions revelation, faith, and experience of God. It is on the basis of religious liberty, of inter-faith dialogue, together with fraternal exchanges of religious experience with a view of mutual enrichment that can now be seen open before us that path paved with gold leading to religious peace" (Dörmann, op. cit. pp. 150-151).

Space prevents the publication of the entire quotation in this issue, so we refer our readers to Fr. Dörmann's work for full data relating to this text.

BACK TO MODERNISM

There is no denying the fact that, with Pope John Paul II's "new theology," we have come full circle back to modernism which reduces the Faith (as well as Divine Revelation itself or at least its principles) to the level of religious sense and (religious) experience: "is it not God manifesting Himself, indistinctly, it is true, in this same religious sense, to the soul? ...?" (St. Pius X, *Pascendi*). (This helps to explain Pope John Paul II's favoring a charismatic Church more or less based on people's feelings).

There necessarily follows the complete elimination of all trace of difference between natural and supernatural religion together with the equivalence (i.e., practical equality) of all religions, which are simultaneously able to claim to be both natural and supernatural. According to this false line of "reasoning," Christianity just like the other religions which have sprung up from religious "geniuses" would have taken its origin not from heaven, but from Christ's religious subconscious, "a man of exquisite nature, the like of which had never been seen before nor will ever be seen again" (ibid.) and from primitive Christian communities.

Revelation, for man, is simply reduced to some consciousness of his personal relationship with God and is common to all religions. Christian revelation has been the awareness of this relationship for the man Jesus; in the other religions it was for Buddha, Mohammed, etc. As for Tradition, it does not consist in the transmission of divinely revealed truths, but rather in the renewal of this personal and subjective religious experience for each and every individual in the course of time and successive generations, and in this sense, it constitutes what is now called a living Tradition.

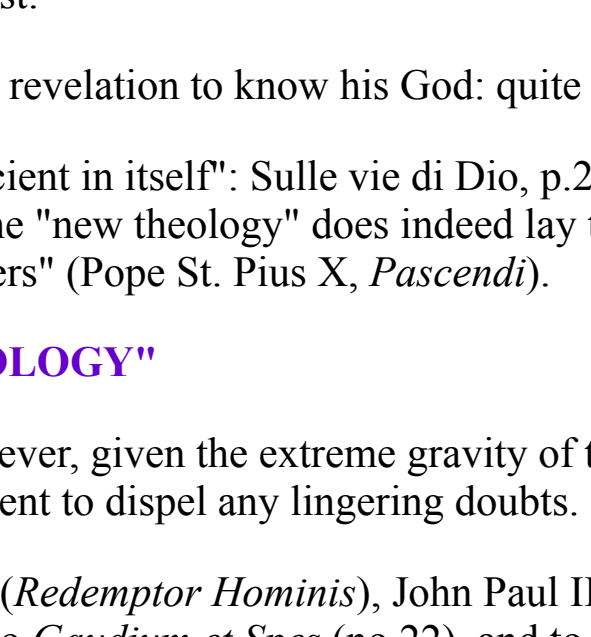
As a consequence, "some, in a thinly disguised manner, others quite openly, hold all religions to be true... In this contest of religions, the most that can be said in favor of the Catholic religion is that it is the truest one," given the "exquisite nature" of Christ; and we should bring the non-believer to experience the Catholic religion... the same one founded by Jesus Christ, that is to say, that product of a progressive development of the (religious) germ which he brought to the world" (ibid.).

"The study of anthropology," wrote Tyrell (English leader of modernism), "does not allow us to affirm... that God has not gradually revealed Himself in each soul's moral and social life and especially in Christ's soul as well as in the life of all religions and particularly in the life of Christianity..."

In future times, religiosity will be the result of inductive reflection on past and present forms of religion, of their study in so far as they are inspired by that light of Truth which enlightens every man coming into this world, and to the extent that each one (of these forms) represents, in a special manner, an effort on the part of the Divine Spirit to make himself intelligible to man in harmony with the other degrees of his moral, mental, and social development" (*Rinnovamento*, July-August 1907, "Per la sincerità").

This provides us with a precise description of the "spirit of Assisi," while also bringing to light those secret motivating forces behind John Paul II's constant "pastoral" trips to Asia and Africa (including his "ecumenical" encounter with voodoo sorcerers).

"If you see me traveling the length and breadth of the whole world in my efforts to meet with people of all civilizations and religions, it is because I have faith in the seeds of wisdom which the Spirit has planted in the conscience of all these various peoples, tribes and clans; from these hidden grains will come the true resource for the future of mankind in this world of ours" (John Paul II's speech to youth in Ravenna, May 11, 1986, quoted in *Tutte le encicliche dei Sommi Pontefici*, ed. dall'Oglio, p. 1821).



Fr. George Tyrell, S.J.

THE "MASTERS"

Which road did Wojtyla the theologian take on the pilgrimage to modernism? He simply followed the crooked paths and byways of the "new theology." Those who "think they have won" are today indeed much less discreet than they were in former times (e.g., before Vatican II) and so, in one of the addresses delivered at the inauguration of the "Maurice Blondel Archives Center" affiliated with the (formerly) Catholic University of Louvain, it is made unmistakably clear that for Blondel "the supernatural is not a nature to which something (grace) has been added; it is, in reality, simply the liberation of all nature, it is the participation in divine liberty" (Center d'Archives Maurice Blondel. *Journées d'inauguration 30-31 mars 1973. Textes des interventions*, p. 59).

This radical distorting and tampering with the basic Catholic notion of supernature, consisting in a falsification obstinately upheld and defended by modernists such as Blondel and De Lubac, is absolutely bound to take them down that same blind alley where John Paul II's "new theology" is to be found at the present time: to the abolition of all distinction between nature and grace (if the supernatural is implicit in human nature, all men are therefore in the state of grace "whether they know it or not, whether they accept it or not through faith") and inevitably to the heresy of subjective universal redemption, to the identification of humanity with the Church, to the corruption of the idea of Revelation and of Faith, and so on.

For example, already for De Lubac, the manifestation of supernature being implied in human nature and which therefore can be explained by this same human nature turns Christ's revelation into a fact of secondary importance, of minor interest:

"From this it follows that strictly speaking, man does not need another revelation to know his God: quite apart from any

supernatural intervention, this 'natural revelation' would be quite sufficient in itself". Sulle vie di Dio, p.210). This quotation from a "master of modernism" serves quite well to make us understand that the "new theology" does indeed lay the axe "not to the branches and shoots, but to the very root, that is, to the Faith and its deepest fibers" (Pope St. Pius X, *Pascendi*).

PAPAL AUTHORITY AT THE SERVICE OF THE "NEW THEOLOGY"

This can easily be verified by the ecumenical initiative of Assisi. However, given the extreme gravity of this assertion, we will now quote yet other facts which, taken in their entirety, will be quite sufficient to dispel any lingering doubts.

Already in the very heart of the inaugural encyclical of his pontificate (*Redemptor Hominis*), John Paul II reveals his thesis of a universal and subjective redemption which Pope John Paul II reads into *Gaudium et Spes* (no.22), and to the drafting of which he had collaborated during the Council: "By His incarnation, He, the Son of God, has in a certain way, united Himself with each man" (*Tulle le encicliche dei Sommi Pontefici*, ed. dall'Oglio).

And now, as if to confirm the fact that the inspiration of John Paul II has not changed, Christoph Schonborn warns us in *L'Osservatore Romano* that the "key text" of the new "Catechism" is taken from *Gaudium et spes* (no. 22) (*L'Osservatore Romano*, 12-1-1993).

We have already mentioned John Paul II's worldwide voyages. All the ecumenical initiatives and speeches of the present pontificate have their basis and explanation, not in Catholic doctrine, but in the aforementioned "new theology": everything is centered upon man and his full development which is supposed to also comprise an awareness in himself of an immanent supernature within each man independently of Faith and Baptism "whether he knows it or not, whether he accepts it or not by faith."

If Paul VI chose to celebrate Teilhard de Chardin at the closing ceremonies of the Sixth International Thomistic Congress, John Paul II went even further still: On May 12, 1981, on the occasion of the centennial of the birth of the monistic-pantheistic Jesuit, Teilhard de Chardin, in this message the Pope praises "in the name of the Holy Father" a highly laudatory and favorable letter to the rector of the Institut Catholique of Paris. And in this message the Pope praises "the wonderful repercussions of his [Teilhard's] research and investigations as well as the marked influence of his personality and the richness of his thought." In this note, Teilhard is described as a man seized by Christ in the depths of his being, ever anxious to hold in high regard both faith and the answer of reason, thereby containing almost by anticipation, John Paul's appeal:

"Be not afraid; open, open wide the doors to Christ, those immense fields of culture, of civilization, of development."

All in all, [de Chardin was] a precursor of Wojtyla's pontificate (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, June 10, 1981, and *SI SI NO NO*, June 15, 1981).

And yet, barely twenty years earlier, the Holy Office had promulgated a *monitum* against Teilhard. Even though he had restrained himself somewhat (this was at the time of John XXIII, and Montini's influence was making itself felt), he was warned that his writings "are full of such ambiguities, and even of the gravest of errors, which constitute an outrageous attack upon Catholic doctrine." And again recently, on February 11th, 1993, Pope John Paul II sent - this time under his own signature and always in the same line of (modernist) thought - a public message to the Archbishop of Aix to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the publication of Blondel's *L'Action*:

"As we recall that work, we wish, first of all, to honor its author who, in his thoughts as well as in his life, succeeded in blending the most rigorous of the Catholic tradition with the most courageous (or bold-spirited) philosophical research with the most authentic Catholicism by his drawing, as he did, from those rich sources of dogmatic, patristic, and mystical tradition" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, May 12, 1993, p.5).

This is nothing but the posthumous ratification or approval of Blondel's (and later on, De Lubac's) heretical pretensions of having discovered, after a rather long lapse of two thousand years, what is called "authentic Christianity" (cf. *Courrier de Rome*, 146 [336], May 1993).

Nor is this all. We have presented documented evidence of Blondel's open and obstinate contempt for the Magisterium of the Church, and have also recalled his "reflections," that is, his (vain) attempts, which never convinced anyone, to "explain" in an orthodox manner his own erroneous ideas in order not to bring down upon himself the righteous censures of the Church which would certainly have delayed as well as embarrassed him no end (cf. *Courrier de Rome*, 145 [335], April 1993). Pope John Paul II, however, on this same occasion, has nothing but praise for this modernist's "courage as a thinker, together with his unflinching loyalty to, and love for, the Church." And Pope John Paul II goes one step further as he urges "today's philosophers and theologians" to follow in Blondel's footsteps who "relentlessly pursued his work while untiringly and obstinately (sic) explaining his thoughts without ever repudiating their inspirations" (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano* op. cit.).

THE TACIT REPUDIATION OF HUMANI GENERIS

Under Pope John Paul II's pontificate, the other founding fathers of the "new theology" were able, already in their lifetime, to bask in their share of (the modernist) glory. On February 2, 1983, Pope John Paul II bestowed the cardinal's hat on De Lubac who was then almost eighty years of age. This papal action constituted a *de facto* rehabilitation, absolutely unjustified, as well as an unjustifiable repudiation of Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Humani Generis*. In the Catholic world, this was taken as a certain sign of the new pope's "new" theological direction. On January 7, 1983, *Present*, a Parisian daily (newspaper) made the following pointed observation:

"We have often wondered for what reason Fr. Wojtyla, who had studied theology in Rome under Pope Pius XII, had, subsequently, almost never referred to that great pope's doctrinal teachings. The explanation lies simply in the fact that he had theologially chosen to follow De Lubac (one of the "fathers" of the "new theology") rather than Pius XII. This fact is more readily understood at the present time."

On the occasion of the venerated Card. De Lubac's death, *L'Osservatore Romano* (May 9, 1991) made public, on its first page, the contents of two telegrams sent by His Holiness John Paul II: the first one, to Card. Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris, and the other one to the Superior General of the Company of Jesus (Jesuits).

The first telegram is as follows:

"Recalling the long and faithful service accomplished by this theologian who succeeded in collecting and saving the best of Catholic tradition in his meditations on the Church and the modern world, I fervently beg Christ the Savior to grant him the reward of His eternal peace."

And the second telegram:

"For many years, I had greatly appreciated the vast culture, spirit of self sacrifice, and intellectual integrity, which have all served to make of this model religious an outstanding servant of the Church, particularly on the occasion of Vatican Council II."

There followed, on page 6, the deceased's *curriculum vitae* prepared by *L'Osservatore Romano*'s editorial staff which, on the 8th and 11th of September, went right on celebrating the memory of the "father of" "new theology," previously condemned by Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Humani Generis*.

While alone, Hans von Balthasar was glorified by Pope John Paul II. And not only he, but also the lady whom he had described as being his theological "better half" Adrienne von Spey. In 1985, with the publicity being provided by *L'Osservatore Romano*, a symposium was held in Rome on Adrienne's "mystic," and Von Balthasar in *Premessa*, and *Il Nostro Compito*, made it publicly known that this event constituted the realization of a "desire expressed in 1983 by the Holy Father." Von Balthasar himself was promoted to cardinal (June 1988) but died long before the very eve of being awarded his "well-deserved honorary distinction" (Card. Ratzinger). However, Ratzinger himself declared in his funeral oration:

"That which the Pope wished to express by this gesture of gratitude and acknowledgment or, rather, of honor, remains valid."

How can we blame him (for publicly declaring the unvarnished truth of the matter)? Nevertheless, it 'is' a fact that this gesture of gratitude, or rather, of honor, on the part of the Pope, has addressed to the pseudo-theology of a pseudo-theologian who has wearily trudged "along the path of sheer personal fancy, of error, and of heresy". (cf. *Courrier de Rome*, 147 [337] June 1993; for Cardinal Ratzinger's homily, see H.W. von Balthasar, *Figura e opera*, p.541).

SUPREME CONTROL OF "NEW THEOLOGIANS" OVER THE CHURCH

In 1981, Pope John Paul II appointed the "new theologian" from Germany, Card. Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Faith. And recently, the Pope confirmed in this awesome office for yet a third five-year term (*Instrum*). This constitutes still one more clear and significant "gesture of gratitude or of honor" in favor of the "new theology." How, in these years of unparalleled crisis in the Church, has the ex-Holy Office (Congregation of the Holy Office: founded by Pope Paul III in 1542 "to combat heresy" - Ed.) defended orthodoxy (believed in the true Faith founded by our Lord Jesus Christ) against the most vicious attacks launched with impunity by the neo- modernists?

Let us go back to Card. Ratzinger himself in his own unmistakably clear answer to this vital question:

"The myth concerning the Vatican's severity with regard to progressive deviations appeared as being the result of wild and useless imaginings. Up to this very day and in no case whatsoever have we ever resorted to, nor imposed canonical sanctions or penalties (on anyone): we have simply limited ourselves to admonishing the guilty wrongdoers" (keynote speech delivered at the Christian Episcopal Conference, cf. *Courrier de Rome*, 97 [287] November 1988).

To the "new theologians," on the other hand, Joseph Ratzinger did guarantee effective supremacy (control) over the Church (cf. *Courrier de Rome*, September 1993).

In 1985, there was held in Rome a Synod on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Vatican II (1962-1965). Still another "new theologian," Walter Kasper, president of Ratzinger's "old friends," was appointed (the official) theologian of that synod. Yet Kasper openly denies the historical authenticity as well as the reliability or trustworthiness of the Holy Gospels. Also, "in the light of the criticisms of forms" (or *Formgeschichte*), he considers that the miracles wrought by Jesus have simply been invented, from the calming of the tempest (Mk. 8:26) to the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn. 11), including Jesus Christ our Lord's bodily Resurrection. Whom Kasper does not even believe to be God the Son (cf. W. Kasper, *Jesus le Christ and Courrier de Rome* 105 (295) July-August 1989). In 1989, this same Kasper who is also a member of the International Theological Commission, was appointed Bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart... without withdrawing one iota of his formal heresies. There is no question here of personal favors being "old comrades," or, in any case, not only of that, but first and foremost, it is always a question of significant "gestures of gratitude" (or "honor") in favor of a very specific "theological" current (i.e., modernism). Careerists (those intent mainly on personal advancement and success in this life) know quite well to which devil they are required to sell their souls.

COMMUNIO'S SUPPORTER

In 1992, under Ratzinger's patronage, a celebration took place in Rome in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the review *Communio*, the official mouthpiece of "those who think they have won." On May 29th, Pope John Paul II received in audience the editors and writers from several countries and later gave a solemn speech in which he recalled "with gratitude the memory of two of its original promoters, eminent theologians of catholicity: Card. Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Fr. Henri de Lubac."

He went on to exhort the editors of *Communio* to always be a ferment of communion and of "unity in diversity" according to the thought of Von Balthasar. In a reminiscent mood, he confided: "In my capacity as Archbishop of Krakow, I had the occasion of encouraging and promoting the Polish edition (*of Communio*)" (cf. *Communio* June-July 1992). We can then well understand why De Lubac, while Paul VI was still very much alive, used to tell his friends, "the day when we will need a (new) pope, I have my candidate: Wojtyla" (*30Days*, July 1986; see Angelo Scola's interview with De Lubac).

Space compels us to bring this study to a close. But before doing so, and in order to complete the overview of the present modernist crisis, let us just mention George Cottier, official theologian of the Papal Palace, and other *Communio* collaborators who have been appointed bishops. These pass themselves off as conservatives, when in reality they are modernists. Also, let us consider that the nominations to the various Roman Commissions and Congregations are introducing more and more "new theologians" into the councils of the Church's governing body.

Can the reader entertain doubts to the direction, which Cardinal Wojtyla increasingly gives to the Church? Even *Civita Cattolica* always considered to be the indicator of the Holy See's intentions and orientations, has transformed itself into an official "new theology" mouthpiece. Yes, the so-called Catholic press, from *Avvenire* to the small parish bulletin, falls in (the modernist) line, for the saying goes: *Ad instar Principis totus componitur orbis (The whole world falls in line with the see, seat, of the Prince-Peter)*.

OUR PRESENT GRAVE AND FATEFUL DUTY

No wonder, then, after having taken all these clearly substantiated and irrefutable facts into consideration, that the current crisis now striking the Church has been aptly compared to the Arian crisis, which constituted "a menace for the entire Church." (St. Vincent de Lerins, *Communitorium*). Any sound theologian knows that papal infallibility does not mean personal steadfastness or firmness in faith, "nor does it guarantee him some personal infallibility" (Bartmann, *Manuel de Théologie Dogmatique*). Such a theologian is also fully aware that, in the present case, papal infallibility is completely out of the question.

Moreover, this scholar knows full well that in Catholic theology, there is also the question of the possibility of a "heretical pope," which has been the object of sharp discussions in some of the darker periods of the history of the papacy. The present ordeal, on the other hand, is particularly intense for those Catholics who, not being grounded in sound theology, are long used to erroneously extending papal infallibility to every single act of the Sovereign Pontiff, especially as a private person, an enormous ordeal indeed but, as we previously remarked, not insurmountable. To overcome the scandal of the present hour, true Catholics must hold fast to some simple truths of the Faith:

1. God can in no way ever contradict Himself and therefore the Holy Ghost cannot nowadays nor at any time in the future inspire developments in doctrine or customs in contradiction with those He had inspired in previous times.
2. Divine Revelation ceased definitively with the death of the last Apostle, and for this reason neither the Church nor the Pope can add or remove anything whatsoever from it.
3. Neither to the Church nor to the Pope has there been promised the revelation of new truths (and even less of contradictory "truths"), but on the contrary, they have been promised God's help to announce those previously-revealed divine truths as well as in judging, on the basis of divine revelation, any and all eventual doctrinal controversies. Therefore no pope is able to contradict anything, which was formerly always to be found in the "Deposit of Faith." "To Peter's successors, the Holy Ghost has been promised not in order that they should teach a new doctrine through His revelation but rather, with His assistance, that they should keep and explain in a faithful and godly manner the revelation transmitted through the intermediacy of the Apostles, that is to say, the Deposit of Faith, i.e., the sum total of truths revealed by Christ, taught infallibly by the Church, and witnessed by Scripture and Tradition" (Vatican I *Constitution De Ecclesia*, Denzinger, 1836).
4. The divine gift of infallibility has been promised not only to the present Pope but to all the popes of all times, and therefore no present Pope can contradict any or all previous popes.
5. Infallibility is not just for the Pope but for the whole Universal Church (that is, for the Church believed, everywhere and by all at all times) (cf. Vatican I, *Denzinger*, 1839). Therefore no pope can contradict that which, in the Church, has always been believed, established throughout the world and (quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est).
6. That in any conceivable future conflict between the Pope of today and the Popes of yesterday, between the Pope of today and the Church of all times and places, the faithful Catholic must remain firmly attached to the Popes of all time as well as to the Faith of the universal Church as St. Thomas Aquinas rightly teaches (*Summa Theologica*, Part IIa IIae, Question 2, article 3).

The above basic truths are put forward to sincere Catholics by their *sensus fidei* as well as their common sense. We may also add that whenever a pope, instead of keeping and proclaiming divinely-revealed Truth which has always been taught since the beginning of the Church, sets out to follow his own erroneous personal opinions which contradict this Truth, he is not at that moment acting in his capacity as pope. It thus follows that he may neither lawfully require others to obey him (in his errors) nor may the faithful be obliged to follow him in his errors.

This may grieve us, but should come as no surprise. The exact notion of infallibility does not, in fact, exclude the possibility of such an unfortunate and tragic circumstance. The divine gift of infallibility simply means that God's active assistance will, with the greatest possible certitude, prevent any pope from imposing formally, *ex cathedra*, his own errors upon the whole Church, although he may attempt to impose them in fact if not formally (through speeches, writings, acts of his administration, etc).

Blessen, in the course of Vatican I, the final drafting of the Constitution on Papal Infallibility was presented to the bishops, the official and chief editor, Bishop Gasser of Bressanone clearly explained its exact meaning: "If the entire Church should ever face the danger of being led astray through the bad faith and negligence of a pope... Christ's vigilance... would prevent an infallible declaration (Si per malum fidem et negligentiam pontificis, universalis ecclesia in errorem induci possit... tutela Christi... iudicium tale impeditur, Mansi 52, col. 1212-1214).

Papal infallibility, therefore, does not at all guarantee that the Faith of the whole world will never be exposed to danger by the "negligence" or even by the "bad faith" of one of Pope's successors, but only guarantees that the *tutela Christi (the divine assistance)* will prevent an infallible declaration, *ex cathedra*, in such deplorable and unfavorable circumstances. Just as it has, in fact, happened in the present crisis, beginning with Vatican II, which, the Pope assured during the Council, was to be simply of a "pastoral" nature (and not doctrinal as were all the twenty other Ecumenical Councils).

And this is why theologians (we refer here only to true and sound theologians) know that papal infallibility has absolutely nothing to do with the present crisis in the Church. This fact does not, of course eliminate the terribly harsh and cruel ordeal presently inflicted upon the faithful sons and daughters of the Church who, in order to save their souls, must maintain their own Faith intact in spite of the hardships and difficulties in these tragic times. And we must admit that these circumstances depend upon the one presently occupying Peter's Chair. These faithful souls must also now prove their fidelity to Jesus Christ as well as to His Church (which is not at all to be identified with the personal theological theories of a pope).

Today's tragedy will prove to be even graver still for the young who risk condemnation only "a false 'Christian' religion, which is far removed from the true Church of Christ" (Pius XI's encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, which constitutes an early papal kenneing of the present-day false ecumenism).

The gravity of the hour therefore imposes equally grave obligations upon one and all, each according to his state of layman, priest, theologian, bishop, cardinal or pope. Beyond our solemn duties of prayer and penance (so insistently asked for by the Immaculate Mother of God at Lourdes and Fatima), we are all duty-bound to oppose the current modernistic ecclesial direction by resolutely defending not only our own Faith, but also that of our brethren in Christ. To this end, each person must, according to his means, come now to the aid of the Church and even remind (if one's own state in life provides the occasion and even more so if it demands it) the present Pontiff to carry out his papal duties in accordance with his high office (cf. Col. 4:17).

All of this constitutes a grave duty of charity. Failing in these sacred duties would be equivalent to mortal sin, and to act otherwise would be tantamount to betraying Christ yet once again. Such a betrayal endangers one's own as well as other souls' eternal salvation whilst making oneself a wretched collaborator in the "self-destruction" of the Church.

Hirpius (to be continued)

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Fr. Du Chateau
Via Madonna degli Angeli, 14
Italia 00049 Velletri (Roma)