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

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True God, True Faith, True Church

THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL AGONY IN HISTORY

When we speak of the "true God," we fall in a certain way into redundancy because, in God, there is no distinction between *divinity* and *truth*. God is, at one and the same time, His own one and total truth. In addition, the foundation and life of all the truths spring from Him. No created reality exists nor is authentically itself except in relation to Him. He is the ever-renewing source of all natural and supernatural reality.

By the original sin, man cut himself off from God; we lost His friendship and companionship. Simultaneously, access to the truth became very difficult and painful for us. Now, we have to make a great effort to disentangle it from the obscurity which conceals it from our eyes and desires. Corrupted by our self-centeredness, our search for God has been transformed into our most difficult undertaking. It is more difficult for us to reunite with the true God than to fashion fanciful ideas about Him in our mind or to build idols with our hands. That admirable familiarity which our first parents enjoyed in their earthly Paradise is, for us, inconceivable and inaccessible.

This state of powerlessness angers man who has attained a certain degree of natural knowledge and a corresponding self-satisfaction in this knowledge. Whereas he can uncover the secrets enclosed in the material world, the mystery of God continues to escape his grasp and, because of this, he experiences a humiliation which easily turns into revolt, denial, or confusion. Of course this reaction only aggravates the difficulties of his search and contributes no little bit to leading him further astray, often orienting him toward imaginary or corrupted divinities. Now any search for God can only be understood as for the true God. Of what use would it be to set out "on the track of God" (J. Rivière), if one should be mistaken as to the very nature of the Cause of Causes, of the Supreme Good, and if one should thereby multiply the evils inherent in our wounded condition?

Since today there exists a sort of blindness, reinforced by laicism in the civil society and by neo-modernism in the religious, it is more necessary than ever for us to correctly link together the true God, the true Faith, and the true Church. For in the last analysis, what is the Faith if it is not the teaching given and followed by the true Church of God? And what is the Church if it is not that of the Word descended from God? What is the Word of God if it is not the Truth of God and the Truth about God, manifesting itself and expressing itself among us? The search for the true God can only have for its end the recognition of the one True God, one in Three Persons, and the correlative rejection of false gods or of notions concerning God which have been distorted by men. Humanity struggles today in the greatest spiritual agony of its history because it has not been willing to give itself up to this evidence and from yielding itself up to the temptation of untenable forms of ecumenism.

NEITHER THE FAITH WITHOUT THE CHURCH NOR THE CHURCH WITHOUT THE FAITH

Since religion cannot be lacking in spirit and life, it follows that the true God cannot be served in anything other than the true Faith and the true Church of the divine Word of God. The aphorism "Outside the Church...." remains and will always remain rigorously precise regarding the absolute nature of this truth and the required response of humanity as a whole to it, even if, in the daily journey of individual souls, the desire of the true Faith and the good will of non-believers are accepted by the Son of God who has offered his life for all, while some of the culpable children of the Church dangerously alienate themselves from It. These certitudes, formerly taught universally by the apostolic hierarchy, must be presented for the understanding of one and all. St. Francis de Sales wrote it so perfectly:

Neither faith outside the Church nor the Church without the faith can save us."

From the viewpoint of truth, God, the Faith, and the Church can only be one. God can only teach the truth; the Faith can only announce it; the Church can only diffuse it and live it. Only the true Faith fully instructs souls; only the true Church leads them, with certitude, into the bosom of God. This *totality* of God living and true, of His doctrine, and of the institution by which He wished to prolong Himself in time, imperatively controls the salvation of each individual and of humanity. To willingly turn oneself away from It leads no less inevitably to eternal damnation.

A STRANGE LACK OF LOGIC

Consequently, it is not surprising that in a similar logic of imperative truth, both in the divine order and by its very nature, the true Faith requires being taught to all peoples. Man cannot by his own power set himself upon the way of salvation if he has not been enlightened, by this superior and infallible light, regarding his Creator, his Redeemer, and himself. One can without doubt also add that he could not fruitfully receive understanding of the truth if he had not been called upon by Heaven to desire and seek it. Regardless of the method of transmission used - formal instruction, works of charity, the bearing of exemplary witness - religious truth must be diffused by man among his fellow men, and the true God has clearly confided the task to the true Church. Our era gives evidence of a strange lack of logic: it extols secular knowledge for all, although this is only a matter of obtaining relative benefits. But when it is a matter of the truth that saves man from his most profound misfortune (i.e., the darkness in which he is immersed immediately upon birth), it is then only a question of discretionary option and of religious liberty, and is left to the sovereign evaluation of our ignorance and our infirmities. By an unceasing deception, the enemies of the Faith continually depict the divine truth as the adversary of human liberty, whereas it is in fact the origin of it, the mother and perfect teacher of it, one could say. What have they themselves to offer to disoriented minds if not but a basically oppressive liberty of satisfaction of the passions and the spirit of domination?

THE OBSCURE ECUMENISM

Undoubtedly, it will be pointed out to us that the Pope is making efforts to win back to the divine truth the ground he had too lightly sacrificed to the benefit of the "will of man" and of a laicized world. Yet, for all that, he hasn't renounced the ambiguities of language which mislead souls nor those postures of false humility, which consist of making a case against the previous centuries while persevering in the present errors.

The reigning Pope writes:

The Catholic Church rejoices when the other Christian communities [meaning the non-Catholic communities, where doctrinal errors have abounded for centuries - *Ed.*] announce the Gospel [the *same* Gospel?! - *Ed.*] with Her [really, "with Her?" - *Ed.*] while recognizing that the means of salvation have been entrusted to Her in fullness [Have the means of salvation also been granted by Heaven to those expressions of faith swarming with errors contrary to the truth willed by God? - *Ed.*].

Such remarks surely give proof of a culpable inexactitude in conferring even a partial legitimacy to heretical or schismatic churches outside the Catholic Church, which, for 20 centuries, the unanimity of Popes, Doctors, and theologians has presented as the necessary guarantor and guardian in the order of the Faith and of salvation. Let us rather listen to St. Francis de Sales in his controversies with "the brothers who have been led astray," as he called the protestants:

All these discourses....are but daydreams. Withdraw yourselves from the hands of those who have a mania for building up false systems which don't adjust their conceptions to the faith, but the faith to their conceptions.

The neo-modernist viewpoint delights in a vague romantic notion which embraces all the religions and de-emphasizes the perversity of error.

Must not the human race attain unity by a plurality of modes of thought, of action, of culture, and of civilization? Does not such an interpretation correspond at least in part to the wisdom and the providence of which God has given evidence with regard to His creatures (Pope John Paul II)?

Believers and non-believers are thus invited to enter into an evolutive spiral which will conduct them to unity by plurality, as if the deepest doctrinal differences could, solely by virtue of a spell-binding phraseology, change into complementary portions of the one single truth (to which they do not cease to oppose themselves). In a chimerical view of the spirit, one counts on the autonomous development of the individual or collective conscience (one no longer knows which very clearly) to advance the reign of God among those widely scattered wills, who do not want it at any price. For, finally, of what God are we speaking? Is this not mocking the true God, who, by his Word and the Holy Spirit, has prescribed exactly the opposite attitude: a teaching Church, a precise doctrine, a morality without compromise? Neo-modernism wishes to make absolutely no mention of the absence of, or the persistent aversion to, the true God, while at the same time errors relative to the true Faith and the true Church produce deep and often fatal wounds to souls, wounds rendered incurable by purely human forces because of the juxtaposition of errors. It is truly extraordinary that one no longer finds in the great religious orders solid theologians to denounce this nonsense. How can love of the living and true God develop in a pagan or laicized culture where no divine seed is either sent or received? In short, one denies the Sovereign Master the right to take possession of His creature and make His habitation in her.

It is to be feared that this passive and distorting attitude reveals a demeanor of fear at the same time as a lack of faith. To make up for this deficiency, an excessively meditative searching is substituted, giving the false illusion to those masses immersed in darkness that they find themselves at the dawning of a new day. But all this new theology collapses before a single word of the Gospel:

Now this is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent (Jn. 17:3).

The Fathers of the Church, faithful interpreters of Sacred Scripture, have refused to devalue this word and they enlighten us still more when they say:

False doctrine must not take possession of the celestial words to make them understood in a sense which is contrary to their meaning (St. Hilary).



Robert Duncan is "consecrated" as coadjutor of the Pittsburgh Episcopal Diocese in a ceremony held in the cathedral of St. Paul in the Catholic diocese of Pittsburgh (April 27, 1996). The Episcopalians celebrated their "holy eucharist" on one of the cathedral's altars. Catholic Bishop of Pittsburgh, Donald Wuerl, assisted at the ceremonies (above, far left). This was done under pretext that the Episcopalians could not find any better or bigger building. (See *Ut Unum Sint*, 42.)



GRANTING "INFALLIBILITY" TO MERELY HUMAN WORDS

The failings of the Apostolic See, which during the past 30 years has been under the influence of neo-modernism, obvious or covert, only adds force to the perils which menace Christianity, and each and every Christian: paganism, laicism, monotheism without Christ the Savior, and the excessive attempts to find in every non-Christian attitude some germ of truth, while making no mention of the false opinions or errors which oppose themselves more or less violently to Catholicism. We say with extreme sorrow that there is a great deal of falsehood and cowardice involved in this disastrous behavior, because those in the highest responsible positions know perfectly well that the true and living God cannot find, in a world dominated by error, the adoration due to Him, nor the response of sacrificial love (or sanctified love, they are one and the same) that He expects of His creatures. They know the refusal of the True God, of the true Faith, and of the true Church, constitute the greatest obstacle to salvation. But neo-modernism, having attained the pinnacle of power, forces them to diffuse a doctrine in which disputed questions are instituted as official truths. The ecclesiastical power doesn't hesitate to abusively use the divine authority with which it is invested to give a new appearance to God, to the Faith, and to the Mystical Body of Christ. It is not excessive to maintain that we find ourselves in the presence of a form of confrontation against the Divinity which is directed with skill and perseverance.

Several decades ago the historian Jaques Zeiller praised the papacy of the third century for conducting itself as....:

...[T]he guardian of a purely religious deposit which it did not deem itself commissioned to transcribe into the terminology of a fixed philosophy.

One might believe that this rigorous mind would not have appreciated those who are so carried away as to celebrate....:

...[T]he great new vision of man and of all that which is human which Vatican Council II has proposed, in particular with *Gaudium et Spes*.

And here let us underline that cleverness that consists of defending oneself with an institution as prestigious as the Council when one wants to distance oneself from Tradition. But the use of the defense of the Council, doesn't it signify in reality "the defense of myself, for my own shadowy ideas and perceptions?"¹ May John Card. Newman forgive us for borrowing his famous formula in the present instance! Since it isn't very modest to praise oneself, one praises an official text which one has played a primary role in editing. That confers a certain credibility to an assembly which, as it evolved, gave off a strong odor of being gang-hijacked, as we know today.

After 30 years of doctrinal confusion, our era will have at least learned, in a most brutal and sorrowful way, that whereas the Church surrenders all claims to pronounce infallibly *in the name of the Lord* to strengthen the faith in souls, she succumbs to the temptation to *infallibilize* merely human words. We know the offensive has been conducted with secular means and support. The results have surpassed the expectations of the subversives. We can reflect with St. Hilary:

...[T]he dissimulation of these irreligious people is so great that the people of God can find themselves living under bishops of the antichrist.

The humble, adoring, and missionary Christianity of yesteryear wavers in the certitudes that it held from God Himself. It has given way to a "pontifical-collegial-popular" uniformity which is arrogant and sure of itself, powerfully successful in the "media," which fastens on it the evocation of liberty, progress, and the rights of man, regardless of the degree of unreality, of deception, and of excess contained in these words.

TRIPLE LOYALTY

Turning themselves from the divinely revealed Truth, they more and more wink in the direction of the desolate monotheisms which obstinately refuse the salvific Trinity and, consequently, the living relation between God and man. They affect to believe in the possibility of several revelations, not even fearing to ratify as divine those oppositions and contradictions which issue from the disordered imaginations of men. They neutralize the missionary activity of the Church in exalting, in the name of a democratic evangelization, the validity of laicism or of pagan cultures loaded with poisons for the soul. They no longer want to know of the misery of man nor of the redemptive grace; they prefer to dream of an automatic and universal salvation.

In the face of this nonsense, how healthy it is to refresh oneself at the true sources of Christian faith! St. Irenaeus wrote:

The most gifted speaker among the leaders of the churches will not teach any other doctrine, for no one is greater than the Master, neither will the poorest speaker diminish this institution, because the faith, being always one and the same, can neither be enriched by one who can speak a great deal about it nor be impoverished by one who can speak but little.

The holy bishop of Geneva, St. Francis de Sales, holds to the same teaching in alluding to the grandeurs and limits of the very highest apostolic authority:

If the name Peter makes us recognize him as chief, the name Simon warns us that he was not unlimited chief, but obedient and subordinate chief....Our Lord is Lord and Master in his own right: St. Peter only administers for Him.

Is not the same fidelity, although with less responsibility, demanded of each Catholic *vis-a-vis* the true God, the true Faith, the true Church? Pseudo-humanistic universalism and inter-religious pandemonium will not be driven out except at this price, the grace of God supplying. It doesn't seem to us that the grace of this triple fidelity can be honestly requested nor obtained without the decisive restoration of the Holy sacrifice of the Mass in its essence and permanent authenticity. The Divine Truth is not divisible at the pleasure of the members of the Church-teaching or of the members of the Church-taught.

Ignatius

Courrier de Rome of November, 1995

¹ *Apologia pro me ipso, id est pro unbris et imaginibus meis?*