



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)"

May 2003 No. 52

The Errors of Vatican II

PART III:

In Part 1 of what promises to be a lengthy serialization, we discussed the "mentality" of the Second Vatican Council *in general*. In this overview, we especially highlighted its ambiguous nature as to the law, how at the outset it presented itself to the world, and some general contradictions and omissions in some of its texts.

In Part 2, we began to summarize the errors ascribed to Vatican II *in particular*, starting with a basic division of its errors into those which are *doctrinal* and those which are *pastoral* (recognizing that such a distinction is not always well-demarcated). In Part III we will concentrate on the doctrinal errors concerning: *1)* the "Priesthood," *2)* the "Incarnation," "Redemption" and the "Idea of Man," *3)*the "Kingdom of God."

4) Errors Concerning the "Priesthood"

> Vatican II is inclined toward an erroneous idea of the priesthood, reducing it to a function of the "people of God," who are arbitrarily identified with the Church. *Lumen Gentium* §13 [hereafter *LG*], reads:

...Hence it is that the People of God is not only an assembly of various peoples, but in itself is made up of different ranks. This diversity among its members is either by reason of their duties-some exercise the sacred ministry for the good of their brethren-or is due to their condition and manner of life-many enter the religious state and, intending to sanctify by the narrower way, stimulate their brethren by their example....

Therefore, the "sacred function" is conceived as an "order" of the "People of God," a term that literally expresses the idea of class, order, state, in itself and within the larger entity. And in keeping with the progressive mentality imposed during the Council, it also represents not only a part, but also and above all, a function, the latter term having no Latin equivalent. This "function" is realized in different "offices" (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*§§2,4 [hereafter *PO*]). It is an "office" before being a "power." The priest is no longer the "priest of God"; on the contrary, he is the "priest of the people of God," which legitimates him in his "function." This is contrary to the entire tradition of the Church and her divine constitution.

> It is contrary to the historic truth of Tradition and the New Testament that, from the outset, Our Lord established some of His specific followers as ministers, as is stated in *PO* §2:

However, the Lord also appointed certain men as ministers, in order that they might be united in one body in which "all the members have not the same function" (Rom. 12:4). These men were to hold in the community of the faithful the sacred power of Order, that of offering sacrifice and forgiving sins, and were to exercise the priestly office publicly on behalf of men in the name of Christ....

The above-quoted text seeks to legitimate attributing "power through orders" to the need for the unity of the society of Christians by making it substantively depend on the needs of an alleged "community" or "People of God." But Our Lord did not take His ministers from "the community of Christians." On the contrary, He began by choosing His ministers-the Apostles-and He formed them since, in turn, they formed Christians. He chose His "ministers" even before a "community of Christians" existed. He did not form the Christian militia by beginning with foot soldiers! He began with the officers, since they form the foot soldiers.

> As stated in *Lumen Gentium* (§10), Vatican II illicitly *equalizes* the proper meaning of the "ministerial priesthood" with that of the "common priesthood" of the faithful:

Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood are none the less ordered one to another; each in its own proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ.

Thus, the two forms of the "one priesthood of Christ" are placed on the same level. Nothing is said of "subordination," but rather, "reciprocal ordination." Thus, it speaks of two evidently equal functions of "the one priesthood of Christ." This parity, already *in itself contrary* to the deposit of Faith, seems to hide a subordination of the "ministerial" priesthood to the priesthood of the faithful, since, for the Council, the faithful seem to make up "the People of God," which has its own meaning. In Vatican II, the priesthood is legitimated by having a "function" within it. The difference in essence and degree between the two priesthoods is never explained: it remains at the level of a simple verbal statement.

> The Second Vatican Council plays with a deficient definition of "priest." Priests are defined, above all, in terms of their being the bishops' "cooperators" (*PO* §4). "Because it is joined with the episcopal order the office of priests shares in the authority by which Christ himself builds up and sanctifies and rules his Body" (*PO* §2; see also *LG* §28). Vatican II seems to have wanted, so to speak, to compress the figure of the priest into the "People of God," by erasing, to the extent possible, his difference from the faithful, and on the other hand, above all, by picturing his main quality as that of being the bishop's subordinate "cooperator."

> The false assertion, contrary to all of Tradition as well as to the Council of Trent (Sess. XXIII, ch. 1, Dz. 957) that, among priestly "functions," the premier one is preaching and not the celebration of the Holy Mass. *PO* (§4) states:

The People of God is formed into one in the first place by the Word of the living God, which is quite rightly sought from the mouth of priests. For since nobody can be saved who has not first believed, it is the first task of priests as co-workers of the bishops to preach the gospel of god to all men. In this way they carry out the Lord's command: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15), and thus set up and increase the People of God.

On the contrary, in the first place, the priest is defined by "the power to consecrate, offer, and dispense... the Body and Blood" of Christ and, in the second place, by "the power to remit or retain sins" (Trent, *op.cit*). Preaching is *not necessary* to the definition of the priest. One need only think of the great saints whose mission was realized above all by their ministry of confession, *e.g.*, St. Leopold of Padua or St. Padre Pio.

> Vatican II devalues ecclesiastical celibacy (*PO* § 16):

Perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the kingdom of heaven was recommended by Christ the Lord (Mt. 19:12). It has been freely accepted and laudably observed by many Christians down through the centuries as well as in our own time, and has always been highly esteemed in a special way by the Church as a feature of priestly life. For it is at once a sign of pastoral charity and an incentive to it as well as being in a special way a source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world. It is true that it is not demanded of the priesthood by its nature. This is clear from the practices of the primitive Church and the tradition of the Eastern Churches where in addition to those-including all bishops-who choose from the gift of grace to preserve celibacy, there are also many excellent married priests.

That ecclesiastical celibacy "is not demanded of the priesthood by its nature" is false because it is contrary to all of Catholic Tradition, which has interpreted it in this sense because of Christ's "recommendation" in Matthew 19:12. St. Paul confirms to us that the early Church had the same opinion. He exalts virtuous celibacy, considering it to be the best state for "giving things to the Lord" equally for men and women (I Cor. 7:1, 29ff., 32ff.). To say that celibacy is not necessary to the nature of the priesthood only means that a married man could become a priest by keeping the juridical state of marriage but not its usage, *i.e.*, by separating himself from his wife. In no way does this mean that priests can be married and have children, like the ministers of heretics and schismatics. In I Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6, St. Paul writes that, among other things, whoever wishes to become a bishop "must have only one wife." This has always been interpreted as saying that it is necessary for priests and bishops not to be remarried widowers.

> The Second Vatican Council repeatedly refers to the priest as the "president of the assembly," as if such a definition were essential to the priest's "function" in the Holy Mass. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (§33) and *LG* (§26) refer to the "holy presidency of the Bishop."

For it is by the apostolic herald of the Gospel that the People of God is called together and gathered so that all who belong to this people, sanctified as they are by the Holy Spirit, may offer themselves a "living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" (Rom. 12:1). [*PO* (§2)]

Therefore the Eucharistic celebration is the center of the assembly of the faithful over which the priest presides. Hence priests teach the faithful to offer the divine victim to God the Father in the sacrifice of the Mass and with the victim to make an offering of their whole life...(PO, §5).

5) Errors Concerning the "Incarnation," "Redemption/ and the "Idea of Man"

Vatican II is imbued with an erroneous conception of the "Incarnation."

In fact, this error asserts that, by His Incarnation, the Son of God somehow unites Himself to all men (*Gaudium et Spes*, §22 [hereafter *GS*]), as if the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, by incarnating Himself into a real man, into an individual having existed historically, was united by this to all other men; and as if each man, solely by the fact of being human, of having been born, finds himself united to Christ *without knowing it*. By this, the idea of the Holy Church is that it is no longer the "Mystical Body of Christ" and, therefore, no longer the Holy Church of those who believe in Christ and are baptized. Therefore, the "People of God" which is the Church (of Christ) tends to coincide simply with humanity itself.

> Vatican II is inspired with an erroneous concept of the "Redemption." *Lumen Gentium* §7 says:

In the human nature united to himself, the son of God, by overcoming death through his own death and resurrection, redeemed man and changed him into a new creation. For by communicating his Spirit, Christ mystically constitutes as his body those brothers of his who are called together from every nation.

Here, the Redemption is incorrectly represented. "Redemption" is the possibility given all men through the Incarnation and by the sacrifice of the Cross of Our Lord to be saved, a possibility lost forever if one does not become or if one doesn't want to become sincerely Catholic, except in the case of invincible ignorance (with only God knowing the number of these cases) in which grace acts through the intermediary of baptism of desire. In this changed conception of the Redemption, it is seen as already realized for each man from the moment when it is declared that man has been transformed "into a new creation," not because he has become Catholic with the help of the Holy Spirit and guided by actual grace, but strictly by the fact of the Incarnation's advent and of Christ's "death and resurrection." This is the theory known as that of "anonymous Christianity," already presented by Maurice Blondel and developed by Henri de Lubac and, in particular, Karl Rahner. It is a very grave doctrinal error because it declares personal justification as being already realized for every man without any participation of his will or free choice and, so, without any need of his conversion, faith, baptism or works. Redemption is guaranteed to all, as if sanctifying grace were ontologically present in each man just because he is man. This false doctrine denies original sin because our Faith teaches that, by the inheritance of original sin with which they come into the world, men do not possess grace at birth.

Picture

> There is present in Vatican II an unjustified and non-Catholic exaltation of man just because he is man.

In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear. For Adam, the first man, was a type of him who was to come, Christ the Lord, Christ the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to himself and brings light to his most high calling. It is no wonder, then, that all the truths mentioned so far should find in him their source and their most perfect embodiment (G,S §22).

He who is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1 : 15), is himself the perfect man who has restored in the children of Adam that likeness to God which had been disfigured ever since the first sin. Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him, has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare. For, by his incarnation, he, the son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin (GS§7).

What is affirmed in G/S"§22 is that Christ, having been incarnated, "fully reveals man to himself and brings light to his most high calling," elevated human nature to a "dignity beyond compare." This makes it sound as if our Lord did not come to save us from sin and eternal damnation, but to make us fully conscious of the unequaled dignity naturally inherent in us.

This assertion of the Second Vatican Council openly contradicts the Church's constant teaching according to which Jesus came into the world to *save* man, not to *exalt* him. Christ came to make man conscious of the fact that he is a sinner vowed to eternal damnation if he does not repent and convert to Him. There is no question in the mission of Christ of having him discover his "dignity beyond compare" in the meaning of *Gaudium et Spes*.

> The obvious theological error contained in *Gaudium et Spes* (§24) which states, "...if man is the only creature on earth God has wanted for its own sake, man can fully discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself," as if man possesses such value in himself that it would cause God to create him.

Here we put our finger on the man-centered turn taken by Vatican II. It is an obviously absurd assertion and incompatible with the idea of divine creation from nothing, which is a dogma of the Faith. The perennial teaching of the Church is that the infinitely just God created all things, including man, "for Himself," for His own glory, and not because of any intrinsically-possessioned value rendering him independent of God (Who made man). Such a doctrinal deviation also alters the exact meaning necessary to define Creation. Moreover, it alters the true meaning that is necessary to attribute to the commandments of loving our neighbors as ourselves (for the love of God), and of considering all men as brothers. In the Council's changed definition, these commandments are no longer justified by the love of God, Who wants from us this charity toward our neighbor (since we are all sinners), and because of the fact that we all descend from Him, God the Father. Rather, this Council document asserts that these commandments are justified by a superior dignity accorded man because he is man.

The Church has never denied man's superior dignity in relation to other creatures, which belongs to him because God created him in His image and likeness. But this dignity lost its sublime character because of original sin, which stripped man of this likeness. Thus, it is by sanctifying grace that man is supernaturally able to know and love God and to enjoy the Beatific Vision. In the Catholic meaning, the dignity of man cannot be considered as an ontological characteristic [*i.e.*, a characteristic of *being-Ed*] that imposes respect for all choices, because this dignity depends on right will turned toward the Good and is therefore a *relative* and not an *absolute* value.

> Vatican II includes an erroneous concept of equality among men founded on its false idea of the Redemption discussed above.

All men are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God's image; they have the same nature and origin, and being redeemed by Christ, they enjoy the same divine calling and destiny; there is here basic equality between all men and it must be given ever greater recognition (GS§29).

The Church has always taught that men are equal before God, but certainly not because she believes that all men are already objectively joined to and already saved by the Incarnation as the above quote announces. The conception of the notion of "equality" in Vatican II is hardly orthodox, but this conception becomes the basis of the dignity of the person. The Council then uses this "dignity of the person" to defend a Protestant notion of "religious liberty" because it is based on freedom of conscience, that is, on individual opinion in matters of faith and not on the Catholic principle of authority.

> Vatican II devalues the effect of Original Sin and thereby obscures the notion of "Original Sin." In its Article 22, *Gaudium et Spes* states:

He who is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1: 15), is himself the perfect man who has restored in the children of Adam that likeness to God which had been disfigured ever since the first sin.

This, however, is not the Catholic Church's doctrine. On the contrary, she has always taught that after original sin, Adam and his descendants lost this likeness. It was hardly a simple "alteration." To declare that this likeness was conserved, although imperfectly, amounts to opening the way to a heterodox conception of the Incarnation already treated above.

6) Errors Concerning the Kingdom of God"

> The mentality of the Second Vatican Council alters the traditional notion of the "expansion" or "growth" of the Kingdom of God on earth by the visible Church. In fact, this "expansion" or "growth" is entrusted to the "People of God" and is described in *LG* §13:

The one People of God is accordingly present in all the nations of the earth, since its citizens, who are taken from all nations, are of a kingdom whose nature is not earthly but heavenly. All the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit so that "he who dwells in Rome knows those in most distant parts to be his members." Since the kingdom of Christ is not of this world (cf. Jn. 18:36), the Church or People of God which establishes this kingdom does not take away anything from the temporal welfare of any people. Rather she fosters and takes to herself, insofar as they are good, the abilities, the resources and customs of peoples. In so taking them to herself she purifies, strengthens and elevates them — This character of universality which adorns the People of God is a gift from the Lord himself whereby the Catholic ceaselessly and efficaciously seeks for the return of all humanity and all its goods under Christ the Head in the unity of his Spirit.

There is an alien element introduced here, represented by the "temporal welfare of any people" as an elevated and ennobled integral part of the "People of God" and, therefore, of the Kingdom of God which is realized on earth. This is an ambiguous and unacceptable notion because this "temporal welfare" is built not only on "customs" but also on "resources," that is, a people's material goods. This is an absurd idea that results in a naturalist vision of the Kingdom of God.

As a consequence of the two previous errors identified above, Vatican II inspires a collectivist vision of the Kingdom of God. In fact, from *LG* §13 it follows that the collective individuality of each people, with its "temporal welfare," becomes a member as such-as a value in and of itself-of the "People of God," so that it comes to be "introduced" into the Kingdom which is realized in this world.

> The Second Vatican Council incorrectly defines the contribution of the lay faithful in the "expansion" of the Kingdom of God on earth "so that the world might be imbued by the spirit of Christ." The value placed on the word "imbued" is very far from the true notion of "conversion." Above all, this contribution of the lay faithful is inevitably and wrongly meant to be in service of material progress, following the example of secular culture, which must make "human and Christian freedom" advance in the entire world:

...The faithful must, then, recognize the inner nature, the value and the ordering of the whole of creation to the praise of God. Even by the secular activity they must aid one another to greater holiness of life, so that the world may be filled with the spirit of Christ and may the more effectively attain its destiny in justice, in love and peace. The laity enjoy a principle role in the universal fulfillment of this task. Therefore, by their competence in secular disciplines and by their activity, interiorly raised up by grace, let them work earnestly in order that created goods may serve the utility of all men according to the plan of the creator and the light of his word. May these goods be more suitably distributed among all men and in their own way may they be conducive to universal progress of the Church, will Christ increasingly illuminate the whole of human society with his saving light. (*LG* §36)

So, the naturalism treated immediately above is now admixed with another alien element represented by the lay myth of progress, with its constant exaltation of work, technology, "civil" culture, egalitarianism, and (human and Christian) freedom, which this effectively denies.

> There is in Vatican II an unbelievable assertion regarding the Holy Ghost:

...Constituted Lord by his resurrection and given all authority in heaven and on earth (Acts 2:36; Mt. 28: 18) Christ is now at work in the hearts of men by the power of his Spirit, not only does he arouse in them a desire for the world to come but he quickens, purifies, and strengthens the generous aspirations of mankind to make life more humane and conquer the earth for his purpose.

The text seem to say that, by the fact itself of our longing for future glory, the Holy Spirit also breathes into us the longing for earthly happiness, evoked by the expression "make life more humane."

> Incomprehensibly, Vatican II states that "the Paschal Mystery elevates human activity to its perfection."

In *Gaudium et Spes* (§38) the Holy Eucharist is defined as follows:

...Christ left to his followers a pledge of this hope and food for the journey in the sacrament of faith, in which natural elements, the fruits of mans cultivation, are changed into the glorified Body and Blood, a supper of brotherly fellowship and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

The Second Vatican Council does not mention "transubstantiation" and it introduces a Protestant idea of the Mass.

According to Vatican II, how does the "Paschal Mystery" elevate human activity to perfection? -Answer: by the fact that what is changed "into the glorified Body and Blood" are "natural elements" obviously *refined by man*. In whatever the earth, man's activity produces the bread and wine which are then "changed" into the Body and Blood. Such a relationship insinuates the false idea of participation-whatever it might be-of man's activity in the conversion (more exactly, the "transubstantiation") of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ by the priest. This idea is also found in the "Eucharistic Liturgy" of the *Novus Ordo* Mass:

You are blessed, Lord, God of the universe: by your goodness we have received this bread, fruit of the earth and of men's work: we present it to you in order for it to become for us the nourishment of eternal life.

> Vatican II is guilty of the deadly Article 39 in *Gaudium et Spes* which in the conclusion of its third chapter titled "Man's Activity in the Universe" (*GS* §§33-39), proposes a final perversion of the idea of the Kingdom of God taught by the Church. This Chapter III contains the outline of the idea of the collective salvation of humanity, and also that all of God's creation was made for man. This is achieved by misinterpreting Romans 8:21 to say that "all of creation," created by God to serve man, will equally obtain eternal salvation.

We know neither the moment of the consummation of the earth and of man nor the way the universe will be transformed. The form of this world, distorted by sin, is passing away and we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling and a new earth in which righteous dwells, whose happiness will fill and surpass all the desires of peace arising in the hearts of men. Then with death conquered the sons of God will be raised in Christ and what was shown in weakness and dishonor will put on the imperishable: charity and its works will remain and all of marriage, which God made for man, will be set free from its bondage to decay (*LG* §39).

Article 39 continues with another strange idea:

We have been warned, of course, that it profits man nothing if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself. Far from diminishing our concern to develop this earth, the expectancy of a new earth should spur us on, for it is here that the body of a new human family grows, foreshadowing in some way the age which is to come. That is why, although we must be careful to distinguish earthly progress clearly from the increase of the kingdom of Christ, such progress is of vital concern to the kingdom of God, insofar as it can continue to the better ordering of human society.

This appears to mean that the "new earth" is already present in the "present earth," since "the body of the new human family grows [here], foreshadowing in some way the age which is to come." Take note that the *prefiguring* of the Kingdom of God is not given by the Church Militant (which is the orthodox teaching), but by the growth of "the body of a new family." And this growth of the body of a new human family is calculated on universal progress, universal fraternity, and to human and Christian freedom (LG§§13,36; GS §§30,34,38). This is to say, the Kingdom of God which is partially realized in this world, is no longer made up of the Church Militant, but of *humanity*. Humanity is the subject which brings about the Kingdom, and which will enter it one day *en masse*. In fact, Article 39 of *LG* concludes:

When we have spread on earth the fruits of our nature and our enterprise-human dignity, brotherly communion, and freedom-according to the command of the Lord and in his Spirit, we will find them once again, cleansed this time from the stain of sin, illuminated and transformed, when Christ presents to his Father and eternal and universal kingdom "of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace." Here on earth the kingdom is mysteriously present; when the Lord comes it will enter into its perfection.

This is a naturalistic, millenarian vision that calls for the religion of Humanity. It is completely foreign to anything the Catholic Church has ever taught. It is the complete antithesis to the exclusively supernatural reality of the Kingdom of God and of the consummation of the end of time which has been revealed to us by Our Lord and always maintained by the Church.

Canonicus

Translated by Suzanne M. Rini and edited by Fr. Kenneth Novak. All quotes from Vatican Council II and post-Conciliar documents are taken from *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Harry J. Costello and Rev. Austin Flannery, O.P. (Costello Publishing Co., Inc., 1975). All Scripture references are from the *Douay-Rheims Bible* (TAN Books and Publishers).

[Index](#), [Part I](#), [Part II](#), [Part III](#), [Part IV](#), [Part V](#), [Part VI](#), [Part VII](#), [Part VIII](#)