



si si no no

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

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The 1988 Consecrations

This issue of the *Angelus* English-Language edition of **SISINONO** is the first installment of the second half of a double study regarding the "state of necessity" invoked by Archbishop Lefebvre to justify his consecration of four bishops on June 30, 1988. In our issues of *SISINONO* of **July** and **September** of 1999, we discussed the *theological* aspects. With this issue and the ones to follow, we will discuss the **canonical** aspects. These remarks are for those who admit the existence of an extraordinary crisis in the Catholic Church but do not know how to justify the extraordinary action of Archbishop Lefebvre on June 30, 1988 when, lacking permission from Pope John Paul II, he transmitted the power of episcopal orders to members of the Fraternity founded by him.

CANONICAL STUDY – PART I

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Dogma Is Defended By Maintaining the Mass of All Time

1. Archbishop Lefebvre and the So-Called "Lefebvrists"

Ten years ago, 83-year-old Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, sensing that he was approaching the hour of his death, consecrated four bishops without waiting for the pontifical mandate (promised in exhausting negotiations, but always postponed or subjected to destabilizing conditions) in order to provide for the survival of the Society of Saint Pius X. The Society had been founded by him in November 1970 to the request of a group of French seminarians who asked his assistance to maintain sound Catholic doctrine, to preserve the Catholic seminaries imbued with that faith, and to celebrate the Holy Mass of the so-called Tridentine rite. As a consequence of these episcopal consecrations, Archbishop Lefebvre, already considered "rebellious" for refusing to do away with the Society as the local Ordinary (H.E. Bishop Mamie) had arbitrarily ordered him to do and suspended *a divinis* for having ordained priests, was excommunicated *ad factum* and doubly accused of being disobedient to the Pope and schismatic.

By this excommunication, the Holy See sent Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society founded by him [with Rome's canonical approval and blessing - *Ed.*] into exile. The so-called "Lefebvrists," a label applied to clerics and laity, were made unpopular. We say "so-called" Lefebvrists because a "Lefebvristism" does not exist and never existed. A "doctrine" of Archbishop Lefebvre, in fact, does not exist. His enemies have tried to write him off as "schismatic" or even "heretical," but as anyone knows who has studied the facts, these accusations are false.

Archbishop Lefebvre is not the head of a sect. He never wished to establish one. He is not to be considered the head of "traditionalists" in general. His religious thought, which is known from his sermons and various exegetic and homiletic writings, is absolutely orthodox and permeated with zeal for Catholic Truth. He has been marginalized and persecuted because he wished to remain loyal in faith and work to the constant teaching of the Church, without respect of persons. The so-called "Lefebvrists" are nothing but Catholics faithful to what the Church has taught for almost 200 centuries up to the Second Vatican Council. Strictly speaking, therefore, it is not correct to call them "traditionalists." It is better said that they are faithful to Catholic Tradition. The Tradition in Catholicism is precisely fidelity to the dogma consecrated by the Magisterium of the Church.

2. A Corrupt Liturgical Rite

Anyone who wishes to be faithful to dogma must be obedient to the principle of salvation proclaimed by our risen Lord, "Be you faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life" (Apoc. 2:10). The novelties which have emerged from Vatican II are disturbing and cannot be accepted.

Here is a council of the Church held with the express purpose of opening the Church up to the world [*i.e.*, *aggiornamento*], an intention unlike any other in the history of the Church. It declared itself only a pastoral council and not a dogmatic one, hence a trustee of a spurious magisterium. It is responsible for disseminating grave ambiguities in doctrine. It gave a new "ecumenical" definition of the Catholic Church, promoted a "collegiality" of a democratic or semi-conciliarist sort, and advertised freedom of conscience of the liberal-Jacobean variety. The "spirit" of this council conceived the *Novus Ordo Missae*, that is, the "Mass of Paul VI," with its idea of a table in order to be theologically agreeable to the protestant heresies of which six participated in its very formulation. There is a question whether this Mass is theologically dubious and necessarily an ambiguous rite since it was supposed to please the heretics.

3. The "Celebrating" People

It is true that corrections were made to the scandalous first edition of the New Mass (1969). These were instigated by the indignant and documented criticisms of theologians and scholars headed by Cardinals Bacci and Ottaviani. But one notes the presence of all the same protestant heretical concepts in the definitive text of 1970.

The first of these protestant concepts is to equate the ordained priesthood with the faithful by speaking of the faithful's participation in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice in a new manner. There is ground for a new mentality believing the Mass is a "concelebration" of priest and people. This idea was condemned with great clarity by Pope Pius XII in *Mediator Dei*.¹ As a consequence of this, the priest is no longer considered the exclusive minister of the Holy Eucharist, a Catholic teaching defined by the Magisterium. The minister becomes, on the contrary, the "people of God," which "has to send the prayers of the whole human family up to God," as if it exercised a sort of priestly mediation in behalf of all humanity which is understood to include, therefore, non-believers, non-Catholics, and atheists.²

As a consequence of Vatican II, the Holy Mass - the "sacredotal" prayer of the "people of God" - has acquired an *ecumenical* significance and, therefore, the stamp of heterodoxy. The "people of God" is identified with humanity, a realization of the unity of the human race, of which unity the Holy Mass becomes a signal moment.³

The new rite expresses a depreciation of the ministry of the priest and an erroneous concept of the common priesthood of the faithful because the expiatory sacrifice celebrated by the priest is conceived as celebrated by the people, which "alone... enjoys a true priestly power, while the priest acts merely through the office entrusted to him by the community,"⁴ a thesis condemned by Pius XII in *Mediator Dei* (Dz.2300). This new definition of the Sacrifice of the Mass appears in the clearest fashion in the notorious Article 7 of *The Instruction of the Novus Ordo Missae 1970*, in which it is dared to be written:

In Missa seu Cena dominica populus Dei in unum convocatur; sacerdote praeside personamque Christi gerente, ad memoriae Domini seu sacrificium eucharisticum celebrandum - In the Mass or the Lord's Supper the People of God are called together in one place where the priest presides over them and acts in the person of Christ. They assemble to celebrate the Memorial of the Lord, which is the sacrifice of the Eucharistic.

Notice three things: **1)** the celebrant, even if representing the person of Christ, is only the president of the Assembly, as if he were a Protestant minister; **2)** it is the assembly that is gathered together in order to "celebrate" the memorial of the Lord; and **3)** the memorial of the Lord is called a "eucharistic sacrifice," but not a *propitiatory* one. This distinction would not have pleased the protestants. The text effectively expresses the idea of *expiatory* sacrifice required by the Faith. [It should be mentioned that the 1970 version of the *Instruction of the Novus Ordo Missae* was a revision under pressure from more traditional bishops of the 1969 version which is theologically worse than the 1970! (See *Pope Paul's New Mass*, "Revisions to the *Instruction Generalis*," by Michael Davies. Price: \$19.95) - *Ed.*]

4. An Ambiguous "Real Presence"

One would like to read of Article 7 (1970) would recall the dogma of transubstantiation. On the contrary, it is never mentioned. Instead, we find it replaced by an ambiguous "Real Presence," acceptable to protestants who reject transubstantiation. The 1970 text continues:

Hence the promise of Christ: "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20) applies in a special way to this gathering of the local church.

For in the celebration of the Mass whereby the Sacrifice of the Mass is perpetuated, Christ is really present in the very community which is gathered in His name, in the person of His minister and also substantially and continuously under the eucharistic species.⁵

This definition speaks as if the "Real Presence" is no longer reserved to the unique presence that results from transubstantiation, but is extended to the presence (non-sacramental) of Christ in the "assembly," in the "person of the minister," and in His Word. This same presence, which is "in a substantial and permanent manner" under the Eucharistic species, depends, according to the text, not on transubstantiation, about which it does not speak, but on the assembly being gathered together "in the name" of Christ.

Doesn't all this recall the consecration of the Lutheran heretics, who deny, as has been noted, that Holy Mass really renews the expiatory sacrifice of our Lord on Calvary?⁶ The lack of reference to transubstantiation helps us understand why all the traditional signs of faith [e.g., interior gold-plating of the sacred vessels, kneeling for Holy Communion, etc. - *Ed.*] have been taken away.⁸

5. A New Type of "Faith"

Except for the Creed, mention of the Holy Trinity has disappeared from the invocations and prayers of Holy Mass. Liberal protestants do not like it; Jews and Muslims detest it. The Holy Trinity has been replaced by an anonymous "God of the universe." It is true that the celebrant may bring up such a subject matter in his homily, but it is so vast it is frequently skipped.

As Archbishop Lefebvre insisted, the new rite is a "corruption" of the Catholic Mass. How can a rite which pleases heretics and non-Christians be suitable for Catholics? It represents for the priests that celebrate it the faith which was taught to them in seminaries drenched with liberalism and modernism. This is a new type of faith. It is ecumenical, and, even if preserving vestiges of the old Catholic faith, is syncretistic and poisoned with heresy. It is the cult of Humanity and dialogue with error placed side by side with the adoration owed to the Holy Trinity, while not yet taking its place.

A corrupt liturgical rite is a grave danger to the souls of those who assist at it. The new Mass has been one of the most bitter fruits of Vatican II. And all official Catholicism that somehow has survived the ambiguity and repeated infidelity shows signs of a seriously diseased body. Once Catholic societies and nations are suffering declines in birthrate, rebellion, vice and corruption, false religions, a variety of sects, and invasion without reprieve by Muslims.

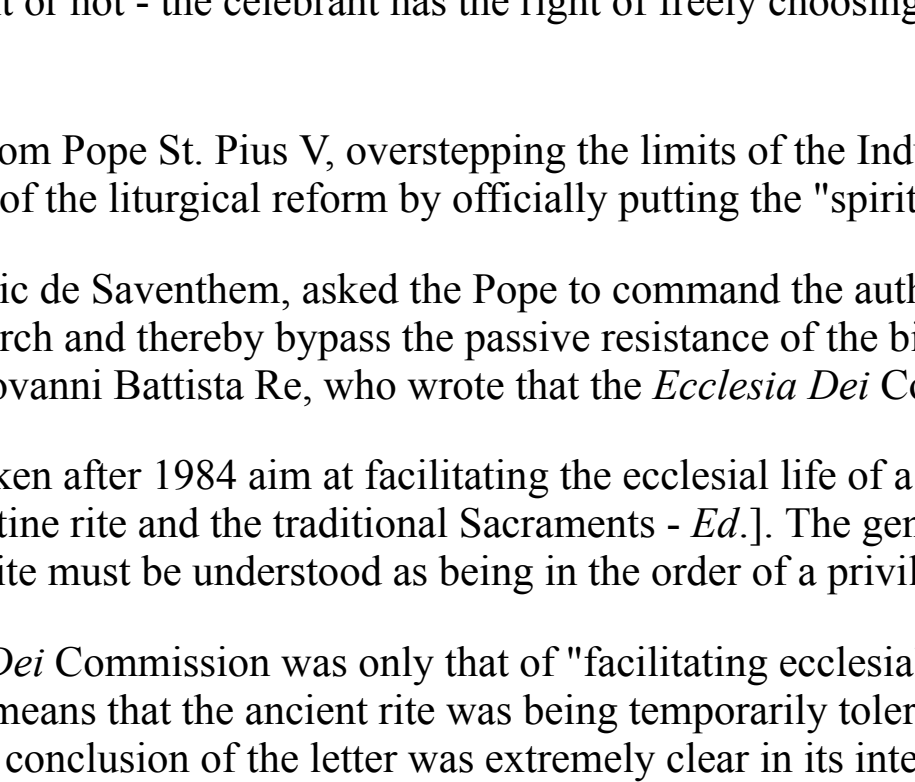
6. The Merit of Archbishop Lefebvre

Having thought it put Archbishop Lefebvre out in the cold with its arbitrary excommunication of him, the Vatican might have thought it succeeded dissolving the bastion of fidelity to dogma represented by the Society of Saint Pius X. But this is not the case. Despite material difficulties of every kind, the Society today numbers about 400 priests, has 180 seminarians in training, 120 sisters, 65 oblates, and 55 brothers. It maintains five international seminaries. It is alive and kicking, for which it thanks the Lord. A few years ago, Cardinal Ratzinger admitted his astonishment regarding the extension and apostolate of the Society.

Catholics faithful to dogma relish being able to assist at the Mass of All Times in the churches and chapels of the Society of Saint Pius X to the great and inestimable benefit of their souls. They are not constrained to recognize - against their conscience - "the legitimacy and the doctrinal correctness" of the missal promulgated by Pope Paul VI,⁹ as happens on the contrary to whomsoever frequents the Tridentine Mass conceded by the Indult of Pope John Paul II, in which Indult, for the record, this condition is found formulated. It is a matter of a recognition, which, even if implicit, is dangerous for the salvation of souls, given that the "doctrinal correctness" of the Mass of Paul VI is, as has been seen, doubtful.

We do not know if the lack of doctrinal correctness is such as to have to consider the new rite invalid *a priori*. We don't have the authority to make a definitive judgment in the matter. We know, however, that if we hold to the salvation of our soul, we must avoid the new rite at all costs, with its hyper-politicized priests and the secularized ambience that engulfs it. We are aware of owing the inestimable benefit of being able to attend the truly Catholic Mass to the persevering defense of the Faith undertaken in their times by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer, the only two Bishops who forthrightly defended it, and by the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X founded by Archbishop Lefebvre. We await with unchangeable faith in the work of God for the day when the Holy See, having returned to the sound doctrine of all time, will wipe away the unjust condemnations.

In the meantime, we thank our Lord also for saving us from the seductions laid by Rome to lead back into the "flock" those of us who persist in preferring the true Catholic Mass to that of Pope Paul VI. We make reference to the Motu proprio *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta*, issued by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the invalidly applied excommunication of Archbishop Lefebvre. It is the tenth anniversary of that document, the anniversary that some have made the object of triumphant declarations in light of the success of the so-called "Ecclesia Dei Latin Mass communities," established according to the directives and the promises contained in the papal motu proprio. It is true that over the last ten years since *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* was released, some 15 priests and 30 seminarians have left the Society of Saint Pius X. But it has held its ground for ten years, please God, even though the competition of the "Ecclesia Dei" communities has invariably moved in nearby.



Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger poses with the monks of the traditionalist Abbey Ste. Madeleine in Le Barroux France, after offering the Tridentine Mass there on September 24, Accompanying the Cardinal was Msgr. Camille Perl (3rd from right), Secretary of the Pope's Ecclesia Dei Commission.

Text below picture: Le Barroux, France. The second most important man in the Vatican didn't spell out the purpose of his visit to the abbey Ste. Madeleine here on September 22, 23 and 24, but he didn't have to. Everyone - from the traditional Benedictine monks who inhabit this extraordinary Romanesque monastery, to the hundreds of visitors who filled every corner of its church for the Pontifical Tridentine Mass offered by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger - heard the message loud and clear. As one monk explained to a visitor: "This is Rome's way of saying that they approve of us; that they haven't abandoned traditionalists." Not that the Cardinal was mute during his visit, but whatever words of encouragement he gave to the monks (whose priest-members say the traditional Mass exclusively) were said behind closed doors. His homilies - both to the Benedictine nuns of the nearby Abbaye Notre-Dame de l'Annonciation du Barroux, were he said a Tridentine Mass on Saturday; and to the monks and their visitors on Sunday - offered the kind of doctrinal richness one would expect from the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, but nothing in the way of newsmaking quotes. Neither were any provisions made for interviews with the press: indeed,....

B. The Illusion of "Ecclesia Dei"

1. The Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei Adflicta

Why do we say this *motu proprio* has given life to an illusion? Consider the facts. Issued on July 2, 1988, as if for a comment on the excommunication applied against Archbishop Lefebvre, the document wanted all those who until that moment "had been tied in some way to the movement created by Archbishop Lefebvre" to recognize their duty to not support the named "movement."⁸ At the same time they held out their hand. How?

In paragraph five of the document, the Pope manifested his will, to which he asked all the Bishops and those invested with the pastoral ministry of the Church to associate themselves, that "ecclesial communion" for the sake of the faithful who are "bound to former liturgical and disciplinary forms in the Latin tradition," by establishing measures that would guarantee their "just aspirations."⁹ Therefore, the Pope established the beginnings of a commission [*i.e.*, the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission - *Ed.*] preside over by an appointed cardinal and composed of members of the Church charged with collaborating with the competent organs and interested parties on all sides in order to facilitate "full ecclesial communion" of priests, seminarians, religious communities and individuals up till now affiliated with the Society of Saint Pius X, who desired to remain united to the Successor of Peter "preserving their spiritual and liturgical tradition, in light of the Protocol signed on May 5, 1988 by Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Lefebvre."¹⁰ [For the text of this Protocol of Accord and the archive of all the documents exchanged between Rome and Archbishop Lefebvre in the time leading up to and immediately following his consecration of the four bishops, see *Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican* available from Angelus Press. Price: \$12.45 - *Ed.*]

This famous Protocol of Accord, though not taking effect at the time, constituted the juridical base for organizing those structures which have since been called "Ecclesia Dei communities." These are generally societies of apostolic life composed initially of refugees from the Society of Saint Pius X to whom the privilege of celebrating the aforesaid Mass of St. Pius V and of maintaining "the previous liturgical and disciplinary forms" is granted. Among the first and more notable of these communities are the Benedictine Abbey of St. Madeleine of Le Barroux, France, and the Fraternity of St. Peter.

In various aspects the autonomy accorded to these institutions, however, is rather limited.¹¹ An important point must be recalled here. In the Protocol of Accord of May 5, 1988, the Holy See acknowledged

for practical and psychological reasons, the consecration of a member of the Society as a bishop appears useful. This is why, in the framework of the doctrinal and canonical solution of reconciliation, we suggest to the Holy Father that he name a bishop chosen from within the Society, presented by Archbishop Lefebvre... (Protocol of Accord, II,5,2)

This means that Rome had in principle accepted the consecration of a bishop faithful to Tradition. Upon reflection, Archbishop Lefebvre doubted Rome's sincerity. In any case, having manifested the Protocol of Accord as the basis for the recognition of the "Ecclesia Dei communities," the official promise of a future bishop was understood. By now, such a consecration for these communities is long overdue. But, up to now there has not been even a hint. In other words, the promise has not been kept.¹²

2. An Indult Gravely Conditioned and Without a Reason for Being

We turn now to the text of the *motu proprio*. In concluding his instruction, the Pope affirmed that there was a need to respect the "spiritual desire" of the faithful "who feel attached to the Latin liturgy, by applying in a broad and generous way the directives adopted some time ago by the Apostolic See for the use of the Roman Missal according to the typical edition of 1962."¹³ To what was the Pope referring? - Answer: To his indult *Quattuor Abhinc Annos*, issued on March 10, 1984 and already cited by us, which established, for priests and faithful who had applied to their bishop for it, the possibility of receiving the privilege of celebrating and assisting at the so-called Tridentine Mass. Naturally, the granting of the privilege was subject to some conditions and among which were that the petitioners would accept "the legitimacy and the doctrinal correctness of the Roman Missal promulgated in 1970 by the Roman Pontiff, Paul VI" and that such a celebration would take place "only for the use of whoever asked for it" and in the places of worship and under the conditions established by the local ordinary. Parish churches were excluded from concession of the privilege, save extraordinary cases.¹⁴ The exercise of the privilege was subjected to notable limitations and the bishops showed themselves quite deaf to the requests of the faithful for it.¹⁵ The faithful found in conscience to the Tradition continued to assist in great number at the Masses celebrated by the priests of the Society of Saint Pius X.

In 1986, the Pope established a commission of eight cardinals of the Curia with the task of examining the situation and of preparing norms which would establish a new regulatory form for the Indult, valid for the whole Church. These norms, however, were never promulgated.¹⁶

Perhaps the most important work of this commission [which included Alfonso Cardinal Stickler (1911-1999)] concerned the question of the suppression or non-suppression on the part of Pope Paul VI of the so-called Tridentine Mass. According to these cardinals Pope Paul VI never formally suppressed this Mass on which account "no bishop has the right to prohibit a Catholic priest from saying the Tridentine Mass."¹⁷

Though it wasn't its express purpose to do so, the conclusion of this commission, which holds up under canonical scrutiny, deprives the Indult of any significant necessity. If the Tridentine Mass has never been formally suppressed and continues therefore to exist as a perfectly valid liturgy of Holy Church, celebrating it and assisting at it is a *right*, not a *privilege*, and the Indult of Pope John Paul II, which concedes the privilege for it is canonically superfluous.

3. The Passive Resistance of Bishops and the Interpretation of the Holy See

However it may be, the invitation extended to the bishops by the Pope to be "generous" in conceding the permission to celebrate the Tridentine Mass has not been welcomed. The evidence is extremely clear. The bishops turn a deaf ear. At the same time, the demand for that Mass seems to increase, perhaps because the faithful are fed up with the "liturgical anarchy" which, thanks to the Mass of Pope Paul VI, reigns in almost all the parishes universally, though degree and intensity may vary, especially in France.¹⁸

The attitude of the bishops, however, contradicts that of the Holy See only in appearance. This is the point. The Holy See has made promises, for example, the appointment of a "traditional" bishop, which it has not kept. It established the aforementioned commission of cardinals but its norms, valid for the whole Church and which contain a new regulatory form, have never been promulgated. We give here the first three of the six norms cited in the commission's summary:

- 1) In the offices of the Roman Rite, there ought to be accorded to the Latin language the honor due to it. The bishops must try to have at least one Mass in the Latin language in every important locality of their diocese on Sundays and Holy Days. Nevertheless, the readings of the Mass will be able to be done in the vernacular.
- 2) All priests are able to say, at any time, their private Masses in Latin.
- 3) For every Mass said in Latin - be the faithful present or not - the celebrant has the right of freely choosing between the Missal of Pope Paul VI (1970) and that of Pope John XXIII (1962).¹⁹

Norm No.3 makes it possible to celebrate the Mass named from Pope St. Pius V, overstepping the limits of the Indult! It is obvious why a norm of this kind has never been promulgated. It would have demonstrated plainly the failure of the liturgical reform by officially putting the "spirit of the Council" in crisis.

On October 13, 1993, then President of Una Voce, Dr. Eric de Saventhem, asked the Pope to command the authorization of the Mass and the Sacraments according to the ancient rite to be freely accessible throughout the whole Church and thereby bypass the passive resistance of the bishops. He was answered January 17, 1994 by the deputy in charge of general affairs for the Secretary of State, Msgr. Giovanni Battista Re, who wrote that the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission had conceded the use of the Roman Missal...
...under certain conditions. The diverse dispositions taken after 1984 aim at facilitating the ecclesial life of a certain number of faithful, without however rendering perpetual the previous liturgical forms [*i.e.*, the Tridentine rite and the traditional Sacraments - *Ed.*]. The general law is that of using the rite revised after the Council, on account of which the use of the previous rite must be understood as being in the order of a privilege which has an exceptional character.

This is the writing on the wall. The purpose of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission was only that of "facilitating ecclesial life" for the faithful attracted to the Tradition, but it was not allowed to "render (the ancient rite) perpetual." This phrase means that the ancient rite was being temporarily tolerated so as not to offend the sensibilities of certain faithful, but it was not to be considered a rite destined to remain. The conclusion of the letter was extremely clear in its intention. After having paid formal homage to the "safeguarding of the values which constitute a precious patrimony for the liturgical tradition of the Church," Msgr. Giovanni Battista Re continued by declaring with forceful clarity that...

...the first duty of all the faithful is that of welcoming and probing the wealth of the meanings which are found in the liturgy in force, and of doing it in the spirit of faith and obedience to the Magisterium, by avoiding all opposition harmful to ecclesial communion.²⁰

The letter concludes by reminding Dr. de Saventhem that the Holy Father hopes Una Voce [whose current international president is Mr. Michael Davies - *Ed.*] will contribute to this end.

By the way, Dr. de Saventhem replied to Msgr. Re with two follow-up letters which remained however without an answer. In the first of these letters he wrote:

That at which the faithful assist is nothing other than the innumerable different forms of eucharistic embellishments which have multiplied in the Church for 25 years, appealing to the legitimacy more or less well-grounded of the different editions of the Roman Missal of Paul VI and to the multiple options provided there.... In the majority of parishes these celebrations have been simply imposed. That's why the faithful, discouraged, had no other way of avoiding them except the silent exodus.... Finally, it is shown by the polls of the last 25 years that a progressive erosion of the faith, even among those who still frequently churches, must be taken into account. Since *lex credendi* follows *lex orandi* [*i.e.*, the law of belief follows on the law of prayer - *Ed.*], is there no need to conclude, then, that the Faith is no longer nourished by the reformed liturgy or even that this latter has accelerated the loss of faith?²¹

PROTOCOL 1411

Excerpts from the July 1999 statement issued by the Vatican which changes the direction and character of the Fraternity of St. Peter. Not included is an accompanying letter to the Fraternity's superior general effectively suspending his control over the traditionalist order and cancelling the extraordinary chapter, a meeting of leading Fraternity priests elected according to Vatican norms to discuss the order's constitution.

•From the answer to **Question 1**, which asked whether traditionalist priests may "freely use the Missal promulgated by the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI":

"... the Missal in force is that promulgated after the Second Vatican Council. Moreover, the above mentioned priest [of the FSSP or similar groups] must celebrate with the post-conciliar Missal if by chance a celebration takes place in a community which uses the modern Roman rite...in order that there be no confusion or inconvenience to the faithful..."

•From the answer to **Question 2**, which asked, "Can superiors of whatever rank [in traditional communities] prohibit priests from using the post-conciliar Roman Missal?"

"No. The use of the Roman Missal of 1962 consists of an 'indult' and 'cannot be imposed on communities which celebrate the Eucharist according to the renewed Missal.'"

•From the answer to **Question 3**, which asked, "Can a priest belonging to a community which enjoys this indult celebrate a Mass according to the new order of the Roman rite without any impediment?"

"Affirmative... Moreover, he cannot and must not be prohibited from co-celebration by his superior."

(The Latin Mass, Fall 1999)

4. A "Parenthesis of Tolerance"

The text of Msgr. Re should be taken as an authentic interpretation of the motu proprio *Ecclesia Dei*. The commission born of this document has not in the least intended to genuinely restore the ancient rite or to even put it on a level of parity with the new rite. It was only a case of being a "pastoral gesture" of Pope John Paul II when faced with the sensibilities of certain faithful "anchored to the past." It is a "parenthesis of tolerance"²² which does not aim at "rendering perpetual" the ancient rite within the official liturgy of the Church. On the contrary, the clear mandate from Rome is that all the faithful fulfill their duty to follow unconditionally the new rite since this is and remains the will of the Pope.

The importance of this letter, of this official interpretation of the *motu proprio*, is confirmed by the fact that the bishops often cite it in refusing to concede the Mass by means of the Indult.²³ The overwhelming mentality of the present hierarchy is that the Indult to celebrate the Tridentine Mass is nothing other than a parenthesis destined to be closed one day. On account of this we say *Ecclesia Dei* itself is an illusory carrot which many have bitten, hoping that the present Pontiff would effectively command the full restoration of the ancient rite of Holy Mass with equal dignity in respect to the new.

But the day of a nude awakening is drawing nigh. The recent demands sent to the "Ecclesia Dei communities" by the Secretary of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission, Msgr. Camille Perl, demonstrate this. In a document he issued in the summer of 1998 (perhaps in anticipation of celebrations commemorating the Commission's tenth anniversary), Msgr. Perl mandated that: **1)** in the Tridentine Masses celebrated by reason of the Indult, the celebrant from now on be seated during the reading of the Epistle; **2)** that the Prologue of St. John's Gospel read at the end of Mass [*i.e.*, the Last Gospel - *Ed.*] be abolished; and **3)** that the so-called "universal prayer" begin to be recited during the Mass.²⁴

We judge this an attempt to mutilate the Tridentine Rite and to contaminate it with the new rite of Pope Paul VI. For what reason would the priest have to sit while the Epistle is read? Where else is this type of thing generally seen? It is the priest-president of the protestant *Novus Ordo* Mass who remains seated while laity of various sort read the passages of the Old and New Testament inserted into the so-called "Liturgy of the Word." To demand the celebrant to sit during readings that he has traditionally stood to read himself is to make necessary the presence of someone else other than the celebrant to do the reading. A nun? A layperson? You see the groundwork being laid.

Why is the cutting off of the Last Gospel wanted? What's the problem? It is very clear. On five counts, the Last Gospel is received un-ecumenical and it politically correct because: **1)** it reaffirms the divine nature of Christ; **2)** it recalls that the world and those of "its household," namely the Jews, "received Him not"; **3)** it reminds us that the world is inimical to Christ and must be converted; **4)** it is a bitter yet pitiful reminder to the Jews of their sin against the Holy Ghost; and **5)** it proclaims Christians superior to the sons of Abraham because, thanks to faith in Christ, they have become the chosen "sons of God."

The so-called "universal prayer," finally, is a prayer word according to various formulas, in accordance with which the "ecumenical" spirit is introduced explicitly into the Mass, as the "conciliar Church" born from Vatican II understands it.²⁵

This letter of Msgr. Perl shows that the Holy See has decided to pick up the pace. The "restoration" is done for. Unless they appease the authorities by further compromises, hard times are around the corner for the "Ecclesia Dei communities." Their superiors will perhaps attempt to resist and defend the Mass of All Time from the exactions and the corruptions. But will they succeed? For how long? They will learn that, in retrospect, they should not have let themselves be seduced in 1988. They should have taken exception to the manifest invalidity of the condemnation of Archbishop Lefebvre. This has been officially proposed by the American priest, Rev. Fr. Gerald Murray, in his "thesis for a licentiate" in Canon Law, argued and approved with the highest mark (July 1995) at the Pontifical Gregorian University. We will discuss this thesis in the next installment of this canonical study of the 1988 episcopal consecrations of Archbishop Lefebvre. Our work hopes to make a contribution to the truth by doing our part, God willing, in dispelling the cloud of lies and false interpretations which surround the person and work of Archbishop Lefebvre.

Causidicus (edited by Rev. Fr. Kenneth Novak)

(This article begins the **canonical** aspect of the double study of the 1988 Episcopal Consecrations. The **SISINONO** issues of **July** and **September** 1999, dealt with the **theological** aspect. The next installment of the canonical study will appear in January 2000.)

1. C.F.A.A.S. 1947, p.553, cited in Arnaldo Xavier da Silveira, *La nouvelle Messe de Paul VI: Qu'en penser?* translated from the Portuguese of C. Salagne, Chireen-Nontrouil, 1975, p.103. This work, which develops a fundamental analysis of the *Novus Ordo Missae* 1969 & 1970, contains in an improved translation three studies having appeared in 1970 & 1971. The analysis of the *Novus Ordo* of 1970 is on pp.100-124. We have abundantly availed ourselves of this essay. We have likewise availed ourselves of Romano Amerio's *Iota Unum. Studio sulle variazioni della Chiesa cattolica nel secolo XX* Milano-Napoli 1986 2nd ed., Chapters XXXVII,XXXVIII, pp.496-548. [Available in its English translation from Angelus Press. Price: \$24.95 - *Ed.*]

2. *La nouvelle Messe de Paul VI*, cit., pp. 103 - 105. The text of the *Novus Ordo* in question is in Article 5 of the *Prologo* of the same.

3. On the idea of the unity of the human race as an end of the Catholic Church coming from Vatican II, see P. Pasqualeucci *Un'intrusione laica nel Vaticano II: il concetto di unita del genere umano* in Italian edition of *SISINONO*, 1988 (XXIV) n.11.

4. *Quare de huiusmodi sanctae Ecclesiae coadunatione locali eminentior valet promissio Christi: "Ubi sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi sum in medio eorum"* (Mt. 18:20). *In Missae enim celebratione, in qua sacrificium Crucis perpetuatur, Christus realiter praesens adest in ipso coetu in suo nomine congregato, in persona ministri, in verbo suo, et quidem substantialiter et continenter sub speciebus eucharisticis.* - The 1969 and 1970 Latin texts of Article 7 are reported in *Pope Paul's New Mass*, pp.285-287.

5. *La nouvelle Messe de Paul VI*, loc. cit., and ch. V: *Le nouvel ordinaire de la Messe et la repas protestant.*

6. For a detailed list, see *Breve esame critico del Novus Ordo Missae*, pp.20-21.

7. The Indult *Quattuor abhinc annos* of March 10, 1984 (text in the appendix to *Enquete sur la Messe traditionnelle*, 1988 - 1998 in the article, "*Dixieme anniversaire du Motu proprio Ecclesia Dei*", special issue of *Le NF*, 1988, edited by Christopher Geoffroy and Philip Maxence)

8. We cite the text published in *Enquete*, cit., Appendix, pp.373-374.

9. *Op. cit.*, p. 74

10. *Ibid.*

11. Official Bulletin of the French District of the Society of Saint Pius X, n. 29 of 29 Sept. 1988 for some details of the accord between Dom Gerard and Rome on the occasion of the recognition of the Abbey of Le Barroux.

12. The text was noted by M. deJaeghere in his intervention reported by *Enquete*, cit. on p.279.

13. Fact can be found in the appendix to *Enquete*, cit., p.374.

14. Text cited in