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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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The Errors of Vatican II

PART I:

This installment of Angelus Press's Edition of *SISI/NoNo* begins a lengthy serialization of errors ascribed to the Second Vatican Council.

The "rap sheet" begins this time with a simple overview of the Council. Further installments will concentrate on specific issues of doctrine, theology, definition, the Sacred Liturgy, the so-called "separated brethren," the contemporary world, the missions, education, pastorality, and practice.

It will conclude with solutions.

Vatican II's Ambiguous Juridical Nature

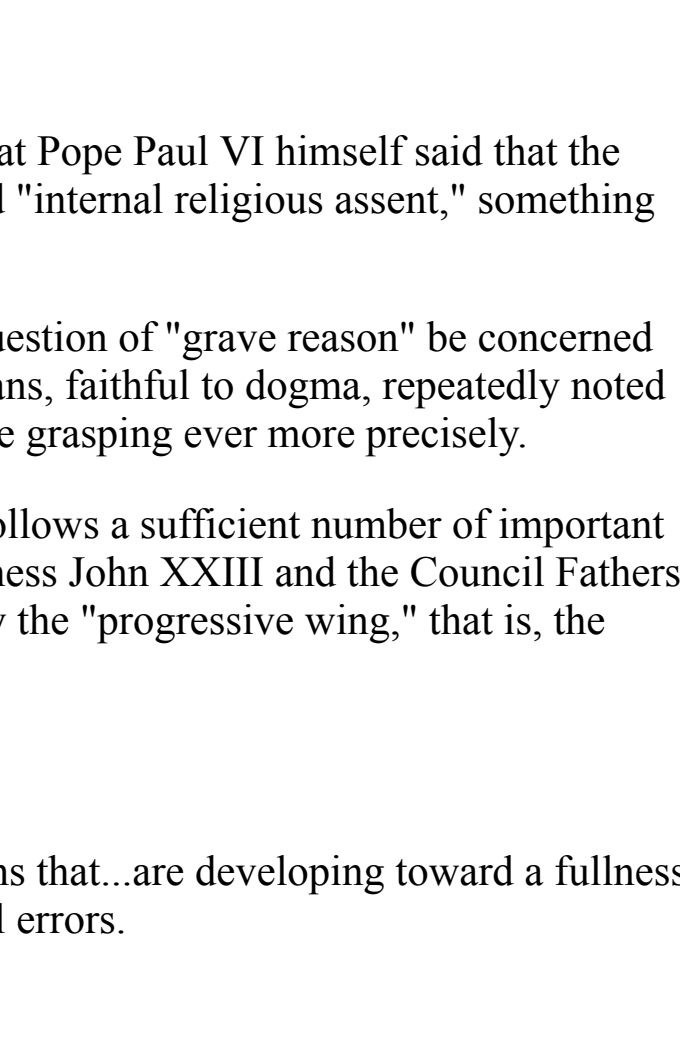
First of all, ambiguity pervades the Second Vatican Council's nature as to law (*i.e.*, "juridical nature"). This remains unclear and appears indeterminate because Vatican II termed itself simply a "pastoral Council" which, therefore, did not intend to define dogmas or condemn errors. This can be seen from the address delivered at the Council's opening by Pope John XXIII on October 11, 1962, and in the *Notificatio*, publicly read on November 5, 1965. Therefore, the Council's two Constitutions, *Dei Verbum* (on Divine Revelation) and *Lumen Gentium* (on the Church), which, in fact, **do** concern matters of dogmas of the Faith, are dogmatic only in name and in a solely descriptive sense.

The Council wanted to disqualify the "authentically manifest and supreme ordinary Magisterium" (Pope Paul VI). This is an insufficient figure of speech for an ecumenical council since such councils always embody an extraordinary exercise of the Magisterium, with the Pope deciding to exercise its exceptional nature together with all of the bishops assembled by him in council. He acts therein as the *suprema potestas* of the entire Church, which he possesses by Divine right. Neither does reference to the "authentic character" of Vatican II explain things, because such a term generally means "authoritative" relative to the Holy Father's sole authority, not to his infallibility. The *"mere authenticum"* ordinary Magisterium is **not** infallible, while the ordinary Magisterium **is** infallible. In any case, the ordinary Magisterium's infallibility does not have the same characteristics as the extraordinary Magisterium. Thus, it cannot be applied to the Second Vatican Council. It is necessary to realize that the point in question is how many bishops throughout the Catholic world are teaching the same doctrine, and not how many are present at a Council.

Such being Vatican II's actual juridical nature, it is certain that it did not wish to impart a teaching invested with infallibility. It is true that Pope Paul VI himself said that the Council's teaching ought to be "docilely and sincerely" accepted by the faithful, that is, with (we specifically note) what is always called "internal religious assent," something required of any pastoral document, for instance.

This assent is obligatory, but only on the condition that sufficient and grave reasons *do not* exist for not granting such assent. Might a question of "grave reason" be concerned when alterations in the deposit of Faith are evident? Already during Vatican II's tormented discussions, cardinals, bishops, and theologians, faithful to dogma, repeatedly noted the ambiguities and errors which were infiltrating Council texts, errors that today, after 40 years of definitive reflection and study, we are grasping ever more precisely.

We do not pretend completeness for our synopsis of the errors ascribed to Vatican II. Yet it seems to us that we have specified in what follows a sufficient number of important ones, beginning with the first utterances such as those contained in the Council's October 20, 1962 "Address on Openness" by His Holiness John XXIII and the Council Fathers' "Message to the World." Though not one of the official, formal Council texts, nevertheless, these texts expressed the thinking wanted by the "progressive wing," that is, the neo-modernist innovators' line of thinking.



"Address on Openness"

Aside from its resoundingly divergent assertions denied by the facts, such as, "Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations that...are developing toward a fullness of superior and unexpected designs," Pope John XXIII's famous speech on opening up to the world contains three real and true doctrinal errors.

FIRST ERROR: & mutilated concept of the Magisterium.

This error is contained in the incredible assertion concerning the Church's renunciation and condemnation of error:

The Church has always been opposed to these errors [*i.e.*, false opinions of *men-Ed.*]. She has often condemned them with the greatest severity. Now, however, the Spouse of Christ prefers to employ the medicine of mercy rather than that of harshness. She is going to meet today's needs by demonstrating the validity of Her doctrine, rather than by renewing condemnations.

With this renunciation of employing proper, God-given authority to defend the deposit of the faith and to help souls through condemning errors that ensnare souls and prevent their eternal salvation, Pope John XXIII kicked aside his duties as Vicar of Christ. In fact, condemning error is essential for maintaining the deposit of faith, which is the Pontiff's first duty, and with it, always confirming sound doctrine, thus demonstrating the efficacy of doing so with timely application. Moreover, from a pastoral point of view, condemning error is necessary because it supports and sustains the faithful, the well-educated as well as those less so, with the Magisterium's incomparable authority. By its exercise they are strengthened to defend themselves against error, whose "logic" is often astute and seductive. This is not the only point: condemning error can lead errant souls to repent, by placing the true sustenance of their intellect before them. The condemnation of error is, in and of itself, a work of mercy.

To hold that condemning error should never have occurred is to support a mutilated concept of the Church's Magisterium. In the main, the post-Vatican II Church, no longer condemning error, has substituted for it *dialogue* with those in error. This amounts to doctrinal error. Previously, the Church has always prosecuted dialogue *with* such errors and those *in* error. Pope John XXIII's quote above enounces the error clearly: that demonstrating "doctrine's validity" is incompatible with "renewing condemnations." This is to suggest that would validity ought to be imposed only thanks to one's own *intrinsic logic*, and not from *external authority*. But in such an approach, faith would no longer be a gift from God, nor would there be any need of grace to fortify faith, nor any need to exercise the principle for sustaining faith via the authority in the Catholic Church. The essential error is concealed in Pope John XXIII's phraseology; it is a form of Pelagianism [*i.e.*, that all men are, by nature, good-*Ed.*] which is typical of all "rationalistic conceptions" of the Faith, all of them repeatedly condemned by the Magisterium.

Not only heresies and theological errors in the strict sense have been objects of condemnation, but every one of the world's ideas that is not Catholic, not only those adverse to the Faith, but also those to whom Our Lord's words apply, "He who does not gather with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth" (Mt. 12:30).

The un-orthodox position taken by John XXIII, maintained by the Council and the post-Conciliar period has caused the collapse of the Church's ironclad armor. The Church's enemies-inside and out-appreciate this heterodox position. No doubt they agree with Nietzsche, who said: "The intellectual mark of the Church is essentially harsh inflexibility, by which the conception and judgment of values are treated as stable, as *eternal*."

SECOND ERROR: -The contamination of Catholic doctrine with intrinsically anti-Catholic "modern thinking."

Connected to this unprecedented renunciation of error is another flagrantly grave assertion made by John XXIII in his January 13, 1963, Christmas address to Cardinals. He said that "doctrinal penetration" must occur through "doctrine's more perfect adhesion to fidelity to true doctrine."

However, he followed this by explaining that

true doctrine ought to be expressed using the forms of investigation and literary style of modern thinking, since, to do so, is to sustain the *depositum fidei*'s classic doctrine and is the way to recast it: and this ought to be done patiently, taking into great account that all must be expressed in forms and propositions having a predominantly pastoral character.¹

Liberals and modernists had already long recommended that classical doctrine be re-cast in forms imported from "modern thinking." Doing so was specifically condemned by Pope Pius X in *Pascendi*² and his decree *Lamentabili* which condemned the following:³

- §63. The Church shows herself unequal to the task of preserving the ethics of the Gospel, because she clings obstinately to immutable doctrines which cannot be reconciled with present day advances.
- §64. The progress of the sciences demands that the concepts of Christian doctrine about God, creation, revelation, the Person of the Incarnate Word, the redemption, be recast. (*Lamentabili*, July 3, 1907, *dz* 2063, 2064)

In *Humani Generis*⁴ Pope Pius XII said the same thing. Thus, Pope John XXIII's predecessors had condemned his proposed doctrine. This is a typical of all modernist errors.

In fact, it is not possible for the categories of "modern thinking" to be applied to Catholic doctrine. In all of its forms modern thinking negates-*a priori*- the existence of an absolute truth and holds that everything is relative to Man, who is his own absolute value, divinized in all of his manifestations, from instinct to "self-consciousness." This way of thinking is intrinsically opposed to the fundamental truths of the Catholic Church beginning with the idea of God the Creator, of a living God Who has been revealed and incarnated in His Second Person. In the end, modern thinking means only a politics and an ethic. By proposing a similar contamination, Pope John XXIII showed himself to be a disciple of the of the neo-modernists "New Theology," already condemned by the Magisterium. Regarding the Catholic Church's salvation mission, the needs of the day required of the Second Vatican Council to reinforce the **rejection** of modern thinking found in the prior popes-from Pius IX to Pius XII. Instead, the Council gave full sway to "the study and expression" of "authentic" and "classic" doctrine *via* "modern thinking."

THIRD ERROR: The Church's goal is "the unity of humanity."

The third error of the Opening Address announced that "the unity of humanity" was the Church's own and proper goal. This was advanced by the Second Vatican Council, which quoted St. Augustine (Ep. 138,3) to purport that the Church be

preparing and consolidating the way toward that human unity which is a fundamental necessity because the earthly City is constructed to always resemble the heavenly one "in which truth and the law of charity reign, and is the extension of the Eternal One.

Here "human unity" is seen as the "fundamental necessity because the earthly City is constructed to always resemble the heavenly one." But the Church never taught that her expansion in this world had "human unity" as her goal, as affirmed by Pope John XXIII, **simply**. On the contrary, this is the guiding idea of the Enlightenment's philosophy of history first elaborated by the 18th century by secularists. It is not of the Catholic Church, but is an essential component of the religion of Humanism.

The error consists in mixing the Catholic vision with an idea imported into it from secular thought. Secularists do not look to extend the Kingdom of God through that part of it realized on earth by the Catholic Church. This vision is a substitute for that of the Church's. Humanism is convinced of the dignity of man as man (since humanists do not believe in original sin) and of his supposed "rights."

Besides these three errors in the Opening Address, two more theological errors were proposed in what followed.

Errors in the Council Fathers' "Message to the World"

The "Message to the World" was promulgated at the start of the Council. [Archbishop Lefebvre was one of the few to criticize *it-Ed.*] In miniature, it contained the pastoral line of thought that would be developed to the fullest in *Gaudium et Spes*. "Human good," the "dignity of man" as man, "peace between people," a pastoral in which the preoccupation with "human good," "the dignity of man," as man, "the peace between people," are its central concerns, and left aside is man's conversion to Christ:

While we hope that through the Council's labors the light of faith shines more clearly and alive, we await a spiritual renaissance from which also comes a happy impulse that favors human well-being, that is, scientific invention, progress of the arts, technology, and a greater diffusion of culture.

"Human well-being" is characterized according to the century's reigning ideas, *i.e.*, scientific, artistic, technological, and cultural progress.⁵ Should the Second Vatican Council have become so preoccupied with such things? Should it have expressed hope for the increase of these solely earthly "blessings," always shortlived, often deceptive, in place of those eternal ones founded on perennial values taught by the Church over the centuries? No wonder that, following this brand of pastoral, instead of a new "splendor" of the faith, a grave and persistent crisis has arisen?

The actual theological error, in the proper sense of error, occurs at the close of the "Message to the World" where it is said: "*We invite all to collaborate with us in order to install in the world a more well ordered civil life and a greater fraternity.*" This is **not** Catholic doctrine. Any anticipation of the eternal kingdom in this world was constituted **only** by the Catholic Church, by the visible Church Militant, the earthly element of the Mystical Body of Christ, which grows slowly, not withstanding the opposition of "the prince of this world." The Mystical Body of Christ increases, but not strictly through the "union of all men of good will," and of all humanity under the banner of "progress."

Ambiguity

The texts of Vatican II are infamous for being ambiguous and contradictory. Suffice it by the following serious example to show how profound the ambiguity is.

Vatican II's *Dei Verbum* (on Divine Revelation) is called a "dogmatic constitution" because it concerns the inerrant truth of dogma. In §9, however, it expounds in an obviously insufficient and unclear way [or else, why the confusion presented in § 11 ?-*Ed.*] how the truths of the Faith rest on two pillars of revelation-Sacred Scripture **and Tradition-and** on the absolute inerrancy of Sacred Scripture and the total historical authenticity of the Gospels.⁶ In §11, *Dei Verbum* lends itself even to opposite interpretations, one of which would reduce inerrancy only to "truth...confided to the Sacred Scriptures....":

...Since, therefore, all that the inspired authors, or sacred writers, affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture, firmly, faithfully and without error, teach that truth which God, for the sake of salvation, wished to see confided to the sacred Scriptures....(*Dei Verbum*, § 1b, Nov. 18, 1965)

This is subversively equivalent to heresy because the absolute inerrancy of Sacred Scripture and the truth expounded there is the truth of the Faith constantly deduced and taught by the Church alone.

Contradictions

For an example of patent contradiction, let us look at §2 of the October 28, 1965 decree, *Perfectae Caritatis* (On the Up-to-Date Renewal of Religious Life). It states that the renewal of religious life "comprises both a constant return to the sources of the whole of the Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes, and the adaptation to the changed conditions of our time...."

This is a patent contradiction since, according to the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, the unique characteristic of religious life has always been that of being completely antithetical to the world, corrupted as it is by original sin and the very illustration of the fleeting and transient. How is it possible that the "return to the sources...and to the primitive inspiration of the [Catholic] institutes" be accomplished by their "adaptation to the changed conditions of our time?" Adaptation to **these** "conditions," which today are those of the secularized modern world of lay culture, are the very ones that impede, in themselves, "the return to the sources."

Paragraph 79 of *Gaudium et Spes* (On the Church in the Modern World, Dec. 7, 1965) grants governments the right "of lawful self-defense" to "defend the interests of the people." This substantively seems to conform to the traditional teaching of the Church, which has always granted the right of defense from an external or internal attack of the "just war" category, and conforms to the principles of natural rights. However, §82 of the same *Gaudium et Spes* also contains an absolute condemnation of war and, therefore, of every type of war, without making express exception for defensive war, justified three paragraphs earlier, which, then, the Council both permitted and condemned! Compare, yourself: first, the permission, then, the condemnation:

§79. War, of course, has not ceased to be part of the human scene. As long as the danger of war persists..., governments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed. State leaders and all who share the burdens of public administration have the duty to defend the interests of their people and to conduct grave matters with a deep sense of responsibility....

§82. It is our clear duty to spare no effort in order to work for the moment when all war will be completely outlawed by international agreement. This goal, or course, requires the establishment of a universally acknowledged public authority vested with the effective power to ensure security for all,....

Contradiction is also evident in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (On the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963) regarding the maintenance of Latin as the liturgical language. We read in §36(1): "The use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites." In the next line,

§36(2). But since the use of the vernacular, whether in the Mass, in the administration of the sacraments, or in other parts of the liturgy, may frequently be of great advantage to the people, a wider use may be made of it, especially in readings, directives, and in some prayers and chants. Regulations governing this will be given separately in subsequent chapters.

But the regulations "established" in this document are left to episcopal conferences:

§22(1). Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See, and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.

§22(2). In virtue of power conceded by law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of bishops' conferences, legitimately established, with competence in given territories.

This paragraph was given wide latitude. There are numerous cases where the Council authorized the partial or total use of the vernacular:

§54. A suitable place may be allotted to the vernacular in Masses which are celebrated with the people, especially in the readings and "the common prayer," and also, as local conditions may warrant, in those parts which the people, according to the rules laid down in §36 of the Constitution.... Wherever a more expanded use of the vernacular in the Mass seems desirable, the regulation laid down in §40 of the Constitution is to be observed. [Paragraph 40 discusses the procedure to be followed if "more radical adaptation of the liturgy is needed," which "entails greater difficulties."-*Ed.*]

§62(a): In the administration of sacraments and sacramentals the vernacular may be used according to the norm of §36.

§65. In the mission countries, in addition to what is furnished by the Christian tradition, those elements of initiation rites may be admitted which are already in use among some peoples... [e.g., rites which are certainly in the vernacular-*Ed.*].

§68. The baptismal rite should contain variants, to be used at the discretion of the local ordinary—Likewise a shorter rite is to be drawn up, especially for mission countries....

§76. Both the ceremonies and texts of the Ordination rites are to be revised. The addresses given by the bishop at the beginning of each ordination or consecration may be in the vernacular....

§78. Matrimony is normally to be celebrated within the Mass after the reading of the Gospel and the homily before "the prayer of the faithful." The prayer for the bride, duly amended to remind both spouses of their equal obligation of mutual fidelity, may be said in the vernacular.

§101(1). In accordance with the age-old tradition of the Latin rite, the Latin language is to be retained by clerics in the divine office. But in individual cases the ordinary has the power to grant the use of a vernacular translation to those clerics for whom the Latin constitutes a grave obstacle to their praying the office properly. The vernacular version, however, must be drawn up in accordance with the provisions of §36.

§113. Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when the divine offices are celebrated solemnly in §36 with the assistance of sacred ministers and the active participation of the people. As regards the language to be used, the provisions of §36 are to be observed;...

Contrary to firmly maintaining the use of Latin, the Second Vatican Council seemed to be preoccupied with opening the greatest possible number of avenues for the vernacular and, by doing so, laid down the premises of its definitive victory in the post-Conciliar era.

Relevant Omissions

Among the Council's omissions, we shall limit ourselves to discussing the most relevant under two subtitles: five omissions on the **dogmatic** level and three on the **pastoral** level.

On the Dogmatic Level

On the dogmatic level, five points strike us:

- the failure to condemn the major errors of the 20th century;
- the absence of the notion of supernaturality and lack of mention of Paradise;
- the absence of a specific treatment of hell, mentioned only *once* in passing (§48 of *Lumen Gentium*);
- the lack of mention of the dogmas of Transubstantiation and of the propitiatory character of the Holy Sacrifice [In those paragraphs of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* specifically expounding on the Holy Mass (§§30, 47, 106), there is a repeated failure to reinforce these dogmas-*Ed.*];
- the disappearance of any mention of the idea of "the poor in spirit."

On the Pastoral Level

The following points come to our attention regarding omissions at this level:

- in general, the absence of **specifically Catholic** treatments of such key notions as pastorality, the relation between Church and State, the ideal models of individual, family, and culture, *etc.*;
- the failure to condemn Communism, the greatest threat to Christendom, on which so much has been written. This failure was noticeable and resulted later in §75 of *Gaudium et Spes* which weakly and generically condemns "totalitarianism," putting it on the same level as "dictatorship":

...The understanding of the relationship between socialization and personal autonomy and progress will vary according to different areas and the development of peoples. However, if restrictions are imposed temporarily for the common good on the exercise of human rights, these restrictions are to be lifted as soon as possible after the situation has changed. In any case it is inhuman for public authority to fall back on totalitarian methods or dictatorship which violates the rights of persons or social groups. (*Gaudium et Spes*, §75[c]).

The same omission reoccurs in §79 of the same document, in which the horrific crimes of the recent wars were addressed:

...Any action which deliberately violates these principles and any order which commands these actions is criminal, and blind obedience cannot excuse those who carry them out. The most infamous among these actions are those designed for the reasoned and methodical extermination of an entire race, nation, or ethnic minority. These must be condemned as frightful crimes; and we cannot commend too highly the courage of men who openly and fearlessly resist those who issue orders of this kind....

These 20th-century "methods" had been witnessed many times, for example, against the Christian Armenians (almost 70% exterminated by the Muslim Turks in the years before WWI) and by the neo-pagan Nazis. But such schemes were known also to have been performed by the Communists by their systematic physical annihilation of so-called "class enemies," that is, millions of individuals whose only crime was that of belonging to a social class deemed aristocratic, *bourgeois*, peasants-all extirpated in the name of a "classless society," Communism's Utopian goal. Clearly, in *Gaudium et Spes* (§79), "social class" exterminations should have been added. But the progressive wing that imposed itself on the Council guarded against this being done, proving itself politically left-wing. It did not want Marxism to be discussed as a destructive born of Communism nor its actual political practice.

- the failure to condemn corrupt customs and hedonism, which had deeply spread within Western society.

Canonics

Contrary to firmly maintaining the use of Latin, the Second Vatican Council seemed to be preoccupied with opening the greatest possible number of avenues for the vernacular and, by doing so, laid down the premises of its definitive victory in the post-Conciliar era.

Every renewal of the Church is essentially grounded in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. Undoubtedly this is the basis of the movement toward unity.

Christ summons the Church to continual reformation as she sojourns here on earth. The Church is always in need of this, in so far as she is an institution of men here on earth. Thus, in various times and circumstances, there have been deficiencies in moral conduct or in Church discipline, or even in the way that Church teaching has been formulated to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith itself, these can and should be set right at the opportune moment.

Church renewal has therefore notable ecumenical importance. Already in various spheres of the Church's life, this renewal is taking place. The Biblical and liturgical movements, the preaching of the word of God and catechesis, the apostolate of the laity, new forms of religious life and the spirituality of married life, and the Church's social teaching and activity: all these should be considered as pledges and signs of the future progress of ecumenism.

2. *Pascendi*, 1907, §2, c.

3. *Lamentabili*, §63, 64.

4. *Humani Generis*, AAS 1950, pp.565-566.

5. *Gaudium et Spes*, §§60-62.

6. *Gaudium et Spes*, §§53, 74, 76, etc.