

THE CHURCH OF PAUL VI AND OF JOHN PAUL II

*Dignare me laudare te, Virgo Sacrata:
Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos!*

Paul VI's first encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* (August 6th, 1964) displayed many characteristics of such a solemn papal document, repeating elements of the Catholic faith. It contained some admirable passages including, since it was in stark contrast to the determinations at which the bishops of Vatican II subsequently arrived, this one:

“See how St Paul himself formed the Christians of the primitive church: ‘You must not consent to be yokefellows with unbelievers. What has innocence to do with lawfulness?’” [n. 62]
But it also included lapses, serious departures from the teaching of the Church founded by Jesus Christ which the encyclical claimed to be addressing.

There was a problem in the very first paragraph. The Pope said: “Jesus Christ founded His Church to be the... mother of all men”. This statement without qualification is erroneous. To understand why we have to labour the obvious: when a man speaks he is understood as referring to things not as they may be, but as they are. That is, he is understood not to speak of things *in potency* but of things *in act*. Our Lord founded His Church for the salvation of those who would embrace His teaching which teaching His Church repeats. A man has to submit to the Church for her to be his mother and many never will. To make it clear: the Church is the mother of all men *only in potency*.¹

This failure involved a departure from the sanity of the reasoning of St Thomas Aquinas on which the Church's philosophy is founded.

That this was not an isolated error was confirmed in n. 9 when the Pope said this: “this is the hour in which the Church should deepen its consciousness of itself”, an essay in subjectivism which, in n. 7, he claimed was called for by the deliberations of the currently running Second Vatican Council. His predecessor, Pius XII, had confirmed as recently as August, 1950, that the Church's theology is grounded in the realism of St Thomas and condemned excursions into modern philosophy one of whose flaws is its indulgence in subjectivism which holds that truth is determined not by reality but by opinion.²

In n. 6 the Pope demonstrated theological incompetence. He said this:

“[I]t is not our intention to express ideas that are either new or fully developed; the ecumenical council exists for that purpose...”

This utterance is, in theological terms, *mala sonans*—offensive to pious ears—because it runs counter to the clear expression of the *Vatican Council* on July 18th, 1870 in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Pastor Aeternus*, that—

¹ This error was to be repeated in faulty translations of the words of consecration in the *novus ordo missae*.

² Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, August 12th, 1950, nn. 29-34

“[t]he Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might disclose new doctrine, but that by his help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the apostles and the deposit of faith, and faithfully set it forth.” [Dz. 1836]

If it is beyond the power of a pope to express ideas (*sc.* doctrines) that are new, *a fortiori* is it beyond the power of an ecumenical council.

These failures raise the question of just what Church it was that Paul VI had in mind when he penned the opening words which gave the encyclical its eponymous title.

The Second Vatican Council

In the November following the appearance of this encyclical the bishops of the Second Vatican Council in *Lumen Gentium*, their ‘Dogmatic Constitution on the Church’ (November 21st 1964), sought with a mix of heterodox and orthodox statements to reinvent the Church by advancing a concept which would make of it a vehicle for humanity’s advancement. They said this:

“By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind.” [n. 1]

This turns reality on its head. The Catholic Church is neither ‘a kind of sacrament’ nor ‘a sign of the unity of mankind’. She is not at the service of men. Rather, men, if they are to come to their proper end, must embrace her. The effect of the bishops’ claim was to repeat Paul VI’s idea in n. 1 of *Ecclesiam Suam* that the Church was founded to be ‘the mother of all men’.

But the Council’s bishops went further. They proposed a conception of the Church which would embrace those who could have no possible part in her. This is behind their claim in n. 8 that—

“[t]his... unique Church of Christ... subsists in the Catholic Church... although many elements of sanctification... can be found outside her visible structure...”

The verb employed here, the Latin *subsistere*, means ‘to underlie’. The Catholic Church does not *underlie* the Church of Christ. She *is* the Church of Christ, the Church Christ established. The bishops’ claim sought to circumvent the teaching of Popes, Councils and Doctors that outside the Church there is no salvation, enunciated by St Cyprian in the Third Century and repeated by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, by Pope Boniface VIII in 1302, by the Council of Florence 1441 and by Pope Pius XI in 1928, *inter multos alios*.

In n. 15 of the document, in a further indulgence in subjectivism, the bishops spoke as if any Protestant faith (and there are many varieties) differs from the Catholic faith only in degree rather than in kind,³ and as if Catholics and adherents of Protestant or other heretical sects had something in common.⁴ In n. 16 they went further asserting that the plan of salvation

³ “The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honoured by the name of Christian but who do not however profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter...” Those who deny any element of the Catholic faith are heretics. Their ‘faith’ is not divine (of God) but human only. *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 5, a. 3; q. 11, a. 1

⁴ “There is... a sharing in prayer and spiritual benefits; these Christians are indeed in some way joined to us in the Holy Spirit for by his gifts and graces his sanctifying power is active in them also and he has strengthened some of them even to the shedding of their blood.” The proposition “that Protestantism is only a different form of the same Christian religion”, was condemned by Pius IX, *Syllabus of Errors*, December 8th, 1864, n. 18. That there can be

included "in the first place... the Moslems (who) profess to hold the faith of Abraham and adore together with us... the one merciful God..." Whatever god this sect adores, its members reject the divinely inspired Old and New Testaments and condemn the revelation, confirmed by the Church, of the Trinity of Divine Persons in One God. Its 'god' is, moreover, far removed from the One Who created mankind in love. St Thomas remarked with justice:

"Mohammed ...did not bring forth any doctrines produced in a supernatural way... On the contrary he said that he was sent in the power of his arms, signs which are not lacking even to robbers and tyrants..."⁵

In n. 3 of the 'Decree on Ecumenism', *Unitatis Redintegratio*, published on the same date, the Council's bishops said this:

"The brethren divided from us... carry out many liturgical actions of the Christian religion. In ways that vary according to the condition of each Church or community, these liturgical actions most certainly can truly engender a life of grace, and, one must say, can aptly give access to the communion of salvation."

This statement is blatantly heretical. The Church's teaching on the unity of the Church is set forth *in extenso* in the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum* (June 29th, 1896), whose burden is reflected in this passage [in n. 9] where he quotes St Augustine:

"He who dissents even in one point from divinely revealed truth absolutely rejects all faith, since he thereby refuses to honour God as the supreme truth and the *formal motive of faith*. In many things they are with me, in a few things not with me; but in those few things in which they are not with me the many things in which they are will not profit them (In Psalm. liv., n. 19). And this indeed most deservedly; for they, who take from Christian doctrine what they please, lean on their own judgments, not on faith; and not *bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor. x., 5), they more truly obey themselves than God. *You, who believe what you like, believe yourselves rather than the gospel* (Lib. xvii., *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, cap. 3).

This is reinforced in a further passage in n. 5 where Leo XIII cites St Cyprian:

St. Paul says: "All members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ" (I Cor. xii, 12). Wherefore this mystical body, he declares, is "compacted and fitly jointed together. The head, Christ: from whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly jointed together, by what every joint supplies according to the operation in the measure of every part" (Eph. iv, 15-16). And so dispersed members, separated one from the other, cannot be united with one and the same head. *There is one God, and one Christ; and His Church is one and the faith is one; and one the people, joined together in the solid unity of the body in the bond of concord. This unity cannot be broken, nor the one body divided by the separation of its constituent parts* (De Cath. Eccl. Unitate, n. 23)... What similarity is there between a dead and a living body?

Finally, though it was published a year after the contentious utterances cited above, the document *Dei Verbum*, the Council's bishops' 'Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation', deserves to be quoted in one crucial section, n. 8, for the way it confirms their indulgence in heterodoxy. The bishops said this:

no martyrdom outside the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith is attested to by St Cyprian *The Unity of the Catholic Church* 14; *Letter to Jubaianus*, 72, 73, and in the writings of St Irenaeus and St Augustine.

⁵ *Summa Contra Gentiles* Bk. I, ch. vi. n. 4

“The tradition that comes from the apostles makes progress in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. There is a growth in insight into the realities and words that are being passed on. This comes about in various ways. It comes through the contemplation and study of believers who ponder these things in their hearts. It comes from the intimate sense of spiritual realities which they experience. And it comes from the preaching of those who have received, along with the right of succession in the episcopate, the sure charism of truth. Thus, as the centuries go by, the Church is always advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth, until eventually the words of God are fulfilled in her.”

This is an attempt to reinterpret the Church’s constant teaching along modernist lines. It effectively denies the Church’s teaching that, because she is of God not of man, the Church is possessed of the fulness of divine truth. It makes a mockery, moreover, of the teaching of the *Council of Trent* in 1546, confirmed by the *Vatican Council* in 1870, which sets forth what is meant by ‘tradition’.⁶

The foregoing should suffice to demonstrate that far from working for the good of Christ’s Church, the bishops of the Second Vatican Council - and Pope Paul VI with them - endeavoured to subvert the Church’s teachings as to her own nature via syncretistic protocols. More than this, they sought to reduce the Catholic Church to an entity dedicated to man, i.e., humanism. No wonder their efforts were welcomed by the scions of freemasonry, deistic offspring of the Protestant Revolt, whose ‘religion’ is focused on man to the exclusion of God.

It is impossible, therefore, that the documents *Ecclesiam Suam* of Paul VI and *Lumen Gentium*, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, and *Dei Verbum* of the Second Vatican Council could be documents of the Catholic Church; impossible that that synod of bishops could have been a general or ecumenical council of the Catholic Church.

If anyone is in doubt as to this analysis or of the intent of Paul VI manifest in his actions, it will pay him to study the Pope’s Address to the United Nations General Assembly on October 4th, 1965. His abandonment of the authority of Christ and of His Church over the world in favour of an institution known to be a creature of Freemasonry ought to appall every Catholic.

The Effect of the Efforts of Paul VI and the Bishops of Vatican II

Because she is of God and not of man, the Catholic Church is not only immaculate but immutable. Hence, the efforts of Pope and bishops to reinvent the Church had no effect on her. *But it had an effect.* It produced a counterfeit assumed to be identical with the Catholic Church which thereafter became confused with her. As we will show hereafter, Paul VI’s effective successor, Pope John Paul II, confirmed its existence in his first encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* (March 4th, 1979) when he identified this entity as ‘the Church of the New Advent’.

There was another effect, pernicious in the extreme. The insistence thereafter by popes and bishops that Vatican II was a general or ecumenical council of the Catholic Church brought with it a compulsion among the faithful to accept that its determinations—however tinged

⁶ *Trent*, Session IV, April 8th, 1546, Dz. 783; *Vatican*, Session III, *Dogmatic Constitution Dei Filius*, Ch. 2 *Revelation*, April 24th, 1870, Dz. 1787 & Ch. 4, *Faith & Reason*, Dz. 1800

with ambition and lack of charity, however heterodox or outrageous in content—were teachings of the Catholic Church and that they were bound to follow them.

Pope John Paul II

The new Pope, who had been actively involved in the Council as a bishop, set himself the task of reinforcing his predecessor's initiative in *Redemptor Hominis*. He claimed there that he was continuing the program embarked on by Paul VI—

“this great predecessor of mine, who was truly my father...” [n. 4]

In terminology so subjectivist as to be at times incomprehensible he argued—

“The rich inheritance of the pontificate of Pope Paul VI... has struck deep roots in the awareness of the Church in an utterly new way, quite previously unknown... (3.1)

This endeavour drew the attention of German academic Dr Wigan Siebel, Professor of Political Science in Münster, Germany. In 1980 he published a criticism entitled *The Program of Pope John Paul II* which the reader is encouraged to study.⁷ We adopt various salient elements of his critique in what follows.

“The occupants of the papal throne before John Paul II,” he remarked, “always used the form ‘We’ in order to accentuate unity with the Holy Spirit and at the same time the unity of the faithful. As a sign of the ‘new surge of life’ in the Church the Pope uses the expression ‘I’, which he maintains throughout the encyclical.”⁸ It might reasonably be added that the Pope's solecism was indicative not only of a ‘new surge of life’ but of the new direction which Paul VI and the Council's bishops had sought to move Christ's Church. Let it be noted: *not once in the course of the encyclical did the Pope use the term ‘Catholic’, or refer to the Church he was lauding as ‘the Catholic Church’.*

Dr Siebel picked up the Pope's contention that the Church—

“has a new awareness which derives from the Second Vatican Council inspired by Paul VI's first encyclical, an ‘awareness – or rather self-awareness – by the Church formed in dialogue’, a ‘consciousness, enlightened and supported by the Holy Spirit...”

“In what,” he asked, “does this ‘consciousness’ of the Church consist?” He found the answer in 4.1 of the encyclical:

“The Church's consciousness must go with the universal openness in order that all may be able to find in her ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’ (*Eph.* 3: 8). This openness... gives the Church her apostolic urgency or her missionary dynamism...”

To which he added this telling observation: “If the ‘missionary dynamism’ of the Church is in truth an opening of the Church to the whole wide world, the Pope can only be speaking of a kind of mission in reverse! This is a flooding of the Church by the world, while the Church exposes itself to this inundation through dialogue.”⁹

⁷ Under the title *A Study of the Encyclical Redemptor Hominis*, translated from the German by Leonard Latkovski, M.A., O.S.J. with a preface by the translator, available at <http://www.the-pope.com/prog-ip2.html>

⁸ *A Study of the Encyclical Redemptor Hominis*, op. cit. Part I, A New Advent

⁹ *A Study of the Encyclical Redemptor Hominis*, op. cit., Part II, The New Church, 1

Dr Siebel went on to refer to the Pope's invocation of a new 'revelation', a term which invokes the Council bishops' attempt to redefine 'tradition' in *Dei Verbum* 8 referred to above—

"[C]an we fail to have trust... in our Lord's grace as revealed recently through what the Holy Spirit said, and we heard, during the Council?"

Concerning this he remarked, "Vatican II expressed the word of the Holy Ghost and therefore it is not permitted to give up the ecumenic initiative." He quoted the Pope again—

"True ecumenical activity means openness, drawing closer, availability for dialogue, and a shared investigation of the truth in the full evangelical and Christian sense... The Church is at the same time 'seeking the universal unity of Christians'." [6.2]

"Why," he asks, "does 'real ecumenical work' mean 'openness'? Because the conversion to the Catholic Church and therewith to Catholic truth is not seriously required anymore. The opening to the world, in fact, allows entrance without conversion, without commitment. In place of conversion, there is 'dialogue'; instead of commitment to the truth, there is exchange of views and positions, which by its very nature never comes to an end; rather, all this is carried on in a 'mutual search for the truth'. If a person already has the truth in the form of Catholic doctrine, can he continue to 'seek for the truth', without actually turning away from it? ... When 'the Church' engages in a search for the very thing which the Church is, we must say that there is a serious incompatibility between Catholic doctrine and what is being spoken of."¹⁰

Thus, the rot begun by Paul VI and endorsed by the innumerable heterodox utterances of the bishops of the Second Vatican Council was confirmed by Pope John Paul II. As confirmation of this, let the reader study the content of the John Paul II's Address to the United Nations General Assembly on October 5th 1995 which marked the thirtieth anniversary of Paul VI's original abandonment of the authority of Christ and His Church over the world.

Our Blessed Lady

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of the faithful in virtue of her freely consenting to be the Mother of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Author of grace and of our spiritual regeneration, and of her Son's designation of her as such when he addressed St John from the Cross. She is no less our mother than was Eve, for while we gain our human life from Eve, from Mary we gain the supernatural life of grace, a created participation in the Divine Life. This life is what St John is referring to when he writes of Christ in the prologue to his Gospel:

"He was in the world and the world was made through Him and the world knew Him not. He came into His own and His own received him not. But to as many as did receive Him He gave power to become sons of God, to those who believe in His name..."¹¹

Whereas human life comes to us via nature, our spiritual life comes through adoption. But it is not to be thought of as suffering the shortcomings that attend human adoption.

¹⁰ *A Study of the Encyclical Redemptor Hominis*, op. cit., Part II, The New Church, 4

¹¹ *In mundo erat and mundus per ipsum factus est and mundus eum not cognovits; in propria venit et sui eum non receperunt; quotquot autem receperunt eum dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his qui credunt in nomine eius...* John 1: 13

“It is... much more intimate and fruitful than in ordinary human adoption... Divine adoption... produces sanctifying grace in the soul of the just, thereby making it to participate in the divine nature and to have within itself the germ of eternal life. The soul... endowed thus with grace... is [God’s] child, called to know Him face to face and to love Him for all eternity.”¹²

In human adoption the child shares neither in the father’s family nor in his exercise of human nature. But in Divine adoption the baptised child shares in both the family of God the Father and His nature. In the natural order life is received without a wilful act. In the supernatural order life is received only with a wilful act, that of the child’s parents and then of the man when he reaches maturity. To participate he must believe in Christ’s name and conform himself to His precepts.

Fr Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance teaches—

“[I]t is common and certain doctrine, and even *fidei proxima*, that the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer, is associated with Him in the work of redemption as secondary and subordinate cause, just as Eve was associated with Adam in the work of man’s ruin.”¹³

In a footnote he adds—

“Many Fathers, followed by many theologians, have noted that if Eve alone had sinned there would have been no Original Sin, and if Mary alone had given her consent without Jesus there would have been no redemption.”

He goes on to quote St Albert the Great—

“The Blessed Virgin Mary was chosen by God not to be his minister but to be His consort and His helper—in *consortium et adiutorium*—according the words of *Genesis*: ‘Let us make him a help like to himself’.”

The Catholic Church compares herself to Mary. St Paul says in *Ephesians* 5: 25-27:

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life: that he might present... to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish...”

As, by the ineffable providence of God, Mary was conceived immaculate, so when her Son established His Church did He establish an entity, likewise, immaculate. The Church is His spotless bride. Like Mary she is a mother *but her motherhood is narrower* than that of the Blessed Virgin. She is the mother only of those who conform to Christ and to His precepts by embracing her sacraments and her liturgy; in other words, she is mother only of the faithful.

‘Mother of the Church’

On November 21st 1964, at the close of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Council, upon the promulgation of the documents *Lumen Gentium* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*, Paul VI declared the Blessed Virgin Mary—

“Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors...”

After what has been exposed above, the reader ought to feel the greatest concerns as to the identity of ‘the Church’ to which Paul VI was referring by this title.

¹² Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance OP, Ph.D, S.T.D, *The Mother of the Saviour and Our Interior Life*, trans. Bernard J Kelly C.S.Sp., D.D., (Dublin 1949), pp. 188-9.

¹³ *The Mother of the Saviour and Our Interior Life*, op. cit., p. 184

Christ's Church is holy and without blemish: immaculate. She fulfils faithfully her office under the guidance of her Head, Our Blessed Lord. She is compared to Mary. She brings forth to new and immortal life children who are baptised. She is a mother in virtue of her imitation of Mary and, as such, the spotless spouse of Christ. To add to these the claim that Mary is mother of the Church confuses the images these doctrines generate, disturbing the even tenor of the Church's teaching. This is, doubtless, the reason why the Church has never previously insisted on the title, despite the fact that certain popes, bishops and theologians have referred to the reality underlying the claim from time to time.¹⁴

The errors Paul VI committed in *Ecclesiam Suam*, errors reflected in the novel teachings of the bishops of the Council then in its course, raise a justifiable doubt as to whether it was the Catholic Church to which he was referring in that encyclical, or the idealised entity towards which those bishops were moving under his inspiration, an entity focused, not on God but on man. It is impossible that *this entity*, which Pope John Paul II identified in *Redemptor Hominis* as 'the Church of the New Advent' but which might better be designated 'the Church of Vatican II', is of God.

It is, accordingly, a reasonable position to hold that 'the Church' of which, on November 21st 1964, at the close of the Council's Third Session, Paul VI proclaimed Mary 'the Mother', was not Christ's Church but this counterfeit. In support of this view it is worth considering what Dr Siebel has to say on the subject.

"The pilgrim People of God, which... is dissolved more and more into the formlessness of mankind, needs 'particularly at our time', a mother whose conceptualisation allows us to forget the Church as the Bride of Christ. Hence, this mother is referred to all men. We now have 'the special characteristic of the motherly love that the mother of God inserts in the mystery of redemption and the life of the church finds expression in its exceptional closeness to man and all that happens to him' (*Redemptor Hominis* 22.4). But if there is a 'Mother of the Church', then the very concept of the Church has... been changed, the time of its institution... pushed back. The Church as an institution can have no mother; she is the Mother of God's People. At the same time, the parallel between Mary and the Church is discarded. As Mother of the Church, Mary stands above the Church; thus is destroyed the idea that Mary is the image of the Church, a concept which has a central importance in our traditional understanding..."¹⁵

Verdict on Pope Paul VI

It seems clear in retrospect that Paul VI was a Gnostic in the sense that he thought he knew better than Christ, thought he knew better than the Church He had founded. This characteristic was to manifest itself in his reduction of a central issue of faith, the manner of offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to a mere matter of discipline when, in 1968 in breach of the Church's specific prohibitions against doing so (*Council of Trent*, Session VII, canon 13,

¹⁴ As St Ambrose did; as Pope Leo XIII did in the encyclical on the Rosary *Adjutricem populi* (September 5th 1895)

¹⁵ *A Study of the Encyclical Redemptor Hominis*, op. cit., Part II, The New Church, 3

March 3rd, 1547 [Dz. 856]; Pius V in the Bull *Quo Primum*, July 14th, 1570), he substituted for the canonised form of Mass in the Roman Rite a form of his own invention.

From all of the above the reader may be moved to agree with the writer that in *Ecclesiam Suam* Pope Paul VI initiated the attempt to divert the Catholic Church from the end intended by Almighty God that she should serve man's salvation, to a means to advance the earthly 'paradise' of humanism. It is an immense irony that the date on which he did so, August 6th, 1964, should correspond with the date on which he was to die fourteen years later.

Michael Baker

October 11th, 2024—*Maternity of the Mother of God*