

MATER POPULI FIDELIS - THE ATTACK ON THE MOTHER OF GOD

PART II – THE MODERNIST IMPOSITION

In order to see why Pope Leo XIV would think it appropriate to put his name to so defective a document as the ‘doctrinal note’ *Mater Populi fidelis* (October 7th, 2025) it is necessary to understand the state in which the Catholic Church finds herself today and to realise the influence on her clergy of the Modernist heresy.

Since about 1965, as a result of the conduct of two Popes, John XXIII and Paul VI, and the synod of bishops they oversaw, there has co-existed with the Catholic Church in the Vatican another entity. The Catholic Church, of course, is of God. This other entity is of man, and the devil. Paul VI labelled it *the Conciliar Church*. His successor called it *the Church of the New Advent*. Each thought it identical with the Catholic Church which the synod had reconstituted. Neither understood that Christ’s Church is a divine thing beyond man’s power to alter, save in accidentals.

What the synod’s bishops had achieved, instead, was to produce a counterfeit, a ‘Church’, which, led by Pope Paul VI, they proceeded to confuse with the Catholic Church. *This entity* has laboured ever since to promote among the faithful the spirit of the world. Its motivating force is the Modernist heresy and its end is to reduce the faith of Catholics to accommodation with the secular. It is best identified, by reference to its source, as *the Church of Vatican II*.

Popes John XXIII and Paul VI were infected with the Modernist virus and each of their five successors has been also. Each has shared the illusion that *the Church of Vatican II* is identical with the Catholic Church. Each has conducted himself as if his every act has been as Vicar of Christ when, most of the time, he has acted as head of the profane entity. Leo XIV’s endorsement of the ‘doctrinal note’ denigrating Our Blessed Lady by denying her titles *Co-Redemptrix* and *Mediatrix of Graces* illustrates his continuance in this baleful tradition.

It is heretical for any Catholic to assert that the Pope is never infallible. In 1870 the *Vatican Council* defined when he is, and in what circumstances. But there is another heresy which is equally bad—possibly worse. That is to say that the Pope is always infallible.¹ He is not. Every pope errs and, what is more, he errs most of the time. It is precisely because a pope does err that the Vatican Council defined the circumstances *in which he cannot*. It is not just ordinary Catholics who are guilty of this foolishness: many bishops and clerics are guilty of it too. It was the acceptance *at that synod*, by some two hundred bishops opposed to the self-contradictory, and heretical document, *Dignitatis Humanae*, of the view that Pope Paul VI could not err when he endorsed it, which moved them to withdraw their objections and reduce the number of bishops opposed to a nominal eighty. Let us now take a look at the Modernist heresy.

The Modernist Heresy

Before we do, it is essential to understand modern thought. For this heresy derives *not* from an error on one point or another of Church doctrine, but from the false philosophy that underlies modern thought—*modern philosophy*—whose tenets not only attack the basis of man’s thinking but also his common sense.

¹ Pope Benedict XVI made this clear in the first public statement after his election in ... when he said: “

Modern Thought—Modern Philosophy

“Not what God commands,” Martin Luther had said in the sixteenth century, “but what I say”. The adoption of his arrogant claim by so many Catholics (for the first Protestants were all Catholic) brought down on them and their families a host of evils. Man is utterly dependent on God. When he rejects God’s authority, he invokes a curse upon himself - intellectual blindness.

Reality confronts us in this world as God will confront us in the next for reality is God’s *surrogate*. When the Catholics of the sixteenth century chose to reject God, they chose also to reject reality, in particular its character which is the measure of truth. It might be argued they fulfilled, in their turn, the promise the devil made to our first parents: ‘You will be as gods’. For in lieu of reality as truth’s standard, these Catholic ‘protestants’ set up, as their gods, personal opinion. *Not God’s authority, but mine became Not reality as truth’s measure, but what I think.*²

Less than a hundred years later, Frenchman René Descartes formalised this error in the aphorism *Cogito ergo sum* – ‘I think, therefore I am’. Its effect was to turn philosophy on its head. No longer would men admit that a thing had first to exist before it acted; now action was primary, existence presumed. No longer would they submit to reality: they would accord a thing their own ‘reality’. This is *subjectivism* whose effects have afflicted men’s conduct ever since. Descartes’ formula was balanced by another error, a companion error, advanced by Englishman Francis Bacon. He refused to acknowledge the *formal* in things, the immaterial influence which fixes their quiddities, distinguishes one from another. The diversity in things could be explained, he insisted, by matter alone. Two errors then, *subjectivism* and *materialism*, were to serve as crutches for those crippled by their pride when they rejected God and His authority.

Thus did the Protestant Revolt do away with sound philosophy, rooted in the common sense of the Romans and sound thinking of the Greek philosophers, which God’s Church had secured for mankind over fifteen centuries. Intellectual life descended from wonder over the variety in creation to uncertainty whether men could really be sure of anything. These defects solidified during the period known as ‘the Enlightenment’ into the ‘rational’ assessment that, since man could be sure of nothing beyond what the senses report, all assertion of an immaterial realm is false or, at best, conjectural. Religion, was reduced to illusion—mere ‘belief’.

One of the defects in logic which follows subjectivism is confusion of what exists only in mind, *mental being*, with what exists in the real, *real being*. This confusion solidified in the school of modern philosophy known as *Idealism* whose chief proponent was Georg Hegel. He considered reality nothing but an invention of the mind. In other words, real being *was nothing but mental being*, so that what was primary was *personal consciousness*. This is the philosophical error which grounds the Modernist heresy.

Modernism—the Heresy Itself

Modernism denies the reality of what transcends the senses, the immaterial. Since God is not material, it denies His existence. However—this must be carefully understood—it *does not say so explicitly*; nor, if pressed will any Modernist admit it. Modernists look to ends which satisfy immediate demands, such as that the Church should conform herself to secular mores, come to

² Cf. Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum, A Study of Changes in the Catholic Church in the XXth Century*, Sarto House, Kansas City MO, 1996, Second Ed. transl. from the Italian by Fr. John P. Parsons, pp. 23-25.

terms with the world. That these are *intermediate* ends, not the *final* end of the heresy, eludes them.³ But the Catholic Church knows where the heresy is heading. In 1794 Pope Pius VI had condemned the propositions of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia and laid down principles to be applied against those who would seek to reform the Church along worldly lines. At the threshold of the twentieth century his successor, Pius X, faced with a deadlier virus than Pistoia, invoked the principles of his predecessor in the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (September 8th, 1907) and syllabus of Modernist errors, *Lamentabili sane*.

Analysis of Pius X's Encyclical Pascendi

The Pope begins with a *preliminary note* in which, from the effects of their tenets, their manner of speech, their actions—that is, from their intentions *objectively considered*—he identifies Modernists as enemies of the Church.⁴ He remarks, in this fashion, the extraordinary scope of the heresy *which attacks the very way we think*:

“[T]hey lay the axe not to the branches and shoots, but to the very root... to the faith and its deepest fibres. And once having struck at this root of immortality, they proceed to diffuse the poison throughout the whole tree, so that no part of Catholic truth is left untouched...” [Pascendi n. 3]

Modernists as philosophers - Human reason, the Modernist contends in conformity with modern philosophy, is confined entirely within the field of phenomena. It is limited to things that appear and the manner in which they appear. The Modernist considers he has neither the right, nor the power, to overstep these limits. Hence, he regards himself as incapable of lifting himself up to God, considered as an external reality, or of recognising His existence through visible things. According to Modernism God can never be an object of human science, nor an historical subject.

His agnosticism lapses easily into atheism. Science and history must, he insists, be atheistic. There is room for nothing but phenomena: an objective God, and all that is divine, must be excluded. [Pascendi, n. 6]

Modernists as believers - The Modernist acknowledges religion to be a fact. It must, then, have some explanation. Having closed the doors to a natural (i.e., objective) knowledge of God and any argument based upon it, and having rejected any possibility of God revealing Himself and His will to man, he concludes that religious belief must, following Hegel's postulates, be found *within man*. Faith consists, therefore, in a certain *interior* religious sense originating in a need for the divine whose source is man's subconscious. This is the Modernist principle of *religious immanence*. It is to this alleged *interior sense*, and not to any act of the informed intellect, that Modernists give the name 'faith'. For them faith is a *feeling*, not an act of the mind.

For Modernists *religious sense* is not only the source of 'faith' but also of 'revelation'. God manifests himself in this religious sense to the 'believer'.

“Since God is both the object and the cause of faith, this revelation is at the same time *of God and from God*; that is to say, God is both the Revealer and the Revealed... It is thus that [Modernists] make consciousness and revelation synonymous... and [put] religious consciousness... on an equal footing with revelation, and [demand] that to it all must submit, even the supreme authority of the Church, whether in the capacity of teacher, or legislator in the province of sacred liturgy or discipline.” [n. 8]

³ Since modern philosophy eschews any cause but matter, the heresy that relies on it is blind about the most important of the causes, the *final* cause. On the causes generally see St Thomas *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 44, aa. 1-4

⁴ This exemplifies the Church's theological maxim *de internis Ecclesia non iudicat*, “the Church does not judge the internal dispositions of the soul”.

Faith may be said to attribute to some fact, some phenomenon, a certain *transfiguration*. (Mark again: this 'faith' is *something emanating from the 'believer'*.) This transfiguration elevates it above its true conditions, attributing to it characteristics it does not truly possess. This is especially the case with past phenomena, such as the person of Jesus Christ. Since agnosticism demands that anything suggestive of the divine be rejected, it follows that Our Lord's historical person has been *transfigured* by 'faith'. In reality, then, everything not in strict keeping with the character, condition and education of a person in the place and time in which Christ lived must be excluded, so that His person must also be said to have been *disfigured* by faith.

For the Modernist, man's *religious sense* is the origin not just of the Catholic religion but of *all* religions. The Catholic faith was engendered by this process of *religious immanence* which originated in the consciousness of Christ, a man of the choicest nature whose like has never been, nor will ever be, repeated. Christianity (Catholicism) emanated from nature spontaneously and of itself. Thus, all the Church's claims of the supernatural are denied, reduced to a *subjective and material conception* of the natural, and the Catholic faith merely one with other religions. [n. 10]

What, then, is the status of Catholic doctrines - dogma? For the Modernist they are formulas, products arrived at after detailed reflections, of man's religious sense. They have no purpose but to give the believer an account of his faith and must, accordingly, be adapted to his religious sense. But, since this has an infinite variety of aspects of which, now one now another, predominates, these formulas are subject to vicissitudes and are, therefore, changeable. Thus, the way is open to the Modernist thesis of *the evolution of dogma*.

"[I]t is necessary that the *primitive* formula be accepted and sanctioned by the heart; and similarly, the work from which are brought forth [from them] the *secondary* formulas, must proceed under the guidance of the heart. Hence it occurs that these formulas, in order to be living, should be, and remain, adapted to the faith and to the believer. Wherefore, if for any reason this adaptation should cease to exist, they lose the first meaning and, accordingly, need to be changed." [n. 13]

What does the Modernist mean by *belief*? Belief is a personal experience after the manner of an intuition of the heart which places the believer in immediate contact with God. It is this *personal experience* - not an act of the mind acknowledging truth revealed - that makes him a believer. What is there to prevent such experiences from being found in other religions? Nothing! It follows that every religion, even a pagan one, must be held to be true. If Christianity seems to have more truth, it is because it is more vivid than the others, truer to its origins. [n. 14]

What does the Modernist mean by *tradition*? Pius X again:

"Tradition, as understood by the Modernists is a communication with others of an *original experience*, through preaching by means of the intellectual formula." [n. 15]

This communication of religious experience sometimes takes root and thrives; at other times it withers and dies. If it thrives, it is true; for Modernists think that to live is proof of truth, since for them, life and truth are identical. "Thus," the Pope concludes—

"we are... led to infer that all existing religions are equally true, for otherwise they would not survive."

Modernist Methods - The conduct of Modernists is in harmony with their teachings.

"In their writings and addresses they seem not infrequently to advocate doctrines which are contrary one to another, so that one would be disposed to regard their attitude as double and doubtful."

The reason for this is their assessment that science and faith are mutually separate.

"Thus, in their books one finds some things which might well be approved by a Catholic, but on turning the page one is confronted by other things which might well have been dictated by a rationalist." [n. 18] This duplicity, this double-faced-ness, is a signal mark of Modernists and their heresy. For the Modernist, faith occupies itself with something that science (following the dictates of modern philosophy) declares to be unknowable. Each has its own field: *science* is entirely concerned with phenomena, while *faith* concerns itself with the divine, unknown to science.

"Thus... there can never be any dissension between faith and science, for if each keeps to its own ground they never meet and therefore can never be in contradiction." [n. 16]

The Modernist treats history, including the life of Our Lord and accounts of his miracles, as a part of science. How, then, does he reconcile faith in Jesus Christ with science?

"Though such things come within the category of phenomena, still in as far as they are *lived* by faith, they have, in the way described above, been *transfigured*, moved from the world of sense, transferred to the divine and, accordingly, *disfigured*. Hence, should it be further asked whether Christ has wrought real miracles, made real prophecies, whether He rose truly from the dead and ascended into heaven, the answer of agnostic science will be in the negative and the answer of faith in the affirmative—yet there will not be on that account any conflict between them." [n. 16]

The reader may begin to see how, precisely in the act of contradicting himself, the Modernist regards himself as true to his principles.

"For (what may be) denied by the philosopher as philosopher speaking to philosophers considering Christ only in his historical reality... (may) be affirmed by the believer speaking to believers considering the life of Christ as *lived again* by the faith and in the faith." [ibid]

Catholics in the pews, bemused by the way Father X seems to contradict himself, or seems to be saying today *the very opposite* of what he had said yesterday, now have a key to his duplicity. Despite his claims to be a *Catholic* priest, they are listening not to a Catholic but to a Modernist.⁵

Modernists as theologians - The Modernist has, then, two realms, the one of science, the other of faith. If they seem to contradict each other this is only apparent, for a hierarchy appears.

"The philosopher has declared: *the principle of faith is immanent*; the believer has added: *this principle is God*; and the theologian draws the conclusion: *God is immanent in man*. Thus, we have *theological immanence*. So, too, the philosopher regards it as certain that the representations of *the object of faith are merely symbolical*; the believer has... affirmed that *the object of faith is God in himself*; and the theologian proceeds to affirm that *the representations of the divine reality are symbolical*." [Ibid n. 19]

Now a symbol is a representation of some object and, for a believer, it is an instrument.

"[I]t is necessary... according to the teachings of the Modernists, that the believer not lay too much stress on the formula, as formula, but... only for the purposes of uniting himself to the absolute truth which the formula at once reveals and conceals, that is to say, endeavours to express but without ever succeeding in doing so." [Ibid]

In other words, the Modernist's 'faith', always subject to science and scientific fact, is evanescent, devoid of any reality that can be justified rationally. Just how pernicious are the consequences of this train of Modernist reasoning should be evident. Its whole *subjectivist* rationalisation, a pattern of lies, demonstrates its provenance in the Father of Lies

⁵ This assertion of mutually conflicting 'truths' is a canard proposed at various times in the history of philosophy, notably by Siger of Brabant (1240-1284). The Muslim Averroës (1126 - 1198) proposed a duplicity of 'truths' between philosophy and Mohammedan 'theology' as a result of being condemned for his philosophy (which reflected that of Aristotle) because it cast doubt on Mohammed's 'revelations'. The nonsense of 'two truths' was settled by St Thomas Aquinas in his *De unitate intellectus (On the Unicity of Intellect)*.

Modernists on the Church - The way Modernism regards the Church is this:

“[The Church] is the product of the *collective conscience*, that is to say, of the association of individual consciences which, by virtue of the principle of *vital immanence*, depend all on one first believer who, for Catholics, is Christ.” [Pascendi n. 23]

Now every organisation needs a directing authority as well as elements that make it – that *keep it* – unified, and these elements, in the Catholic Church, are doctrine and worship. The Church thus, rightly, exercises a triple authority, *disciplinary*, *dogmatic* and *liturgical*. Its nature is gathered from its origin and establishes its rights and duties. However, *things have changed* – *tempora mutantur et nos in illis* - as Heraclitus might have said (if he had spoken Latin!).⁶

“In past times it was a common error that authority came to the Church from without, that is to say, directly from God; and it was then rightly held to be autocratic. But this conception has now grown obsolete. For in the same way as the Church is a vital emanation of the collectivity of consciences, so too authority emanates vitally from the Church itself. Authority, therefore, like the Church, has its origin in the *religious conscience* and... is subject to it.” (ibid)

The reader may, on reading this nonsense, be reminded of the slogan repeated *ad nauseam* by camp followers of the ersatz ecumenical council after 1965, “We are the Church”. If the Church is not something objective; if it is something arising from our collective consciences, then, of course, the claim is right: *We are the Church!*

Conscience demands conformity of the Church with the world. Why? Because—

“we are living in an age when the sense of liberty has reached its highest development. In the civil order the public conscience has introduced popular government. Now there is in man only one conscience, just as there is only one life. It is for the ecclesiastical authority... to adopt a democratic form, unless it wishes to provoke and foment an intestine conflict in the consciences of mankind. The penalty of refusal is disaster. For... [if] the sentiment of liberty... were forcibly pent up and held in bonds, the more terrible would be its outburst, sweeping away at once both Church and religion.” (ibid)

Thus, the one great anxiety for Modernists was to find a way of reconciling the authority of the Church with the liberty of believers. Enter Pope John XXIII and his ‘council’!

The reader might like to pause here and revisit John XXIII’s *Opening Speech* of October 11th, 1962 to the bishops summoned to the Vatican. He should have little difficulty recognising the Modernist bent to his text.⁷

But: we anticipate.

Relation of Church and State - The Modernist attitude to the relationship of Church and State differs radically from that grounded in reality which the Church has maintained for 1,900 years. She must now submit herself to the world’s demands; alter her attitude to the secular State. No longer can she insist she holds a position of superiority, as God’s representative on earth, to princes and rulers, let alone towards a populace now embracing the ‘liberty’ which is their true entitlement. Nor can she claim, as she has in the past, to lay down moral precepts to be kept, not just by Catholics, but by all men.

Let us see what Pius X has to say on this development.

⁶ “Times change and we change with them”. Attributed to Ovid (43 BC – 17 AD) but more appropriately to Heraclitus (c 500 BC), the philosopher of change.

⁷ A copy is available in the Abbott edition of *The Documents of Vatican II*, (Geoffrey Chapman) London, 1966, p. 710

"It is not only within her own household that the Church must come to terms... she has other [relations] with those who are outside... The rules to be applied... are... those... laid down for science and faith, though... [now it is a matter] of *ends*.... [A]s faith and science are alien to each other by reason of diversity of their *objects*, Church and State are strangers by reason of diversity of *ends*, that of the Church being spiritual, while that of the State is temporal. Formerly, it was possible to subordinate the temporal to the spiritual... conceding to the Church the position of queen and mistress of all... But this doctrine is today repudiated by philosophers and historians alike. The State must therefore be separated from the Church, and the Catholic from the citizen." [n. 24]

The last point is sobering in the extreme! That this Modernist claim has been adopted by the Church's bishops and clergy goes far to explain the deafening silence among them over the innumerable moral issues that have arisen to afflict society in the last fifty years.

The Pope spells out the Modernist justification of personal irresponsibility.

"Every Catholic, by reason of the fact that he is also a citizen, has the right and duty to work for the common good in the way he thinks best, without troubling himself about the authority of the Church, without paying heed to its wishes, its counsels, its orders—nay, even in spite of its rebukes. For the Church to... prescribe for any citizen any line of action... is to be guilty of abuse of authority, against which one is bound to protest with all one's might..." [ibid]

The authorisation of disobedience to the Church by the pseudo-synod of Pistoia was one of the many errors for which Pius VI condemned it in *Auctorem Fidei*.

The Church's Magisterium - Given all that has been shown above, we should not be surprised to find that the heresy attacks the Church's authority. Modernists may not have admitted this in 1907 when Pius X was writing, but it follows.

"As faith is to be subordinated to science as far as phenomenal elements are concerned, so too in temporal matters the Church must be subject to the State... For granted the principle that in temporal matters the State possesses the sole power, it will follow that when the believer, dissatisfied with merely internal acts of religion, proceeds to external acts—as in reception and administration of the sacraments—these will fall under the control of the State." [n. 25]

Since it is only exercised by external acts, what is to become of the Church's authority? Obviously, it will be completely under the dominion of the State.

And, to show the reader where the Modernist mind wished to lead the Church, Pius X spelled out what was to come.

"If Modernists have not yet openly proceeded so far, they ask the Church in the meanwhile to follow of her own accord in the direction in which they urge her and to adapt herself to the forms of the State." [ibid]

Why have the Popes, why have the bishops, since the close of the ersatz council in December 1965, declined to exercise their God-given authority against the popular will expressed in the modern State in matters of faith and morals? The answer is that the bishops of that false synod, and the Pope who brought it to conclusion, embraced, book and verse, these dictats of the Modernist heresy. Every Pope and almost every bishop since has continued to do so.

Evolution - We spelled out above in the short analysis of modern philosophy the consequences of its *materialistic* bent of indulging—in lieu of the facility of *distinction* proper to intellectual beings (where the *formal* characters in things are considered and weighed)—in one species or another of *material* change, such as succession or evolution.⁸ We remarked how this defect would be found in the heresy to which that defective philosophy gave rise.

⁸ Or addition, or multiplication, or division!

In n. 26 of his encyclical the Pope shows the effect of this philosophical error on religion.

"First of all, [the Modernists] lay down the general principle that in a living religion everything is subject to change, and must in fact be changed. In this way they pass to what is practically their principal doctrine, namely, *evolution*. To the laws of evolution everything is subject... dogma, Church, worship, the [sacred books] ... even faith itself."

How do their 'laws of evolution' operate?

"The primitive form of faith, they tell us, was rudimentary and common to all men alike, for it had its origin in human nature and human life. Vital evolution brought with it *progress*... by an increasing perfusion of the religious sense into the conscience." [ibid]

Their explanation, which applies *subjective* categories to *objective* historical events, is ingenious. The 'progress' in faith mentioned is of two kinds: *negative*—which goes to eliminate extraneous elements, such as ties to family or nation—and *positive*—which, via intellectual and moral refinements, leads to *the idea of* the divine becoming fuller and clearer. This 'progress' is aided by the appearance of extraordinary individuals, prophets—of whom Christ was the greatest—whose lives and words contained something of mystery *which faith attributed to the divinity*, because it fell to their lot to have new and original *experiences* in harmony with the *religious needs* of their time.

This 'progress' in the field of *dogma* (*evolution of dogma*) was due chiefly to overcoming obstacles to the faith, vanquishing its enemies, refuting objections, striving to penetrate its mysteries.

"This is what is found to have happened in the case of Christ; that divine something which faith recognised in Him was slowly and gradually expanded in such a way that He was at last held to be God."

Let the reader understand the significance of this claim. *Christ is not God!* The assertion that He is God is no more than the effect of *collective consciousness*. Where is the heresy leading? Pius X tells us explicitly: *Modernism ends in atheism*. [Pascendi n. 3]

As to *evolution of worship*, the Modernist recognises the value certain acts acquire by usage but insists that it operates in the need to accommodate worship to the manners and customs of peoples. Finally, there is the question of *evolution in the Church*.

"[This] is fed by the need of adapting itself to historical conditions and harmonising itself with existing forms of society."

Modernist Attitude to Tradition and Progress - Although evolution is urged on by needs or necessities, if it was controlled by these alone, it would easily overstep the boundaries of tradition and, separated from its *primitive vital principle*, would make for ruin rather than progress. How does the Modernist address this? By adopting categories of *materialistic* progress along the lines taught by Hegel (and adopted by Karl Marx), known as dialectic—*thesis* followed by *antithesis* leading to *synthesis*.

"Evolution is described as a resultant from the conflict of two forces, one of them tending towards progress, the other towards conservation. The conserving force exists in the Church and is found in *tradition*; tradition is represented by religious authority... by right and in fact. *By right*, for it is the very nature of authority to protect tradition: and *in fact*, since authority, raised as it is above the contingencies of life, feels hardly, or not at all, the spurs of progress. The *progressive* force, on the other hand, which responds to the inner needs, lies in the individual consciences and works in them—especially in such of them as are in closer and more intimate contact with life." [n. 27]

This leads the Pope to expose the heresy's most critical element.

"Already we observe, Venerable Brethren, the introduction of that most pernicious doctrine which would make of the laity the factor of progress in the Church." [ibid]

Here is the instrument to put into effect the mindset that religion emanates, not from a man's natural deference to his Creator as a response to the bounty of infinite variety bestowed on him, but from a shared illusion, arising from within.

If religion arises from *within* man and all claims of the supernatural are without foundation—if religion *responds to the inner needs, lies in the individual consciences and works in them*, it is essential that these be heeded, especially those among them who *are in closer and more intimate contact with life*. And who are these? Why, the laity, of course!

This fetish of the Modernist, *subjectivist*, imposition—that it is *the laity* that underpins the Church—

- was to dominate the mind of Jose Maria Escriva and ground his movement, *Opus Dei*, and
- be embraced by the bishops of the ersatz council in their document, *Gaudium et Spes*.

It is this *Modernist element*, in a new guise, that has been used by its functionaries in *the Church of Vatican II* to oppress the faithful over the last twenty-five years. It is called 'synodality'.⁹

The scandal for the Catholic faithful, who have done what they can to answer this nonsense, is that Popes, bishops and clergy have hidden the reality that the 'synodal' obsession has nothing to do with Catholicism, or the Church, but is rooted in the Modernist heresy.

Modernist as Reformer - The Modernist has a passion for innovation, for reform.

"In all Catholicism there is absolutely nothing on which [Modernism] does not fasten. They wish philosophy to be reformed, especially in the ecclesiastical seminaries. They wish scholastic philosophy to be relegated to the history of philosophy and to be classed among absolute systems, and young men to be taught modern philosophy which alone is true and suited to the times in which we live. They desire the reform of theology..." [Pascendi n. 38]

History is to be rewritten and taught only in accord with their methods and modern principles. Dogma, and its *evolution*, is to be harmonised with science and history. No dogmas are to be included in the catechism except those which have been so reformed and are within the capacity of the faithful. As to worship—

"[T]he number of external devotions is to be reduced, and steps must be taken to prevent their further increase..." [ibid]

And how that evil, and an accompanying iconoclasm, has been visited upon the faithful!

As to the Church's ecclesiastical government, it is to be reformed in all its branches, but especially in its disciplinary and dogmatic departments, and submitted to the influence of those, identified above, as *in closer and more intimate contact with life*.

"[O]utwardly and inwardly it must be brought into harmony with the modern conscience which now wholly tends towards democracy; a share in ecclesiastical government should therefore be given to the lower ranks of the clergy, and even to the laity, and authority, which is too much concentrated, should be decentralised." [ibid]

The reader familiar with John XXIII's *Opening Speech* to the bishops assembled in the Vatican in October 1962 will recognise in its refrains these Modernist desiderata as, in the Pope's subsequent

⁹ In 2018 the tool of the *Church of Vatican II* called *the International Theological Commission*, defined 'synodality' as 'the action of the Spirit in the communion of the Body of Christ and in the missionary journey of the People of God'.

conduct and in that of his successor, they will recognise their execution and their putting in place of this further demand:

“The Roman Congregations, and especially the Index and the Holy Office, must be... modified...” [ibid]

Modernism and Pride - Blinded by the subjectivist prejudice in which their heresy, and they with it, are embedded, Modernists refuse to admit they are in error. The Pope remarks how—

“Modernists express astonishment when they are reprimanded or punished. What is imputed to them as a fault they regard as a sacred duty. They understand the needs of consciences better than anyone else, since they come into closer touch with them than does the ecclesiastical authority. Nay, they embody them, so to speak, in themselves... Let authority rebuke them if it pleases—they have their own conscience on their side and an intimate experience which tells them with certainty that what they deserve is not blame but praise.” [n. 27]

But behind this most fundamental of all the attacks Christ’s Church has faced in twenty centuries, there lies the malevolent spirit the devil precipitated at the outset of man’s existence.

“[I]t is pride which exercises an incomparably greater sway over the soul to blind it and lead it into error, and pride sits in Modernism as in its own house, finding sustenance everywhere in its doctrines and lurking in its every aspect. It is pride which fills Modernists with that self-assurance by which they consider themselves and pose as the rule for all. It is pride which puffs them up with that vainglory which allows them to regard themselves as the sole possessors of knowledge, and makes them say, elated and inflated with presumption, “We are not as the rest of men,” and which... leads them to embrace and to devise novelties even of the most absurd kind. It is pride which rouses in them the spirit of disobedience and causes them to demand a compromise between authority and liberty. It is owing to their pride that they seek to be reformers of others while they forget to reform themselves and that they are found to be utterly wanting in respect for authority...” [n. 40]

The reader who has attended to the detail of Pius X’s analysis of the Modernist heresy and how fundamental is its attack on the faith instituted by Christ will have grasped just how vital it was for the saintly Pope to have spent such time in exposing its undertaking. He will understand, too, how justified is his claim [in n. 39] that Modernism is “the synthesis of all heresies”.

In Part III of this paper we will endeavour to show how each element of the Modernist heresy went to form the thinking at the pseudo-synod held between 1962 and 1965, and how traitorous is the claim that the gathering was an ecumenical, or general, council of the Catholic Church.

The reasoning in *Mater Populi fidelis* relies on opinions expressed at that defective synod and on utterances of Popes who deferred to it. It follows that the document can only be regarded a document of the Catholic Church’s diabolical counterfeit, the *Church of Vatican II*.

Michael Baker

February 11th, 2026—*Apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes*