

SAINTS UNDER THE NEW DISPENSATION

“In the daily exercise of our pastoral office we sometimes have to listen, much to our regret, to voices of persons who, though burning with zeal, are not endowed with too much sense of discretion or measure. In these modern times they can see nothing but prevarication and ruin. They say that our era, in comparison with past eras, is getting worse and they behave as though they had learned nothing from history... They behave as though at the time of former Councils everything was a full triumph for the Christian idea and life and for a proper religious liberty.”

Pope John XXIII, *Opening Speech*, Second Vatican Council

Fr Carl Ashton of the church of the Sacred Heart, South Mt Druitt in western Sydney, is wont when he celebrates the Memorial of *St John Vianney* to say that a study of the life of the *Curé of Ars* compels one to the view that in the order of the saints he must be in the very top rank. For forty years Jean-Baptiste Vianney hardly slept more than three hours a night ; most of each day he spent in the confessional. Anyone who came within his influence was impelled to convert from his former way of life. The Devil himself was reported as saying—the usual caveat being observed of *the Father of Lies*—that if there were three in the world like the *Curé*, his kingdom would be destroyed. Clearly there are ranks among the saints.

I

As at 26th April 2014, the Church had canonised but two of the popes who had reigned over the previous 400 years, Pius V¹ and Pius X².

Pope Pius V (8.1.1566 to 1.5.1572) implemented and enforced the decrees of the Council of Trent, declared St Thomas Aquinas a Doctor of the Church and standardised the Roman rite of the Church’s liturgy ; he prosecuted various French bishops for heresy and excommunicated Queen Elizabeth for schism and the persecution of her Catholic faithful. He established the Holy League of Christendom to fight the Muslim Ottoman Turks’ encroachment on Europe. His efforts to enjoin an apathetic population to action were memorialised by G K Chesterton :

*[T]he Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.
The cold Queen of England is looking in the glass ;
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass ;
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish gun,
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is smiling in the Sun...³*

Pius V invoked the intercession of the Blessed Virgin as *Help of Christians* in the struggle with the Mohammedan and to her he attributed the success of Don John of Austria and his forces in the battle of Lepanto (7th October, 1571) which went far to preserve Christendom from the ravages of that *faux religion* until the middle of the twentieth century. He marked the date with the feast of *Our Lady of Victories*, now

¹ On 22nd May, 1712, by Pope Clement XI.

² On 29th May, 1954 by Pope Pius XII.

³ G K Chesterton, *Lepanto*

celebrated as *Our Lady of the Rosary*. All this he accomplished in the face of moral laxity among religious and clergy, weak Catholic princes, and the poisoning influence of a ubiquitous Protestantism.

Pope Pius X (2.6.1835 to 20.8.1914) isolated and condemned, in one of the longest encyclicals ever written, the heresy of Modernism⁴. In 1910 in the Decree *Quam Singulari* he instituted the practice, now universal, of admitting children to the Eucharist on reaching the age of reason, awakening the Catholic faithful to the dictates of the economy of salvation. He established a commission of cardinals to codify the Church's canon law, the resulting *Codex* being promulgated by his successor, Benedict XV. He endorsed and enforced the teachings of his predecessor, Leo XIII on the necessity of a grasp of the philosophy and theology of St Thomas for the proper formation of seminarians and religious, and raised the status of the College of St Thomas in Rome to the level of a pontifical university, the *Angelicum*.

Pius X endorsed the Church's teaching against Freemasonry advanced so strenuously by his predecessor and condemned the Masonic government of France for passing a law effecting the separation of Church and state in that country. The government's attempts to make it appear the Church was provoking a breach of their concordat were foiled at every turn by his astute Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val, so that the government had itself to precipitate the breach. It proceeded to confiscate all Church property throughout the country.⁵ To those Catholics who complained at the price of this immense disenfranchisement Pius X said this :

"They speak too much of the goods of the Church and too little of her *good*... Tell them that history repeats itself. Ages ago on a high mountain two powers stood face to face. 'All this will I give thee', said the one, 'if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' The other refused—and is refusing still..."⁶

Many evidences of miracles attended Pius X in the course of his life. During an audience he was holding a paralysed child which wriggled free from his grasp to go running around the room. A couple to whom he had been confessor when he was bishop of Mantua had a two-year-old child with meningitis. They wrote to the Pope who replied telling them to hope and pray about the matter and two days later the child was cured. Ernesto Ruffini, later Archbishop of Palermo and a Cardinal, while he was studying for the priesthood visited the Pope after he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. He told him to return to the seminary and his condition would resolve: it did. During his walks through Rome the sick would place themselves where his shadow would fall in anticipation of a cure, and many occurred. The parallels with St Peter are manifest.

⁴ *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, 8th September, 1907. He had earlier, in the Decree *Lamentabili Sane* (3rd July 1907), condemned 65 Modernist propositions.

⁵ Another instance of the systematic theft from the Church and her faithful of their rightful property which had occurred under the reigns of Henry VIII and his successors in England which was to be repeated by the totalitarian regimes of Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany.

⁶ Quoted in F A Forbes, *Pope St Pius X*, London, 1918 ; this from Tan Books (Rockford, Illinois) reprint, 1987, p. 73.

One will search the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in vain for any mention as authorities of either St Pius V or St Pius X, and especially for any mention of the latter's encyclical condemning Modernism.

II

On Sunday, 27th April, 2014, Pope Francis canonised two more popes, John XXIII and John Paul II, the span of whose reigns covered a mere 46 years. Many other and earlier popes, popes whom an objective observer might think had better, and prior, claims to such recognition, were passed over. The issue for our consideration is not whether or not these two are saints in heaven—Christ's Church through the mediacy of the Pope has declared them to be so. The issue is whether it was prudent for him to have done so.

Before proceeding there are matters that need to be addressed. The first is the philosophical truth that any power can be used for good or for ill, and its corollary that the greater the power the greater the good and the greater the harm that may be worked. Of all the powers given to men, none are greater than those given to a pope.

The second follows on the first and turns on the unique position of the pope in the affairs of men as the Vicar of Christ. He is infallible on certain occasions and in respect of certain matters, yet he is not indefectible (or impeccable). Such is the respect with which he is held and the powers he enjoys, however, that many think him indefectible. For such people (whether cardinals, bishops, religious or laity) it is impossible that a decision a pope may have taken could have been imprudent, or foolish, or in error ; impossible that the inevitable consequences of such decision could be harmful, or that any harm that flowed was attributable to the pope who took the decision. The voice of sanity on the subject is that of Melchior Cano O.P., theologian to the Council of Trent :

“Peter has no need of our lies or flattery. Those who blindly and indiscriminately defend every decision of the supreme Pontiff are the very ones who do most to undermine the authority of the Holy See—they destroy instead of strengthening its foundations.”⁷

Prudence—*recta ratio agibilium* (right reason about things to be done)—is the virtue which governs the exercise of all other virtues ; it is the *auriga virtutum*. A pope has a duty to feed Christ's sheep and to care for them [John 21: 15-17], an essential element of which is that he determine what is apt to bring minds nearer to or turn them away from the faith, and that he promote the former and reject the latter. Any man or woman who is in heaven is a saint, yet very few of those in heaven have been declared to be so by the Church which has been at pains over twenty centuries to elevate only those whose lives would serve for the edification and sanctification of the faithful. She has refrained, in particular, from elevating those who engaged in error in the course of their lives lest the faithful should be scandalised at the apparent endorsement of that error by the Church.

⁷ Quoted in George Weigel, *Witness to Hope, The Biography of Pope John Paul II*, New York, 2001, p.15.

Since John XXIII's decision to call a general or ecumenical council prudence has frequently been wanting in papal decisions. Both John XXIII and John Paul II, were guilty of prudential errors. One such error was the latter's decision in 1983 to abolish the office of *Promotor Fidei*, the Devil's Advocate, who defended the Church when a candidate was proposed for beatification or canonisation. Had Pope Francis (and, for that matter, his predecessor Pope Benedict XVI) had the benefit of the advocacy of this Office-bearer in upholding the Church's honour, he might have refrained from canonising either pope from concerns about scandal over the apparent endorsement by the Church of their errors. Not that prudence seems to have featured largely in Pope Francis's decisions to date, witness his egregious decision to canonise John XXIII in the absence of more than one duly attested miracle.

Here is a list of the more grievous errors of Pope John XXIII.

- Summoning a council of the bishops of the Church in the belief that he was convoking an ecumenical or general council when the end for which he publicly acknowledged he had summoned them was inconsistent with the end of such a council⁸ ;
- Abdicating formally and publicly in his *Opening Speech* to the Second Vatican Council the authority of the Church to exercise her medicinal powers for the correction of evils among the faithful ;
- Suspending rules he himself had laid down for the conduct of the Council when the conditions for their implementation had not been met, precipitating a loss of control of the deliberations of the attendant bishops which enabled the Council's use as an instrument for the propagation of error ;
- Rejecting, impliedly, in his *Opening Speech*, the Church's constant and infallible teaching against a right to religious freedom thereby casting doubt on the claim of the Church to be the one true religion on earth ;
- Denying, impliedly, in his *Opening Speech*, the Church's teaching concerning the weakened condition of human nature as a consequence of Original Sin.

Of these errors, the first was irresponsible, the second and third were negligent, and the fourth and fifth involved utterances which were at least offensive to pious ears.

Here is a list of the more grievous errors of Pope John Paul II.

- Continuing the error of abdication of authority of his predecessors John XXIII and Paul VI by neglecting to correct or to discipline bishops, priests and religious who taught heterodox matter to the faithful⁹ ;

⁸ Much has been written to the effect that he was inspired to summon the council by the Holy Spirit. That was not at all the view of the Cardinals to whom he first mooted the idea. Cf. Xavier Rynne, *Letters from Vatican City*, New York, 1963, p. 2. In a pastoral letter of 1870, the Archbishop of Westminster, Henry Edward Manning, (later Cardinal), explained to his clergy the background to the events leading to the (First) Vatican Council. In the course of it he quoted with approval the words of Cardinal Pallavicini, "to convoke a general council except when absolutely demanded by necessity is to tempt God." [These references quoted in Michael Davies, *Pope John's Council*, Kansas City, 1977, pp. 2-3.]

⁹ Shortly after his accession to the papal throne, he authorised the removal by the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* of Hans Küng's entitlement to be regarded as a Catholic theologian. The same Congregation called Dutch theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx, to account. Many among the faithful entertained hopes that once again the Church would have a Pope prepared to exercise her executive power and to discipline dissenters. These hopes were quickly dashed. The beginnings were not followed by any concerted action to circumvent the purveyors of heresy within the Church. The new

- Endorsing and promoting the errors of the ideology of feminism ;
- Misrepresenting in encyclicals (*Redemptor Hominis* and others) and in other public documents that it was man rather than Christ that was the focus of the Church's way in the world ;
- Implying in encyclicals (*Redemptor Hominis* and others) and in other public documents that baptism was no longer necessary for salvation ;
- Endeavouring in his early *Wednesday Audiences* by a tortured exegesis to force various texts of the Old and New Testaments to conform with feminist ideology ;
- Proclaiming publicly in encyclical letters, apostolic letters such as *Mulieris Dignitatem*, and addresses, this tortured exegesis as if it was part of the Church's teaching ;
- Publishing a body of moral teaching, the misnamed 'theology of the body', grounded in this erroneous exegesis as if it accorded with the Church's constant teaching ;
- Contradicting in an encyclical (*Fides et Ratio*) the authority of innumerable of his predecessors before, and after, the Council of Trent and, most recently of Leo XIII in *Aeterni Patris* [4.8.1879] ; of Pius X in *Pascendi* [8.9.1907] and in (*motu proprio*) *Sacrorum antistitum* [1.9.1910] & *Doctoris Angelici* [29.6.1914] ; of Benedict XV in the 1917 *Codex Iuris Canonici*, canon 1366 § 2 ; of Pius XI in *Studiorum Duce*m [29.6.1923] ; and of Pius XII in *Humani Generis* [12.8.1950], by asserting that the Church did not have a philosophy of her own ;
- Claiming as authority for the above proposition words of Pius XII in *Humani Generis* which are manifestly authority for the very contrary proposition¹⁰ ;
- Failing to give other than lip service to the Church's long standing insistence that her seminarians and religious should be instructed in the philosophy of St Thomas.

It seems not to concern Pope Francis or those advising him that these canonisations have scandalised those of the faithful conscious of the two popes' shortcomings. Very little study of feedback on the internet is needed to confirm the universality of the concerns at his action. The Pope and his advisors give every indication that they will listen to those to whom they wish to listen, and close their ears to those to whom they do not, emulating in this the foolish and naïve attitude demonstrated by John XXIII in the passage quoted as anagraph to this paper.

We have quoted the common sense of Melchior Cano on the correct approach to be taken to the papal person. A misplaced respect serves to cow peer-bishops from the robust opposition needed to preserve a pope from folly—one or more prepared to tell the Pope to his face that he is wrong and, if he takes exception to their advice, to suffer the consequences that may be visited upon them, demotion, transferral or even excommunication, for the good of the Church. Had such opposition been offered, it

Pope was to exercise the executive power only sporadically during the remainder of his reign. Küng, for instance, was never excommunicated or even suspended *a divinis*, a neglect which permitted him to boast that he was still a priest in good standing. The ongoing defective attitude of the papacy was demonstrated in Pope Benedict's habit of meeting with him socially.

¹⁰ There is certainly objective dishonesty here : it is difficult not to see also subjective dishonesty.

is hard to see how Pope John Paul II could have continued with his idiosyncratic, not to say mindless, distortion of the meaning of passages of the Old and New Testaments in a fruitless endeavour to make them conform to feminist ideology. The nonsense in which he engaged seems to have been accepted and embraced by cardinals and bishops universally.

The incompetence of Pope John Paul II (and of his predecessor, Pope Paul VI) was not helped by their appointment as office holders within the Vatican of reputed Masons such as Jean Cardinal Villot and his successor, Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, to the position of Secretary of State.¹¹ The defective dispositions of these prelates rendered them only too willing to assist the pope of the day in poor decision making.

III

From all the above it is clear that, notwithstanding what has been encouraged as the popular view among believers, the two canonised popes had limitations which mandated that neither should be held up for emulation by the faithful. Neither had a thorough grounding in the Church's philosophy which, in the absence of outstanding speculative or practical intellectual ability, is essential for the right guidance of Christ's Church. Neither was possessed with the intelligence, science, wisdom or prudence necessary for the task.¹² Neither of them are—or ever will be—Doctors of the Church. Many others were more outstanding in holiness but lacked the qualifications deemed essential under the present dispensation as candidates for canonisation, as a study of the lives of two of them will show.

Cardinal Mindszenty

József Cardinal Mindszenty [born József Pehm] (1892-1975) was the Prince Primate, Archbishop of Esztergom, and leader of the Catholic Church in Hungary from 2nd October 1945 to 18th December, 1973. He was an uncompromising opponent of the totalitarian regimes of fascism and communism over five decades, going to prison for the first time in 1919. He was imprisoned during World War II by the pro-Nazi authorities and, at the war's end and the installation of a communist government in Hungary, he was arrested and accused of treason and conspiracy. In anticipation of his arrest he wrote a note denying he had been involved in any conspiracy and asserting that any confession that might be exacted from him would be the result of duress. In the course of a show-trial that generated worldwide condemnation (and a resolution of the United Nations), he was sentenced to life imprisonment. On 12th

¹¹ One can find in current literature, and on the internet, any number of allegations of Catholics enrolled in Masonic lodges around the world, particularly since the mid 1970s. The involvement not only of members of the Catholic laity, but of the clergy, with 'the Craft' has been the case since at least the mid nineteenth century. The most dramatic public assertions regarding such involvement occurred in September 1978 when Italian Mason, Mino Pecorelli, published a list of some 120 people whom he alleged to be Masons in, or associated with, the Vatican dicasteries, including cardinals, bishops, and priests as well as members of the laity. Cardinals Villot and Casaroli appeared on the list. Two weeks after he had published the list Pecorelli was assassinated by two gunmen on a Rome street.

¹² Cf. *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 14, a. 1, ad 2. "Now man has different kinds of knowledge according to the different objects of his knowledge. He has *intelligence* as regards the knowledge of principles ; he has *science* as regards knowledge of conclusions ; he has *wisdom*, according as he knows the highest cause ; he has *counsel* or *prudence*, according as he knows what is to be done." [My emphases]

February 1949 Pope Pius XII excommunicated every person who had been involved in the Cardinal's trial and conviction.

On 30th October 1956, in the short-lived Hungarian revolution, the Cardinal was released. He returned to Budapest where he praised those who had overthrown the communist government. When, four days later, the Russian Soviets invaded Hungary to enforce the communist ideology, the Cardinal approached the United States embassy in Budapest and was given political asylum. He remained in the embassy for the next fifteen years, a thorn in the side of communists world-wide.

With the compromises accepted by John XXIII and his successor, Paul VI, incident to the rapprochement with the secular (and communist) world embraced by the bishops of the Second Vatican Council, the Cardinal's position of principle became increasingly embarrassing. On 28th September, 1971, after extensive negotiations between (then) Archbishop Casaroli, Paul VI's negotiator, and the communist authorities in Hungary, he was told he was free to leave the country. He agreed to do so on certain terms relating to his position as head of the Church in Hungary. On his arrival in Rome he discovered that these terms were not to be honoured. In a poor attempt at covering this betrayal Paul VI declared Mindszenty 'a victim of history', rather than 'of communism', and cemented it in place by annulling the excommunications imposed by Pius XII. In December 1973 the Pope stripped the Cardinal of his titles and declared the Archdiocese of Esztergom vacant. In fairness to him, Paul VI refused to fill the see while Mindszenty remained alive. Archbishop Lázló Lékai who succeeded him was more accommodating to the communist regime.

After his death in 1975 the Cardinal's body was buried in the Hungarian chapel of the Marian shrine of Mariazell in Austria. In 1991, with the fall of the communist government in Hungary, his tomb was opened in anticipation of the removal of his remains to the Cathedral of Esztergom in Hungary. The Cardinal's body was found to be incorrupt. The process for his beatification began in 1996 but there has been no indication of its progress since.

Garrigou-Lagrange

Réginald Marie Garrigou-Lagrange OP, (1877-1964), the most eminent theologian of the twentieth century, taught in the Pontifical University of St Thomas, the *Angelicum*, for more than fifty years. Born Gontran-Marie in the town of Auch in southern France, he enrolled in 1896 to study medicine at the University of Bordeaux. While there he read a passage in a book by Ernest Hello which changed his life's direction, an instance (as he would later write) of divine illumination to which his intellect had responded through exercise of that Gift of the Holy Spirit called *Understanding*. He wrote later —

"I glimpsed how the doctrine of the Catholic Church is the absolute Truth about God, about His inner life, and about man, his origins and his supernatural destiny. I saw as in an instant of time how this doctrine is not simply 'the best we can put forward based on our present knowledge', but the absolute truth which shall not pass away..."

He entered the Dominican Order at the age of 20 and was given the name Réginald. The Dominicans who formed him were committed to implementing the mind of

Pope Leo XIII on the essentiality of the teachings of St Thomas. Here he found realised the inspiration that had driven him to enter religion. Fr Réginald demonstrated great intellectual abilities and he was appointed to teach at his Order's French House of Studies. At the age of 32 he was sent to the Pontifical University of St Thomas, the *Angelicum*, in Rome where he remained until his retirement at Christmas 1959.¹³

In 1946, in an article in the journal *Angelicum*, he condemned a new movement in theology based in France whose followers, opposed to the interpretations of St Thomas endorsed by the Church, advocated a return to an alleged purity of thought and expression of the faith and its sources in sacred scripture and the Church Fathers which they called a *Ressourcement*. Fr Garrigou-Lagrange rejected the claim that they were returning to the sources and responded that, in deviating from the theological tradition of the Church, they were creating a *nouvelle théologie* which was Modernism in disguise. The followers of this movement included Henri de Lubac, Teilhard de Chardin, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Yves Congar, Karl Rahner, Hans Küng, Edward Schillebeeckx, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Louis Bouyer, Jean Daniélou and Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI. They were to exercise great influence on the determinations of the bishops who formed the Second Vatican Council.¹⁴

Modernism is, by definition, a theology distorted by the influence of modern philosophy, no branch of which but has its ultimate source in the subjectivism of René Descartes. The only viable opponent of this intellectual folly is the moderate realism of Aristotle as rendered by St Thomas Aquinas, which philosophy –

“acknowledged and accepted by the Church, safeguards the genuine validity of human knowledge, the unshakable metaphysical principles of sufficient reason, causality and finality, and finally, the mind's ability to attain certain and unchangeable truth... His doctrine is in harmony with divine revelation and is most effective both for safeguarding the foundation of the faith, and for reaping, safely and usefully, the fruits of sound progress. ” [Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, (12.8.1950) AAS 42 : 572-3]

Inevitably then, early or late, each of these theologians fell a victim to some version or other of modern philosophy, even those who had once plighted their allegiance to St Thomas, such as Chenu and Jacques Maritain.

“[They] extol other philosophies of all kinds... by which they seem to imply that any kind of philosophy or theory, with a few additions and corrections... can be reconciled with Catholic dogma. No Catholic can doubt how false this is, especially where it is question of those fictitious theories they call immanentism, or idealism, or materialism, whether historic or dialectic, or even existentialism...” [Pius XII, *ibid.* at 574]

The young Fr Karol Wojtyla studied at the *Angelicum* and his doctoral thesis, *The doctrine of faith in St John of the Cross*, was reviewed by Fr Garrigou-Lagrange, who

¹³ The present author was taught the principles of St Thomas by Australian Marist priest, Austin Maloney Woodbury Ph.D, S.T.D., and his students. Woodbury was taught at the *Angelicum* by Garrigou-Lagrange in the 1920s.

¹⁴ After the Council, these split into two camps (left and right wings) divided over their interpretation and implementation of the Council's reforms ; on the left, Modernists ; on the right, semi-Modernists.

was troubled by the young priest's refusal to use the predicate 'object' of God.¹⁵ The defective version of Thomism in which Wojtyla had been formed in his native Poland rendered him incapable of viewing reality other than through subjective eyes. Any attempt to blend subjectivism with realism resembles the attempt to blend water with oil. What results is neither one nor the other, and sound thinking, like the purity of the oil, is compromised fatally. This state of confusion of objective and the subjective characterised Wojtyla's thinking throughout his life and does much to explain his pre-occupations (such as feminism), and the often strange character of his writings.

Fr Garrigou-Lagrange lived an exemplary life in conformity with his vows, simply and poorly. His influence, faithful to the motto of the Dominican Order, *Veritas*, disbursed throughout the world via his students, was immense : it continues today, and may yet serve in the restoration of the papacy once again to explicit allegiance to the philosophy of St Thomas. He died on 15th February, 1964, the feast day of the remarkable Dominican mystic, Blessed Henry Suso.

IV

Why have these men—the one who lived out the truth in the face of tyranny, the other who taught the truth against the heresy of the age, whose lives eminently qualify them as candidates—not been considered for canonisation ? The reason is that they stand for values eschewed by those infected with *the ethos of Vatican II*.¹⁶ Mindszenty opposed the forces of totalitarianism with whose principals John XXIII (before and during the Council) and Paul VI (during and after the Council), were happy to negotiate. Garrigou-Lagrange exposed the neo-Modernism of the school of thought which flourished during the Council and led the bishops who comprised it to indulge in a multitude of errors¹⁷. It flourishes still. To canonise either of these men would be to raise doubts about that *ethos*, and that possibility cannot be admitted.¹⁸

Here, then, is the sub-text to the recent canonisations : they were an attempt to canonise the Second Vatican Council, to lay to rest the assertions of error in many of its determinations that have not ceased to plague it ; to insist it was indeed an ecumenical, i.e., an infallible, council. The tacit underlying argument is this :

¹⁵ Cf. Roco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla ; the Thought of the Man who became Pope John Paul II*, Grand Rapids, 1997, pp. 44-53; George Weigel, *Witness to Hope; the Biography of Pope John Paul II*, London, 2005, pp. 85-6.

¹⁶ Let us make ourselves clear. Those who recognise certain (if not all) of the problems that arose because of Vatican II endeavour to distance that influence from the Council by blaming what they call 'the spirit of Vatican II'. Many of the Council's teachings were orthodox, many others inconsistent with the Church's constant teaching, especially those that countenance rapprochement between the Church's sacred province and the secular, particularly the teaching in favour of 'religious freedom', which demonstrably contradicted the Church's infallible teaching. These flaws have poisoned the whole. The problem is not then with 'the spirit of Vatican II' but with the Council itself.

¹⁷ So fundamental is the Church's philosophy to the soundness of her theology, that the high point of the flawed *nouvelle théologie* might be said to have occurred with Pope John Paul II's false claim in *Fides et Ratio* that the Church has no philosophy of her own.

¹⁸ We can look forward, under the present dispensation then, to the canonisation of Paul VI, who committed errors more grievous than either his predecessor or his successor.

If these popes, so closely associated with the Second Vatican Council, be saints, how can there have been error in any of the determinations of the Council Fathers ?

That this reasoning proceeds *per accidens* rather than *per se*—that sanctity is a matter of the will rather than of the intellect—will not trouble those who have promoted the canonisations.¹⁹ Strict logic has never been their strong point. There is, moreover, a certain strength in their position, for the majority of believers are not alive to Vatican II's defects ; they trust the leadership of the Church to reflect accurately the Church's charism as the one thing on earth incapable of error.

Vatican II has wrought a collapse of opposition to innumerable of the evils that afflict the world. With the rejection of the Church's infallible teaching against religious freedom—*implied* by John XXIII in his *Opening Speech* ; *proclaimed* by Paul VI in his ill-considered address to the United Nations of 5th October 1965 ; and *taught* by the Council's bishops in the Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*—it was inevitable the concordats between the Church and many of the world's nation-states would be dismantled and that this abandonment of principle would impinge on the attitudes of the world's peoples to facilitate implementation of the Masonic manifesto—

- that the Catholic religion is not the only true religion for mankind ;
- that the natural situation of any nation is that its functions be rigorously separated from the influence of the Church God has established on earth ;
- that there can be no rational opposition to a merely atheistic view of the world and the universe ; and,
- that ideology, particularly feminist ideology, is entitled to replace rational belief in God and the order He established in the world.

The grant of an entitlement to 'religious freedom' has facilitated, moreover, the entry into Europe of that false religion, Mohammedanism, which Pius V and every pope down to Pius XII opposed for the harm it works in human civilisation.

Each of these evils, against which the Church stood firmly until fifty years ago, has flourished since, *and because of*, Vatican II. The whole burden of the present dispensation in the Vatican reflects the *nouvelle théologie* condemned by Garrigou-Lagrange as it reflects *the ethos of Vatican II*, the demand that the Church's teaching be conformed to the world. This is nothing else than Modernism by another name.

The proponents of this error—popes, cardinals, bishops, priests—cannot endure. It is only a matter of time before they expire and the Modernist poison expires with them. It is only a matter of time before their worldly inclinations are replaced with orthodox Catholicity whose influence is again burgeoning, for the Church is Christ's Church *not their* Church and He has given us this assurance: *Fear not for I have overcome the world.*²⁰

Michael Baker

14th May, 2014—*St Matthias*

¹⁹ The title 'saint' does not guarantee its subject's teachings have always been in accordance with the mind of the Church. Among the thousands of canonised saints only thirty five have been declared Doctors of the Church.

²⁰ *John* 16: 33