

TEN CONDEMNATIONS OF PIUS VI APPLICABLE TO THE VATICAN SYNOD 1962 - 1965

“What happened on the global level with Vatican II took place locally with the Synod of Pistoia, in 1786, where the authority of Bishop Scipione de’ Ricci – which he was able to exercise legitimately by convoking a diocesan Synod – was declared null and void by Pius VI [because] used... *in fraudem legis*... against the *ratio* which presides over and directs every law of the Church...”

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò¹

One who studies Pope Pius VI’s introduction to his Bull *Auctorem fidei* (August 28th, 1794) addressing the pseudo-synod of Pistoia, and surveys the 85 propositions of that gathering he condemned for their heterodoxy, then considers the determinations of the bishops of the Second Vatican Council, finds himself exclaiming—“Why, it has all happened before!”

This is an extract from Pius VI’s remarks concerning that synod:

“In order not to shock the ears of Catholics, the innovators sought to hide the subtleties of their tortuous manoeuvres by the use of seemingly innocuous words such as would allow them to insinuate error into souls in the most subtle manner. Once the truth had been compromised, they could, by means of slight changes or additions in phraseology, distort the confession of the faith necessary for our salvation, and lead the faithful by subtle errors to their eternal damnation. This manner of dissimulating and lying is vicious, regardless of the circumstances under which it is used. *For very good reasons this can never be tolerated in a synod of which the principal glory consists above all in teaching the truth with clarity and excluding all danger of error.*²

“Moreover, if all this is sinful, it cannot be excused as one sees it being done under the erroneous pretext that seemingly shocking affirmations in one place are developed along orthodox lines in another, while being corrected in yet other places; as if allowing the possibility that one could either affirm or deny the statement, or that one could leave it up to the personal inclinations of the individual. Such has ever been the fraudulent and daring method used by innovators to establish error, giving scope to the possibility both of promoting and excusing it...”

The full text of the *Introduction* is available on the internet.³

Readers of the papers on this website will be familiar with our contention that Protestantism (and each of the philosophies it fostered) has this singular characteristic: its exponents lack any concern over the fact that they are engaged in logical and philosophical contradiction. In his remarks quoted above Pius VI notes the same characteristic in the determinations of the Synod of Pistoia. It is to be found also among the expositions and declarations of the bishops of the Second Vatican Council as, for instance, in their so-called Declaration of Religious Freedom.⁴ In this paper we note ten condemnations uttered by Pius VI of the Synod of Pistoia that are equally applicable to utterances of the bishops of Vatican II, or to what followed on

¹ [Abp. Viganò: The Latin Mass and Novus Ordo cannot coexist, this is a 'battle between Christ and Satan' - LifeSite \(lifesitenews.com\)](http://lifesitenews.com)

² Emphasis added.

³ <https://novusordowatch.org/wp-content/uploads/piusvi-auctorem-fidei.pdf> A copy is available on this website at [Microsoft Word - Auctorem Fidei Intro.docx \(superflumina.org\)](https://www.superflumina.org/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Auctorem%20Fidei%20Intro.docx)

⁴ See, e.g., https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/canonisations-since-vii.pdf

those utterances. The condemnations are set out below in boxed paragraphs with references to their citation in the *Enchiridion Symbolorum* of Denzinger (1854), or of Denzinger-Shönmetzer (1957), or both. There follows a reference to the document, or documents, of Vatican II which bear upon the issues raised by Pius VI, and the subsequent history.

I

Auctorem Fidei

n. 26 The doctrine which rejects as a Pelagian fable, that place of the lower regions (which the faithful generally designate by the name of the limbo of children) in which the souls of those departing with the sole guilt of original sin are punished with the punishment of the condemned, exclusive of the punishment of fire... such as that about which the Pelagians idly talk—*false, rash, injurious to Catholic schools*. Dz. 1526 : DS. 2626

Vatican II

Gaudium et spes

n. 22 *Since Christ died for everyone, and since the ultimate calling of each of us comes from God and is therefore a universal one, we are obliged to hold that the holy Spirit offers to everyone the possibility of sharing in this paschal mystery in a manner known to God.*⁵

The *International Theological Commission* produced a report dated April 27th, 2007, entitled *The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who Die without Being Baptized*. Pope Benedict XVI saw fit to endorse it shortly afterwards. The report was grounded in what had fallen from Vatican II. Thus, in its preamble:

“The treatment of this theme must be placed within the historical development of the faith.

According to *Dei Verbum* 8 the factors that contribute to this development are the reflection and the study of the faithful, the experience of spiritual things, and the teaching of the Magisterium.”

But *Dei verbum* n. 8 was a defective statement of the Church’s sacred tradition, and reliance on what its bishops had had to say was no adequate ground on which to weigh the Church’s 750 year tradition, confirmed at mid-point by Pius VI. Moreover, the claim expressed in *Gaudium et spes* n. 22, in the absence of appropriate distinction, savours of the heterodox view that salvation is open to all men regardless of the Church’s teaching *extra Ecclesiam nulla sallus* (St Cyprian; Fourth Lateran Council (1215); Council of Florence (1441). It reduces to a claim that all men are saved not just potentially but actually, an error frequently uttered by Pope John Paul II (e.g., *Dominum et Vivificantem*, May 18, 1986, n. 52.)

We have set forth our criticism of the initiative, amounting to denigration of the Church’s considered position, and the defects in the *Commission’s* approach in a separate paper.⁶

⁵ Cum enim pro omnibus mortuus sit Christus cumque vocatio hominis ultima revera una sit, scilicet divina, tenere debemus Spiritum Sanctum cunctis possibilitatem offerre ut, modo Deo cognito, huic paschali mysterio consocientur. Translation Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Washington: Georgetown University, 1990.

⁶ Cf. https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/limbus-puerorum.pdf

II

Dz. 1528

n. 28 The proposition of the synod in which, after it states that “a partaking of the victim is an essential part in the sacrifice,” it adds, “nevertheless, it does not condemn as illicit those Masses in which those present do not communicate sacramentally, for the reason that they do partake of the victim, although less perfectly, by receiving it spiritually”, since it insinuates that there is something lacking to the essence of sacrifice in that sacrifice which is performed either with no one present, or with those present who partake of the victim neither sacramentally nor spiritually, and as if those Masses should be condemned as illicit in which, with the priest alone communicating, no one is present who communicates either sacramentally or spiritually—*false, erroneous, suspected of heresy and savouring of it.*

Vatican II

Sacrosanctum concilium

n. 7 ...[T]he liturgy is considered... an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.

...

n. 14 ...The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people... is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

...

27. It is to be stressed that whenever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred, so far as possible, to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private.

This applies with especial force to the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments, even though every Mass has of itself a public and social nature.

The ambivalence in these provisions on essential issues of Catholic theology serves—

- to derogate from the critical involvement in the liturgy of the *alter Christus*, the ordained priest, who alone exercises the priestly office of Jesus Christ, and from the efficacy of Mass as a sacrifice, in contravention of what the Council of Trent taught explicitly [Dz. 937a – 940];
- to diminish the essential function of the priest in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, fulfilled at the second consecration, and to confuse his confecting of the sacred species and consumption thereof, essential to the sacrifice, with distribution of Holy Communion which is not essential to it but superadded for the benefit of the faithful;

- to imply a) that the priest is no more than a minister to the faithful of the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice, and b) that the presence and active participation of the faithful is essential to its celebration.⁷

Against these complaints it may be argued that elsewhere in its documents (as in *Presbyterorum Ordinis*) the Council upholds the Church's teaching on the unique office of the priest. But the defects in these passages of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* reflect the criticism of Pius VI of the conduct of the pseudo-synod that "affirmations in one place are developed along orthodox lines in another, while being corrected in yet others... as if allowing the possibility that one could either affirm or deny the statement, or that one could leave it up to the personal inclinations of the individual". Why should this ambivalence of Vatican II about orthodox Catholic teaching not be condemned as Pius VI condemned the pseudo-synod?

III

Dz. 1529

n. 29 The doctrine of the synod, in that part in which, undertaking to explain the doctrine of faith in the rite of consecration, and disregarding the scholastic questions about the manner in which Christ is in the Eucharist, from which questions it exhorts priests performing the duty of teaching to refrain, it states the doctrine in these two propositions only: i) after the consecration Christ is truly, really, substantially under the species; ii) then the whole substance of the bread and wine ceases, appearances only remaining; it omits absolutely to make any mention of transubstantiation or conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which the Council of Trent defined as an article of faith [Dz. 877, 884], and which is contained in the solemn profession of faith [Dz. 997]; since by an indiscreet and suspicious omission of this sort knowledge is taken away both of an article pertaining to faith, and also of the expression consecrated by the Church to protect the profession of it—as if it were a discussion of a merely scholastic question—*dangerous, derogatory to the exposition of Catholic truth about the dogma of transubstantiation, favourable to heretics.*

Vatican II

Sacrosanctum concilium

n. 7 ...*Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, "the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross", but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ*

⁷ The heretical content was rendered explicit in a commentary by Cardinal Roche on March 19th, 2023 and in a sermon of Cardinal Cantalamessa in Lent, 2023. The latter said: "The Catholic liturgy underwent a transformation from an action with a strong sacred and priestly imprint to a more communal and participatory action, where all the people of God have their part, each with their own ministry..." Cf. Jose Ureta, *The Mass of Paul VI corresponds to a New Theology*, at <https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2023/04/cardinals-roche-and-cantalamessa-mass.html#more>. Since *lex orandi statuit legem credendi*, it is clear that what Vatican II advocated and what Pope Paul VI's 'new' mass taught, was a religion other than the Catholic religion, a faith other than the Catholic faith.

Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20)...

Nowhere in this provision, which conflates the different 'presences' of Christ to the detriment of His real presence in the Eucharist, are the terms 'transubstantiation' or 'real presence' used.⁸ The document is ambivalent about the power of the priesthood, the expression 'ministry of priests' side-stepping the issue, diminishing the office and derogating from its immense dignity. The use of the expression 'when a man baptizes' misstates the demands of the Church's canon law then in force (CIC 1917), and the Church's teaching, that the proper minister of the sacrament of baptism is a priest or, with permission, a duly ordained deacon.⁹

Why should not the provision be condemned as it would have been condemned by Pius VI in the terms indicated, albeit with modification, as "dangerous, derogatory to the exposition of Catholic truth about the dogma of transubstantiation, derogatory of the institution of the sacred priesthood, and favourable to heretics"?

IV

Dz. 1533

n. 33 The proposition of the synod by which it shows itself eager to remove the cause through which, in part, there has been induced a forgetfulness of the principles relating to the order of the liturgy "by recalling it (the liturgy) to a greater simplicity of rites, by expressing it in the vernacular language, by uttering it in a loud voice", as if the present order of the liturgy, received and approved by the Church, had emanated in some part from the forgetfulness of the principles by which it should be regulated—*rash, offensive to pious ears, insulting to the Church, favourable to the charges of heretics against it.*

Vatican II

Sacrosanctum Concilium

n. 21. *In order that the Christian people may more certainly derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy, holy Mother Church desires to undertake with great care a general restoration of the liturgy itself. For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it.*

⁸ Both were omitted, apparently, to avoid obstacles what the bishops conceived, falsely, to be the Church's understanding of what is meant by 'ecumenism'; and to avoid offending Protestant sensitivities. These failures are not healed by their appearance in an instruction issued thereafter by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on May 25th, 1967, *Eucharisticum mysterium*.

⁹ Canon 738: The ordinary minister for solemn baptism is a priest... Canon 741: The extraordinary minister of solemn baptism is a deacon who shall not use his power without the permission of the local Ordinary or the pastor, granted for a just cause that, when necessity urges, is legitimately presumed.

In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.

.....

n. 34. *The rites [of the sacred liturgy] should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions...*

n. 36.

1. *Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites.*

2. *But since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants, according to the regulations on this matter to be laid down separately in subsequent chapters...*

In its suggestions that the Church's sacred liturgy was in need of restoration; that it was made up of elements subject to change; that the liturgical texts and rites lacked clarity in signifying their sacred elements; that they were encumbered by useless repetitions; and in its proposed reordering of the liturgy to allow replacement of Latin by the vernacular, the directions given by the Council reflect the errors promoted by the Synod of Pistoia.

Accordingly, these provisions ought be condemned in the words Pius VI used in n. 33—with slight modification—"as if the present order of the liturgy, received and approved by the Church, had emanated in some part from the forgetfulness of the principles by which it should be regulated; and (are thus) rash, offensive to pious ears, insulting to the Church and the Holy Spirit by which it is governed, and favourable to the charges of heretics against it".

V

Dz. 1534

n. 34 The declaration of the synod by which, after it previously stated that the order of canonical penance had been so established by the Church in accord with the example of the apostles that it was common to all and not merely for the punishment of guilt, but especially for the disposition to grace, it adds that "it (the synod) recognises in that marvelous and venerable order the whole dignity of so necessary a sacrament, free from the subtleties which have been added to it in the course of time", as if through the order in which, without the complete course of canonical penance this sacrament has been wont to be administered, the dignity of the sacrament had been lessened—*rash, scandalous, inducing to a contempt of the dignity of the sacrament as it has been accustomed to be administered throughout the whole Church, injurious to the Church itself.*

Sacrosanctum concilium

n. 72 *The rite and formulas for the sacrament of penance are to be revised so that they more clearly express both the nature and effect of the sacrament.*

Why should this provision not be condemned for what it implies in the terms applied by Pius VI and quoted, “as if through the order in which... this sacrament has been wont to be administered, the dignity of the sacrament had been lessened, and (accordingly) that its terms are rash, scandalous, inducing to a contempt of the dignity of the sacrament as it has been accustomed to be administered throughout the whole Church, and injurious to the Church itself”?

VI

Dz. 1555

n. 55 Likewise, the doctrine by which it professes to desire very much that some way be found of removing the lesser clergy (under which name it designates the clerics of minor orders) from cathedrals and colleges by providing otherwise, namely through approved lay people of mature age, a suitable assigned stipend for the ministry of serving at Masses and for other offices such as that of acolyte, etc. as formerly, it says, was usually done when duties of that sort had not been reduced to mere form for the receiving of major orders; inasmuch as it censures the rule by which care is taken that “the functions of minor orders are to be performed or exercised only by those who have been established in them according to rank” (Conc. prov. IV of Milan), and this also according to the intention of the Tridentine Council (sess. 23, c. 2) “that the duties of sacred orders, from the diaconate to the porter, laudably received in the Church from apostolic times and neglected for a while in many places, should be renewed according to the sacred canons, and should not be considered useless as they are by heretics”—*a rash suggestion, offensive to pious ears, disturbing to the ecclesiastical ministry, lessening of the decency which should be observed as far as possible in celebrating the mysteries; injurious to the duties and functions of minor orders, as well as to the discipline approved by the canons and especially by the Tridentine Synod; favourable to the charges and calumnies of heretics against it.*

Vatican II

Lumen Gentium

n. 29

At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed “not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service”. For strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests they serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity to the people of God...

Since these duties, so very necessary to the life of the Church, can be fulfilled only with difficulty in many regions in accordance with the discipline of the Latin Church as it exists today, the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy. It pertains to the competent territorial bodies of bishops, of one kind or another, with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, to decide whether and where it is opportune for such deacons to be established for the care of souls. With the consent of the Roman Pontiff, this diaconate can, in the future, be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state. It may also be conferred upon suitable young men, for whom the law of celibacy must remain intact.

There is no mention of the minor orders in the documents of Vatican II.

The Council of Trent in its session XXIII, chapter 2, taught as follows:

“[T]o the end that the ministry of so holy a priesthood might be exercised in a more worthy manner, and with greater veneration, it was suitable that, in the most well-ordered settlement of the Church, there should be several and diverse orders of ministers, to minister to the priesthood, by virtue of their office; orders so distributed as that those already marked with the clerical tonsure should ascend through the lesser to the greater orders. For the Sacred Scriptures make open mention not only of priests, but also of deacons; and teach, in most weighty words those things especially to be attended to in the Ordination thereof; and, from the very beginning of the Church, the names of the following orders, and the ministrations proper to each one of them, are known to have been in use; to wit those of sub-deacon, acolyte, exorcist, lector, and door-keeper; though these were not of equal rank: for the sub-deaconship is classed amongst the greater orders by the Fathers and sacred Councils, wherein also we very often read of the other inferior orders.

That this neglect of liturgical principle by Vatican II marked its abandonment of the mind of the Church (as expressed at Trent and confirmed by Pius VI) was confirmed when Pope Paul VI in his *motu proprio Ministeria quaedam* (August 15th, 1972) purported to suppress the minor orders completely. This was consistent with his initiative of reducing the rite of Mass from a matter of faith, and immutable, to a mere matter of discipline alterable at the whim of the reigning pontiff, contradicting the stand of his predecessors over 400 years who had followed the admonitions of the Council of Trent and of Pope Pius V in his bull *Quo primum*, and the stand taken by every pope back (at least) to the reign of Gregory the Great.

Why should not this abandonment of principle be condemned as “a rash suggestion, offensive to pious ears, disturbing to the ecclesiastical ministry, lessening of the decency which should be observed as far as possible in celebrating the mysteries; injurious to the duties and functions of minor orders, as well as to the discipline approved by the canons and especially by the Tridentine Synod; and favourable to the charges and calumnies of heretics against it”?

VII

Dz. 1562 & 1563

nn. 62, 63 The doctrine which rejects devotion to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus... and blames its worshippers... as if the faithful when they adore the Heart of Jesus, separate it or cut it off from the divinity; when they worship the Heart of Jesus it is the heart of the person of the Word, to whom it has been inseparably united in that manner in which the bloodless body of Christ during the three days of death, without separation or cutting off from His divinity, was worthy of adoration in the tomb,—*deceitful, injurious to the faithful worshippers of the Heart of Jesus.*¹⁰

¹⁰ Dz. 1561, condemnation n. 61, is in similar and more comprehensive terms.

There is plenty of mention of penance in the documents of Vatican II but no mention of the need for reparation for sin or of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus which the Church has endorsed as the most fitting means to achieve that end. This is consistent with the Council's deference to the Protestant claim that a believer is justified, or pardoned, solely on condition of his faith in Christ. The bishops' silence on this fundamental issue of Catholic theology, and its expression in a devotion which the Church has recognised formally in encyclicals of the popes (cf. Leo XIII, *Annum Sacrum*, May 25th, 1899 and the authority of the popes there cited; Pius XI, *Miserentissimus Redemptor*, May 8th, 1928), is eloquent of the Council's departure from Catholic principle that the faithful should join their sufferings with those of Our Lord so as to "make up for what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ" (*Colossians* 1: 24).

Why should not this omission be condemned in terms similar to those applied by Pius VI to the propositions of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia mentioned above, "as false, deceitful, detracting from, and injurious to, the pious and due worship given and extended by the faithful to the humanity of Christ, as detracting from their vocation as Christians of the need to make reparation for their sins and the sins of others, and as injurious to the Apostolic See"?

VIII

Dz. 1566

n. 66 The proposition asserting that "it would be against apostolic practice and the plans of God, unless easier ways were prepared for the people to unite their voice with that of the whole Church"; if understood to signify introducing of the use of popular language into the liturgical prayers,—*false, rash, disturbing to the order prescribed for the celebration of the mysteries, easily productive of many evils.*

Sacrosanctum Concilium

n. 36.

1. *Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites.*

2. *But since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants, according to the regulations on this matter to be laid down separately in subsequent chapters.*

.....

n. 38. *Provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved, provision shall be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples...*

.....

n. 40. *In some places and circumstances... an even more radical adaptation of the liturgy is needed...*

.....

n. 54. *In Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and "the common prayer," but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts which pertain to the people, according to the norm laid down in Art. 36 of this Constitution.*

Nevertheless steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.

Wherever a more extended use of the mother tongue within the Mass appears desirable, the regulation laid down in Art. 40 of this Constitution is to be observed.

.....

n. 63. *Because of the use of the mother tongue in the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals can often be of considerable help to the people, this use is to be extended according to the following norms:*

a) The vernacular language may be used in administering the sacraments and sacramentals, according to the norm of Art. 36...

The experience of what has followed on Vatican II's abandonment of principle over the use of Latin in favour of vernacular language in liturgical prayers has borne out only too well the reasons for Pius VI's condemnation. Why should these propositions not be condemned in similar terms, as "false, rash, disturbing to the order prescribed for the celebration of the mysteries, easily productive of many evils"?

IX

Dz. 1567

n. 67 The doctrine asserting that "only a true impotence excuses" from the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, adding, moreover, that there is produced the obscurity which arises from a neglect of this precept in regard to the primary truths of religion,—*false, rash, disturbing to the peace of souls, condemned elsewhere in Quesnel*.¹¹ [Dz. 1429 et seq.]

Vatican II

Sacrosanctum Concilium

n. 23. *That sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remain open to legitimate progress careful investigation is always to be made into each part of the liturgy which is to be revised. This investigation should be theological, historical, and pastoral. Also the general laws governing the structure and meaning of the liturgy must be studied in conjunction with the experience derived from recent liturgical reforms and from the indults conceded to various places...*

n. 24. *Sacred scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from scripture that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung; the prayers, collects, and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration and their force, and it is from the scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Thus to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy, it is essential to promote that warm and living love for scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony.*

¹¹ The reference is to Pasquier Quesnel, Jansenist, many of whose teachings were condemned by Clement XI in 1713 in the papal bull *Unigenitus*. Cf. <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/clem11/c11unige.htm>

Dei Verbum

n. 22. *Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful...*

n. 23. *The bride of the incarnate Word, the Church taught by the Holy Spirit, is concerned to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of the Sacred Scriptures so that she may increasingly feed her sons with the divine words...*

n. 25. *... The sacred synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful, especially religious, to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the "excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:8). "For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." Therefore, they should gladly put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself, whether it be through the liturgy, rich in the divine word, or through devotional reading, or through instructions suitable for the purpose and other aids which, in our time, with approval and active support of the shepherds of the Church, are commendably spread everywhere...*

n. 26. *In this way, therefore, through the reading and study of the sacred books "the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1) and the treasure of revelation, entrusted to the Church, may more and more fill the hearts of men. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similarly we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which "lasts forever" (Is. 40:8; see 1 Peter 1:23-25).*

In their assertion that "that sound tradition is open to legitimate progress" these provisions rely on Vatican II's false understanding, in *Dei Verbum* n. 8, of the Church's sacred tradition.

In their assertion that what they advise would assist in "the restoration, progress and adaptation of the sacred liturgy" they offend in the manner in which the pseudo-synod offended (n. 33 above) in that they speak "as if the present order of the liturgy, received and approved by the Church, had emanated in some part from the forgetfulness of the principles by which it should be regulated", and therefore are "rash, offensive to pious ears, insulting to the Church, favourable to charges of heretics against it".

In their preoccupation with a Protestant focus on sacred scripture at the expense of what the Church in her wisdom has identified among its voluminous passages as adequate to inform the faith of the faithful, these provisions offend. To make clear just how they do so, let us repeat three propositions condemned by Pope Clement XI in 1713—

79. *It is useful and necessary at all times, in all places, and for every kind of person, to study and to know the spirit, the piety, and the mysteries of Sacred Scripture.*

80. *The reading of Sacred Scripture is for all.*

.....

85. *To forbid Christians to read Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels, is to forbid the use of light to the sons of light, and to cause them to suffer a kind of excommunication.*

Thus they deserve condemnation as Pius VI condemned the pseudo-synod of Pistoia in that they are "false, rash, disturbing to the peace of souls, and among propositions of the Jansenist Pasquier Quesnel condemned by Clement XI in his bull *Unigenitus* (1713)".

Dz. 1574

n. 74 The deliberation of the synod about transferring to Sunday feasts distributed through the year... and therefore of abrogating the precept of hearing Mass on those days, on which according to the early law of the Church, even then that precept flourished... (inter alia)—*a false proposition, harmful to the law of the general Councils and of the Supreme Pontiffs, scandalous, favourable to schism.*

Vatican II

Sacrosanctum Concilium

n. 107. *The liturgical year is to be revised so that the traditional customs and discipline of the sacred seasons shall be preserved or restored to suit the conditions of modern times...*

Mysterii Paschalis, motu proprio of Paul VI, February 14th, 1969

Inspired by the attitude promoted by the Council, this document gave effect to the protocol of adapting the Church's customs and discipline to the demands of the secular world. It promulgated a new General Roman Calendar part of whose effect it was to permit transference to a Sunday of the feasts of the Epiphany, the Ascension and Corpus Christi.

The Church's Holy days of obligation were (and remain)—

Christmas – Nativity of the Lord	December 25 th
Epiphany of the Lord	January 6 th
Ascension of the Lord	Ascension Thursday, 40 days after Easter
Mary, Mother of God	
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin	August 15 th
Immaculate Conception	December 8 th
Saints Peter & Paul	June 29 th
All Saints day	November 1 st
Corpus Christi	Thursday after
St Joseph	March 19 th

By an indulgent permission of exceptions to the discipline imposed by the Church in her liturgical year, the new regime diminished the significance of the vast majority of these feasts, either by removing the duty of the faithful to attend Mass on those days or by transferring their celebration to a Sunday.¹²

Intimately connected as it is with the commemoration of the events whereby man's salvation was wrought, the liturgical year is not a mere matter of Church discipline or administration, as is implied by the Council's teaching and the actions of Paul VI. It is of faith, part of the

¹² In Australia there are now only two holy days of obligation, Christmas Day and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. In a country which had long been immersed in the mores of the secular, this indulgence assisted in reducing the resistance of the faithful to its burgeoning influence.

analogy of faith. Its regular rehearsal of those events is necessary to reinforce the doctrines they teach for, as the Council of Trent taught, “such is the nature of man that he cannot easily without external means be raised to meditation on divine things” (cf. Dz. 943). The liturgical year reflects in its rigour the lessons of Trent in its canons (in Session vii, March 3rd, 1547) on the Sacraments in General and (in Session xxii, September 17th, 1562) on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a point Paul VI appears to have conceded when he wrote that the celebration of the liturgical year “enjoys a sacramental force...” (*Mysterii Paschalis* I).

The assertion of the Council that the liturgical year required revision is condemnable in line with that of Pius VI quoted: “a false proposition, harmful to the law of the general Councils and of the Supreme Pontiffs, scandalous and favourable to schism”. It is, moreover, derogatory of the Church’s holy discipline and offensive to the Holy Spirit by which the Church is governed.

It is fitting that we should round off this criticism of these assertions of the bishops of the Second Vatican Council by quoting what Pius VI had to say at the conclusion of his list of the errors of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia:

“Therefore, we command all the faithful of Christ of either sex not to presume to believe, to teach, or to preach anything about the said propositions and doctrines contrary to what is declared in this Our Constitution; that whoever shall have taught, defended or published them, or any one of them, all together or separately, except perhaps to oppose them, will be subject *ipso facto* and without any other declaration, to ecclesiastical censures, and to the other penalties stated by law against those perpetrating similar offences.” (Dz. 1594)

The arguments proposed here are arguments from Vatican II’s effects. An even stronger argument can be mounted from its causes.¹³ It is impossible that Vatican II could have been an ecumenical, or general, council of the Catholic Church. It ought better to have been termed ‘a synod’ and, such was its error-riddled state, ‘a pseudo-synod’ after the fashion of the pseudo-synod of Pistoia.

Michael Baker

April 16th, 2023—*Low Sunday (Quasimodo Sunday – Dominica in albis depositis)*

¹³ Cf. *What Went Wrong with Vatican II* at https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/vatican_ii_www.pdf