

TUMULTUOUS TIMES

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Archbishop Viganò, June 24, 2020

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò’s critique of 9th June 2020 on the responsibility of the Second Vatican Council for the problems besetting God’s Holy Church has disturbed many of the faithful. Thank God we have, at last, a prelate prepared to say what has needed to be said for forty years. The Archbishop has little to fear from the Church’s governing regime. He rightly puts his loyalty to Christ above his loyalty to the Pope and his fellow bishops. He elaborates on his critique in a letter to be found in *The Remnant* and reproduced below.

In an article on the website Onepeterfive, Dr Peter Kwasniewski has urged the faithful to take the Archbishop’s critique seriously.¹ He says this:

I used to hold, with conservatives, that we should “take what’s good in the Council and leave behind the rest”. The problem with this approach is captured by Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Satis Cognitum*:

“The Arians, the Montanists, the Novatians, the Quartodecimans, the Eutychians, certainly did not reject all Catholic doctrine: they abandoned only a certain portion of it. Still who does not know that they were declared heretics and banished from the bosom of the Church? In like manner were condemned all authors of heretical tenets who followed them in subsequent ages. ‘There can be nothing more dangerous than those heretics who admit nearly the whole cycle of doctrine, and yet by one word, as with a drop of poison, infect the real and simple faith taught by our Lord and handed down by Apostolic tradition.’ (Anon., *Tract. de Fide Orthodoxa contra Arianos*)”

In other words: it is the mixture, the jumble, of great, good, indifferent, bad, generic, ambiguous, problematic, erroneous, all of it at enormous length, that makes Vatican II uniquely deserving of repudiation.

Dr Kwasniewski suggests that there are three theoretical possible courses for a future Pope:

- to publish a new *Syllabus of Errors* that identifies and condemns common errors associated with Vatican II while not attributing them explicitly to that Council. This would leave open the degree to which the Council documents actually contain errors and close the door to many popular ‘readings’ of the Council;
- to declare that on account of their ambiguities and difficulties the Council documents should no longer be referenced as authoritative in theological discussions; or,
- to deliberately disown or set aside certain documents of the Council or parts thereof.

I have suggested to him a fourth. A future Pope might appoint a commission of theologians to advise him on the question—*Was the Second Vatican Council in fact an ecumenical or general council of the Catholic Church?*

¹ <https://onepeterfive.com/vigano-critique-council/>

The Church needs an answer to this fundamental question more than it needs to address the errors for which the Council is responsible. A negative answer would present the hypothetical future Pope with an issue whose determination might resolve all of the issues contemplated in Dr Kwasniewski's suggestions. In seeking to address it the Pope could do one of two things: he could consider the question himself and, after prayer, consultation with his fellow bishops and further advice, rule formally and definitively in accordance with the terms of *Pastor Aeternus* either in favour of, or against, the proposition. Alternatively, he could summon a council to consider and rule on the question. Whatever one may think of the character of Vatican II, a council called to resolve the question of its legitimacy would certainly be a general or ecumenical council because invoked for the good of the Church and the Catholic faithful. A resolution by a pope or an ecumenical council *against* Vatican II's legitimacy would deprive it of all authority, exclude it from the Church's Magisterium and solve all difficulties at a stroke. Such of the Council's determinations as accorded with the Church's constant teaching up to 1962 would, of course, be unaffected by any declared illegitimacy.

There is time for every season under heaven, as the author of *Ecclesiastes* says, a time for keeping and a time for casting away. The time for casting away Vatican II's errors has arrived and whether the thing itself is declared illegitimate or innumerable of its determinations are so declared, the Church and Christ's faithful deserve to have the issue resolved. The clergy ought to be as loud in their complaints over the evils let loose by the Second Vatican Council as are great numbers of the laity. They should heed Archbishop Viganò's warning:

"If out of pride or unfortunate obstinacy we do not know how to recognize the error and deception into which we have fallen, we will have to give an account to God, who is as merciful with his people when they repent as he is implacable in justice when they follow Lucifer in his *non serviam*."

Michael Baker

July 2nd, 2020 — *The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin*

Appendix

Letter of Archbishop Viganò to Dr Lawler

24 June 2020

Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

Dear Doctor Lawler,

I received your letter, courtesy of our common friend Edward Pentin, in which you raise some questions regarding what I have stated about the Second Vatican Council. I am very happy to respond to you, in the hope that these reflections may help to heal the Catholic Church from the serious evils that afflict her.

First, what is he saying about Vatican II? That things have gone downhill fast since then is certainly true. But if the whole Council is a problem, how did that happen? How do we reconcile that with what we believe

about the inerrancy of the magisterium? How were all the Council fathers deceived? Even if only some parts of the Council (e.g. Nostra Aetate, Dignitatis Humanae), we still face the same questions. Many of us have been saying for years that the “spirit of Vatican II” is in error. Is the archbishop now saying that this phony liberal “spirit” does accurately reflect the work of the Council?

I do not think that it is necessary to demonstrate that the Council represents a problem: the simple fact that we are raising this question about Vatican II and not about Trent or Vatican I seems to me to confirm a fact that is obvious and recognized by everyone. In reality, even those who defend the Council with swords drawn find themselves doing so apart from all the other previous ecumenical councils, of which not even one was ever said to be a *pastoral council*. And note that they call it “*the Council*” par excellence, as if it was the one and only council in the entire history of the Church, or at least considering it as an *unicum* whether because of the formulation of its doctrine or for the authority of its magisterium. It is a council that, differently from all those that preceded it, called itself a *pastoral* council, declaring that it did not want to propose any new doctrine, but which in fact created a distinction between *before* and *after*, between a dogmatic council and a pastoral council, between unequivocal canons and empty talk, between *anathema sit* and winking at the world.

In this sense, I believe that the problem of the infallibility of the Magisterium (the *inerrancy* you mention is properly a quality of Sacred Scripture) does not even arise, because the Legislator, that is, the Roman Pontiff around whom the Council was convened, solemnly and clearly affirmed that he did not want to use the doctrinal authority which he could have exercised if he wanted. I would like to make the observation that nothing is more *pastoral* than what is proposed as dogmatic, because the exercise of the *munus docendi* in its highest form coincides with the order that the Lord gave to Peter to feed his sheep and lambs. And yet this opposition between *dogmatic* and *pastoral* was made precisely by the one who, in his discourse opening the Council, sought to give a severe meaning to dogma and a softer, more *conciliatory* meaning to pastoral care. We also find the same setting in the interventions of Bergoglio, where he identifies “*pastoralism [pastoralità]*” as a *soft* version of *rigid* Catholic teaching in matters of Faith and Morals, in the name of *discernment*. It is painful to recognize that the practice of having recourse to an equivocal lexicon, using Catholic terms understood in an improper way, invaded the Church starting with Vatican II, which is the first and most emblematic example of the so-called “*circiterism*”, the equivocating and intentionally imprecise use of the language. This happened because the *Aggiornamento*, a term in itself ideologically promoted by the Council as an *absolute*, held dialogue with the world to be its priority above all else.

There is another equivocation that must be clarified. If on the one hand John XXIII and Paul VI declared that they did not want to commit the Council to the definition of new doctrines and wanted it to limit itself to being only *pastoral*, on the other hand it is true that externally – *mediatically* or *in the media*, we would say today – the emphasis given to its acts was enormous. This emphasis served to convey the idea of a *presumed* doctrinal authority, of an *implicit* magisterial infallibility, even though these were clearly excluded right from the beginning. If this emphasis occurred, it was in order to allow the more or less heterodox instances to be perceived as authoritative and thus to be accepted by the clergy and the faithful. But this would be enough to discredit those authors of a similar deception, who still cry out today if anyone touches *Nostra Aetate*, while they are silent even if someone denies the divinity of Our Lord or the perpetual virginity of Mary Most Holy. Let us recall that Catholics do not worship a Council, neither Vatican II nor Trent, but rather the Most Holy Trinity, the One True God; they do not venerate a conciliar declaration or a post-synodal exhortation, but rather the Truth that these acts of the Magisterium convey.

You ask me: “*How were all the Council fathers deceived?*” I reply by drawing on my experience of those years and the words of my brothers with whom I engaged in discussion at that time. No one could have imagined that right in the heart of the ecclesial body there were hostile forces so powerful and organized that they could succeed in rejecting the perfectly orthodox preparatory schemas that had been prepared by Cardinals and Prelates with a reliable fidelity to the Church, replacing them with a bundle of cleverly disguised errors behind long-winded and deliberately equivocal speeches. No one could have believed that, right under the vaults of the Vatican Basilica, the *estates-general* could be convoked that would decree the abdication of the Catholic Church and the inauguration of the Revolution. (As I have already mentioned in a previous article, Cardinal Suenens called Vatican II “*the 1789 of the Church*”).

The Council Fathers were the object of a sensational deception, of a fraud that was cleverly perpetrated by having recourse to the most subtle means: they found themselves in the minority in the linguistic groups, excluded from meetings convened at the last moment, pressured into giving their *placet* by making them believe that the Holy Father wanted it. And what the *innovators* did not succeed in obtaining in the Conciliar Aula, they achieved in the Commissions and Committees, thanks also to the activism of theologians and *periti* who were accredited and acclaimed by a powerful media machine. There is a vast array of studies and documents that testify to this systematic malicious *mens* of some of the Council Fathers on the one hand, and the naïve optimism or carelessness of other well-intentioned Council Fathers on the other. The activity of the *Coetus Internationalis Patrum* [opposing the innovators] could do little or nothing, when the violations of the rules by the progressives were ratified at the Sacred Table itself [by the Pope].

Those who have maintained that the “*spirit of the Council*” represented a heterodox or erroneous interpretation of Vatican II engaged in an unnecessary and harmful operation, even if they were driven to do so in good faith. It is understandable that a Cardinal or Bishop would want to defend the honour of the Church and desire that she would not be discredited before the faithful and the world, and so it was thought that what the progressives attributed to the Council was in reality an undue misrepresentation, an arbitrary forcing. But if at the time it could be difficult to think that a religious liberty condemned by Pius XI (*Mortalium Animos*) could be affirmed by *Dignitatis Humanae*, or that the Roman Pontiff could see his authority usurped by a phantom *episcopal college*, today we understand that what was cleverly concealed in Vatican II is today affirmed *ore rotundo* in papal documents precisely in the name of the coherent application of the Council.

On the other hand, when we commonly speak of the *spirit* of an event, we mean precisely that it constitutes the soul, the *essence* of that event. We can thus affirm that the spirit of the Council *is* the Council itself, that the errors of the *post-conciliar period* were contained *in nuce* in the Conciliar Acts, just as it is rightly said that the *Novus Ordo* is the Mass of the Council, even if in the presence of the Council Fathers the Mass was celebrated that the progressives significantly call *pre-conciliar*. And again: if Vatican II truly did not represent a point of rupture, what is the reason for speaking of a *pre-conciliar Church* and a *post-conciliar church*, as if these were two different entities, defined in their essence by the Council itself? And if the Council was truly in line with the uninterrupted infallible Magisterium of the Church, why is it the only Council that poses grave and serious problems of interpretation, demonstrating its ontological heterogeneity with respect to other Councils?

Second, what is the solution? Bishop Schneider proposes that a future Pontiff must repudiate errors; Archbishop Viganò finds that inadequate. But then how can the errors be corrected, in a way that maintains the authority of the teaching magisterium?

The solution, in my opinion, lies above all in an act of humility that all of us, beginning with the Hierarchy and the Pope, must carry out: recognizing the infiltration of the enemy into the heart of the Church, the systematic occupation of key posts in the Roman Curia, seminaries, and ecclesiastical schools, the conspiracy of a group of rebels – including, in the front line, the deviated Society of Jesus – which has succeeded in giving the appearance of legitimacy and legality to a subversive and revolutionary act. We should also recognize the inadequacy of the response of the good, the naivety of many, the fearfulness of others, and the interests of those who have benefited thanks to that conspiracy. After his triple denial of Christ in the courtyard of the high priest, Peter “*flevit amare*,” he wept bitterly. Tradition tells us that the Prince of the Apostles had two furrows on his cheeks for the rest of his days, as a result of the tears which he copiously shed, repenting of his betrayal. It will be for one of his Successors, the Vicar of Christ, in the fullness of his apostolic power, to rejoin the thread of Tradition there where it was cut off. This will not be a defeat but an act of truth, humility, and courage. The authority and infallibility of the Successor of the Prince of the Apostles will emerge intact and reconfirmed. In fact, they were not deliberately called into question at Vatican II, but ironically they would be on a future day in which a Pontiff would correct the errors that that Council permitted, playing jests with the equivocation of an authority it officially denied having but that the faithful were surreptitiously allowed to understand that it *did* have by the entire Hierarchy, beginning right with the *Popes of the Council*.

I wish to recall that for some people what is expressed above may sound excessive, because it would seem to call into question the authority of the Church and of the Roman Pontiffs. And yet, no scruple impeded the violation of Saint Pius V's Bull *Quo primum tempore*, abolishing the entire Roman Liturgy from one day to the next, the venerable millenary treasure of the doctrine and spirituality of the traditional Mass, the immense patrimony of Gregorian chant and sacred music, the beauty of the rites and sacred vestments, disfiguring architectural harmony even in the most distinguished basilicas, removing balustrades, monumental altars, and tabernacles: everything was sacrificed on the conciliar renewal's altar of *coram populo*, with the aggravating circumstance of having done it only because that Liturgy was admirably Catholic and irreconcilable with the *spirit* of Vatican II.

The Church is a divine institution, and everything in her ought to start with God and return to Him. What is at stake is not the prestige of a ruling class, nor the image of a company or a party: what we are dealing with here is the glory of the Majesty of God, of not nullifying the Passion of Our Lord on the Cross, of the sufferings of His Most Holy Mother, of the blood of the Martyrs, of the testimony of the Saints, of the eternal salvation of souls. If out of pride or unfortunate obstinacy we do not know how to recognize the error and deception into which we have fallen, we will have to give an account to God, who is as merciful with his people when they repent as he is implacable in justice when they follow Lucifer in his *non serviam*.

Dearest Doctor Lawler, to you and to your readers, I cordially send my greetings and the blessing of Our Lord, through the intercession of His and our Most Holy Mother.

+ Carlo Maria Viganò,
Arcivescovo, Nunzio Apostolico

Official translation by Giuseppe Pellegrino