

## THE VATICAN BUREAUCRACY

O God our refuge and our strength, look down with mercy on Thy people who cry to Thee... and hear our prayers for... the liberty and exaltation of our holy mother the Church, through Christ Our Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The seeming inability of the Vatican to control its household is a matter of ongoing concern. In March of this year, the President of the *Pontifical Academy for Life*, Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, betrayed the Church's moral teaching in the case of the birth of a child threatening the life of the mother. He was supported in this by the editor of the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.

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Late in 2008, in Brazil, a nine year old girl (given the alias *Carmen*) was impregnated by her stepfather and conceived twins. Over the trenchant opposition of the local Ordinary, Dom José Cardozo Sobrinho, Archbishop of Olinda and Recife, doctors operated on the girl and aborted the babies on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009. Pursuant to canon 1398 of the *Code of Canon Law*, these doctors incurred thereby the *latae sententiae* penalty of excommunication. Consistent with his duty, Dom Cardozo confirmed the penalty. The Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, Giovanni Battista Cardinal Re, commended him for doing so in an interview published in *La Stampa* on 7<sup>th</sup> March. He wrote to Dom Cardozo confirming this.

On 15<sup>th</sup> March, in a gratuitous article published in the *Italian* edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, Archbishop Fisichella urged a relativist view of the Church's teaching reducing it to ineffectuality and castigated Dom Cardozo for upholding the Church's position.<sup>2</sup> How was it possible that such an article could appear in the newspaper which holds itself out as the paradigm of Catholic opinion? *A fortiori*, how could such an article appear when the Prefect of the relevant Congregation had expressed himself in so strong a fashion in support of the local bishop to the contrary of what was advanced?

Various members of the *Pontifical Academy* distanced themselves from the Archbishop's views, among them Professor Michel Schooyans of the University of Louvain, who penned a scathing criticism<sup>3</sup>. He remarked how, notwithstanding that the shortcomings in Archbishop Fisichella's article had been made public, the editor of *L'Osservatore Romano* (Gian Maria Vian) had seen fit to reproduce it uncorrected, and without mention of Cardinal Re's endorsement of Dom Cardozo's actions, in the *French* edition on 17<sup>th</sup> March; in the *Spanish* edition on 20<sup>th</sup> March; and in the *English* edition on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009. At the very least, as Professor Schooyans remarked, "[t]he Vatican's mouthpiece is... failing to comply with its mandate."

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<sup>1</sup> From a prayer of Pope Leo XIII which he directed to be said in all churches after Sunday Mass.

<sup>2</sup> The event here detailed are related in the paper of Professor Michel Schooyans of the University of Louvain reproduced on the internet at <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/1339160?eng=y>

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2 above.

After almost four months of silence, the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* issued a ‘clarification’, published in *L’Osservatore Romano* on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009. But the ‘clarification’ was almost as problematic as Archbishop Fisichella’s article—not in its elaboration of the Church’s teaching, but in its prefatory assertions.

The ‘clarification’ related how letters had been sent to the Holy See lamenting—  
“the confusion that has been created... following the manipulation and exploitation of an article by... Archbishop Rino Fisichella...”

This was a half truth which was more than half false. It was true that the Archbishop Fisichella’s article had been cited by pro-abortionists in support of their position. But it was false to imply that what had been done *by him* had been done *by them*. Pro-abortionists were justified in claiming that the article demonstrated a change in the Church’s position for Archbishop Fisichella was, after all, President of the *Pontifical Academy for Life*.

The ‘clarification’ then went on to assert that in the Fisichella article “the doctrine of the Church was presented”. That was false: the doctrine of the Church was *not* presented.

In an article appearing on the *Zenit* website on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2009, Robert Moynihan dealt with the recent controversy over the benign treatment of Barack Obama by the editor of *L’Osservatore Romano*, and noted that the editor was a close friend of the Secretary of State, Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone. He noted further that Vian’s conduct in this and other matters had led many to question the catholicity of the newspaper. The Fisichella article, and Vian’s obduracy in republishing it in subsequent foreign language editions is of a piece with this attitude of accommodation to secularism.

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These events demonstrate the executive paralysis which continues to dog the Vatican, manifested in—

- a lack of unity in essential matters;
- a lack of will to discipline;
- ponderousness in action;
- serial procrastination; and,
- the unwillingness ever to admit publicly that some prelate has erred.

God’s Holy Church cannot err; she is the spotless bride of Christ. But her ministers can err: they do so constantly. It is bizarre to see members of the Church’s bureaucracy apologising for some error which the Church has *never* committed, but remaining silent over errors which her bishops and priests commit daily. The Church endures not because of them, but *in spite of* them.

In the paper *Freemasons in the Church* published on this website in November 2005<sup>4</sup>, we set forth the test provided by Pope Leo XIII for exposing Masonic influence among the clergy –

“[N]o matter how great may be men’s cleverness in concealment and their experience in lying, it is impossible to prevent the effects of any cause from showing, in some way, the intrinsic nature of the cause whence they come. “A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor a bad tree produce good fruit.”[Matt. 7: 18] Now, the Masonic sect produces fruits that are pernicious and of the bitterest savour.”<sup>5</sup>

Any bishop, priest, or Catholic layman who manifests in his words or actions the promotion, or acceptance of secular, i.e., Masonic, principles ought to be regarded as a Mason or, at the very least, under Masonic control unless he is able convincingly to refute the allegation. Leo XIII quoted Pope Felix III [383 AD] to the point in a later encyclical on Freemasonry –

“An error which is not resisted is approved; a truth which is not defended is suppressed; and he who does not oppose an evident crime is open to the suspicion of secret complicity.”<sup>6</sup>

Just who is running the Vatican, ministers of God’s Holy Church, or initiates of Rome’s Masonic Temple?

Michael Baker

31<sup>st</sup> July 2009 – *St Ignatius of Loyola*

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. [http://www.superflumina.org/3\\_Masonsinchurch.html](http://www.superflumina.org/3_Masonsinchurch.html)

<sup>5</sup> *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884), n. 10

<sup>6</sup> *Inimica Vis* (8.12.1892), n.7