

An Explanation

December 8, 2012

An acquaintance sent to me recently a copy circularized to all SSPX priests by SSPX Headquarters (HQ) of an official explanation of five possibly troubling remarks of the SSPX's Superior General (SG), and this person asked for my opinion. I honestly think that Superiors of the SSPX might be as troubled as before. Very briefly, here is why:—

Firstly, in Austria in May, the SG said that the SSPX needed to re-think its relations with Rome. HQ explains that this was no change of the SSPX's position on Newrome, but merely a call for SSPX members to recognize that not everything said by Newromans is nonsense. However, the priests who heard the original words in Austria understood the SG to be meaning the same as what he wrote in the Society's in-house magazine of last March (*Cor Unum*), namely that the "new situation" in the Church "requires that we take up a new position with respect to the official Church," because since 2006 "we have witnessed a development in the Church." Does HQ have an explanation for these written words of the SG?

Secondly, on the same occasion the SG is meant to have said that the potential agreement with Rome would mean every chapel less than three years old being pulled down. HQ explains that in fact the SG said that where the SSPX had said Mass for more than three years, a chapel could be set up. However, the SG did also say that wherever the SSPX had ministered for less than three years, it might continue its ministry in private, which implies that any public buildings must be disused.

Thirdly, on CNS, also in May, the SG spoke of religious liberty being "very, very limited." HQ explains that the SG was speaking of "true religious liberty," i.e. as the Church has always taught it, namely the right limited to the Catholic religion. However the SG's original words on CNS are as clear

as clear can be, and verifiable by anybody with the Internet: "The Council was presenting a religious liberty which was in fact a very, very limited one – very limited." HQ may need here to provide a second explanation to prove that its first explanation was not, at best, a mistake?

Fourthly, in Écône in September, the SG admitted that he had been wrong in his dealings with Rome. HQ explains that the mistake was only on a "very precise and limited point," namely whether the Pope would insist or not on the SSPX accepting the Council. However, this insistence on the Council (along with the New Mass) is the total bone of contention between the SSPX and Newrome. Is not this explanation of HQ like saying that the gash made by the iceberg in the side of the *Titanic* was a very precise and limited gash?

Fifthly, years ago the SG said that the Council texts are "95% acceptable." HQ explains that he was speaking of the letter and not of the spirit of the texts. However, what mother will give to her children any part of a cake which she knows is 5% poisoned? It is true that she could in theory give them any part of the 95% not poisoned, but in practice will she not be afraid of the poisoning spirit behind all parts of the cake?

In conclusion, had the SSPX's crisis of this spring and summer made me wonder about the competence and honesty of the SG and his HQ, I fear that after this explanation of five quotes I would still be wondering. May God be with them, because they have a daunting responsibility.

Kyrie eleison.