

BEGGING with CONFIDENCE

January 27, 2024

Around us, evil on evil is unfurled? “

Fear not,” said Jesus, “I’ve overcome the world” (Jn. XVI, 33).

On the last day of 2023 a Franciscan priest of the Capucin Friary of Morgon in France gave a sermon on that recent document of Pope Francis, *Fiducia Supplicans* (“Begging with Confidence”) , which has given scandal to souls all over the world. This sermon is a notable summary of why the document has given such scandal. The sermon is in its turn summarised here below, to less than half its original length.

In the account of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Gospel of St Luke (II, 34), we read how the old man Simeon prophesied that the new-born child just laid in his arms by Mary would be a sign of contradiction for the entire world. All men would have to accept Him or reject Him, because they cannot remain neutral. A classic example of this contradiction is the Catholic laws of marriage. If in practice Catholics break these laws out of weakness, that is already grave, but if they deny those laws in principle, it is a spiritual sin, much graver still.

In this respect, the Pope’s recent signing of “Fiducia Supplicans” will cause untold damage to the Church, because it will entitle all kinds of couples presently living in sin to “beg with confidence” for a blessing from any Catholic priest, and thereby to think that they are no longer living in sin. This will put in peril their eternal salvation. For were John the Baptist and Thomas More then mere fools for giving their lives to defend God’s laws of marriage? True, Our Lord himself did not condemn the woman caught in adultery (Jn.VIII, 3–11), but He never blessed her either, rather He told her to sin no

more (v.11). To bless sinners, with no instruction or rebuke for their sin, can only encourage them to continue in their sin.

Entering the New Year, we must pray for all those who risk being victims of this terrible document. Firstly for Catholic priests, that they have the courage of John the Baptist and Thomas More to stand up to the joint pressure of today's bad authorities in Church and State, who would both want to make priests go with the flow of today's godless world so as to abandon God, by breaking His clear and strict laws of marriage. Secondly we must pray for Catholic families striving against all odds to uphold God's laws of marriage, especially for abandoned spouses seeing the pope encourage those who do not keep, but break, His law. Thirdly, we must pray for souls worldwide, offended by such a scandal, coming from the Pope.

For indeed any scandal is all the greater for the height of the authority from which it comes, for the obviousness of the immorality it promotes, and for the number of souls which it offends. On all three counts, the scandal of "Fiducia Supplicans" is immeasurable. As for the authority scandalising, there is no higher moral authority on earth than that of the (at least seeming) Vicar of Christ, the Pope. As for the immorality promoted, what is more basic to human society than the natural laws of marriage which Christ reinforced, but which even pagans clearly grasp who abominate adultery and homosexuality? And as for the extension of souls scandalised, what human society is not undermined in the formation of its building bricks, its families, by the Vicar of Christ using all of his authority on earth to command the priests of Christ to bless sinful souls that are living in defiance of God's natural laws of marriage?

One may wonder if ever in all the 2,000 years of Church history such a huge scandal has been seen. We must pray even for Pope Bergoglio, that he may save his soul – right now, it is in grave danger.

And finally we must pray not for Our Divine Lord but to Him, to thank Him for taking upon Himself to rescue us from the devastation of sin being wrought all around us, especially by sinful churchmen. He alone paid for us the debt otherwise unpayable to His Father for our sins. He alone opens for us the otherwise barred gates of Heaven. He alone enables us to sing at the end of Mass not the "Miserere" but the "Te Deum Laudamus" – we praise Thee, O God, for Thy wisdom in allowing sin and death, to be conquered by Thine own suffering. We beg Thee only for the grace of perseverance to the end.

Kyrie eleison.