

Benedict's Ecumenism – V

May 19, 2012

Because of the need to break a long argument into several pieces, readers may have lost the thread of the several EC's on "Benedict's Ecumenism." Let us sum up the argument so far:–

EC 241 established a few basics: the Catholic Church is an organic whole, amongst the beliefs of which if anyone picks and chooses, he is a "chooser," or heretic. Moreover, if he takes with him a Catholic belief outside the Church, it will not remain the same, just as if oxygen is taken out of water by electrolysis, it ceases to be part of a liquid and turns into a gas. Conciliar ecumenism supposes that there are beliefs which non-Catholics share with Catholics, but in fact even "I believe in God" is liable to be quite different when it is incorporated in a Protestant or in a Catholic system of belief, or creed.

EC 247 used another comparison to illustrate how parts of the Catholic whole do not remain the same when they are taken out of that whole. Gold coins may remain identical gold coins when they are taken out of a heap of coins, but a branch cut off a living tree becomes something quite different, dead wood. The Church is more like the tree than like the coins, because Our Lord compared his Church to a vine-plant, in fact he said that any branch cut off it is thrown into the fire and burnt (Jn. XV, 6 – interestingly, no living branch is so fruitful as the vine-branch, no dead wood is so useless as vine-wood). So parts cut off from the Catholic Church do not remain Catholic, as ecumenism pretends.

EC 249 would show how Vatican II documents promote these false ideas of ecumenism, but EC 248 had to issue a preliminary warning that those documents are notorious for their ambiguity, So it gave the example of how *Dei Verbum* (#8) opened the door to the modernists' false notion of "living

Tradition” Then EC 249 presented three Council texts, crucial for the modernists’ ecumenism: *Lumen Gentium* #8, suggesting that Christ’s “true” Church reaches beyond the “narrow” Catholic Church, and *Unitatis Redintegratio* (#3), suggesting firstly that the Church is built up of “elements” or parts that can be found the same inside or outside the Catholic Church (like coins in or out of a heap), and secondly, that these elements can therefore serve to save souls inside or outside the Catholic Church.

EC 251 came at last to the ecumenism of Benedict XVI in particular. Quotes of Fr. Joseph Ratzinger given by Dr. Schüler in his book *Benedict XVI and the Church’s View of Itself,*” showed how the young theologian in the 1960’s thought entirely along the lines of golden coins in or out of the heap. Later quotes indeed showed that the older Cardinal and Pope has continually tried to keep his balance between the Church as a heap of coins and the Church as an organic whole, but as Dr. Schüler argues, this very balancing act presupposes that half of him still believes in the Church as a heap of coins.

Unless readers demand textual quotes of Joseph Ratzinger to prove that these are not being twisted or taken out of context, the last EC in this series will conclude with an application of its lessons to the situation of Archbishop Lefebvre’s Society of St Pius X. On the one hand the SSPX is part of the true Catholic whole, “one, holy, Catholic and apostolic.” On the other hand it had better avoid making itself part of the diseased Conciliar whole. As a healthy branch grafted onto the unhealthy Conciliar plant, it would necessarily catch the Conciliar disease. No way can a mere branch heal that disease.

Kyrie eleison.