

Bishops Valid? – III

March 5, 2016

To present Fr Calderón's arguments for the Newrite of Consecration of Bishops being "most likely valid" does not mean defending the Novus Ordo as a whole, nor saying that there is no problem with this Newrite. It does mean that the problem must be weighed not by hothead emotions but by the Church's sacramental theology, a domain in which it is apt to happen, as the proverb says, that "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Here are Fr Calderón's arguments, still heavily summarized:–

What is needed to guarantee the validity of a sacramental Rite is its long-standing approval by the Church. Because the Newrite of Episcopal Consecration (NEC) is an entirely new rite, fabricated under Paul VI in the wake of Vatican II, it has no such guarantee. Moreover that Council's anti-liturgical spirit, quasi-heretical collegiality and anti-authoritarian spirit, forming the context in which the NEC was fabricated, combine to raise a doubt as to its validity: has the new Matter in the NEC been so changed as to invalidate the sacrament? Does the NEC show its promulgator's new Ritual Intention to make a Rite to consecrate bishops to "do what the Church does" (and always has done)? And has the Form been officially established by the Church, and does it sufficiently express not necessarily the grace of the bishopric to be conferred, but at least the episcopal order which necessarily implies that grace?

The new Matter of the NEC raises no doubts, because it has not been significantly changed from the Traditional matter. On the other hand the promulgator's new Ritual Intention is problematic, because Paul VI may have been the highest authority in the Church, nevertheless all his liturgical reforms are shot through with his typical modernist desire both to "do what the Church does" and at the same time not to

do it. This contradiction characterised almost his entire pontificate, causing untold confusion throughout the Church. Thus the NEC as a whole betrays his democratic spirit, altering radically in several places the Traditional concept of a Catholic bishop and his authority. This new Ritual Intention is ambiguous.

As for the NEC's new Form, it was established by the highest Church authority, Pope Paul VI, but not with his Extraordinary infallibility, nor with the Church's Ordinary infallibility (which never breaks with Tradition), so that a final Church judgment upon its validity must wait for the restoration of the Church's sane Magisterium, presently eclipsed. Meanwhile as a sacramental Form it does seem valid, because "Accept the Principal Spirit" is a Form similar to other Forms approved by the Church, and any intrinsic ambiguity as to the order of bishops is wholly clarified by the immediately surrounding extrinsic Rite.

However, since Paul VI established this Newform both meaning and not meaning to break with the Traditional concept of a Catholic bishop, then in accordance with the doctrine of Leo XIII's "Apostolicae Curae," had his dissolving of episcopal authority been clear and explicit, his NEC consecrations would certainly be as invalid as Anglican Orders. As it is, the modernist errors are only implicit in the context of the NEC's institution. But it is a dark shadow overhanging the validity of the NEC.

Fr Calderón's conclusion was given here last week: the Matter, Form and Ritual Intention of the NEC are certainly illegitimate because of their break with Tradition, but they are most probably valid because they signify what needs to be signified and most of their elements come from Rites accepted by the Church. However, that validity is not certain because the Ritual Intention to break without breaking with Tradition is illegitimate, the NEC is only similar to Church-approved Rites, and the changes go all in a modernist direction. But

the sacraments call for absolutely certain validity, especially the consecration of bishops on whom the Church hangs. Therefore newbishops and newpriests were best conditionally re-consecrated and re-ordained.

Kyrie eleison.