

Bishops Agree

July 12, 2008

Many friends of the Society of St. Pius X wonder what position towards an agreement with Rome is taken by Bishop Alfonso de Galarreta. He is one of the Society's four bishops, but what he thinks and says is not so often quoted, at least in English, a language which he may understand but which he prefers not to have to speak.

At the Society's mother-house in Ecône, Switzerland, it was he who this year conducted the annual ceremony of ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood. Sections of his sermon are available on the Internet at christus.imperat, for instance. Here are two paragraphs, the first concerning the Society's episcopal consecrations of June 30, 1988, because this year was their 20th anniversary; the second concerning Cardinal Castrillón's "ultimatum" of June 4 and 5, one month ago.

From the truth no longer being preached, but merely looked for (as though one did not know it), there followed, said the bishop, "the importance and need for those consecrations to ensure the survival of the Catholic priesthood. We are proud of the consecrations, not as being a revolt against the Pope, but as being in reality the safeguard of the Catholic priesthood. We are also proud of the figure of Archbishop Lefebvre. We are not "Lefebvrists," but we adhere to his way of thinking because it is Catholic. We are ashamed neither of the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ, nor of the unchanging Catholic Church, nor therefore of Archbishop Lefebvre."

Further on, as to the Cardinal's "ultimatum," the bishop said that calling it an ultimatum was going too far. He went on, "We saw it rather as being meant to scare us, to put pressure on us to come to a purely practical (not doctrinal) agreement (with Rome). This is the way they want to make us go, but it is a dead end, and we will not go that way. We cannot

undertake to betray our professing of the Faith, nor can we get drawn into an exercise in demolition. Our reply to the Holy Father is therefore to follow the steps laid down (complete liberation of the Tridentine rite of Mass and nullification of the “excommunications” of 1988) as preliminaries to a doctrinal encounter. Rome will react either with a slowing down or complete stop of contacts, or with a fresh condemnation – one wonders exactly what form that might take – or with a lifting of the ‘excommunications’.”

Firstly the Faith, then Rome – all four Society bishops follow substantially the Archbishop’s line of thinking, “because it is Catholic.” “Sooner die than betray,” he used to say.

Kyrie eleison.