

Bleating Lambs

September 18, 2021

At the end of last month at Courtalain in France, 15 Superiors of Traditional Catholic Communities, but in good standing with Rome, issued a joint statement in anticipation of their meeting with Pope Francis a few days later, because of their reasonable fear of losing their dearly bought good standing with Rome. For indeed on July 16 he issued his *Motu Proprio Traditionis Custodes* in which he had used all his apparent Authority to stop any further use in the Church of the Traditional rite of Mass. Had he next summoned themselves to Rome early in September in order to take away their good standing with Rome? After harshly banning the Latin Mass it would be entirely logical for him to ban the Communities using that Mass. And so a few days before their appointment with the Pope they met together to consider their danger, and at the end of their meeting they issued a joint Statement of their position, on which the best comment comes from a fabulist of 2,600 years ago. Here is a brief summary of their Statement –

We 15 Superiors who sign below wish above all to emphasize our love of the Church and our fidelity to the Pope. But since his recent condemnation of the Latin Mass, we are feeling suspected, marginalised and banished. Far from pretending as Traditionalists to be the true Church, we depend on the Pope of Rome and the diocesan bishops for our salvation and faith. We loyally submit to their Authority and to their teaching, including that of Vatican II and its aftermath. Please forgive us if any party spirit or pride has come among us. We beg for a humane, personal trusting dialogue where we can tell our tale of woe, in particular of how we have relied on promises of Rome to build up our Communities. Above all, please let us have a truly human and merciful dialogue. We do contribute to the diversity of that liturgy which is at the heart of the Church. And Pope Francis himself says that all souls must be

reached out to, to help each of them to find their own way of belonging to Mother Church.

And here is the fable of Aesop (620–564 B.C.), called “The Wolf and the Lamb” –

A stray Lamb stood drinking early one morning on the bank of a woodland stream. That very same morning a hungry Wolf came by farther up the stream, hunting for something to eat. He soon got his eyes on the Lamb. As a rule Mr. Wolf snapped up such delicious morsels without making any bones about it, but this Lamb looked so very helpless and innocent that the Wolf felt he ought to have some kind of an excuse for taking its life.

“How dare you paddle around in my stream and stir up all the mud!” he shouted fiercely. “You deserve to be punished severely for your rashness!”

“But, your highness,” replied the trembling Lamb, “do not be angry! I cannot possibly muddy the water you are drinking up there. Remember, you are upstream and I am downstream.”

“You do muddy it!” retorted the Wolf savagely. “And besides, I have heard that you told lies about me last year!” “How could I have done so?” pleaded the Lamb. “I wasn’t born until this year.”

“If it wasn’t you, it was your brother!”

“I have no brothers.”

“Well, then,” snarled the Wolf, “It was someone in your family anyway. But no matter who it was, I do not intend to be talked out of my breakfast.”

And without more words the Wolf seized the poor Lamb and carried her off to the forest.

Kyrie eleison.