

Campos Resilient

December 20, 2008

Catholics regularly ask, "What has happened to Campos?" They are referring of course to the Brazilian diocese which Bishop de Castro Mayer, lone hero of the post-Conciliar episcopate alongside Archbishop Lefebvre, maintained in Catholic Tradition until his death in 1991, but which his second successor, Bishop Rifan, led back under the Roman authorities ten or so years later. The question then is, how well is Catholic Tradition faring in the Campos now under Roman control?

And the answer is that the 40-plus-year war between Catholicism and Conciliarism is unfolding along the usual lines: the laity who cleave to Tradition are tranquil in their Faith; the best of the priests now under, ultimately, neo-modernist Rome are suffering from split loyalties; their bishop, loyal to the same Rome – or to his own ambition – is manoeuvring all the time to Conciliarise the work of Bishop de Castro Mayer.

Ambition is the only explanation that the most clear-sighted layfolk can find for the defection to neo-modernist Rome of Bishop Rifan. These layfolk say, "If he was wrong to follow Tradition for so long, why should he be right now? The valid books he wrote then, are they invalid now?" The Bishop threatens them with taking away their priests. Reply of one of these layfolk: "Your Excellency, that's entirely up to you. As for me, at Easter I will bring in a priest from outside, if necessary." Over such souls the Bishop has lost all influence.

Some of the laity say that nothing has changed in the eleven parishes of Tradition, and they declare that Bishop Rifan can do no wrong. Others notice the beginning of changes, for instance how the priests no longer tell the people to throw out the television set because it is enough to keep it under

control. Logically, for a bishop and priests letting go of the complete truth, their preaching is tending to become more authoritarian. However, they are liable to back down where they sense a resistance which would diminish the numbers of their flock.

Typically, the clear-sighted laity, in particular a group of some 180 souls in three chapels of the Traditional parish of Vari Sai, are turning to priests uncompromisingly Traditional to say Mass for them and to maintain their Faith. Long term, their hope is in the Society of St. Pius X, which is the major support system of such priests, and which is showing no signs of being about to fall in with the neo-modernists of Rome. But the struggle must continue. As Our Lord says, "If these days were not shortened . . ."

Kyrie eleison.