

Cardinal Smiles

June 19, 2010

A recent smile of Cardinal Kasper confirms my long-standing belief that despite the profound liberalism of the Conciliar Popes since John XXIII, still one need not doubt their really having been Popes. A number of serious and believing Catholics do doubt it because they cannot see how real Vicars of Christ can depart so far from the Catholic Faith and Church of Christ as these Popes have done. Indeed there is a problem, grave beyond all measure.

These “sedevacantists,” as they are usually called, argue that if anybody walks like a heretic, talks like a heretic and, as Americans say, quacks like a heretic, then he IS a heretic. But a heretic excludes himself from the Church. Therefore these Popes have excluded themselves from the Church and cannot possibly have been its Head – how can a non-member be a head?

The true answer, I believe, is that the heresy which automatically casts out of the one and only Ark of Salvation is so grave that to commit it, somebody must fully know and fully mean what he is doing. He must realize that he is denying Catholic truth that has been defined with God’s own authority by God’s Church, in other words that he is defying God. Without this realization, called “pertinacity” by the Church, he may be denying divine truths, but he is not yet defying God, or casting himself out of the Church.

Now “sedevacantists” find ridiculous the idea that Popes, profoundly educated in Church teaching, do not know what they are doing when they utter such enormities as does Benedict XVI, to take just one example amongst many, on the on-going validity of the Old Covenant. To make a heretic fully realize what he is doing, in olden days, when the Church was in her right mind, the Pope’s Inquisition (or Holy Office) would pull

him over, confront him authoritatively with his error, and urge him to renounce it. If he refused, then his pertinacity was clear to all, and the wolf was cast out of the sheepfold. But such a confrontation requires authority, both to summon the heretic and to declare his error. What then if, since Vatican II, it is the highest Church authority which no longer discerns Catholic truth?

Enter Cardinal Kasper. At a press conference he held on May 4 in Paris (already referred to in EC 148), he is reported as saying, correctly, that the Society of St Pius X staunchly opposes the Catholic Church's dialogue with other Christian churches for which he is responsible. "They've attacked me as a heretic," he said with a smile.

Well might he smile. By what authority, if you please, does the mere SSPX condemn the ecumenical dialogue which has been the Universal Church's principle and practice ever since Vatican II, which is preached everywhere by Benedict XVI, and for which he is the Pope's prime agent? Surely it was only charity towards those misguided "Traditionalists" that prevented the good Cardinal from bursting into laughter!

Humanly speaking, the Church is finished. But not divinely.

Kyrie eleison.