

Clash Evolving

August 12, 2017

How is the Society of St Pius X evolving since the spring and early summer when strong tensions arose in it over the participation of Conciliar priests as official witnesses in Society marriages? In brief, relations continue to be strained between Society leaders favouring that participation and those Society priests and laity that condemn it. One can even foresee the Society splitting between the followers of Archbishop Lefebvre and the followers of Bishop Fellay. Such a split was inevitable from the day when Bishop Fellay began leading the Archbishop's Society in a different direction from the Archbishop himself.

But nothing shakes the determination of Bishop Fellay's Menzingen to steer away from the line traced by the Archbishop and towards the line of Conciliar Rome. Just recently it is reported that in France a Society couple engaged to be married refused to have anything to do with the Conciliar authorities, whereupon their SSPX priest refused to marry them. Obviously he had his Superiors' support. Does this insistence upon dismantling the Archbishop's Society have any rational explanation? Three factors may be at work, amongst others.

Firstly, Providence chose Switzerland to serve as the Society's first geographical base, and Switzerland has enjoyed ever since a corresponding importance and prestige within the SSPX. Thus its top two officials at present, and many of its priests, are Swiss citizens. Now Switzerland is a country of order which is famous, for example, for how its trains run on time, whereas the lack of official recognition for a truly Catholic Congregation is normally a disorder that will be the more keenly felt by an orderly people. Secondly, SSPX priests can be dreaming of how large an apostolate will open up to the Society if only it can be recognised by Rome. And thirdly, there can seem to be no other solution to the Society's

serious internal strains than its putting itself under the authority of Conciliar Rome – Bishop Fellay does not want to hear of apocalyptic solutions like an intervention of God.

But firstly, the supreme order for Catholics is not the order of the State, however desirable that may be, but the order of God, trampled underfoot by Vatican II. Secondly, modernists by their nature can give every appearance of being “converted” because they see no problem in their own subjectivism. But it is so comfortable that few have any intention of quitting it for any objective conversion involving the Cross. As Fr Vallet said, liberals do not convert. And thirdly, to think that the only solution to the unprecedented problems of today’s world and Church is to go along with the lies, betrays a serious lack of faith, however triumphant those lies may seem. Do we really think that God’s arm is shortened because we men are wicked (Isaiah L, 2; LIX, 1)? God knows exactly how He will deal with the unprecedented lies, as we need only wait to see, but in the meantime He does not want us to be going along with them!

However, there is also good news – some priests and laity refusing to go along with the lies are also resolute. A reader in France tells me that a number of SSPX priests have been woken up by the concrete problem over marriages. The best of the SSPX priests are not resorting to Conciliar witnesses for Society marriages, much to the annoyance of their Superiors. Three of the demoted Deans have written strongly against Conciliar marriage witnesses even after their own demotion, and one has just spoken out strongly against the Personal Prelature, because it is by no means out of the question, even since Cardinal Müller’s damning Declaration of late June. We are by no means “back to Square one,” as Bishop Fellay claimed at that time. “Like a bad business manager at bay,” says this reader, “he has forfeited all trust from any colleagues with a brain in their head, even the most respectful.” What matters now, the reader concludes, is not to save the SSPX as a whole,

because that would take a miracle, but to save as many priests and laity as possible from the downward slide of the SSPX.

Kyrie eleison.