

Conciliar Popes I

May 23, 2015

Whenever the claim is put forward that the Conciliar Popes may be at least partly in good faith, there are usually Catholics that protest. They will say that the Popes are intelligent and educated churchmen, so it is impossible that they do not fully realize what they are doing. The “mentevacantist” theory, according to which these Popes have vacant minds, partly ignorant of the consequences of their own actions, is for these critics absurd. One can understand the protest, but let me quote a friend who understands “mentevacantism” as it needs to be understood:—

“The idea that Popes can be mistaken in good faith because they hold that certain errors are not opposed to the Faith, gets little serious attention, because people have a concept of the papacy too detached from the world, whereas the whole history of the Popes is a history of men of their time being liable to share in all the good and bad habits and vices of their time. The difference lies in the power of the error, which has never been so mighty as it is today, mankind never having been, as one must not forget, so degenerate as today.

“For indeed liberalism is now everywhere and it is overwhelming, no longer a mere thought, or way of thinking, but a very way of being that permeates every man alive, be he an absolute liberal in himself, or an agent of liberalism and its subversion, or merely one of its tools. Such is the case of the Conciliar Popes. They think they are drawing close to the world to heal it. They do not realize that it is the world which is drawing them to itself to infect and control them.

“In such a situation as this, one can certainly speak of liberal Popes but not of non-Catholic Popes, insofar as there is lacking the prime requisite for such a condemnation, namely the personal will on their part to be liberals and not

Catholics. All one can do is recognize the fact that in these Popes there is the personal will to be Catholics and not anti-Catholic liberals, since for them there is no contradiction between the two, far from it. According to their theologian and thinker, Joseph Ratzinger, liberalism is one of the good by-products of Catholicism, needing only to be cleansed of certain alien distortions imported into it. And so as for destroying the Church, it stands to reason that Popes believing in such a compromised Catholicism cannot help one of the consequences of their actions being the destruction of the Church.

“Concerning Archbishop Lefebvre, given that he grew up in a Church quite different from today’s Church, I can only conclude that for him it was impossible for a Catholic acting as an instrument of subversion not to realize what he was doing. Still less could a Pope not realize. From reading between the lines of certain of the Archbishop’s writings, I do believe that while his vision of the world certainly included the process of degeneration reaching down to the end of time, it did not include that process involving in any clear manner the Church as well.”

I can just hear readers objecting to this kind of analysis: “Oh, Excellency, please stop defending the Conciliar Popes. It’s black or white. If they’re black, I’ll be a happy sedevacantist. If they’re white, I’ll be a happy liberal. Your greys do nothing but confuse me!”

Dear reader, black is black, white is white, but rarely in real life do we find pure white, and never pure black (whatever is, has the goodness of being). If you want to understand this relative excusing of the Conciliar Popes, the key is to grasp that the world has never been so deeply bad as it is today. From this unprecedented degeneracy it is obvious that Conciliar Popes are in this respect more excusable for going astray in the Faith than any of their predecessors.

Kyrie eleison.