

Continuing Damage – I

July 27, 2013

When people wish to defend the very bad Doctrinal Declaration (DD) officially submitted by the Society of St Pius X to the Roman authorities in mid-April of last year as the basis for a practical agreement between Rome and the SSPX, they will often argue that since Rome refused the DD, the DD is of no further interest and may be forgotten. But in this month's issue of the "Recusant," newly arisen magazine of the Resistance in England, there appears a contrary argument which deserves careful attention. Here it is, either quoted directly from the original, or summarized:—

"The DD, as both its name and its contents make clear, is a statement saying that a number of doctrinal positions on questions of the greatest importance in the present crisis in the Church are acceptable to the SSPX. The problem is that several of the positions expressed in the DD are not acceptable." For instance the SSPX's General Chapter of last July was told by a leading theologian of the SSPX that *"This Declaration is (. . .) profoundly ambiguous and sins by omission against the duty to denounce clearly the principal errors which are still raging within the Church and are destroying the faith of Catholics. As it stands, this Declaration gives the impression that we would accept the 'hermeneutic of continuity'."* ***"The harm done by the DD is therefore that of a doctrinally dubious public statement. Nor has it, as such, been "withdrawn" or "renounced."*** In fact Bishop Fellay consistently refuses to admit that there is anything doctrinally dubious about his Declaration. At the very most he admits to having tried to be "too subtle," but he does not admit that such subtlety is highly objectionable in matters pertaining to the defence of the Faith. Bishop Fellay complains that the whole problem is that he "has not been properly understood" even by theologically very skilled

members of the SSPX. He allows, among others, Fr Themann in the USA to defend the Declaration in public conferences that have been recorded and are being distributed among the faithful."

It is true that matters might have been worse if Rome had accepted the DD, but that does not lessen the standing damage wrought by the DD's manifestation of what is doctrinally acceptable to the SSPX. For if Bishop Fellay says that he "withdraws" and "renounces" the DD, he certainly seems to mean no more than that it was inopportune at that moment, as being liable to cause division in the SSPX. "He has never as much as suggested that the DD is doctrinally dubious and unacceptable. And that is where the real issue has been all along, and that is the issue that is far from being solved: the Superior General seems to refuse to make any unambiguous profession of the SSPX's position."

In conclusion, the scandal caused by the DD has still not been repaired "Trying to downplay the seriousness of the matter for the purpose of maintaining or regaining peace and quiet among the faithful risks encouraging the mentality that doctrine does not matter all that much, as long as things run smoothly and we can keep the true Mass, etc." Such downplaying will only make the scandal worse (End of the article in the "Recusant").

This article states very moderately the problem of the DD not being publicly recanted or retracted by Bishop Fellay. But how can any Catholic Congregation keep and serve the Truth when it is led by a Superior who so obstinately plays at ducks and drakes with the Truth? If the SSPX is a lifeboat, either it gets rid of this deluded Captain who constantly seeks to drill holes in the floor of the lifeboat, or the SSPX turns into a deathboat. May God in his mercy open the SSPX's eyes.

Kyrie eleison.