

Difficult Discussions – I

April 18, 2009

From Bishop Tissier de Mallerais speaking in Paris we hear that terms have been fixed for the doctrinal discussions due to take place between the Society of St. Pius X and the Church authorities in Rome. The discussions are to be in writing, which is wise, insofar as there is less room for passion and more time for careful thinking. Also they will not be made public, a provision which at best eliminates “grand-standing” by either party, otherwise known as playing to the gallery, because there will be no gallery present.

From Rome we hear that the impetus towards a Rome-SSPX understanding which was generated by the Pope’s January “re-incommunication” of the four SSPX bishops, was seriously slowed down by the distrust generated by the media uproar of January-February, which is what that uproar was designed to achieve. Yet subjectively speaking, there is certainly still good will on the part of the Pope towards the SSPX, and there is no lack of good will on the part of the SSPX towards the person of the Holy Father.

The problem for these discussions is that, objectively speaking, as on either side there may be some reluctance to admit, we are in the presence of an irreconcilable clash between the religion of God and the religion of man. Vatican II mixed the two together, which was too much of the religion of man by half. Let us then say that Benedict XVI wishes to combine Vatican II with Catholic Tradition. That is still too much of the religion of man by a quarter. Let us now suppose that the SSPX and Benedict XVI were to agree to come half-way towards each other. That would still represent one eighth of the religion of man mixed with seven eighths of the religion of God, which for the purposes of Almighty God would still be one eighth too much.

For just as it takes a disproportionately small amount of water mixed with a tank full of gasoline (or petrol) to stop a car engine dead, so it takes only a small admixture of idolatry to stop dead the true religion of God. The Lord God himself tells us that he is a jealous God (Exod. XX, 5; etc.), and will not endure any false gods beside him. To anybody in the SSPX who might be tempted to worship with the neo-modernists, as to any neo-modernist who might wish to share worship with the Catholics, the Old Testament prophet Elias would say as he said to the hesitating Israelites, "How long do you halt between the two sides? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." Scripture then says, "The people did not answer him a word" (III Kings, XVIII, 21).

Subjectively, the Israelites wanted to have it both ways. Objectively, that was impossible. For ourselves too.

Kyrie eleison.