

Doctrine Indispensable

October 9, 2010

I can remember Archbishop Lefebvre in 1986 being surprised at how few followers of Catholic Tradition seemed to grasp the enormity of the all-religion love-fest at Assisi, but such is the corruption of our times: ideas and truth are of no consequence, because “All you need is love.” In truth, all of us need, absolutely, both doctrine and love.

Doctrine is not just formulas of words. Those of us that have the inestimable gift of the Faith know that upon our short life in this world hangs an eternity of unimaginable bliss or horror in the next life, and we know that this is the destiny of all men, whether they believe it or not, Limbo for unbaptized innocents being the one exception. It then stands to reason that unless God is cruel – vain wish of many a poor soul seeking to justify its revolt against Him! – He is offering to all souls at all times the light and strength they need to gain Heaven and avoid Hell, if they wish. But when a soul does not have the Faith, what form can that light and strength take?

Let two non-Catholics point towards the answer. Dr. Samuel Johnson, 18th century giant of English common sense, said “When a man is tired of London he is tired of life.” In other words, behind the hurly-burly of daily living in all its daily details, a man is forging day by day a general attitude towards life. And Count Leo Tolstoy in his epic novel, *War and Peace*, says, “To love life means to love God.” In other words, a man’s general attitude towards life is in fact an attitude towards God.

Of course many a modern soul will deny vigorously that his attitude to life can have anything to do with a “non-existent” God, but God is not the less sustaining in existence both him and all the objects daily surrounding him, and God is giving

to him all the time the free-will with which to love or hate God within and behind them all. Thus Communists are meant to be atheists, yet Lenin once said, "God is my personal enemy." Communists, as such, hate life and hate God.

Then what is the right attitude to life and to God? The First Commandment lays it down: to love Him with all one's heart and mind and soul. But how can I love anybody without first having some knowledge of him? The right attitude to life and to God presupposes at least some faith or trust in the goodness of life and/or of God. Thus when unlettered souls come to Our Lord in the Gospels to ask for a miracle, frequently he tests their "faith," or praises it and rewards it, when he grants the miracle. What faith? Faith in him. But who exactly is he?

That is for lettered souls to formulate, in doctrine. This doctrine of God may be polished down the ages, but it cannot be changed, any more than God can be changed. It is the on-going corrector of our attitude to life and to God, for as long as we wish to be unimaginably happy and not unhappy for all eternity. Catholic doctrine is truth. God is Truth. Truth is indispensable.

Kyrie eleison.