

Doctrine – Why? – II

September 18, 2010

Doctrine, or teaching, is of the very essence of the Catholic Church. Souls must firstly be taught how to get to Heaven, or they will never get there. “Going, teach all nations” is among the very last instructions of Our Lord to his Apostles (Mt. XXVIII, 19). That is why Archbishop Lefebvre’s heroic fight for Catholic Tradition (1970–1991) was first and foremost doctrinal.

That is also why, as quoted last week in EC 165, Bishop Fellay told Brian Mereshon last May that doctrinal differences cannot be bracketed out in order to arrive at any practical agreement, however attractive, with Rome. Asked whether the rejection by the Society of St Pius X of a canonical or practical solution was not “a sign of obstinacy or ill will,” the Bishop replied (his words are accessible on the website of the “Remnant”): “ . . . It is very clear that whatever practical solution would happen without a sound doctrinal foundation would lead directly to disaster . . . We have all these previous examples in front of us – the Fraternity of St Peter, the Institute of Christ the King and all of the others are totally blocked on the level of doctrine because they first accepted the practical agreement.”

The reason for Catholic doctrine being “blocked” by any practical agreement is common sense. Today’s Romans are still absolutely attached to their Council (Vatican II). That Council is essentially a slide away from Catholic Tradition, the religion of God, down into a new religion of man. If then they make a major concession to Tradition, such as would be any regularization of the SSPX, they are bound to ask for some concession in return. Now they know that the SSPX clings to Catholic doctrine, for all the reasons given previously. So the least that they can require is that the doctrinal differences be passed over, for the moment.

But that is enough for the Romans' purposes! As to "for the moment," once a practical re-union were to have been signed, the non-doctrinal euphoria of all the Traditional souls delighted to be no longer out in the cold (as they feel it) of Rome's disapproval, would make it quite difficult for the SSPX to back-track if – just by chance, of course – the "moment" were to turn into an indefinite length of time. The trap would have closed on the SSPX.

And as to the "passed over," to pass over doctrine, especially the radical doctrinal difference between the religion of God and the religion of man, is equivalent to passing over, or bracketing out, God Himself. But how can a servant of God possibly serve God by bracketing Him out, or passing Him over? If one thinks about it, that is the first little step towards a great apostasy!

As Bishop Fellay points out, 40 years of experience confirm these principles – the battlefield of Catholic Tradition is littered with the corpses of organizations which started out nobly, but failed to grasp the importance of the doctrinal problem.

Kyrie eleison.