

Drexel's Pope

August 8, 2020

Originally this last of four issues of "Eleison Comments" being drawn from Fr. Drexel's booklet on *Faith is Greater than Obedience* was going to argue in favour of the booklet's position that Pope Paul VI was of good intentions when at the head of the Catholic Church between 1962 and 1965 he presided over the Second Vatican Council and brought about its revolutionary change of the Church. Of course human intentions are the secret of God who alone can know them infallibly, but Our Lord tells us to judge the tree by its fruits, and it is here that Paul VI is found wanting. We are now 55 years on from the end of the Council, and its fruits have proved to be disastrous for Catholicism in any true sense of the word.

Therefore amid the many excellent things contained in Fr Drexel's Messages from the 1970's contained in *Faith is Greater than Obedience*, it is difficult to include his portrait of Paul VI. In brief, here it is –

Paul VI loved the Church – 3-XII-71– *He feels pain and sorrow for consecrated souls turning from the Church to the world.* 4-VIII-72 – *He is abandoned by many who could have supported him with vigour and loyalty. With tears and sweat he wrestles to save the Church, he sorrows for unfaithful priests, he grieves still more for bishops more interested in their comfort than in caring for the faith or for souls.* 1 – VIII-75– *He is oppressed by false advisers.* 7-IV-72 – *He becomes more lonely, and those loyal to him are persecuted.* 5-VII-74 – *He prays, sacrifices and suffers constantly, but many break faith.* 7-XI-75 – *Never have there been so many sacrileges as since the New Mass, but My visible representative bears no guilt for this. His will is interior participation at the holy sacrifice, in reverence and in love (. . .) it is priests who are sinning in this way and act contrary to the word and work of the successor of Peter.*

Notice in particular the last of these references, from November of 1975. The categorical statement that the Pope bore no responsibility for the multiple sacrileges that came with the New Mass cannot be true, however good his intentions may have been. "The way to Hell is paved with good intentions," because men are fallible, they make mistakes and what they intend is not always what they achieve. However, as soon as a good intention has a bad result, then if they really intend the good result, they will change whatever was producing the bad result. But in the 1970's Pope Paul changed little or nothing from his liberal revolution of the 1960's, on the contrary he did everything in his power to crush the counter-revolution of Archbishop Lefebvre from inside the Church. Therefore the Pope's real intention was not "*interior participation at the holy sacrifice*" but the bringing into line of the Catholic Church with the modern world, a re-aligning to which the Archbishop was an unacceptable obstacle.

As the Archbishop said, Pope Paul was a liberal catholic, in other words a man deeply divided between two irreconcilable loves: his true love of the Church by his Catholic faith, and his false love of the modern world by his liberalism. Inside any one man these two loves must fight to the death. Inside Paul VI the Catholicism would not die, so towards the end of his life he wept for the loss of priestly vocations, but his liberalism ran deeper. It was intellectual, ideological and implacable. Woe to anybody who got, or gets, in its way. Then suddenly the liberal dove brings out its claws, which are those of a hawk. Such was Paul VI. In comparison with his liberalism, his faith was sentimental. Hence his Council and his Mass.

And where does that leave Fr Drexel? When Heaven makes use of a human messenger, it leaves him with his free will and personality. Women and children make the most docile messengers, the most completely faithful to the message being entrusted to them, but men . . . many men have struggled to

achieve their views on life, and these may consciously or even unconsciously colour any message of Heaven or earth passing through them. Very possibly Our Lord spoke to Fr Drexel from the 1920's until his death in 1977. Very possibly Fr Drexel's own solution to the agonising problem set by Pope Paul was the solution adopted by many a pious Catholic after the Council: the Pope means well, it is the bishops who are the real problem. Alas . . . as today, the bishops were a problem, but so was the Pope.

Kyrie eleison.