

Fatal Humanising

February 22, 2014

Some Catholics who hold that the Apostolic See is vacant protest strongly against recent issues of these “Comments” which seem to put the universal heresy of liberalism on an equal footing with the particular opinion of sedevacantism. But whereas these “Comments” constantly excoriate the plague of liberalism, surely they have recently done no more than argue that nobody is obliged to be a sedevacantist, which, considering what a sterilising trap sedevacantism proves in some cases to be, is surely a very moderate position to take.

However, the “Comments” do hold that sedevacantism, while admirable as an effort to combat liberalism, is at best an inadequate means of doing so, because it shares with liberals one of their basic errors, namely the exaggeration of papal infallibility. In its full depth this error takes us to the heart of today’s unprecedented crisis of the Church, which is why the “Comments” will insist on the question, while begging pardon of any readers unduly bored or offended. The whole Church is at stake, and not just the sensibilities of these or those of its members.

That full depth is mankind’s slow but steady turning away over the last 700 years from God, from his Son and from his Church. At the height of the Middle Ages Catholics had a clear and strong faith, grasping the oneness and exclusivity of the objective God and his non-contradictory Truth. Dante had no problem putting Popes in his *Inferno*. But as down the centuries man put himself more and more at the centre of things, so God lost his absolute transcendence above all creatures, and truth became more and more relative, no longer to God’s authority but instead to man’s.

Within the Church, take for example the 13th of the 17 “Rules for thinking with the Church” from St Ignatius of Loyola’s

famous book of the *Spiritual Exercises*, praised by countless Popes ever since, and no doubt responsible for helping to save millions of souls. Ignatius writes: *"To be right in everything, we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it."* Such a position might support the churchmen's authority in the short run, but did it not run a serious risk of detaching it from truth in the long run?

Indeed by the late 19th century liberalism had become so strong that the Church had to support its own authority by the Definition in 1870 of its Magisterium when operating at full power, namely whenever 1) a Pope 2) defines 3) a point of Faith or morals 4) so as to bind the whole Church. But thinking too humanly since then, too many Catholics, instead of relating this Extraordinary Magisterium to God and to the unchanging truth of the Church's Ordinary Magisterium, have tended to lend to the human person of the Pope an infallibility coming from, and belonging to, God alone. This humanising process generated a creeping infallibility which almost inevitably resulted in the preposterous claim of Paul VI to be able to remould the Church's Tradition in the name of a "Solemn Ordinary Magisterium." The great majority of Catholics allowed him to get away with it, and to this day a mass of them are becoming day by day liberals as they follow the Conciliar Popes, while a small minority of Catholics are driven to denying that those responsible for the Conciliar nonsense can be Popes at all.

In brief, I personally have respect for many sedevacantists, insofar as they believe in the Church and are desperate for a solution to an infinitely serious problem of the Church., but in my opinion they need to look higher and deeper – the infinite height and depth of God himself.

Kyrie eleison.