

“Holy Priests”?

March 4, 2017

By a great grace of God, one reader of these “Comments,” immersed by family and work in today’s world, has nevertheless kept a true sense of what is going on around him – the great drama unfolding every day of the salvation or damnation of the souls which he meets. It is not a comfortable sense. He might wish that he could not see what he sees, but by another great grace of God, he does not want to go back to sleep. He knows what the Society of St Pius X used to represent, and he used to profit greatly by it. Now from a simple layman’s point of view, with no pretention of getting into the higher arguments, he observes that the Society is not what it was, but has joined the sleeping brigade, and he wonders what he is going to do. His words are not to be found on the Internet, but they must be in many a sad Catholic’s heart. Here they are, in italics:–

*I have mentioned this before but I keep seeing it at work. Souls are **starving** and they are withering away under the weight of sin and the pressures of this anti-culture engulfing all of us. Almost all of the former Catholics I have talked to have either been disgusted with all the abuse taking place in the Church (I imagine though that many use this as a big rationalization for their own sins), or they have seen in the priests nothing but selfish men who have not died to self and put on Christ. Their view of the Church is clouded by so much unfaithfulness and so much sin.*

No doubt the abuses in the Church serve as an excuse for Catholics to give up the Faith, but what a responsibility of priests who, even without causing grave public scandal, nevertheless by their example cease to inspire and uplift! Priests of the Society – you used to inspire and uplift – where are you now?

*Honestly, I would dare say that The Angelus Press (magazine of the SSPX in the USA) no longer has a cutting edge. We need to be jarred from our complacency (I know I certainly do with my fallen human nature!). We need to be jarred from our intellectual sloth. It is all very well to write beautifully about spiritual and doctrinal issues, indeed I do not think anyone can accuse AP of promoting heresy but . . . and here is the kicker . . . **if none of these ideas are woven into the fabric of daily life or address any of the problems of modernity, then the Church becomes just one "sweet thing" to soothe us from the realities of real life.***

Here is the problem. Real priests deal in "the realities of real life." "Lord, give us holy priests," prays the SSPX. Alas, is not "holy priests" liable to mean soothing priests? And should priests be soothing souls so as to make them comfortable in this life, or should they not rather be making them uncomfortable in this "valley of tears," so that all their desires go towards life eternal?

I am becoming more and more indifferent to what the SSPX does because we layfolk have no influence on what they do. So if they want to rush headlong into oblivion and obscurity and irrelevance, which is what I think will happen, then let them go ahead. The unique glory of the SSPX used to be that it was the only organized resistance against Conciliar shenanigans out of a principled rejection not of authority but of anything that was destroying the Faith. Alas, the SSPX is using the same principle of authority – good in itself – to co-opt any opposition to error, whereas authority is meant to be at the service of the truth. So quite honestly, I have no idea what I am going to do, practically speaking. We still attend the SSPX but (at least for myself) the fervor I had with the SSPX has almost been extinguished. Patience. Amidst all of this, Christ is the one who will give victory.

Is the Newsociety indeed not on its way to making itself as irrelevant for life eternal as the Newchurch?

Kyrie eleison.