

Just Claims

May 30, 2009

On the assumption that the Second Vatican Council established within the Catholic Church a serious split between Catholic Truth and Catholic Authority, “Eleison Comments” three weeks ago (“Flat Contradiction”) divided today’s Catholics between those who cling to Truth and have problems with Catholic Authority, and those who cling to Catholic Authority and have problems with Catholic Truth or doctrine, for instance on religious liberty.

Setting up such a parallel between “Conciliarists” following Vatican II and “Traditionalists” following the age-old doctrine and liturgy, may well shock numbers of both, for the reasons evoked above, but let us appeal to the realities in the Church around us. Do we not observe that as Traditionalists who wholly reject present Church authorities risk losing their Catholic sense, so too Conciliarists who wholly scorn present Traditionalists (as do most German bishops) risk ceasing to be Catholics for lack of any sense of doctrinal truth?

However, the parallel only goes so far. For while outright “sedevacantism” and outright Neo-modernism are in this logical respect comparable, they are by no means equivalent, because Truth is higher than Authority, which only exists to serve Truth. If all Authority disappeared, Truth would still be there (“My words will not pass away,” says Our Lord – Mk.XXV, 35). But if all Truth were smothered in lies, as is happening today, we would see, as we are seeing, all Authority discredited with it, and being replaced by brute force. Truth and its ensuing Justice are the life-blood of Authority. Authority is merely the servant and protector of Truth and Justice.

This is why Traditionalists clinging to Truth are, as such,

repeat, as such, better Catholics than Conciliarists clinging to Authority – judge by the fruits! And while Truth, by its nature of corresponding to the object and not to the subject, cannot bend to Authority, on the contrary the Church authorities, Popes and Cardinals and Bishops, must one day bend back to the Truth, and the sooner the better. Nor is saying so remotely an arrogant claim on the part of Traditionalists, as Cardinal Ratzinger once opined, because Traditionalists never invented Tradition, Tradition was a given, from being merely faithful to which they got their name. Archbishop Lefebvre had engraved on his tombstone St. Paul's "Tradidi quod et accepi" (I Cor.XI, 23), because he was the very first to maintain that he had done no more than hand on what had been handed down to him.

This fundamental primacy of Truth over Authority applies inside and outside the Catholic Church, inside and outside any part of the Church. But modern souls have lost almost all grip on Truth. Here is the drama.

Kyrie eleison.