

Lefebvre's Wisdom – I

August 21, 2021

And what do these “Comments” have to say about Pope Francis’ latest smashing scandal, namely his Motu Proprio “*Traditionis Custodes*” in which he does all he can to extinguish the age-old Traditional rite of Mass in Latin, and to make sure that it will disappear for ever from celebrations of Mass? First and foremost these “Comments” would give glory to God for having given us as model, to guide us through this end of world crisis of the Church, Archbishop Lefebvre. He ended his days supposedly “excommunicated” by the mainstream churchmen. Nor has he been faithfully followed by the leading churchmen of the Society of St Pius X, which he himself formed. But the historic record of what he did and said is there, and its wisdom for the Church’s future becomes more clear with each day that passes.

That record tells us exactly how he would have reacted to *Traditionis Custodes*. On the one hand he would have once more wholly rejected the false doctrine of Vatican II, which is behind the Novus Ordo Mass and which to this day strives to abolish all trace of the old Tridentine rite of Mass which has proved since 1969 to be the indestructible competitor of Pope Paul’s New Mass, risking to live on long after the New Mass is in the dustbins of history. On the other hand even with the agonising problem for Catholics set by Popes fighting against Catholic Tradition more bitterly than ever, like Francis in this Motu Proprio, it seems highly unlikely that the Archbishop would have declared that Pope Francis was not Pope. Rather, for the sake of the Church’s structure he would have insisted on respect and courtesy towards all the apparent Popes of Vatican II, leaving to the official Church alone in a more tranquil future time to decide what status to attribute to these Vicars of Christ who had so little understanding of Catholic Tradition.

This balance of the Archbishop between condemning the Conciliar Popes' doctrine but respecting their office has come to be known as "Recognise and Resist" – recognise their office, resist their doctrine. But as a policy for Catholics to follow, it comes into heavy criticism from both sides. Liberals will say, if you rightly recognise the office, then you have no right to resist its commands. Anti-liberal "sedevacantists" will turn that position around, saying, if you rightly resist the office's false commands, then you cannot still be recognising the office issuing those commands, i.e. you cannot both recognise and resist, it must be one or the other. No, said the Archbishop, I reject the teacher's teaching but not necessarily his office. Catholic Popes hating Tradition are a mystery for a future age of the Church to solve, if it will and can. And in this position the Archbishop has been followed ever since by many Catholics, not because of his official authority of which he had little to none, but because, confronted by the same problems in the Church, they had by themselves come to the same conclusions as he had, and therefore followed him, thus making him the trail-blazer of balance and sanity in the Church's on-going crisis.

And so what was it that enabled the Archbishop to keep his balance and serenity when in the wake of the Council so many believing Catholics either lost their faith or despaired of the Church? Undoubtedly it was his unshakable faith in a God and a Truth both far above all human changes or influences or politics or whatever, a God and a Truth enshrined in Catholic Tradition for the benefit of humans, but not in any intrinsic way subject to humans or dependent on humans. Here are the heights on which he lived in spirit and from which he descended into daily life, neither admitting undue change in the things of God, nor demanding too much perfection in the things of men. Liberals are mad to be wanting to adapt God's one true Church to our age of godlessness, while Catholics are mistaken if they doubt God's Providence in His management of His Church.

So Pope Francis is mad, but Jesus Christ is with His Church until world's end. He said so Himself – Mt. XXVIII, 20.

Kyrie eleison.