

Modernism's Malice – III

March 21, 2020

If there is any one thing that a Catholic priest needs to know and to understand thoroughly today, it is the one key sentence at the heart of St Pius X's great Encyclical letter, *Pascendi*, written in 1907 to defend the Church and mankind from the deadly threat of modernism. Modernism is that movement of thought and action by which men give up changing the world to fit Christ and His Church, and work instead on changing Christ and His Church to fit the modern world. And what is the key sentence from *Pascendi* by which this is to be done? Here it is, from paragraph 6 (or thereabouts) of the Encyclical:

“Human reason is confined entirely within the field of *phenomena*, i.e. things perceptible to the senses and in the manner in which they are perceptible; it has no right and no power to go beyond these limits.”

In other words the human mind, which in fact is all day long reading behind what appears to the senses, is finally declared by modern man to be incapable of reading behind the appearances! In other words what looks to me like a door might be a wall, what looks to me like a wall might in fact be the door. From which it would follow that I might better try to walk through the wall than through the door! Of course this is such utter stupidity that nobody will be surprised to know that even modern followers of Immanuel Kant (1732–1804) who invented the stupidity, rarely actually try to walk through walls. In other words they succeed in living by not taking their own philosophy seriously. Here is why modern philosophy has gotten for itself such a bad name. Yet the utterly stupid Kant reigns supreme in the philosophy department of almost all “universities” of our own time! How can that possibly be?

Because Kant is the great Liberator. It is he who once and for all liberated the mind from reality. It is he who decreed that

the mind is free from external reality because it has no access to it! The mind cannot get to reality as it is in itself, the "Ding an sich," because it cannot get behind what the senses show to it. No matter if I can only live by assuming 24/7 both that my senses are telling me what is real around me, and that my mind or intellect is capable of deciphering or of "intelliging" what my senses tell me. From Kant onwards, reality around me is of less and less interest. What matters is "transcendental philosophy" as he calls it, i.e. thinking which will climb the heights and plumb the depths of my fantasy quite independently of humdrum day-to-day reality such as doors and walls. My mind has taken off! My mind is free from reality! Henceforth anything I want is "true"! In fact the word "Truth" has taken on a quite different meaning. In fact all words take on a transcendental meaning. Liberty reigns in my head!

Yet if you insist on pulling me back to what you call the real world, then I can still choose to assume, like all poor non-universitarians, that to continue to survive ("ugh!") in the humdrum world ("ugh!"), it is best not to try to walk through what look like walls, and best not to try eating stones. In other words my mind is transcendently superior to, and free from, all your base "common sense" ("ugh!"), but I can still operate in accordance with it – when I choose to – for purposes of daily living ("ugh!").

Now liberty is the real religion of modern man, and it is the apparent religion, that which has all the trappings but none of the substance of religion, in the lives of far too many Catholics. As St Paul says, "In the end times . . . men will be . . . holding the form of religion but denying the power of it" (II Tim. III, 1–5), in other words keeping the appearances but denying the substance. What are such Catholics? They are precisely Kantian Catholics, or modernists, because almost everybody today is Kantian, because almost everybody today worships liberty, and it is Kant who finally gave them the key

to get out of the prison of God's reality and to escape into clouds of transcendental modernity. I can always submit to God again for as long as I choose, but He can no longer keep me in bonds. I am free, I am free, I am free!

The incredible perversity, pride and perfidy of Kant should be coming into view. More than ever,

Lord, have mercy.