

Modernism's Malice – V

June 13, 2020

There is at least one more important consideration to be presented before we leave modernism alone (at least for the time being), and it is a prophecy of Fr Frederick Faber (1814–1863), concerning our own times, which has surely appeared already more than once in these “Comments.” He said words to the effect that the end of the world will be characterised by men doing evil while they think they are doing good.

It stands to reason. Even at world's end men will still have their God-given nature, which as such is good, underlying their original and personal sins, however heavy these are in the last times – II Tim. III, 1–5. By this underlying nature which underlies even their inborn original sin, men have an underlying natural inclination to good. Yet the mass of men under the Antichrist and his predecessors will have gone along with his evil, actual or anticipated. How will this good and this evil have been compatible inside them?

The human will can want nothing that the human mind has not first presented to it. In front of every human desire must go a human thought. The desire of a non-object can only be a non-desire. Therefore the will depends on the mind to have grasped its object for it, and between every will and the object it wants must have come the mind, always assuming that the mind grasps its own object. But now comes Kant who says that the mind cannot grasp its own real object, it can only grasp what it itself fabricates. This means that the will and its real object are no longer properly connected. This means that a good will can will things in reality bad and a bad will can will something in reality good, but given men's original sin the latter case will be less frequent. And so when Kant unhooks the mind from objective reality, he is making it that much easier for the will to want something bad while it

appeared to be good. Thus in today's whole world of minds unhooked from objective reality, it is that much easier for men still to be of good will even when they are wanting what is in reality not good, because the mind has been radically crippled.

Here is what Fr Faber is prophesying. He is saying that by the end of the world, the problem need not be so much bad hearts or ill-will as good hearts with crippled minds, in other words good hearts with bad principles. What does this mean in practice? It means that today there will be a large number of Catholics who can have the Faith and who mean well, but whose minds are malfunctioning because they follow, consciously but more often unconsciously, the teaching of Kant, so that their good will is correspondingly adrift. Then they can no longer see how the Newchurch is a gangrene upon the true Catholic Church, or how the Archbishop's Society of St Pius X is being gangrened by his successors. But in many cases the blindness of such souls is not necessarily out of malice or a lack of good will.

It follows that in dealing with such souls in which the subjective has been split from the objective by a whole world crippled by Kant, a Catholic can easily make one of two opposed but connected errors. Either he can say that such souls are so innocent of heart that they cannot be mistaken in mind, so the Newchurch cannot be all that mistaken, and so he should rejoin it, Pachamama and all – thus behave today the Newsociety's leaders and all those following them. Or he can say that the errors in the mind of the Newchurch and the Newsociety wishing to rejoin it are so grave that they cannot possibly be the true Church or the true Society, and both must be absolutely shunned – thus argue and behave those known as sedevacantists and those who may refuse the label of sedevacantism but take sedevacantist positions.

On the contrary, if I recognise how Kant began the split of subject from object, I will say neither that such souls are of

good will and therefore their doctrine is good, nor that their doctrine is so false that they must be of bad will. Instead I will say that subjectively they may be of good will, but in any case they are objectively of such bad doctrine that for my eternal salvation I cannot follow them or keep them company. And with the Holy Rosary I will beg Our Lady to keep my heart and mind balanced in truth.

Kyrie eleison.