

Momentous Decision

October 27, 2012

So the exclusion from the Society of St Pius X of one of the four bishops consecrated for its service by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988 is now official. It is a momentous decision on the part of the SSPX leaders, not for any personal reasons, but because of the removal of what many people took to be the single biggest obstacle within the SSPX to any false reconciliation between Catholic Tradition and Conciliar Rome. Now that he is gone, the SSPX may the more easily continue its slide into comfortable liberalism.

If the problem was merely his person, there might be no serious consequences. He is 72 years old (and "more or less gaga") with not too many active years left ahead of him. He could be safely ignored, or further discredited if need be, and left to rant and rave in his isolated retirement. But if indeed his exclusion does mean the repudiation of that opposition to Rome which he represented, then the SSPX is in trouble, and far from resolving its interior tensions by having made an example of him, it is liable now to be racked with silent dissension or open contradiction.

This is because Archbishop Lefebvre founded the SSPX to resist the Council's destruction of the Catholic Faith by its 16 documents, and of the practice of that Faith by the New Mass above all. Resisting the Council was built into the very nature of the Society. Now to undo a thing's nature is to undo the thing. It would follow that with this exclusion the SSPX of Archbishop Lefebvre is well on its way to being undone, and it will be replaced by something quite different. Actually that transformation has been observable for many years. The exclusion is merely one final blow.

Not that the Archbishop was primarily, or only, against the Council. Primarily he was Catholic, a Catholic bishop, a true

pastor of souls, as is clear from his writings prior to the Council. But once that unspeakable disaster for the Church had taken place, he soon saw that the most urgent task in defence of the Faith was to resist the Vatican II Revolution which was taking over millions and millions of Catholic hearts and minds. Hence his founding in 1970 of the SSPX which would use exclusively the Tridentine rite of Mass. Hence his famous Declaration of November, 1974, which was like a charter of the Catholic principles inspiring the SSPX's resistance. Only the conversion and reversion of the Church authorities to the true Faith can justify the abandoning of those principles. And has such a conversion or reversion taken place? By no means. On the contrary.

And the future? To fill the vacuum left by abandoning the purposes of the Archbishop, probably the mainstream SSPX now hastens into the arms of Rome, especially if Benedict XVI's conscience is driving him to end the "schism" before he dies. The bishop's exclusion may or may not have been a pre-condition set by Rome for a Rome-SSPX agreement, but in any case it certainly favours one. SSPX priests who see clear might lie low for the moment and wait for a flock of chickens to begin to come home to roost. SSPX laity might attend SSPX Masses for the time being, but they should watch out for the moment when the transformation mentioned above begins to threaten their faith. As for the excluded bishop, any donations to him or his cause will have to wait a little until the necessary arrangements can be set up. But be sure of one thing: he is not thinking of retiring.

Hang tight, everybody. We are in for one "helluva" ride. Let's just make that a ride to Heaven!

Kyrie eleison.