

New Year

December 31, 2011

And so another year closes out without the sky having fallen in. I have for decades been saying that it is falling in, for instance to a little group of people in France some five or seven years ago. Amongst them was an SSPX priest who had been a seminarian in Econe when I was a professor there in the late '70's and early '80's. "Your Excellency," he said, "Weren't you saying that 25 years ago?" But he said it with a smile, so he may have thought that one day I could be right.

Then will 2012 be the year when the sky falls in? Plenty of worldly commentators think that it could well be the year in which the world economy implodes. Certainly debt cannot keep on piling up the way it has been piling up for decades. For instance welfare entitlements are an unbearable burden on the budget of many a Western democracy, but almost by definition a democratic politician is incapable of taking the severe decisions necessary to restore fiscal sanity, because if he wants to be re-elected he cannot touch them. It has been well said that a democracy can last for only as long as the people do not realize that the cash till belongs to them.

Then is 2012 the year in which the Western democracies finally crash? Maybe. But maybe not. Many people today have a sense of some disaster looming. Surely it cannot take yet another 30 years to arrive, one says. But one has been saying that now for many years. Perhaps people are so drunk on liberalism that ever increasing doses of chaos leave them unconcerned. Nevertheless while the wheels of God grind slowly, says the proverb, they do grind exceedingly small. In other words all of God's bills have to be paid, and the day of reckoning will come, and on accounts far more serious than those of mere welfare entitlements.

This year, next year, some time, never? Certainly not never.

It will come in God's good time. The year is relatively unimportant. As Hamlet says (Act V, 2), "There is a providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all." There is a Providence. There is a God, and his timing is the best of all. "Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit," says the German proverb.

Nor does God require of easily most of us to undertake action to attempt to hold back Church and world on their present course to destruction. I am willing to bet that many of the world's public leaders feel in private helpless to do anything, and I wonder if even the world's secret controllers, hell-bent on world domination, feel at all times confident that they have their game in hand. "Only I can help you now," the Mother of God has said.

What God does require of us is to live in his grace and to trust him. When the crash comes, in 2012 or whenever, from a human point of view it will no doubt be rather unpleasant, but from God's point of view his chastisements are acts of mercy. St. Paul quotes Proverbs (III, 11-12): "My son, reject not the correction of the Lord, and do not faint when thou art chastised by him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth." And St Paul goes on (Heb.XII, 7-8): "Persevere under discipline. God dealeth with you as with his sons. For what son is there whom the father doth not correct? But if you be without chastisement, whereof all are made partakers, then are you bastards and not sons."

The Catholic readiness is all, as of the wise virgins (Mt.XXV, 13). Happy New Year.

Kyrie eleison.