

Papal Error – I

January 30, 2010

Speaking two weeks ago on relations between the Rome of Vatican II and the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX), Pope Benedict XVI showed once more how subtle and powerful the Conciliar error is. He was addressing on Jan.15 a plenary session of the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly known as the Holy Office). The three first paragraphs of his twelve-paragraph address need to be quoted in full, but a summary, as faithful as possible, will have to do.

1. Your Congregation shares in the special ministry of the Pope to ensure Church unity by safeguarding Catholic doctrine. That unity depends on unity in the Faith of which the Pope is the foremost defender. To confirm the brethren in the Faith and keep them united is his prime task. 2 Your teaching authority, like the Pope's, involves obedience to the Faith, so that there may be one flock under the one Shepherd. 3. At all times the Church must get all Christians to witness together to the Faith, "In this spirit I place a particular trust in your commitment to overcoming any remaining doctrinal problems in the way of the SSPX achieving full communion with the Church."

The problem here is much more than just whether or not the SSPX is in "full communion with the Church." The problem is the whole relationship between unity and the Faith. In reality, Catholic unity is essentially dependent on the Catholic Faith. A Catholic being defined firstly by what he believes, then wherever there is no Catholic Faith there can be no Catholics to unite, and wherever there is that Faith there is the essential basis of Catholic unity. Now the Pope does say (1) that "Unity is in fact primarily unity in the Faith," but generally (1,2,3) he connects unity and Faith as though they are on an equal footing, almost as though they are interdependent, whereas true unity is entirely dependent on

the true Faith. How else could he arrive at his conclusion of (3), quoted above in full, where he gives the impression of instructing his Congregation to overcome doctrinal problems for the sake of Rome-SSPX unity?

Yet the duty of Christ's Vicar is not to unite Rome and the SSPX at any cost, so to speak, but to unite them in the Catholic Faith as given us by Christ. So if there is a doctrinal difference between Rome and the SSPX (and there is, and it is huge!), then his prime problem is which of the two has the Catholic Faith, and which has not. And then he must unite the whole Church around whichever of them has that Faith, even if that happens to be the poor li'l SSPX! "Li'l," or little, because it is insignificant except by its Faith!

Alas, Benedict XVI is more Conciliar than he is Catholic. But the Council, putting man before God, constantly undermined the Revealed doctrine of God, or the Faith, in the name of the ecumenical unity of men. That is why Benedict XVI is incapable of grasping, short of a miracle, the significance of the SSPX's doctrinal stand. Yet how many Catholics are not liable to be deceived by the smoothness of his transition from much Truth (in 1,2) to its undoing (in 3)? Few! The error is as powerful as it is subtly conceived and expressed! We must pray for the miracle.

Kyrie eleison.