

Refined Hypocrisy

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Let us assume then, with Fr Gleize's first article here six weeks ago (EC 511), that it is not certain that a Pope cannot fall into heresy. To save souls from Luther down to today, God may have given to the authorities of His Church of the decadent Fifth Age special graces to resist that decadence, but that Age came virtually to an end with Vatican II. Conciliar Popes have been the death of the Church. But are they formal heretics? The interest of Fr Gleize's second article is its highlighting of just how these Popes have managed to kill the Church by subverting Catholic doctrine while seeming to remain Catholic. What is their technique? Fr Gleize examines the case of the five "dubia" or doubtful points raised by the four Cardinals against the text of Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia* (AL): do these points make him a conscious and wilful denier of defined Church doctrine? Seemingly, no, says Fr Gleize, but in effect, yes.

Seemingly, no, because on each of the five points Pope Francis does not directly deny Church doctrine, rather he leaves it ambiguous, or leaves it out. The first of the five points is an example of ambiguity: the Pope does not say, "Divorcees may receive Communion," but, "In certain cases divorcees may receive Communion." Here the "in certain cases" is open to a broad or narrow interpretation. It is ambiguous, and that ambiguity is apt to undermine Church Law, because there are many divorcees and all too many priests and prelates who will be happy to take the broad interpretation.

In all four remaining points the Pope undermines Catholic doctrine not by denial, but by omission. For instance (fourth point), he does not say, "There is no such thing as an objectively sinful act," because the Church has always named a series of objectively sinful acts, starting with God's Ten Commandments. Rather the Pope says, "Objective sinfulness does

not necessarily mean subjective guilt." Now of course the Church has never denied that there can be circumstances for this or that act which take away its guilt, but to put the subjective excuse in the foreground is to put the objective sin in the background. Sinners will love it! Yet the Catholic Church has always ranked the objective nature and moral rightness or wrongness of acts above the subjective blameworthiness of this or that person performing the act. "The exception proves the rule," says one proverb, and another, "Hard cases make bad law." On the contrary the subjectivism of Pope Francis undermines Church law (and common sense) with hard cases, even while he avoids directly contradicting Church law. Fr Gleize concludes that the four Cardinals' five doubts are fully justified.

However, the Pope is covering his tracks by not making dogmatic or anti-dogmatic statements. He himself writes in *AL* that its purpose is to "collect in-put from the two Synods on the family, together with further considerations capable of guiding thought or dialogue or pastoral practice." This is professedly not a dogmatic purpose. Therefore it is difficult to pin on Pope Francis the ticket of "formal heretic." But just as Vatican II professed to be merely a "pastoral," i.e. non-doctrinal, Council, and yet it blew Catholic doctrine and the Church sky-high, so Pope Francis is in *AF* not professing that he is teaching doctrine, and yet he is blowing Catholic morals and the family sky-high. It is the classic Communist or Neo-modernist means of subversion, using practicalities to undermine truth, not in principle but in practice. Compare Rome to Bishop Fellay: "Get practical recognition first, we'll talk about doctrine afterwards." Compare Bishop Fellay to the SSPX: "We are not changing doctrine," while he himself is hardly breathing a word of criticism any more of Pope Francis' destruction of the Church. Would Archbishop Lefebvre have kept silent? To ask the question is to answer it.

Fr Gleize concludes that Pope Francis may not be a "formal

heretic," but he is certainly "favouring heresy." "Formal heretic" should be the worse of the two tickets, but not at this wrong end of the Church's Fifth Age, when the hypocrisy of the Church's enemies is more refined than ever. Heaven help us more than ever! Pray the Fifteen Mystery Rosary every day!

Kyrie eleison.