

Sliding Still – I

November 2, 2019

There have been signs to give one hope that the official Society of St Pius X is no longer sliding under the power and control of the Conciliar churchmen in Rome, but such signs are overwhelmed by the evidence to the contrary. For instance, on September 12 the new Superior General (SG) who was voted to take over from Bishop Fellay in July of last year, Fr Davide Pagliarani, made public an interview in which he said many good things, enough to make at least one reader of these “Comments” rejoice that the Society’s slide was being thrown into reverse. Alas, a recent report from Society HQ in Switzerland gives us to fear that Fr Pagliarani is being directed to say such conservative things in order to fool all Traditionalists who are not watching his actions. Here is the background and the report –

Catholic Tradition has houses in France of three outstanding Orders of monks and friars from the Church’s past: the Benedictines in Bellaigue, the Dominicans in Avrillé, the Franciscans in Morgon. All three were encouraged and helped to start in their day by Archbishop Lefebvre, but never did he claim authority over any of them, in fact he positively refused to do so, because he did not see the Society as having any mission to monopolise Tradition or to control all Traditional initiatives. Since their founding, all three independent houses have, relatively speaking, flourished, and in 2019, as is normal for monks and friars, all three exert a special influence over Traditionalists, all over the world one might say.

However, with the Society’s major change of direction which became public in 2012, relations of these houses with the Society have become problematic, because its leaders have naturally wanted these influential religious to change direction also. Several years ago the SSPX broke off relations

with the Dominicans of Avrillé who were considered to be too independent, while the Franciscans have needed over the same period of time to adopt a policy carefully balanced between co-operation and independence. And as for the Benedictines, their young Superior from Brazil, Dom Placide, came last August under particular pressure from the Society.

Summoned to Menzingen by Fr Pagliarani, he was rebuked for his lack of co-operation with the Society, and a piece of paper was put before him by which he was to sign over to the Society all control over the Benedictine Monastery! When – to put it politely – he declined the offer, he was threatened that the whole world would be told that the SSPX was cutting off all relations with the Monastery. Dom Placide replied that it was up to the SG to do what he thought best, whereupon the threat changed. Now the threat was that all priories of the Society would be ordered to send no more vocations to Bellaigue. And this threat has been carried out. Dom Placide declined the offer to stay for lunch in Menzingen.

We are entitled to speculate upon such a conversation. If we wish to keep up our hopes for Fr Pagliarani personally, we might speculate that he himself was directed to use such bully tactics upon the relatively young head of the Benedictines. But he cannot avoid the responsibility for at least consenting to act the part of the bully. More seriously, the bully tactics suggest that Rome and Menzingen are plotting jointly to sweep together under the Society all presently independent Traditional groupings, and then to restructure the Society and replace it by a Personal Prelature under Conciliar Rome's complete control. This would have two advantages for Rome's war on Tradition: firstly the independence and last traces of Archbishop Lefebvre in the structure of the Society which he designed would disappear, and secondly Rome could then gently strangle, together with the Society, all Traditional groupings and initiatives in one fell swoop. Nor would the Society's present leaders disapprove of the fell swoop, on the contrary,

because as they gently dropped dead of the strangling they would at least have the official recognition for which they have striven for so long.

So much for the misleaders of the Society. But what about its followers, priests and laity?

Kyrie eleison.