

“Rebellious, Divisive”

September 15, 2012

The seventh chapter of the Gospel of St John has a special lesson for today: who are the real rebels against authority, and who are the merely apparent rebels? Who appears to be dividing the people of God, and who is really dividing them? Things are not always what they appear. It is necessary always to “Judge not according to the appearances, but judge just judgment” (Jn. VII, 24).

John VII is close to the end of Our Lord’s life on earth. The Jews are seeking to kill Jesus (verse 1), but Our Lord nevertheless goes up to Jerusalem and teaches in the Temple (14). The crowd is already divided (12), and so the effect of his teaching is that some people (40) recognize in him the prophet (cf. Deut.XVIII, 15–19), while others (41, 42) refuse him that recognition because he is from Galilee. So there is division and dissension. Now division as such is blameworthy, so who is to blame? Certainly not Our Lord, who is merely preaching the doctrine of his Father in Heaven (16–17). Nor can that part of the crowd be blamed which accepted the divine teaching. Clearly the blame for the dissension lies with the Temple authorities and that part of the crowd that was refusing the Truth.

Similarly in the 1970’s and 1980’s Archbishop Lefebvre divided Catholics by teaching and practising the truth of Catholic Tradition, but what Catholic that now boasts of being Traditional blames him for that division? Clearly the blame for the division of the Church lay neither with the Archbishop nor with those who followed him, but mainly with those Church authorities who were twisting the true religion, like the Temple authorities in Our Lord’s own day. Again and again the Archbishop pleaded with them to “judge just judgment” by confronting the central problem created by their Conciliar adultery with the modern world. To this day they refuse that

confrontation. Again and again their only answer has been, "Obedience!," "Unity!." Does not their lack of arguments as to the basic questions of truth suggest it is they who are the true rebels and dividers of the Church?

Yet dissension as such is not a good thing, and both Our Lord and Archbishop Lefebvre knew ahead that dissension would follow on their teaching. Why then did they still go ahead? Because souls can be saved with dissension (cf. Lk.XII, 51-53), but they cannot be saved without Truth. If the religious authorities are misleading the people – and the Devil works especially hard on them because of their power to lead many other souls astray – then the Truth must be told to bring people back on the path to Heaven, even if dissension will be the result. In this respect Truth is above authority or unity.

And where is that truth in 2012? Vatican II was a disaster for the Church – true or false? The Church authorities who brought about Assisi III and John-Paul II's "beatification" are clinging to Vatican II – true or false? And so if the Society of Pius X puts itself under those same authorities, they will use all their prestige, and the power over the SSPX that it will have given them, to dissolve its resistance to Vatican II – true or false? So the SSPX runs a grave risk of losing steadily whatever will it still has to resist that prestige and power – true or false? As Romans say, "Rome can wait"!

Then in the SSPX today, if one "judges not according to the appearance but just judgment," who is it that is being truly "divisive"? Who are the real "rebels against authority"? Those who criticize such a risk of blending Catholic Truth with Conciliar error, or those who are promoting it?

Kyrie eleison.