

Yellow Light

January 5, 2013

Not all of you readers of “Eleison Comments” may have come across the admirable letter of two months ago written by Fr. Ronald Ringrose to the US District Superior of the Society of St Pius X, Fr. Arnauld Rostand. Fr Ringrose has been for over 30 years the independent pastor of the Traditional parish of St Athanasius just outside Washington, D.C., and for all that time he has been the faithful friend, without being a member, of the SSPX. However in June of last year he hosted in his parish the first meeting in the USA of the nucleus of priests now forming a Resistance to that change of direction of the Society, long latent, but which became clear to all in the spring of last year. As Bishop Fellay’s faithful executive in the USA, Fr. Rostand wrote to him to propose a meeting where he might persuade Fr Ringrose that the change was no change. Here is Fr. Ringrose’s reply:—

“Thank you for your letter of October 12 in which you offer to meet to discuss the situation within the Society of St Pius X. While this is a very kind offer on your part and I appreciate it very much, I don’t think that such a meeting will serve any useful purpose, since the problems stem from the Society’s top leadership, and you are not in a position to change that.

It is true that I have been a strong supporter of the Society for many years. This support was based on the fact that my mission as a priest, and the Society’s mission were one and the same, to help souls hold onto the Catholic faith during this time when it seems to have been abandoned by post Vatican II Rome.

Now I have to be more cautious and reserved in that support. I am alarmed that the Superior General would say that 95% of Vatican II is acceptable. I am astounded that the Society’s leadership would respond to three of the Society’s bishops by

suggesting that they are making the errors of Vatican II into a “super-heresy.” I am disappointed that the Society’s response to Assisi III was so weak and anemic. I am saddened by the Society’s unjust disciplining of priests who are following the example of Archbishop Lefebvre, and I am outraged at the treatment of Bishop Williamson – not just his recent expulsion, but the shabby treatment he has gotten over the past few years.

Prior to this year, when asked about the Society by an inquiring parishioner, I always gave the Society a green light. Given the Society’s recent actions, I do not yet give the Society a red light, but I do give it a yellow light of caution. The red light will come if and when the Society allows herself to be absorbed into the Conciliar Church that Archbishop Lefebvre so vigorously resisted.

It is with great sadness that I write these words. There are many good, zealous, faithful priests within the Society’s ranks. Many of them I know personally and admire. Many souls depend on them. It is out of love for the Society that I fear for her future. I fear that she is on a suicidal path. The leadership may think that a deal is off the table, but I fear that that is not the thinking of Rome.

I pray for the Society to return to the mission given to her by Archbishop Lefebvre without compromise or hedging. When she does, she will have my unreserved support.”

And Fr Ringrose’s letter concludes with fraternal greetings. It is truly a model of clear-mindedness and courtesy, firmness and charity. Long live Fr Ringrose to maintain an incomparable bastion of Catholicism right next to the United States’ capital city!

Kyrie eleison.