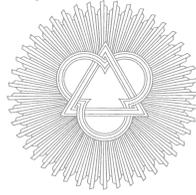

Most Holy Trinity Seminary Newsletter



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My dear Catholic people,

Someone said to me recently, “Do you ever get tired of writing about Bergoglio?” The answer is, of course, “yes.” The problem is, however, that Bergoglio does not cease to produce outrageous statements which cannot be passed over in silence. It is also true that Bergoglio represents a new stage in the development of Modernism since Vatican II. This new development ought to be covered by commentary as much as possible.

Bergoglio said, shortly after being elected, that Vatican II had not yet been fully implemented. He added that only he had the humility to carry it through.

He was right, not about the humility, but about Vatican II. This council established *radical* principles of change which have never been brought to their logical conclusions by any of the Vatican II “popes.” True, there have been plenty of reforms and plenty of heresies, but none of them brought Vatican II into full bloom.

The fundamental principle of Vatican II, indeed its fundamental *heresy*, is the **primacy of conscience over dogma**. This heresy can be clearly seen (1) in ecumenism, which holds that non-Catholic religions are means of salvation, (2) in the new ecclesiology, which asserts that the Church of Christ is found in non-Catholic religions, and (3) most especially in the Decree on Religious Liberty, where the fundamental heretical doctrine is most explicit. The document states: **“This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.”**

There is absolutely no basis for this false doctrine in Catholic moral teaching. The truth is that individuals must be and are coerced to act against their conscience in many cases. For example, when the sergeant-at-arms in a court-

room grabs the convicted murderer in order to incarcerate him, does he ask the murderer: “Is incarceration in accordance with your conscience?” When the executioner is about to turn on the electric chair, does he ask: “Is capital punishment in accordance with your conscience?”

If we were to ask Moslem terrorists if their killing of innocent people is in accordance with their religious conscience, they would undoubtedly affirm that it is. It is their conscience — erroneous as it is — that dictates that they should commit the heinous crime, which for them is a virtuous act of religion. According to the absurd principle of this council, we should permit Moslem terrorists to do their sanguinary work out of respect for their religion.

Vatican II makes this false and blasphemous right to religious freedom a “dogma” by proclaiming that it is found in divine revelation: **“The council further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.”**

There is a footnote in the council document attached to this last statement. One expects to find in the footnote a passage from Sacred Scripture attesting to the “dignity of the human person” as it is the “foundation of religious liberty.” No such reference is found. Instead we are directed towards John XXIII’s encyclical *Pacem in Terris*.

I can think of quite a few *contrary* examples in Sacred Scripture, in which the religious beliefs and consciences of people were not respected, and where they were constrained to act against their consciences. The most notable is the slaying, *at the command of God*, of 23,000 Israelites who participated in the worship of the golden calf.

The council continues: **“On his part, man perceives and acknowledges the imperatives of the divine law through the mediation of conscience.”**

This statement is absolutely false, and contrary to all Catholic theology concerning conscience. According to Catholic moral theology, conscience is not some sort of faculty which *perceives* moral truth, but is merely a *function* of the human intellect which passes judgement on the morality of an act to be performed. This judgement *applies* moral principles to a concrete act. The conscience is merely the *messenger* of the moral law. The moral principles must be learned from divine revelation and/or right reason. If these right principles are known and are applied correctly, then the conscience — the moral judgement — is said to be a *right* conscience or a correct moral judgement. If, on the other hand, the principles are erroneous, or if right principles are falsely applied, then one is said to have an *erroneous* conscience.

You must follow your conscience. If your conscience is right, it must be followed because it correctly applies the law of God. A *right* conscience generates a true *moral right* to posit the dictated action, because the act is dictated ultimately by the will of God.

If your conscience is erroneous, but you *think* that it is right through no fault of your own, you must still follow it, since the intellect is declaring the morality of the act as it honestly perceives it. However, an erroneous conscience does not create a right to posit the act, since the act is objectively evil, and therefore can in no way be dictated by the will of God. To assert that an objectively evil act is willed by God is a heretical blasphemy.

Outside of the divine will, there is no source of moral right. No one has a right to do anything unless his conscience is in *objective* conformity with the divine will. If the conscience is not informed by divine revelation and/or right reason, there is no objective right or basis to act.

The great moral theologian Merkelbach states these principles clearly: **“Man has an absolute right of following a conscience which is entirely true, and this is the liberty which is the liberty of conscience in the strict sense. With regard to the conscience which is invincibly¹ erroneous, although man in the internal forum can and must follow it, he has no right to it in the true and proper sense...and especially he has no absolute right to follow it in the external act...”**

The theologian explains that because erroneous conscience does not generate a true right, but only a perceived right, the legitimate authority can punish those who can even *prove* that they were acting in good but erroneous conscience. Merkelbach gives the specific example of a Catholic State which has the right to punish heretics and infidels, and

to impede them from exercising their religion in an external way, although in many cases these people are acting according to the dictates of their consciences.

Nowhere can the doctrine of “religious liberty,” which Vatican II professes and declares, be found in Catholic moral doctrine. In fact, Vatican II *contradicts* Catholic moral doctrine, as well as innumerable examples from Sacred Scripture.²

“People versus dogma.” I recently saw in a tweet this three-word description of Bergoglio’s operating system. It is absolutely accurate. If one accepts Vatican II’s fundamental primacy of conscience over dogma, then it is true that dogma becomes an enemy of people.

If Vatican II is correct in saying that even erroneous conscience creates a right to do what is in accordance with it, then dogma must be thrown out. Dogma, by its very nature, is *obligatory* doctrine. By definition, one cannot dissent from dogma. It imposes itself and demands assent. All must conform.

How then do you adhere to both Vatican II and dogma? You cannot. *And this is what Bergoglio has understood, which his Modernist predecessors did not understand.*

Bergoglio constantly pounds away at dogma. He hurls sarcastic and derogatory names at dogma. He belittles and denigrates those who adhere to dogma.

He has also extolled conscience. He has even opened the gates of heaven to atheists, *for the reason that they are following their consciences.* Bergoglio has truly understood Vatican II; he has penetrated its radical principle of primacy of conscience over Catholic dogma, and he is implementing this principle down to the very bottom of its logical conclusions.

Did not his predecessors John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI also understand this principle of conscience over dogma? Yes, they did, but they applied it only partially. They were still holding on to some vestiges of dogma. For example, they taught that abortion is wrong, that contraception is wrong (in theory), that sodomy is wrong. For holding and teaching these things they were extolled as great “conservatives,” even though as avid ecumenists they were laying all the groundwork for a Bergoglio. The soul of ecumenism is the primacy of conscience over dogma.

Shocked and appalled. The world of conservatives is reeling at Bergoglio’s approval, at least in the practical order, of sodomy, fornication, and adultery. He approves of these things because, in accordance with the primacy of

¹ “Invincibly erroneous conscience” means a conscience which is objectively false, but thought to be true and correct, through no fault of the person thinking it. In common conversation, we say that such a person “is acting in good conscience,” although doing something objectively wrong. An example would be to shoot your spouse dead, thinking erroneously but honestly that he was a burglar.

² If anyone wishes to verify the Merkelbach quotations, they can be found in Volume I of his *Summa Theologiæ Moralis*, paragraph 211.

conscience, there is no moral dogma by which to condemn them. All of Bergoglio's argumentation in favor of these horrid sins is based on the "good conscience" of these people, who "mean well" and have "meaningful relationships" based on "love." Natural law has no place in these arguments, since if one argues from nature, one crosses into the world of moral dogma. Natural law applies to all creatures who have the same nature.

According to the principles of Vatican II we should accept the immoral behavior of sodomites, fornicators, and adulterers for the reason that they are following their consciences. The same is true for those who are practicing artificial birth control.

Owing to the fact that these are sexual sins, Novus Ordo conservatives are reacting vigorously to Bergoglio's doctrinal deviations. However distasteful these sins are, and however serious they are, they are much less serious than the sin which Vatican II promulgated in 1965: *the sin of the right to embrace a false religion*. For to embrace a false religion is contrary to the First Commandment of God. Moral theology teaches that sins which concern God directly are much more serious than sins which concern misbehavior towards our neighbor. Consequently the sins of heresy and blasphemy are considered far worse than sins of murder.

Yet because modern human beings, even Catholics, are heavily influenced by naturalism and materialism, sins against the divine majesty are considered unimportant, whereas murder and sexual sins are considered very important.

Catholics of the Middle Ages understood the gravity of sins against the Catholic Faith. It is for this reason that Catholic rulers punished heretics very severely, since they knew that through the denial of the Catholic Faith not only was the majesty of God violated, but also there would be a severe deterioration of morals. Every evil act begins with a false idea.

Abortion, contraception, pornography, sodomy, adultery, divorce, and fornication dominate our corrupt society today because of *false ideas*. It was the false idea of the so-called "right to privacy" in the U.S. Constitution which created the bloodbath of now fifty million slaughtered babies since 1973. If the false ideas are extinguished, then immorality can never become ensconced in any culture. Of course there will always be evildoers, but there is a world of difference between a society which has occasional lawbreakers, and a society which condones and encourages the repudiation of the moral law.

What is shocking and appalling is Vatican II. What is more shocking and appalling is the insensitivity of Catholics to the heresy of Vatican II. If Vatican II, instead of having declared the right to believe and profess heresy, had declared the right to an abortion or to sodomy, perhaps Catholics would have listened more attentively. Catholics, however, became so poisoned with modern liberalism and

subjectivism, that the idea of professing whatever religion you please, even heretical, was welcomed as a normal state of affairs, even a dogma of the Church.

The Synod. It is indeed strange that purportedly Catholic bishops should have a meeting about the family, and call for, in so many words, the approval of sodomy, fornication, divorce and remarriage, speedy annulments, and artificial birth control.

- Concerning habitual fornication, that is, cohabitation of unmarried couples, the Synod said **"such unions can display authentic family values or at least an inherent desire for them."**
- Various Synod members called for **"the need to make annulment cases more accessible and less time-consuming."**
- Concerning adultery the Synod said: **"Those who are divorced and remarried require careful discernment and an accompaniment of great respect, while avoiding any language or behavior which might be construed as discrimination."**
- Concerning sodomy and sodomites the Synod said: **"Homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community. Are we capable of providing for these people, guaranteeing [...] them [...] a place of fellowship in our communities? Oftentimes, they want to encounter a Church which offers them a welcoming home. Are our communities capable of this, accepting and valuing their sexual orientation, without compromising Catholic doctrine on the family and matrimony?"**
- Concerning artificial birth control, the Synod said: **"In this light, we should go back to the message of the Encyclical Humanae Vitae of Paul VI, which underlines the need to respect the dignity of the person in the moral evaluation of the methods of birth control."**

Analysis. The entire document talks around the real issues in a childish manner, and insults the intellect of even a simple person. What we want to know is whether something is a sin or not. To talk about "values" or "gifts" or "dignity" or "respect" is absurd in the face of the burning moral issues. These are heaven or hell issues. The Modernists' intent is obvious and their arguments are silly and clumsy: By talking softly about these filthy and perverted acts which break the commandments of God, people will conclude that these acts are morally acceptable.

- Fornication is opposed to the family. The very reason why fornication is immoral is precisely that it is outside of matrimony, and is destructive of family life. It is absurd, false, and idiotic to claim that cohabitation displays family values. Cohabitation is the *enemy* of family values. If these bishops were Catholics they would condemn cohabitation as mortal sin, and put canonical sanctions upon those who practice it.
- The Vatican annulment practice has been “Catholic divorce” since the 1970’s. Annulments are obtained for spurious and ludicrous reasons. Over 50,000 a year are distributed in the United States alone. To speed up the process is just one more attack upon the family.
- To say that those living in divorce and remarriage, a state contrary to both the sixth and tenth commandments of God, require “discernment” and “respect” is just one more example of stupid “soft talk” about something which is nothing but moral turpitude. What is there to respect in taking your neighbor’s spouse?
- Perhaps the most absurd statement in this document is that “homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community.” Are we to understand by this that homosexuals make great ballet dancers, great flight attendants, and great interior decorators? Well of course they do. They are capable, despite their acts of moral perversion, of talented and intelligent activity just like anyone else. We do not need a synod of bishops of the Roman Catholic Church — purportedly — to tell us these things. Or are we to understand it in this sense, that *as homosexuals*, that is, *inasmuch as they are persons violating the natural law*, they have gifts and qualities to give us? What gifts? The gift of sick and stomach-turning abnormality in sexual acts? The gift of AIDS? We are also called upon to “accept and value their sexual orientation.” How do you value something which is pointed the wrong way? Should we accept and value the orientation of the drunkard who enters on the wrong side of the freeway? Should we accept and value the orientation of those who are inclined toward the eating of human flesh? The point is that we

can never accept and value anything which is intrinsically disordered.

The synod’s bird-brained arguments concerning homosexuals are just more “soft talk” on the part of the Modernists, speaking to us as if we were children. The idea behind this silly disguise is that by accepting Jack and Bob as a legitimate couple in our midst, we will consent to the legitimacy of their sex acts. The Modernists are clever enough, however, to know that the cultural and societal acceptance of these couples implicitly justifies their unnatural activity.

- Finally we are told that we “must respect the dignity of the person in the moral evaluation of the methods of birth control.” This means that if you think that artificial birth control is a good thing, then no one has the right to say “no” to you, including the Catholic Church. It would be against your dignity. The true Catholic Church teaches that the only legitimate way to reduce the number of conceptions is by abstinence.³ There is no need for a “moral evaluation,” as if there were choices.

In summary, this wicked document is a call for the Catholic Church to (1) recognize cohabitation and approve fornication and the bearing of illegitimate children; (2) speed up the already existing “Catholic divorce” process of phony annulments; (3) recognize and approve of adultery in false marriages after divorce, thereby repudiating the indissolubility of the Sacrament of Matrimony⁴; (4) approve of homosexual acts and of same-sex marriages and unions as legitimate; (5) approve of freedom of conscience regarding artificial birth control.

Does the document make these statements in the explicit manner that I have made them here? No, they are in the language of *Modernist gobbledygook*, but the message is no less loud and clear.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Donald J. Sanborn
Rector

³ Even in the case of abstinence, a serious and proportionate reason is required.

⁴ In favor of this, they make the **absolutely and totally absurd** argument that someone who can receive communion spiritually ought to be able to receive it sacramentally.