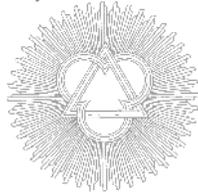

Most Holy Trinity Seminary Newsletter



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My dear Catholic people,

No doubt you have heard of the recent and sudden death of Bishop Daniel Dolan, occurring on April 26th. May he rest in peace.

I first met Bishop Dolan around Christmas of 1972, therefore nearly fifty years ago, in Royal Oak, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. Bishop Dolan was a native of Detroit. I was there at the behest of Fr. Bonfil Bottazzo, a Sylvestrian Benedictine, who was saying the Traditional Latin Mass for a group of people every Sunday in the VFW hall in Royal Oak. He had visited Ecône in the fall of 1972, at which time he invited me to go to Detroit and visit the people there.

One of the persons attending was Daniel Dolan, who had recently emerged from the Cistercians in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. He was searching, like so many other aspirants to the priesthood at the time, for a traditional seminary. Ecône, although not perfect, was infinitely better than any

other choice. He decided to apply, and came to Ecône in January of 1973.

So I knew Bishop Dolan for nearly fifty years. I was never stationed in the same place as he, but nonetheless over the

years we collaborated a great deal in the apostolate. In 1989, I had a rift with him and Fr. Cekada, since they were supporting a nun who was making trouble for the then Father Kelly. I did not think that it was wise for a priest to support a trouble-making nun.

In 1990, however, I resigned from the Society of Saint Pius V for the reason of the ordinations which took place without my knowledge or consent. I was told

that the reason why they did not inform me of the ordinations was that Bishop Mendez wanted to keep the ceremony secret. I believed Fr. Kelly and accepted it.



Christmas 1972

The place is in front of the VFW Hall in Royal Oak, Michigan. At left is seminarian Donald Sanborn, age 22, (now, at 72, unrecognizable as the same human being), in the middle is Fr. Bonfil Bottazzo, a Sylvestrian Benedictine who at the time was saying the traditional Mass in the Detroit area, and at right is Daniel Dolan, age 21, having recently left the Cistercians, and about to go to Ecône.

A few weeks later, at a reception for the newly ordained in Cincinnati, I was told that there were approximately forty people present at the “secret” ordinations, including lay persons. I realized that I had been lied to, and I decided to resign.

In 1991, Fr. Cekada reached out to me to try to reestablish the friendship that existed before 1989. I accepted.

On November 30th, 1993, Bishop Dolan was consecrated a bishop.

In 1995, I invited Bishop Dolan to our chapel in Warren, Michigan in order to do Confirmations. It was in that same year that Bishop Dolan asked me to form a seminary for the training of priests. As a result of this request, I founded Most Holy Trinity Seminary, still functioning to this day.

At the time, Bishop Dolan knew that I adhered to the Thesis of Bishop Guérard des Lauriers.¹ I published an article explaining it in *Sacerdotium*, a theological review for priests which I edited from 1990 to 1995. Bishop Dolan made no objection to the Thesis at the time.

From 1995 to 2020, Bishop Dolan, Father Cekada and I were always at peace. We collaborated on many projects. Father Cekada came every month to the seminary for a week of courses. Bishop Dolan would preach the yearly retreat. We exchanged clergy many times for large ceremonies, especially Holy Week. There was no discord. I trained seminarians for St. Gertrude’s. Among them are Father Lehtoranta, Father McGuire, and Father Nkamuke.

As everyone may recall, Bishop Dolan took part in the consecration of Bishop Selway in February of 2018. Father Cekada was the Master of Ceremonies.

Bishop Dolan did an ordination for the Institute of Mother of Good Counsel in the 1990’s, although they profess very firmly adherence to the Thesis. All was well.

For twenty-five years, therefore, there was no conflict about the Thesis. In fact, it was hardly ever discussed.

Nor was the seminary a Thesis-only institution. In fact, Frs. Dutertre and Chappot de la Chanonie came to America to be trained, in order, precisely, to avoid having to accept the Thesis at the seminary in Verrua, Italy. Now they both hold to the Thesis.

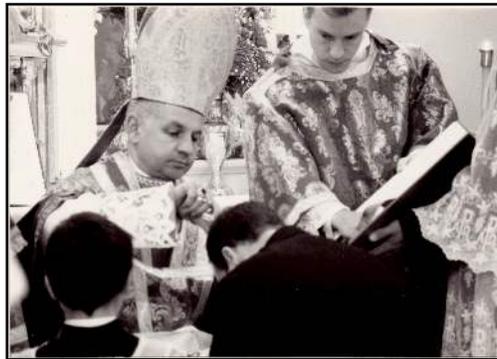
Nor was the Thesis “shoved down the throats” of the seminarians, as has been recently alleged. It was rarely mentioned. It was explained occasionally in class, since in most cases people misunderstand the Thesis, and criticize it for things it does not say. I have always said: “If you are going to criticize the Thesis, then criticize it for what it says, not for what you *think* it says.” Fr. Despósito would actually *invite* criticism of the Thesis when he mentioned it in class.

The Thesis is a theological position which explains *how* the papal see is vacant.

For some reason, however, Bishop Dolan in the spring of 2020 decided to declare war on the Thesis and Most Holy Trinity Seminary. Father Cekada was in severe decline at the time. (He died on September 11th, 2020. Even in the spring of that year, however, he was absolutely intent on recovering and returning to Most Holy Trinity Seminary to do his monthly visit and teaching in the fall of 2020).

The first word we got of this declaration of war was a comment he made to a parishioner, namely that “The Novus

Ordo is an octopus, and the Thesis is one of its tentacles.” He began to perceive the Thesis as a compromise with the Novus Ordo. In June of 2021, he pulled out his four seminarians from Most Holy Trinity Seminary, under the pretext that he wanted to ordain them as early as August of 2022. At the time, they had two more years of theology to do. This he did despite the fact that I offered, by means of summer courses, to accelerate them so as to be ready by August of 2022. It was obvious that he wanted to make the break.



Bishop Dolan confers Tonsure on a seminarian at Most Holy Trinity Seminary in Warren, Michigan. It is probably 1996.

¹ To those unfamiliar with the “Thesis,” it refers to an explanation offered by Bishop Guérard des Lauriers of the present vacancy of the Roman See. In short, it states that the see is vacant for the reason that the elected person intends to promulgate to the Church false doctrine and evil disciplines. Nonetheless he retains his election to the papacy until such time as it will be legally removed from him. This explanation is distinguished from “totalism” which holds that the false pope is not even in possession of a valid election. But both agree that the Vatican II “popes” are false popes.

In November of 2021, Bishop Dolan published in his Sunday bulletin, in a clear reference to the Thesis, although not mentioning it by name, that it “savored of heresy.”

He also on Twitter and other places praised a Ukrainian priest, who said that Most Holy Trinity Seminary was a “non-Catholic seminary.” Bishop Dolan said that this priest “spoke well,” and “was inspired by the Holy Ghost.”

He consecrated a bishop in South America who said the following things about the Thesis: The seminary (Most Holy Trinity) began to teach the Thesis to all students, not just students belonging to the RCI, after the death of Fr. Cekada; the Thesis makes the “Novus Ordo Church” and the Roman Catholic Church into one Church; the Thesis makes Bergoglio into some sort of partial pope; the logical consequence of the Thesis is to offer Mass *una cum*, since, if Francis is the pope, even materially speaking, we ought to pray for him in the canon.

All of these assertions are false. The seminary did not change its policies at all after the death of Fr. Cekada. The remainder of the assertions are also false, and stem from a complete misunderstanding of what the Thesis says.

Because of these attacks upon the seminary, and indirectly upon me and the Roman Catholic Institute, Bishop Dolan destroyed the friendship that existed between us since 1972. Unfortunately he died in enmity with me and with Most Holy Trinity Seminary.

To understand the Thesis requires a thorough knowledge of scholastic philosophy and sacred theology. Sorry to say, but Bishop Dolan never excelled in either of these subjects, his forte being the sacred liturgy, lives of the saints, pastoral theology, and devotions. In these subjects he excelled a great deal, far more than I.

Father Cekada, as well, was a liturgy and canon law man, and a great researcher, but not a deep thinker when it came to sacred theology. Remember, I knew them both very well for nearly fifty years.

This is not to criticize them, it is simply to say that I think they lacked the philosophical and theological equipment to understand the Thesis.

I always point out, however, that even the totalists adhere to the Thesis in practice, since they do not require those returning from the Novus Ordo to do an abjuration of error and to have the excommunication lifted, which one would be obliged to do if someone had been in a non-Catholic sect. In other words, Novus Ordites, despite their errors, are legally (materially) Catholics, and are not excommunicated, nor are required to do anything except to give up their errors. This is *precisely* the point of the Thesis.

Untrained clergy. The traditional movement is unfortunately plagued by untrained clergy. It is owing to the chaos in the Catholic Church, which is the effect of Vatican II. The ingredients of an untrained clergy are (1) the pride of someone who is insufficiently trained, or who may have some other impediment, to seek Holy Orders, even episcopal consecration; (2) the willingness of some prelate imprudently to confer these sacred things upon the unworthy candidate.

Once the untrained priest or bishop is let loose, he can do untold damage, either with false doctrine, bad pastoral practices, doubtful or invalid sacraments, and many other deviations which could be very scandalous. Think of a medical doctor who has never been to medical school.

Fr. Cekada wrote an article a number of years ago, in which he cited the popes regarding the necessity to train priests correctly and thoroughly.

Remember that the training of a priest is not only academic, but also, and more importantly, moral and spiritual.

It has always been the policy of Most Holy Trinity Seminary to train priests as they ought to be trained, in all aspects of the priesthood. The backbone of the Catholic Church is the secular (i.e., parish) priest. These priests in active apostolate will either build up the Church by their virtue and learn-



Bishop Dolan visits Fr. Guépin's chapel outside Nantes, France, called Notre Dame des Dons, or Our Lady of the Gifts, in English. The year is perhaps 1999. I would occasionally accompany Bishop Dolan on his European trips. They were both interesting and fun. We got along very well. For this reason I am still baffled why he turned against me in recent years.

ing, or they will tear it down by their vices and ignorance. If ever there is a time to train priests properly, it is now.

There are some that hold that because there is an acute need for priests, it suffices that they know merely an advanced catechism in order to be ordained. This attitude is extremely dangerous. It is condemned by the Church.

Many new seminarians. Thus far we have accepted eleven new seminarians for the next academic year. There are others interested. I expect to have a completely full house in Reading, consisting of twenty-five seminarians. There will be six resident members of the faculty. Keep us in your prayers.

What is the cause of this “bumper crop” of vocations? One cause is Bergoglio, whose radicalism is showing the whole world what Vatican II is all about. The other factor, I think, is that this generation is the beneficiary of the alertness of parents to the problems in the Catholic Church. The children born in the 1970’s and 1980’s were not raised, in many cases, with the proper discipline, and even more importantly, with the proper vigilance in keeping them away from bad influences. It was, to a great extent, a “lost generation.” In more recent decades, however, parents have internalized the faith more, and have raised their children in a much more supernatural way.

Decline of Catholicism in Latin America.

Here we are merely speaking of those who identify themselves as Catholics. From 2010 to 2020, the decline is as follows: Mexico: 11%; Venezuela: 20%; Colombia: 10%; Argentina: 36%; Brazil: 17%; Chile: 13%; Guatemala: 25%; El Salvador: 25%; Paraguay: 10%.

In more “springtime of the Church” news, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is closing down many churches and consolidating parishes. These changes affect not only inner city churches in which there are very few Catholics, but also suburban churches, for example in Bucks County and Montgomery County.

Yet another springtime statistic for the New Religion is that the Archdiocese of Detroit will ordain no one this year. It is one of thirty-eight dioceses in the United States to have no ordinations.

The Fraternity of Saint Peter. It was reported recently that the priests of the Fraternity of Saint Peter will be obliged to concelebrate the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday with the Novus Ordo bishop of the diocese in which they are situated. Of course, it will be the Novus Ordo Mass.

This is the equivalent of burning the incense to the gods once a year, a practice that was imposed on

the early Christians by the Romans. Do or die. Their consent to concelebrate is an attestation that the New Mass is indeed a Catholic rite. The logic then presses: If it is a Catholic rite, then why keep the traditional Mass? Everyone knows the answer: that the New Mass is not a Catholic rite, and that the FSSP priests, many or most of them, are adhering to the traditional rite for doctrinal reasons, and not merely aesthetic reasons.

This turn of events shows the foolishness of their having trusted the Novus Ordo hierarchy. Their fate, their status, and their condition can change from month to month, from “pope” to “pope,” from “bishop” to “bishop,” according to the whims of each.

Pray for the repose of the soul of Bishop Dolan. I and the priests of the seminary all offered Requiem Masses for this intention.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Donald J. Sanborn
Rector
