

# LOGICAL CHICKENS

## COMING HOME TO ROOST

---

### A COMMENTARY ON RECENT EVENTS IN THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X

*by the Most Reverend Donald J. Sanborn*

[www.traditionalmass.org](http://www.traditionalmass.org)

**E**VEN THE MOST CASUAL STUDENT of the traditional movement cannot have missed, in the past thirty days, the flurry of activity which has engulfed the Society of Saint Pius X. It started on January 24<sup>th</sup> with Ratzinger's lifting of the excommunication of the four bishops who were consecrated by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1988. They were excommunicated for the reason that they accepted episcopal consecration without the mandate, indeed in defiance of a counter-mandate, of the person whom they recognized as pope, then Karol Wojtyla or John Paul II. Since the events have become multiple and complicated over the past thirty days, I will divide the commentary into the following sections: (1) a brief review of the SSPX theological positions; (2) Ratzinger; (3) Bishop Fellay; (4) Bishop Williamson; (5) the outlook for the SSPX.

#### **I. REVIEW OF THE POSITIONS OF SSPX**

The fundamental position of the SSPX is that of *recognize and resist*, that is, to recognize the Novus Ordo hierarchy as the Catholic hierarchy *formally*, that is, as wielding the true power of Christ to rule the Catholic Church, but at the same time to resist the program of Vatican II, including some conciliar doctrines, the New Mass, some new sacramental rites, and other things.

The dream of Archbishop Lefebvre was always to convince the Modernists in the Vatican that they should give their blessing to this congregation which carries on, throughout the entire world, an apostolate of more or less Catholic tradi-

tion parallel to the reforms of the Novus Ordo. To achieve this legalized tradition has always been the goal of Archbishop Lefebvre and his successors since the founding of the SSPX in 1970.

As a result, the SSPX has lived a life of an on-again, off-again romance with the Modernists in the Vatican. Nearly every year rumors swirl about some sort of negotiations with the Modernists, and of some imminent marriage to them. This most recent episode, however, has been by far the closest that the marriage has come, and events point to an eventual legalization of the SSPX by the Modernists.

It is this idea of *recognize and resist* which principally distinguishes us from the Society of Saint Pius X. For this group, since its inception in 1970, has never answered the burning question: Is Vatican II Catholic? Is the religion which has emerged in our local parishes since Vatican II the Catholic religion, or is it a new religion? The answer to this question is critical; indeed, it involves heaven or hell for each of us. For if the Vatican II religion is indeed Catholicism, then it would be a mortal sin to resist it. If, on the other hand, it is a new religion, then it would be a mortal sin to recognize it, and to recognize the Novus Ordo hierarchy as having the power of Christ to teach, to rule, and to sanctify in His name. For if we recognize such a power in them, then we must necessarily say that it is Christ and His Holy Church which has handed us this defection from the Faith. But this is blasphemy.

*Recognize and resist* floats simultaneously these contradictions in the mind. *Recognize* urges that they place Ratzinger's picture in the vestibule of their churches, and his name in the Canon of their Masses. *Resist* urges them to ignore Ratzinger in everyday life, as if he did not exist. *Recognize* urges that they make overtures to the Modernists in Rome; *resist* gives them a license to thumb their noses at the person whom they say is the Roman Pontiff, to publicly mock him, criticize him, and condemn him to hell. Hence the SSPX clergy and laity are capable of saying, as necessity dictates, contradictory statements. As we saw in 1988, as the consecrations were approaching, Archbishop Lefebvre accepted the *Protocol* of May 5, 1988, in which he declared that he accepted Vatican II in the light of tradition, and recognized John Paul as the Vicar of Christ. He even accepted to have a New Mass said at the church of Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet, the SSPX stronghold in Paris. Yet on the following day he repudiated the *Protocol* which he had signed, and by the middle of June, John Paul II had become the Antichrist for him. He revealed the contents of a letter which he had written to the four bishops-to-be in August of 1987, in which he described John Paul II as an Antichrist. This means that in his negotiations with Ratzinger in 1988, Archbishop Lefebvre either changed his mind or lied about the most important point of whether or not John Paul II was the Vicar of Christ, and at the very least negotiated in bad faith with Ratzinger and John Paul II. This flip-flop, however, was made possible by the original error of Archbishop Lefebvre: that one could criticize as non-Catholic the doctrine, liturgy and universal discipline which comes from the Roman Pontiff, but at the same time co-exist with and function in the cadre of this false religion, and be subject to the hierarchy which promulgates it. Like two sides of one brain which do not communicate with each other, these two contradictory currents of thought were able to emerge from the same mouth of the Archbishop. So Archbishop Lefebvre gave both sides of his congregation quotations to work with: to the liberals he spoke words of ultimate reconciliation with the Modernists; to the conservatives he spoke words of resistance to the Modernists. This never-ceasing contradiction has plagued this Society ever since, and does so to this day.

In order to understand this group, it is essential to realize that theology begins and ends with Archbishop Lefebvre. For them, Archbishop Le-

febvre is the Great Prophet, a saint anointed by God for the purpose of leading Catholics through the present crisis. For this reason, while theology and logic warn of contradictions in their system, they defer to Archbishop Lefebvre as a person in whom all contradiction is resolved. Somehow he saw what they do not see, since it would be impossible that an anointed saint be mistaken in what pertains to his very mission, which is to lead Catholics through the crisis.

Consequently the problem of the contradictory positions is swept away by an act of faith in Archbishop Lefebvre. His successors, therefore, do not perceive a problem in acting and speaking in exactly the same manner as he: now soft-line, now hard-line; now resisting, now recognizing. Their priests and lay people live in this world quite securely; they repel their critics not by theological arguments, but by chastisements for having been unfaithful to the Archbishop.

Because Archbishop Lefebvre founded the Society of Saint Pius X, the charism and aura of anointed mission and indefectibility are transferred to this organization. So the four consecrated bishops have seen themselves as perpetuators of Archbishop Lefebvre, almost clones, even to the point of assuming to themselves certain privileges which he possessed only personally, and which died with him.<sup>1</sup> The clergy and lay people of this Society therefore see it as a substitute for the Church itself, having the same mission and corresponding qualities as the anointed Archbishop had himself.

The natural consequence of such a mentality is that the clergy and lay people need to ask themselves a single question: *What would Lefebvre do?* The answer to this question transcends and overcomes all theological contradiction, disappearing like mist before the hot morning sun. But answering the question is at times difficult, given the two sides of the Archbishop.

So in the current events of this Society, where its future path is in the balance, all of these elements are at play. Observers on the outside should not try to make sense of what they are saying from day to day. The Society's logic is the logic of dou-

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, the use of the throne instead of the faldstool, the throne being normally reserved to the bishop of the diocese, but which was given to Archbishop Lefebvre as a personal privilege, a form of honor. There are other details of this kind which are commonly observed by these four bishops, as if Archbishop Lefebvre personally lives on in them.

ble-think and double-talk; they truly maintain in their heads ideas which fight one with another. But they are not daunted by these interior conflicts, owing to their deep and unbending faith in Archbishop Lefebvre.

Now let us pass to a commentary on the recent events.

## II. RATZINGER

Bishop Fellay says that the recent lifting of the excommunications came as a surprise to him, events moving very quickly in December, and that the initiative came principally from Ratzinger. That Ratzinger is anxious to accomplish this reconciliation is not astonishing. He will be 82 in April. Consequently time is limited for him. He wants to see the reconciliation happen for two reasons, in my opinion: (1) to receive the approval of "tradition" for Vatican II; and (2) to have at least one success in the ecumenical process.

As I said in a previous article entitled *Saving the Baby*, Ratzinger knows that Vatican II is in serious trouble. It has devastated the Catholic Church, destroying the magnificent and healthful structure which was left behind by Pope Pius XII. It is precisely this health and vigor which Ratzinger wants to inject into his Vatican II Church, never conceding an inch, to be sure, of the radical theology which engendered this destruction, but at the same time enjoying the prestige of the vibrant pre-Vatican II Church. Demographics are not good for the Modernists: while they were successful in destroying the faith of millions in the 1960's, and making good Modernists out of them, what has come to pass is that, like him, the young Modernists of the 1960's have now become the old Modernists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, planning their retirements, making their last wills and testaments. The offspring of these young Modernists of the 1960's have lost the faith in most cases, since no Catholic Faith was ever presented to them. Furthermore, owing to the widespread practice of artificial birth control, which is *de facto* approved and even encouraged by the Novus Ordo hierarchy and clergy, the number of even *nominal* Catholics in developed countries will decrease dramatically over the next fifty to one hundred years. Most of the church-going members of the Novus Ordo, at least in the developed countries, are in the 50 to 85 crowd, who are still attending because the practice of church-going and the Catholic faith were ingrained into them when they were younger. They have

long since, in most cases, lost the virtue of faith, having embraced the Novus Ordo, but are still going to church and putting money in the basket. In twenty years the number of these people will be seriously reduced. The young people are not there to take their places, since they have either repudiated the Novus Ordo, unable to take it seriously, or have made it into a merely cultural aspect of their lives, showing up at church from time to time for various occasions and feast days.

Ratzinger also wants to have at least one ecumenical success. Forty-four years have elapsed since Vatican II approved of the *Decree on Ecumenism*, and Paul VI, John Paul I, and John Paul II did everything, including the promotion of idolatry, in order to bring about some ecumenical union. But nothing has even budged. Indeed the eastern schismatics (the so-called Orthodox) could say to him: "If you cannot do ecumenism with the SSPX, how do you expect us to have a reunion with you?" So Ratzinger is very intent on bringing the SSPX into the fold under the banner of *reconciled diversity*, i.e., you can be different, but you are nonetheless in the great One World Church.

Furthermore, Ratzinger does not want his beloved Council to be marred by a new "schism." If the only effect, historically, of Vatican II is that millions broke away in opposition to the changes of this Council, Ratzinger would perceive a serious failure in his Council. Concomitant with the dismal decline in the Novus Ordo's numbers is the uptick of vibrancy and life signs in the traditional movement. Whether it is the SSPX, or the Fraternity of Saint Peter, or the Motu Mass, or any other traditional congregation, or even somewhat traditional Novus Ordo congregations, they are all experiencing growth and solid vocation numbers. They are attractive to young families, and even to the younger Novus Ordo clergy. The intransigent, stalinist, and intolerant Novus Ordo bishop is a thing of the past. Ratzinger understands this, but his bishops do not. The Novus Ordo is something like the Soviet Union in the 1980's: it is a system which is out of gas intellectually, and is running on the fumes of an old enthusiasm which has long since passed away. Stagnation is everywhere. Ratzinger is like a Gorbachev who wants to save communism by adding elements of capitalism. So Ratzinger wants to save his heretical Council by adding elements of tradition.

In saying this, however, one should not understand that the Catholic Faith is about to return

to the Vatican, or that Bishop Dolan (the West Chester one, that is) will be elected pope in the next few years. The trend, however, is that the older generation, which abandoned Catholicism and embraced the Novus Ordo enthusiastically, is now dying off. The mainstream Novus Ordites of the 20 to 50 age group are not very enthusiastic; indeed their adherence to the Novus Ordo is for the most part marginal and superficial. The number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life from this age group is positively abysmal. On the other hand there is a very recognizable trend toward traditional observances on the part of the young clergy, few though they be, and many young lay people, although they represent a small minority in comparison to the mainstream Novus Ordites. Nevertheless this small minority is convinced and motivated, is producing vocations, and promises to grow in the future.

Ratzinger wants to harness these young horses to his aged and decrepit Vatican II carriage. His bishops, for the most part, are against it, but Ratzinger presses on, seeing the necessity of receiving the blessing of tradition for his flagging Vatican II.

It was for this same reason that Ratzinger spoke of the *hermeneutic of continuity* in his speech to the Curia at the end of 2005, contrasting it to the *hermeneutic of rupture*. Admitting for the first time that not all has gone well since Vatican II, Ratzinger attempted to save his beloved baby by calling for an interpretation of it which was in accordance with tradition. The attempt is as absurd as it is futile: Is the document on religious liberty going to be interpreted in such a way as to agree with *Quanta Cura* of Pope Pius IX, the document which calls religious liberty an insanity? Nevertheless, this call to benignly re-interpret Vatican II should be seen as an indicator that there is trouble in paradise, that the “springtime of the Church,” which Vatican II was termed and intended to be, has become a blustery autumn full of gray skies and dead leaves blowing in a bitterly cold wind.

### III. BISHOP FELLAY

No one, in my opinion, in the SSPX has perfected the double-mindedness and double-speak of Archbishop Lefebvre more than his successor, Bishop Fellay. If one examines the various sayings and interviews which this man has given over the years, the effect is dizzying. Only about a year ago, Bishop Fellay gave a very hard-line speech at Wi-

nona saying that negotiations with the Vatican were off, because the Vatican wanted them to “shut up,” as he put it. There was an audible sigh of relief in his listeners. Bishop Fellay excoriated in 2002 the group in the Diocese of Campos (Brazil) who accepted a reconciliation with the Vatican. Yet there have been other times when he has spoken very much in favor of reconciliation. It came so close one time that Bishop Williamson, in an obvious reference to Bishop Fellay, said that when the pilot of an airplane should fall asleep, the people have to scream in order to wake him up, lest the plane crash.

It is clear from recent events and statements, however, that the path to reconciliation is open. For the Vatican Modernists cannot lift this excommunication and leave these bishops “floating.” The Vatican Modernists must give them a job, a place in the Modernist hierarchy. Clearly from the point of view of the heretics inhabiting the Vatican, the reconciliation must proceed to its term, and rather quickly.

According to Bishop Fellay, the next step in this whole process is the “clarification” of Vatican II. Together with Archbishop Lefebvre, Bishop Fellay holds that the Council was ambiguous, that is, that its pronouncements were vague, and could be interpreted in a Catholic sense or in a non-Catholic sense. Hence they are in need of clarification in the Catholic sense. This will solve the problem of Vatican II, it is alleged.

How will this “clarification” process go? If anyone is expecting Catholic doctrine to emerge from it, he will be sorely disappointed. Ratzinger will never retreat from religious liberty. The Catholic notion of religious liberty is that the one, true Faith, the Catholic Church, should have the liberty to propagate itself in all the earth, and that its subjects should have complete freedom to embrace it and practice it. The Catholic Church also teaches that the embracing of the Catholic Faith should be a free act, i.e., one that is exempt from any kind of undue fear. In other words, the Church repudiates conversion by the sword or by putting a gun to someone’s head. But the Church also repudiates the idea that one has the moral or civil right to embrace and practice any religion he pleases. The claim to such a moral and civil right is exactly what Gregory XVI and Pius IX called an insanity, and is what was condemned by many popes, and it is precisely this supposed moral and civil right which Vatican II approved of *without any ambiguity*. Fur-

thermore, the Modernist Vatican has confirmed this departure from Catholic doctrine by promoting the civil liberty of all religions, including the approval of the building of a mosque in Rome itself. Do we really think that Ratzinger will annul this promulgated civil right to heresy and infidelity, and confirm *Quanta Cura*? Of course not.

But Bishop Fellay, it seems, has reduced the problem of the religious liberty document (*Dignitatis Humana*) to merely a question of putting undue pressure or fear on someone to accept the Catholic Faith, neglecting, I think dishonestly, the glaring contradiction between Vatican II and Catholic doctrine. He is ready, it appears, to accept *Dignitatis Humana*, merely taking it to mean that we should not put guns to people's heads when we want them to convert. But everyone knows that this is not the only meaning of this document.

Shall we expect Ratzinger to retreat on ecumenism? Impossible. The very reason for being of Vatican II is ecumenism. All of its other heresies, whether collegiality, the new ecclesiology, or religious liberty, as well as the new liturgical rites, the new disciplines, and the new Canon Law, were done in the name of ecumenism. Ratzinger's very religion is the apostasy of ecumenism. We saw this in the uproar over Bishop Williamson's remarks about the Nazi extermination of Jews. He treated Bishop Williamson like a heretic, for indeed he is a heretic in the ecumenical religion. Saying something which could be offensive to members of another religion, and particularly the Jews, is considered high treason and *lèse majesté*. It shows what Ratzinger's beliefs really are. He has no care of Catholic dogma. He sees Catholicism as just one more religion to throw into the brew, a set of beliefs just like any other in this world. But ecumenism! In this the true religion lies. It is a religion which calls holiness the most fundamental perversion of modern man, which is the refusal of objective and absolute truth. Of this religion Ratzinger is the supreme High Priest.

Bishop Fellay, however, has also concocted a solution for ecumenism: that we take it to mean a greater effort to convert non-Catholics, particularly heretics and schismatics, to the Catholic Church. Everyone knows that this is not what ecumenism means. What it really means is that the Catholic Church places itself on a par with non-Catholic religions, sees a salvific value in them ("means of salvation"), and strives to achieve a One World

Church together with them by means of negotiating dogmas by watering them down.

Bishop Fellay has never uttered a word against the Vatican II *Frankenchurch* heresy, which holds that the Church of Christ is something broader than the Catholic Church, that the Church of Christ consists of many "particular churches," including the schismatic sects, and of many "ecclesial communities," such as the heretical sects. It is similar to the monster *Frankenstein*, which was a collection of many disparate body parts sewn together. In fact, Bishop Fellay seems to accept the *Frankenchurch* heresy, because he uses typical *Frankenchurch* terminology: "full communion" and "partial communion." This distinction never existed before Vatican II.

Nor has Bishop Fellay said a word, to my knowledge, against the doctrine of collegiality, which alters the very constitution of the Church into a collegiate church, i.e., something ruled by a council of bishops, of which the pope is merely an indispensable part. The Catholic doctrine is that the Church is a monarchy, and that all power and jurisdiction rests in the pope, apart from and independently of the bishops of the Church.

There have been two statements made in the past month, however, that are chilling. The first is that made by "Cardinal" Castrillón-Hoyos who said that Bishop Fellay "accepts the Council theologically." This seems to indicate that Bishop Fellay has completely caved in on the Council, and that it is merely a question of issuing a statement loaded with double-talk in order to see the reconciliation through. The second statement is even worse, however. Early in February, as the controversy was raging concerning Bishop Williamson's reduction of the number of Jews killed by the Nazis, Bishop Fellay said that the Jews were our "elder brothers" because "we have something in common, namely the Old Covenant."

This statement is **absolutely abominable, scandalous, and implicitly heretical**. The Jews are in no way our "elder brothers." They obviously are not so according to natural generation. So the only way in which to take his words is in the spiritual sense, i.e., that the Jewish faith in the Old Covenant is a true virtue of faith which has a true object, namely a pact with God which is still valid.

The Council of Florence (1438-1445), however, taught the opposite: "It [the Sacrosanct Roman Church] believes, professes, and teaches that the legal things of the Old Testament, i.e., of the

Mosaic Law...ceased with the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the sacraments of the New Testament began, and that whoever, even after the passion, placed hope in these legal things and submitted himself to them as necessary for salvation, as if faith in Christ could not save without them, sinned mortally.” “It [the Sacrosanct Roman Church] believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, **but also Jews** and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart ‘into everlasting fire which as prepared for the devils and his angels,’ unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock.” Saint Paul, furthermore, says that the Old Law is finished: “Behold, I Paul tell you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” (Gal. V: 2) “You are made void of Christ, you who are justified in the law: you are fallen from grace.” (Gal. V: 4) Saint Thomas Aquinas, in his Summa (Ia IIæ, q. 103, articles 3 & 4) is also quite clear about the cessation of the Old Law and its observances. Indeed he says that it would be a mortal sin to observe circumcision as symbol of hope in a future redeemer.

But Judaism’s very essence is the rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Redeemer of the human race, and a continuation of hope in the promise of a future redeemer. The Jews therefore continue to circumcise as a form of religious profession. Their religion, consequently, according to the teaching of the Church at Florence, Saint Paul, and Saint Thomas Aquinas is a mortal sin which leads to eternal damnation.

What, then, do we “have in common” with them? The Old Covenant? The Old Covenant is dead. It has ceded to the New Covenant, the new pact between God and men, which is the Catholic Church, and which is sealed in the sacred Blood of Christ. “*This is the chalice of My Blood, the Blood of the New and Eternal Testament.,*” the priest recites every day in the words of consecration. The same God? No, because they reject the Most Holy Trinity.

Bishop Fellay’s comment indicates that the Jews have an autonomous path to salvation, that is, that they are exempt from the New Testament, that their covenant with God is still valid. How else could they be called “elder brothers?” If someone is your elder brother, it means that you have sonship in common with him, and that you both have the same father. It means that he has superiority to you. But do we have sonship in

common with them? Are they, as Jews, the adopted sons of God, as Catholics are? Impossible, since they reject the *natural* Son of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Do they have the same Father as we? No, because our Father is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they reject. Indeed, if the Jews are our elder brothers, then we are not the children of God, since our only title to be children of God is to be united by faith and grace to the natural Son of God. In other words, there is no spiritual sonship — and therefore no spiritual fraternity — outside of faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ as the true and divine Son of God.

Bishop Fellay’s remark about the Jews being our elder brothers is scary because this is precisely the doctrine concerning the Jews which Ratzinger elaborated a few years ago. I find it hard to believe that Bishop Fellay could have thought of this expression by himself. It sounds as though, in order to save the reconciliation, he was told to say this awful thing in order to counteract the hysteria over the remarks of Bishop Williamson. The fact is that the Jews have nothing in common with the Catholic Church. All that they possess, theologically, is their apostasy from their own Law and Covenant when they repudiated in the court of Pilate their true Messiah and King, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who was the “one to be sent.” (Genesis XLIX: 10) The Catholic Church has nothing to do with their apostasy, nothing to do with them as a religious body, and is the sole possessor and inheritor of all the spiritual goods that the Jews once possessed before the coming of Christ. The Church’s only relationship with the Jews is one of ardently seeking their conversion from this apostasy, owing to God’s persevering and special love for them, as well as His efficacious will that they be converted to the Catholic Faith toward the end of the world. (Romans XI: 25-32) The Church prays for this conversion on Good Friday.

What is evident in any case, however, is that Bishop Fellay is a *theological disaster*. Archbishop Lefebvre, for all of his double-think and double-talk, would never have uttered these scandalous and indeed implicitly heretical words about the religion of the Jews. That Bishop Fellay is the captain of the ship which for years has been the hope of many thousands of Catholics seeking relief from Vatican II, is a catastrophe in the making. It is like the pilot of an airplane with a blindfold on.

Bishop Fellay’s use of this “elder brothers” term is indicative of two alarming realities: (1) that

he is ignorant of even what pertains to the catechism; (2) that he is seriously under the sway and theological influence of the Modernists. This combination is deadly. That an ignorant man is looking to heretics for guidance and enlightenment will spell disaster for the Society of Saint Pius X.

#### IV. BISHOP WILLIAMSON

The “star” of the January events turned out to be Bishop Williamson. But his stardom was, I am sure, unwelcome.

Bishop Williamson gave an interview back in November of 2008 to Swedish television, in which he told the interviewer that the evidence was “hugely against” the commonly held assertion that six million Jews were gassed in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. He admitted that at most only 300,000 perished at the hands of the Nazis, and that they were not gassed.

Shortly after Ratzinger lifted the excommunication of the four bishops, the interview was aired, unleashing a hysterical reaction among Jews and non-Jews alike.

It must be said that Bishop Williamson did everyone great harm, including ourselves, by publicly commenting on something that has absolutely nothing to do with the crusade against Vatican II and its changes. Our single goal consists of rolling back the changes of Vatican II, nothing more and nothing less. But many in the traditional movement have added “baggage” to this unique agenda, attaching to it various political, historical, and social worldviews which skew and obscure this central objective. Often by attaching this baggage they thwart the very work which has been accomplished with painstaking effort. For people come to our chapels for a single motive: to oppose the new religion of Vatican II. They do not come, or should not come, in order to be Jew-haters, conspiracy theorists, geocentrists, natural food fanatics, homeopaths, right-wing political activists, or historical revisionists. Many have tried to drag in such things to the traditional movement. I, for one, have striven incessantly in my thirty-four years of the priesthood to keep these things out of the traditional movement, ever conscious of the danger that they posed to my work.

The Catholic Church must never identify itself with anything else than the Catholic Faith and with those practical conclusions which flow necessarily from the Catholic Faith, such as the reign of Christ in society. It must never involve itself in the pass-

ing trends of the day, or in particular agendas of particular people, in scientific or historical theories (except to condemn them if they should contradict the Faith), in brief in anything which would compromise its universality.

That clergy, and especially a bishop, publicly espouse revisionist theses or conspiracy theories, which give even the common *impression* of hatred of Jews, of sympathy with the Nazi régime, or give credibility to fringy and outlandish concoctions of anti-government fanatics, does serious harm to the Catholic Church. The clergy must always see themselves as *agents of the Catholic Church*, since they are seen as this by the general public, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, whenever they say or do anything. The priest, and especially the bishop, must *lose his identity* in a way, by becoming in a certain sense the very person of the Catholic Church which he represents.

Bishop Williamson, in my opinion, has repeatedly violated this golden rule. His writings and sayings, quite public, are loaded with all sorts of “information” and ideas gathered from half-sane and frenetic proponents of what are at best speculations which in most cases are beyond the ability of anyone to really prove. Whether it is the number of Jews exterminated, or 9/11, or the Oklahoma City bombing, Bishop Williamson has succeeded in linking the defense of the Catholic Faith against the Modernists, a most rational undertaking, with some of the most bizarre and downright lunatic utterances of persons who can type much better than they can think.

The leadership of the Society of Saint Pius X was always aware of this. It is impossible that they were not, since Bishop Williamson was very open and public about all of these things. He could never be accused of having been sneaky. Nevertheless, despite warnings, they saw fit to make him the Rector of the seminary in Ridgefield, Connecticut, having dismissed me because I refused to go along with compromises with the Novus Ordo, and then five years later to make him a bishop, thereby elevating to world prominence a mind that was full of crazy ideas and a mouth that was out of control.

The reason, however, why they made him a bishop was because of his other qualities. Bishop Williamson is an *extremely brilliant* man, and when this section of his intellect becomes temporarily separated from the crazy ideas, which happens from time to time, he is capable of explaining the

Catholic Faith, Catholic theology, and Catholic philosophy with extraordinary clarity, depth, and eloquence. The other reason why he was made a bishop is that he was deeply devoted to Archbishop Lefebvre, perceived him as God's oracle, and consequently is now just as deeply devoted to the Society of Saint Pius X. I have no doubt that Bishop Williamson was the personal pick of Archbishop Lefebvre himself, since the Archbishop picked for positions of power only those who possessed this profound loyalty to him and to his Society. His unusual ideas were dismissed as eccentricity. The French always think of the British as eccentric, and expect them to be so. They titter at it, and brush it aside as inconsequential.

### **The Nazi Extermination of Jews**

The Nazi extermination of Jews is the proper term of what has been called in more recent times the "Holocaust." The term *holocaust* refers to one of the Old Testament sacrifices which were commanded by God to Moses. Indeed it was the greatest of all of the sacrifices in the Temple, manifesting the utter nothingness of man in relation to the infinite majesty of God. So it was at once (1) sacred; (2) a commandment of God; (3) a sacrifice; (4) an official act of worship of the true God before the coming of Christ. But the Nazi extermination of Jews does not conform to any of these things, and therefore should not receive the name *holocaust*.

No one, to my knowledge, denies that the Nazis put Jews to death in an indiscriminate manner. No one denies that the Nazis were against Jews, put them in box cars and transported them to far away places, and put them in concentration camps, much like the American government did to the Japanese-Americans during World War II.

The exact number of those who died in these circumstances, and how they died, is what is disputed. *Wikipedia* says that the six million figure came from Adolf Eichmann, who is certainly a good source. Other authors give the figure at somewhat less than six million, but not significantly. One author puts it at 5.1 million.

Whatever the case, there are two assertions to be made here: (1) the historically accurate figure of how many Jews died in this extermination process has utterly nothing to do with our undertaking, which is to oppose the changes of Vatican II; (2) it is entirely outside of our competence to make a

judgement about how many Jews died at the hands of the Nazis, and how they died.

Regarding the first assertion, there are some who are obsessed with Jews, and blame Jews for every single evil event in the world, who see a web of Jewish conspiracy everywhere. They cannot take their minds off of it. They constantly read books and articles which confirm their suspicions. They are at times attracted to the traditional movement in the Catholic Church not for the true motive of opposing Vatican II so much as for the fact that they perceive the upheaval of Vatican II as the work of Jews. So being traditional, for them, is just one more way of opposing Jews. They then try to draw others into their obsession against Jews, and thereby sully the whole movement as if it were just a branch of the Jew-hating obsession. These people wildly applaud clergy who take up their fanatical cause, and vilify as cowards and laggards those who will not.

To be sure, the Catholic Church is opposed to Judaism for theological reasons, and Judaism is opposed to the Catholic Church for having usurped what the Jews perceive to be theirs, and for having established a Catholic culture and society. To be sure, the Jews have a history of opposing the Catholic Church and the reign of Christ in society, persecuted it in ancient times, and did everything in their power to bring it down during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and especially since 1789. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is no secret that they — not all but most — have always been pro-socialist, pro-communist, and pro-leftist in the various societies of the world in which they are found, and have always sought the downfall of any government or customs which can be called in any way christian. So they can be found in highly disproportionate numbers among the leaders of movements against the Czar in Russia, the Austrian Emperor, and the German Kaiser. The reason for this is understandable, but not justifiable: having received full rights of citizenship in 1789 and the Napoleonic era, they felt uncomfortable living in societies which were dominated by a christian culture. I have no doubt that Catholics and Moslems feel uncomfortable in the Jewish-dominated culture of Israel. Jews, therefore, became in many cases activists against the existing structures of Catholicism or other forms of "Christianity," and thereby have come into conflict with those who wished to see a continuation of christian culture in society. It is furthermore true



that there were Jewish influences in the Vatican II reform of the Catholic Church. About these things we should not be naive.

But it is also true that the most important causes why Vatican II happened cannot be ascribed to Jews. It is the Modernists, people like Ratzinger, baptized former Catholics, who are the causes. Vatican II happened because two very important factors converged: (1) the feverish activity of the Modernists during the years 1914 to 1958, and (2) the negligence of Popes Benedict XV, Pius XI, and especially Pius XII to take sufficient measures to protect the Church from the onslaught of these heretics. If these popes had heeded the warnings of Saint Pius X, and had enacted the measures prescribed by him, Vatican II would have never happened. It is against the Modernists that our war should be fought; we should not be sidetracked by an obsession with Jews.

My second assertion was that assigning an accurate number is far beyond our power as clergy. To do so would require expertise in the scientific methods of historical research and analysis, as well as many, many years devoted exclusively to research. The task is enormous, if it is even possible, since many of the witnesses are already dead, and much of the documentation probably lost. World War II, furthermore, more than any other war, saw the displacement of populations on a grand scale, and as a result, the data provided by censuses could be highly doubtful. Indeed, will we ever have a figure that is historically supportable beyond any prudent doubt?

To read a few books or articles written by people who in most cases lack objectivity concerning the Jews — either pro or con — is not a scientific way in which to establish certitude about these things. Therefore to speak publicly about this six million figure, reducing it to 5% of what is commonly held about it, was in my opinion particularly imprudent on the part of Bishop Williamson. It had the predictable effect of perceiving Bishop Williamson, and with him the whole movement, as a sympathizer of the Nazi cause, and of accusing the Jews of falsifying both the quantity and quality of their suffering.

Even if one wanted to argue that Bishop Williamson's figures were correct about this point, there is absolutely no reason to bring up these opinions in public. It accomplishes absolutely nothing except to cause trouble, and to make it

more difficult for us to accomplish what we are attempting to do.

### **Why all the fuss?**

On the other hand, it must be pointed that the reaction to Bishop Williamson's assertions was insanely overblown. Indeed, if Bishop Williamson has merely made a mistake about a historical fact which can be proven, why was he not dismissed as a mere crackpot? Why is the six million figure so sacrosanct? Why is it a heresy to deny it?

The twentieth century was a century of mass murder. It started with the Turks' genocide of the Armenians, which took place from 1915 to 1923. An estimated 1 to 1.5 million perished. The Turks even today deny the Armenian genocide, saying that the deaths were merely the result of war and of other factors. Has there ever been international outrage over this denial? Then came Stalin's starving of the kulaks (rich farmers) in the Ukraine during the early 1930's. The accepted figure is ten million. The Russians say the figure is exaggerated, and is "only" five million. Has anyone ever become hysterical at this partial exoneration of Stalin? Has anyone ever said that you are pro-Stalin and anti-Ukrainian because you think that the figure is lower? Of course not. In fact, most people do not even know about this extermination.

But this five or ten million, as the case may be, is only a part of Stalin's mass murder toll. The figure varies widely, but the most common figure for Stalin is thirty million, or five times the number commonly admitted for the Jews. But there are "reducers" in this category as well, but they have never been accused of being either pro-Stalin or anti-victim.

Then there was Mao Tse Tung. His figure is commonly put at thirty million during his Great Leap Forward — something analogous to Vatican II, except that Vatican II's spiritual murder by the destruction of the virtue of faith reaches probably one billion. Then there was Pol Pot, who put to death anywhere from 750,000 to 1.7 million, or 26% of the Cambodian population.

But one of the greatest mass murders of them all has taken place in the United States of America. For the United States government in 1973 authorized doctors and abortionists to murder babies with impunity, and the toll has reached well over forty million. The case is similar in China, where female babies have been commonly put to death, and in nearly every other country of the world in which abortion is legal.

So why is the suffering of the Jews during World War II singled out as the greatest suffering, and why is the reduction of the number or the difference in the manner of their deaths seen as an insult to Jews, or worse, a call for the renewal of this extermination? The frenzied reaction to the comments of Bishop Williamson does not correspond to the gravity of the “crime.” Indeed what crime was committed? Did he not merely express an opinion?

### **Freedom of Thought and Freedom of Speech**

It is indeed strange that in an age which touts freedom of thought and freedom of speech, Bishop Williamson should be burned at the stake for merely having expressed an opinion. Did he say that he agreed with the Nazi extermination of Jews? No. Did he urge that Jews be gassed or killed? No. He merely expressed an opinion, an idea, that the number of those who were killed is highly exaggerated, and that the manner in which they died was different from what is popularly accepted.

The outrage over this, prompting the Chancellor-ess of Germany to intervene, and abortion-loving members of Congress to write letters to Ratzinger calling for severe measures against Bishop Williamson, is proof of the fact that ideas rule the world, and that bad ideas can be very dangerous. It is for this precise reason that the Church has always been against freedom of thought and freedom of speech with regard to anything which contradicted Catholic doctrine, even indirectly.

Millions suffered and died in Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, and communist China as a result of ideas, namely of Nazism and communism. Many others died on battlefields for these ideas, some of which have become passé. Countless Japanese soldiers died in World War II for a crazy idea: Japanese militarism and the Samurai code. Many heads were detached from their bodies in the French Revolution for the mere sin of having the wrong ideas.

The Inquisition to which Bishop Williamson was subjected, and his subsequent burning at the stake, imprudent though his comments were, is proof of the utter hypocrisy of the modern world. Where is freedom of thought? Where is freedom of speech? Why does not Bishop Williamson enjoy these things? What happened to Voltaire’s famous statement: *I may disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it?* The truth is that

freedom of thought and freedom of speech were concocted by eighteenth-century anti-Catholics in order to destroy the establishment of the Catholic Church in their respective countries, and to replace it with a set of dogmas of their own. Once these dogmas were set in place, as they are now in all Western nations, ideas which contradict the dogmas of the free-thinkers have been proscribed.

If Bishop Williamson had exaggerated the “victims” of the Inquisition, he would have been applauded. If he had denied God’s creation by declaring himself a Darwinist, he would have been considered enlightened. But because he denied something that has dogma status in the modern world, he must be punished by an international uproar that touches even the highest levels of government. No freedom of thought or speech for him. What brazen hypocrisy!

Oddly, it is precisely in matters such as these, i.e., historical facts or even revisionism, that there should be a free exchange of ideas, provided that there is no contradiction of the Catholic Faith. That historical ideas are challenged by those who deny them can be profitable for truth, since it sharpens the arguments of truth against the deniers. But the modern world turns it upside down: where there should be repression of false ideas, there is freedom; where there should be free exchange of ideas, there is repression. For what is there to fear from a denier of historical fact, if the evidence for the truth is incontestable?

## **V. OUTLOOK FOR THE SSPX**

It is indeed difficult to make predictions for this group, since they are a cauldron full of contradictions. Any one of their contradictory principles is able to take hold at any given moment, and direct their actions at any given time. But I will venture a few predictions here.

**1. Bishop Williamson will recant his position on the six million.** He is in a position right now whereby he is holding up the process of reconciliation of the SSPX with the Modernists. For as long as he remains an unrepentant “holocaust denier,” it is impossible that the Modernist inmates of the Vatican, who must now prove more than ever their unswerving loyalty to the Jews, will ever accept him as a member of the “Catholic” hierarchy. The SSPX, for its part, at least those in it who are desirous of the marriage, are furious with

Bishop Williamson over this row. The SSPX for the umpteenth time was all dressed up in the wedding gown. Ratzinger was waiting with his best man, Castrillón-Hoyos, at the foot of the altar. The music started, *Here Comes the Bride*, and the flower girls were strewing petals before the Bride, richly clothed in shameful concessions to the Modernists, making her solemn way down the aisle of the One World Church. The modern world was watching anxiously with tears of joy in their eyes to see the *jour de gloire* arrive, as Catholic resistance to Modernism was finally on the road to capitulation. Ratzinger, too, was wearing his tuxedo of concession: the Motu Mass and the lifting of the excommunications, both of which infuriated nearly all the bishops. Suddenly the music stops; the Bride freezes; Ratzinger is shocked. Ecumenism has been threatened, so the Groom must leave. The Bride is left in the aisle not knowing where to go, waiting longingly for the Groom to return.

There are two ways in which to restart the wedding: (1) by chopping off Bishop Williamson's head; (2) by Bishop Williamson's recantation of his "heresy."

I believe that Bishop Williamson will recant, because I think that he is more devoted to the Society of Saint Pius X than he is to his various theories. He sees that he has put a big wrench into the affairs of his beloved Society, and in order to repair the damage, he will concede on this issue. For the SSPX, it is the easiest way out. The alternative, to chop off his head, that is, to dismiss him from the Society, contains many problems. The first is that the SSPX schism will not be entirely healed in the eyes of the Vatican Modernists. They want all the bishops. They said so a number of years ago. They want to completely snuff out the SSPX, with the possible exception of a few disgruntled priests, whom they expect to defect in protest over the marriage. But with no bishops to ordain priests, the Modernists know that a remnant SSPX can go nowhere. So the dismissal of Bishop Williamson will raise the specter of a continuation of the SSPX, rendering futile, in a way, the whole reconciliation process. The Vatican would then end up with the worst of both worlds: a world of Novus Ordo bishops disgruntled about the concessions made to the SSPX for the reconciliation, as well as the continued presence of a breakaway SSPX group, that will carry the old torch of Lefebvism.

Bishop Williamson has, furthermore, painted himself into a corner. If he does not recant, and accepts dismissal, then who in the world will want him? Who will want to be aligned to a bishop who has the international reputation for hating Jews, who is banned from a number of countries, and who will be dogged until his dying day by the press who will want to catch him in some compromising act or statement? He is truly a lame duck. Indeed, even if he remains in the SSPX, I think that he will be confined to a desk job. Even showing up to do a Confirmation at an SSPX chapel would bring out a horde of paparazzi.

**(2) Bishop Fellay will conclude an agreement with the Modernists, and the SSPX will achieve the status of a personal prelature.** I believe that this will be the case because (1) Ratzinger desires it ardently, for the reasons I have stated earlier; (2) Bishop Fellay desires it ardently, inasmuch as it was always the desire of Archbishop Lefebvre and that he has no principled reason to oppose it; (3) it is the propitious moment, a moment which will not appear again for a long time.

**(3) There will be no significant exodus of either priests or laity from the SSPX.** There have been reports that the priests are furious over the idea of a reconciliation, but much of this fury is due to the fact that Bishop Fellay conducted, or so it is alleged, these negotiations with the Vatican without the knowledge of the rank and file. But these priests cannot be opposed to the reconciliation in principle, since it has been the express goal of this Society since 1974, when the original condemnation took place. They have Ratzinger's picture in their vestibules and his name in the Canon of their Masses. By what principle are they going to oppose union with him? In the end, I think that this opposition (which has been placed as high as 50%) is a paper tiger, and that they will settle down and accept what is handed to them. There are no theological principles in their heads by which to oppose it.

The laity, for the most part, will not oppose it. The SSPX has always wanted numbers, people in the pews. For this reason, they have refrained from hard-hitting criticism of the Modernists, especially Ratzinger, and consequently have mostly Novus Ordites in their pews who merely happen to like the traditional Mass. The reconciliation will come as welcome news to them. Yes, there will be some

who might end up in the chapels of the sedevacantists, but not many.

### CONCLUSION

About seventeen years ago, I wrote an article entitled *The Mountains of Gelboe*, in which I described in detail the “theology” of the SSPX, and how it would lead to an ultimate reconciliation with the Modernists. I compared it to the mountains of Gelboe in Sacred Scripture, where Saul had led his army in order to fight the Philistines. The Israelites were slaughtered, and Saul in despair killed himself. David subsequently cursed these mountains, because the “strong of Israel had fallen there.”

Archbishop Lefebvre in 1970 formed an organization which, little by little, took on the role of the “strong of Israel,” that is, it attracted the young men throughout the whole world who wanted to enlist in the war against the Philistine, the Modernist. Its ranks swelled, and these priests in turn attracted the lay people who were seeking an alternative to the Philistine rule.

If this reconciliation goes through, the universal slaughter of the strong of Israel will again take place.

The Society of Saint Pius X must either abandon its openness to the Modernists, or it must join up with them. If it chooses to stay on its present

path, then I hope for this reconciliation, since it will finally clear the air, the logical chickens will come home to roost, and they will become officially what they are now in fact: a Novus Ordo organization which cultivates a number of practices and beliefs which are more or less traditional. As they are now, they are a danger to souls.

I remember standing in the porch of the Ridgefield seminary in April of 1983, not far away from Archbishop Lefebvre, the then-Fr. Williamson, and Fr. Roch. They were laughing about the accusation that the then-Fr. Dolan had made to the laity — that the Archbishop would one day lead traditionalists straight back to the Novus Ordo. Well, his SSPX is on Ratzinger’s front porch now — and there is nothing to laugh about any more.

THE MOST REV. DONALD J. SANBORN was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1975. He was Rector of the SSPX seminary in the U.S. from 1977–1983. In 1995 he founded Most Holy Trinity Seminary, which is now located in Brooksville, Florida.