

The Mountains Of Gelboë

(1994)

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**One of Abp. Lefebvre's first seminarians
mourns the fall of his Society.**

AT THE END of the First Book of Kings, we read about the terrible defeat of the Israelite army in a desperate battle against the Philistines. Saul, their King, had been distracted for a long time by an obsession to kill David, for the pure reason that David had upstaged him in battle. Caught in unpreparedness, the Israelite army was slaughtered; Saul, mortally wounded, committed suicide by falling upon his sword. All of this happened upon the mountains of Gelboë (pronounced *jell-bo-ay*). *And the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gelboë. (I Kings 31:1)*

David, who had not taken part in the battle, was overwhelmed with grief. He grieved for Saul his persecutor, for the fact that he was his king. He grieved for Jonathan, his closest friend. He grieved for the valiant men of Israel who fell on that mountain. *The illustrious of Israel are slain upon thy mountains: how are the valiant fallen? (II Kings 1:19)*

The composer George Frederick Handel put this dramatic scene from the Old Testament to moving music in his oratorio entitled *Saul*. To dark strains of funeral dirge, these words bemoan the loss of the valiant youth of Israel:

Mourn, Israel, mourn, thy beauty lost,
Thy choicest youth on Gilboa slain!
How have thy fairest hopes been cross'd!
What heaps of mighty warriors strew the plain!

Every year, in June and July, the priest in reading his breviary frequently recites David's lament of the events on Gelboë:

Montes Gelboë, nec ros nec pluvia veniant super vos, ubi ceciderunt fortes Israël.

O Mountains of Gelboë, may neither dew nor rain fall upon you, where the valiant of Israel have fallen.

Where the Valiant of Israel Have Fallen

When one considers that Israel in the Old Testament is a prefiguration of the Catholic Church in the New, and that the Philistines, the long-time enemy of the Israelites, are a prefiguration of the enemies of the Church, it is difficult not to make the comparison to our own time.

Never was there a time when the Church was more assailed by her enemies; never have they been more successful. Never before has the Church fought such a decisive battle against her enemies. It is truly the moment of her Gelboë.

The battle is a fierce one. The Philistines are, of course, the modernists. The Israelites are Catholics faithful to their holy

Faith. Just like the Philistines who mustered a terrible force in response to their humiliation by the killing of Goliath, so the modernists have assailed the Church in our time with renewed vigor, having been humiliated under the reign of St. Pius X.

Yet the valiant of Israel — the faithful Catholics — are falling and are being slain in this fateful contest.

The Building of a Great Army

Walking home from Sunday Mass in November of 1964, I remember being severely disheartened. It was the first Sunday of Advent, and the first changes of Paul VI had been introduced into the Mass. The prayers at the foot of the altar had been dropped, as well as the Last Gospel. The Dialogue Mass had been introduced, and some Protestant-sounding hymns had been sung. Although tame by today's standards of liturgical aberration, I nevertheless knew, then, instinctively, that something was deeply wrong in the Catholic Church. I felt, at the young age of fourteen, that the Protestant religion had crept into the Catholic Church.

My life would never again be the same. The interior disarray which the changes caused in me became worse and worse as time went on. More and more changes were made; more and more the Church — or what seemed to be the Church — became protestantized.

In 1967 I entered the diocesan seminary on the college level. Naively had I thought that the seminary would be a haven of orthodoxy and conservatism from the liberal parish. In fact, to my deep sadness, I discovered practically the first day that the opposite was true. I remember being horrified to hear older seminarians calling for married clergy and other liberal changes.

By 1970, I realized that I would never be able to function in the environment of the Vatican II religion of the future. I realized then what the *Novus Ordo* religion would become — exactly what it is now. The liberal seminarians are now priests and bishops, and there is yet more to come from them.

I and other seminarians started looking around for other dioceses which would be more conservative. At that time, all one looked for or hoped for was conservatism, a little niche in which to weather the storm of liberalism. Nearly all conservatives felt that the storm would soon pass, since the "Holy Father," then Paul VI, would catch wind of the doings of the evil liberals, and would crack down on them. The "Holy Father" just did not know what was going on — that was the reason for all of the liberalism, we all thought. Year by year the seminary became more liberal; every year I thought to myself, "Next year they will crack down." They never did.

There was always the implicit idea in every conservative's head that the liberals were really Catholics who just got carried away. Once they saw that the changes were not working, they would go back.

It was during these years that I and other seminarians traveled to Fordham University in the Bronx to hear Dr. von Hildebrand speak on the changes. He was introduced by the now well-known Dr. William Marra. I also avidly read *Triumph* magazine, and just about every other traditional or conservative publication I could get my hands on.

But none of it was working. It just got worse and worse and worse.

Finally, in the Fall of 1970, a fellow seminarian had the idea of writing to *The Voice*, a traditional journal published in upstate New York, asking if anyone knew of a traditional seminary somewhere. The letter was published. A priest, by the name of Fr. Ramsey, responded. He said that although he knew of nothing available in the United States, he did know of a small seminary recently founded by a French Archbishop in Switzerland. Furthermore, he would be coming to the United States in the Spring.

Naturally interested, I wrote to him, and received a kind response from him rather quickly. He would be coming in March, and would be happy to meet with me and other interested seminarians. On Monday, March 15, 1971, I and two other seminarians met with Archbishop Lefebvre in New York City. Again, my life would never be the same.

This conversation with the Archbishop contained in seed form all of the strengths and all of the problems that would be part of the traditional movement in the future.

His Excellency was on his way to Covington, Kentucky, where he was to meet with another member of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, the Bishop of Covington. The Archbishop hoped to obtain from him permission to found a little seminary of the newly founded Society in his diocese.

The Archbishop began his conversation with us by showing to us the approval for the Society which he had received from the Diocese of Fribourg. It was clear from this that he wanted to work within the framework of the Novus Ordo. At the time, no one ever thought of doing anything else — we were all just looking for a refuge, a place to be Catholic and mind our own business.

As the conversation progressed, however, Archbishop Lefebvre explained that it was necessary to retain the traditional Latin Mass exclusively, and that this was the Mass used in his seminary. While I welcomed the idea of the traditional Latin Mass, and *hated* the New Mass, the idea of retaining the traditional troubled me. Assuming that Paul VI was the Pope, which we all thought at the time, how can one resist him on this point? One seminarian, I remember, put the objection to him. The Archbishop gave a vague answer as to its legality, and insisted more on the necessity to retain the traditional Mass in order to retain the Faith. He was, of course, right, but the legal question remained puzzling and troubling.

The conversation contained in bud form all the events that would unfold later. The desire to work with the Novus Ordo would eventually war with the resolve to retain the traditional Mass, and the Catholic Faith in general. The Archbishop, and with him the Society, will spend an agonizing twenty-five years trying to wed these two contradictory elements: the Novus Ordo and the Catholic Faith. And because the Novus Ordo is promulgated by the “pope,” the Archbishop and the Society will seek an impossible middle ground between recognizing the authority of Christ in him, and resisting the authority of Christ in him.

These two contradictory strains in Archbishop Lefebvre, the one to work with the Novus Ordo, the other to preserve the Catholic Faith, will cause two factions to arise in Ecône: the *soft-liners*, or liberals, who favored compromise of the Catholic Faith in order to gain the approval of the Novus Ordo, and the *hard-*

liners, who favored abandonment of hope of approval from the Novus Ordo, lest the Faith be compromised.

As I said in my article of ten years ago, entitled *The Crux of the Matter*, the Archbishop gave both sides something to work with. Some statements and deeds were very soft-line; other statements and deeds were very hard-line. The result was that each side could claim to be of the mind and spirit of the Archbishop.

In fact, the Archbishop pursued a course which was neither one nor the other. The method which he foresaw for solving the crisis in the Church was to build up a great army of traditional priests, send them out to say Mass *everywhere*, and attract Catholics to their Masses and apostolate. The Novus Ordo, he thought, would become weak for lack of vocations, and soon the Vatican and bishops would have to capitulate to the reality that the only priests left were traditional priests. Reluctantly they would return to tradition. On the other hand, the Archbishop felt that it was absolutely necessary to preserve Catholic doctrine, liturgy, and practice, and therefore to resist the Novus Ordo authorities, notably Paul VI.

From this double purpose was born the only possible conclusion: the “sifting” solution. Recognize the Novus Ordo authority as the Catholic authority, but sift their doctrines, their laws and their liturgy for what is Catholic, and reject what is non-catholic.

The Archbishop therefore sought to form the seminarian who would accept this solution, and, obviously, regard the Society — him — as the “sifting” authority. This is how the “cult of Monseigneur” got its start. The seminarian, unable to resolve the problem of authority, looked to Archbishop Lefebvre as the special voice of God in this crisis. Rome was not a problem as long as the Archbishop was around to interpret it, and to lead us through the various modernist obstacles given to us by Rome.

From 1970 to 1975, these three currents, the soft-line, the hard-line, and the Lefebvre-line, developed side by side, and only had occasional minor flare-ups with one another. The hard-liners openly made known their sedevacantist views about Paul VI. They also felt no need to hide their allegiance to the St. Pius X Breviary and rubrics, and seminarians could be seen with these breviaries all over the seminary.

In the classroom, the hard-line would do battle against professors of modernist tendency, a certain now well-known British bishop leading the hard-line pack. The soft-liners would defend the professors, and attack the hard-liners. The Lefebvre-liners would generally stay out of it.

In 1974, the Vatican decided to investigate Ecône by sending Visitors who interviewed a great many faculty members and seminarians. Perceiving that the report would be badly received, Archbishop Lefebvre issued his famous *Declaration* which infinitely pleased the hard-liners, and flattened the soft-liners. A year later, in May of 1975, Paul VI suppressed the Society. Archbishop Lefebvre resolved to resist him, and keep Ecône open. The hard-liners rejoiced, full of enthusiasm for the now open war with modernism, particularly located in the Vatican. They gave no care for the suppression, for they considered the acts of Paul VI to be null and void anyway.

The soft-liners were in turmoil. Many left. The Lefebvre-liners said nothing and loyally went along with the Archbishop.

The events of 1975 to 1978 gave every indication that the hard-line would gain the day. The Archbishop seemed to give up any hope, or even desire to reconcile with the modernist Montini. He called the Vatican II church “a schismatic church,” and the New Mass a “bastard Mass.” For a moment, it seemed that the dichotomy in Archbishop Lefebvre of the early years had resolved itself into a logical and consistent pursuit of war with the Novus Ordo. The Society would be the great army of the Catholic Church against its modernist enemies, the Philistines within the walls, primarily the walls of the Vatican. It would attract vocations from the whole world, form them according to the mind of the Church, Catholic and anti-modernist, and return them to the battlefield in every country of the globe. The future was bright, secure, and glorious.

Then on August 6, 1978, Paul VI did something which made a great many people happy. He stopped living.

John Paul II: the Bear Hug

Having gotten through the brief days of Luciani, the present and seemingly never-ending Wojtyla became the third Vatican II “pope” in October of 1978.

Archbishop Lefebvre wanted to see the new “pope.” Wojtyla saw him not long after his election. In the course of his historic conversation, Wojtyla told Lefebvre that he could live with “accepting the Council in the light of tradition,” the formula that the Archbishop had always used in his old attempt to arrive at coexistence with the Novus Ordo. For Lefebvre it meant sifting the Council for Catholicism; for Wojtyla it meant another color on the modernist spectrum of ideas. For Lefebvre it was the re-opening of the pre-Paul VI hope of receiving the approval of the Novus Ordo; for Wojtyla it was a way of reconciling the traditionalists into a High Church. For Lefebvre it was the hope of obtaining a side-chapel of tradition in the modernist cathedral; for Wojtyla, it was the same thing.

Coming together in this hope of reconciliation, Wojtyla gives the Archbishop a bear hug. The war is over.

At least that one. Emerging from this meeting, the Archbishop now has the task of transforming his hard-line Society in battle array into a supple instrument of compromise. Dialogue will be the order of the day for the years to come, and he needs clergy behind him not with sword in hand, but pen in hand to sign a peace with the destroyers of Catholicism.

A Reign of Terror ensued in the Society. Convinced that he had now to build an army of dialoguers and compromisers in order to achieve his long sought after approval of the modernist Vatican, the Archbishop realized that he had to either convert or eliminate the opposition. This he did with relentless resolve, and even cruelty. Sedevacantism was banned. Either you had to say that Wojtyla was pope, or leave and live in banishment and poverty.

To the soft-liners’ delight, every hard-liner in the Society was systematically demolished, either through conversion by pressure or expulsion. By 1986, with the expulsion of the four Italian priests, the process would be complete, and not a single person was left in the Society who was of the mind that Wojtyla was the enemy. The way was now clear for a compromise which would bring coexistence, the side chapel in the modernist Cathedral of Ecumenism.

Despite the setback of the Assisi meeting, and other outrageous ecumenical crimes on the part of Wojtyla, negotiations with the enemy proceeded on course until the fateful day of the protocol: May 5, 1988, the feast of St. Pius V, by no means a coincidence.

After months of negotiation with Ratzinger, a document designed to be preparatory to an ultimate, more formal agreement was presented to Archbishop Lefebvre for signature. In this fateful *protocol*, as it is called, Archbishop Lefebvre (1) promised fidelity to John Paul II and to the Novus Ordo body of bishops; (2) agreed to accept Chapter 25 of *Lumen Gentium*, thereby accepting Vatican II as the teaching of the Catholic Church, without any reserve; (3) agreed to dialogue with the Vatican over disputed points in Vatican II, the new liturgy, and legal matters, "avoiding all polemic," i.e., abandoning the public denunciation of error; (4) recognized as valid the New Mass and the new sacraments, as promulgated by Paul VI and John Paul II in their official editions, thus implying that they are Catholic rites promulgated by the Church, and incapable of being invalid; (5) recognized the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which he himself said is full of errors if not heresies.

In return, Ratzinger conceded a place for the Society in what Archbishop Lefebvre had always termed "the conciliar church." Furthermore, Ratzinger agreed to suggest to the "Holy Father" to name a bishop, to be chosen from among the Society's members.

The next day, May 6th, Archbishop Lefebvre violated the very agreement he entered into, by telling Ratzinger that unless the "Pope" named a bishop and prepared the Apostolic Mandate (the permission to consecrate) by mid-June, he would consecrate a bishop anyway. His reasons were that a postponement of this event would cause in the traditionalists a sense of disillusionment. Furthermore, he added, "hotels, means of transport, the immense tents which will be set up for the ceremony, have all been rented."

Ratzinger and the Archbishop met on May 24th. Ratzinger convinces him that the "Holy Father" will select a bishop from the Society, and will approve of a consecration to be done on August 15th, a mere forty-five days after the much desired June 30th. Lefebvre responds in two letters, one to Ratzinger, the other to Wojtyla, insisting on three bishops and the June 30th consecration date, and that the "Tradition Commission" have a majority of Society members.

Ratzinger responded on May 30th by insisting on the terms of the May 5th protocol, and that the Archbishop submit to the decision of the "Pope" concerning the consecration. Lefebvre responds on June 2nd, denouncing the spirit of Vatican II, and tells Ratzinger that he intends to do the consecration on June 30th, claiming "permission" because Rome said it would permit it on August 15th.

The flip-flop continues. On June 15th, Archbishop Lefebvre gave a press conference in which he said that John Paul II was not Catholic, was excommunicated, outside of the Church, but is the Head of the Church. On June 16th, he told a reporter that he would change his mind if John Paul II — who the day before was not even a Catholic — would approve of his four bishops.

On the 30th of June, 1988 Archbishop Lefebvre consecrated the four bishops. On July 2, John Paul II excommunicated him, and those who follow him.

The Two Sides of the Archbishop

It is evident from his dealings with the modernist Vatican that there were two opposing sides to Archbishop Lefebvre, capable of dictating their own distinct and contradictory theory and course of action.

On the one side was the Archbishop's faith. Having known him for many years, I can attest to the fact that, *in his heart*, he was deeply Catholic, anti-liberal, anti-modernist. He detested the changes of Vatican II, and, like all of us, longed for the days of the traditional Faith.

On the other side was the Archbishop's diplomacy. A firm believer in this art, and well trained in it from having been Apostolic Delegate, he thought that he could solve the Church's problems through diplomacy.

When unfettered by considerations of diplomacy, the Archbishop's faith, enflamed by his fortitude, shown bright. His pronouncements in these undiplomatic and uncalculated moods were excellent. They were exactly what the Church needed — a simple, unambiguous declaration of the truth, a square-in-the-face denunciation of the modernists, a forceful program of positive action against them through the training and ordaining of traditional priests. In this side of him lay the Archbishop's greatness.

When diplomacy dictated his thoughts and actions, however, another Archbishop appeared. Ready to make shameful surrenders for the sake of achieving his end, he would offer ambiguous statements to the modernists as bait, hoping that they would be appeased enough to set him a place at the modernist table. For example, despite the fact that he was *death* on the New Mass, he apparently accepted to permit a New Mass to be celebrated in the large Paris church of Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet:

Cardinal [Ratzinger] lets us know that it would be necessary to then permit a New Mass to be celebrated at St. Nicolas du Chardonnet. He insists on the one Church, that of Vatican II. Despite these disappointments, I sign the Protocol of May 5th. (*Dossier sur les Consécration Épiscopales*, Ecône, 1988, page 4.)

Under the influence of his diplomacy, his wonted courage was transformed into a frail and timorous weakness before the Church's adversaries. Back in 1974, when he perceived that his brilliant *Declaration* was a diplomatic gaffe, to Cardinal Seper he offered the excuse, unworthy of his faith and fortitude, that he had composed it in a moment of anger.

To Ratzinger, in an attempt to move the Vatican to approve of his hoped-for consecrations, he offered the reason that the "tents were rented," as if these consecrations were little more than a wedding reception.

Did he really think that the Vatican would be moved by a question of tents? Did Archbishop Lefebvre really think that the inconvenience of cancelling the tents had anything to do with the momentous questions at hand? Of course not. The truth is that in his heart the Archbishop knew that John Paul II was no more the pope than the man in the moon, and that his dealings with him were not in a spirit of submission to his "authority,"

but rather an attempt to garner from Wojtyla what Wojtyla possessed: an appearance of legitimacy.

Proof of this is his attitude which he expressed to the four bishops-to-be on August 28, 1987, just before the long process of negotiation was begun: "The Chair of Peter," he wrote in a letter to them, "and the positions of authority in Rome are occupied by anti-Christ." (*Ibid.*, page 1.) How, one asks, could he have honestly conducted negotiations with these anti-Christ, in an effort to have his Society approved by them, so as to work side by side with them? How could he call the Vicar of Christ him whom he condemned as an anti-Christ?

The answer lies in the two-sidedness of the Archbishop.

Like two discs playing at the same time, one coming out one speaker, the other out the other, so the Archbishop's two sides, one of faith and the other of diplomacy, could be seen and heard simultaneously, perhaps on the same day, in his pronouncements, attitudes and deeds.

An Army Fighting to Coexist with Heretics

It is often said that if it were not for Archbishop Lefebvre, there would be no traditional movement at all, no priests, no traditional Mass, nothing.

This statement is, for the most part, true. To Archbishop Lefebvre belongs the credit of conceiving the idea of a great worldwide army of priests, working in a coherent and unified fashion against the modernist clergy. To him belongs the credit of setting up a mechanism to accomplish just that, inasmuch as he set his mind to the founding of seminaries and the establishment of many religious houses, schools, convents, novitiates, etc. To him goes the credit of building up a finely equipped army, at least from the material and organizational point of view.

Owing to this material and organizational prowess, and to his charisma which naturally attracted so many people to him, he pulled to himself nearly every vocation to the priesthood among those who were resisting the changes. The formation of Ecône in 1970 was the trumpet call to the Church's troops in her moment of ultimate battle with the powers of darkness, the gates of hell. Many responded and continue to respond. It is Israel's choicest youth in fierce battle with the Philistine.

Like the battle on the mountains of Gelboë, however, our choicest youth are being slain, and the army is losing to the Philistine.

For as long as this army of Catholic priests of resistance to modernism does not perceive the Philistine as the enemy, it will be annihilated.

For although credit goes to Archbishop Lefebvre for raising and equipping the army, so also does responsibility go to him for having led them — as well as the lay people they serve — into the trap of the vast enemy. The trap of the enemy is to lure the resistance to modernism into being a "High Church," a traditional branch of the modernist religion.

This trap, this "solution" of the problem of Vatican II and its reforms serves the purposes of the modernist perfectly. He captures within his reformed, heretical religion, like a spider in her web, virtually the entire resistance which Catholicism could offer it. It captures it, dictates terms to it, contains it, and emasculates it. Then the "Catholic" Church would look for all the world like the Church of England, where adherence to the Catholic

Faith would be reduced to liturgical pomp and “Catholic make-believe” in communion with the heresy. Such a system reduces the Catholic Church to a sect, for the Catholic Church cannot lend the name Catholic to the modernist heretic, and at the same time call itself the true Church of Christ.

Yet the Lefebvrists see as the solution to the Church’s problems a co-existence between modernist and Catholic in the same Church, where they have their churches, and we have ours, all under the same pope, who would be Holy Father to both heretic and Catholic alike.

This attitude is not of God. Never, never, in the history of the Old Testament or of the New, has God ever compromised with His enemies. Never has God permitted the mixture of false religion with His sacred doctrine. In fact, the reason why the chosen people were continually punished in the Old Testament was because they sought to mix their divinely revealed faith with the pagan worship of neighboring peoples.

No, either Vatican II is of God or it is not of God. Either the changes brought forth by this Council are of the Holy Ghost or they are not of the Holy Ghost. If they are of the Holy Ghost, then they should be accepted, and our resistance is sinful. If they are not of the Holy Ghost, then they are of the devil, and there is but one response of the Church to it, and that is *anathema*, a thousand times *anathema*, and excommunication to all heretics. No co-existence with heresy and heretics. To call for such co-existence is to reduce the Church to a sect, like those of the Protestants.

We are not seeking, therefore, in this resistance we place to Vatican II and its changes, a side-chapel of tradition in the great modernist cathedral. No, we are raising a voice of rejection and denunciation of heresy, which is the voice of faith, against those heretics who have invaded our sacred buildings and filled them with the stench of heretical abomination.

Equipping them with everything except the proper theology of how to view the enemies of the Church, Archbishop Lefebvre created an army which does not know where the enemy is. Their struggle is a struggle for “recognition” by the modernist “authorities.” They seek to be absorbed by the Philistine, and not to conquer him. They want to work together with the modernist in the Vatican, and not drive him from it. Their battle is a battle for co-existence with the modernist, a battle to share the same Church with the heretic.

The spirit of “negotiation with Rome” continues in the Society. The very term sounds schismatic, for Catholics do not negotiate with Rome but submit to Rome. Shortly after the consecrations of 1988, Archbishop Lefebvre said that the negotiations would continue, and that perhaps in five years, all would be resolved. We have only recently heard of more negotiations, more moves toward Wojtyla. *Veritatis Splendor*, the new encyclical of Wojtyla, was praised by the *Rector of Ecône* [!] as being “radically anti-liberal, anti-ecumenical, anti-collegial” and as “having nothing serious in it in need of revision.”

The Root of the Problem

The reason why the Society pursues the path of negotiation with the modernists, with the ultimate goal of being absorbed by them, is that they regard Wojtyla as having papal authority. They feel a need to submit to him and be recognized by him, as

they would submit to Christ and be recognized by Christ. Papal authority is the authority of Christ.

At the same time, however, they regard nearly everything he says or does as either heretical, erroneous, scandalous or harmful to souls. They openly say that a Catholic cannot survive spiritually in the *Novus Ordo*. This means that the Mass and sacraments, doctrine, and discipline which has been given to us officially by the Pope (in their eyes) is so harmful to souls that it is spiritually death-dealing.

Because it is spiritually death-dealing, the Society feels that it has a *carte blanche* to carry on any apostolate it wishes in any diocese of the world. At the same time, they carry on negotiations with the spiritual death-dealers, in order that they might work side-by-side with them in dioceses, like the Fraternity of Saint Peter.

If the Society would abandon this impossible position, which is just like that of the Donatists, Jansenists, Gallicans and Old Catholics, and adopt the *Catholic* position, it would become the true and valiant army of resistance it was meant to be.

Their position is impossible, because, in their view, they are *fighting* the very Catholic Church they want to be a part of. But Catholics do not *fight* their Church, they submit to it, because it is indefectible and infallible. It is the Church of Christ, and its authority is the authority of Christ.

The *Catholic* position, therefore, is that it is impossible that the Catholic authority — the authority of Christ — prescribe for the whole Catholic Church false or death-dealing doctrines, disciplines, Masses, or sacraments. Because the Vatican II reforms are false and death-dealing, it is impossible that they come from Catholic authority, the authority of Christ. It is therefore impossible that Wojtyla have the papal authority he claims to have. He does not represent the Catholic Church. The reforms of Vatican II do not come to us from the Catholic Church.

The obvious practical conclusion from this Catholic position is one of *no compromise* with the heretics in the Vatican and episcopal chanceries. It is the duty of the Church to denounce the modernists as impostors in their claim to Catholic authority, and urge Catholics to pay no attention to them, and to refuse to give them the Catholic name. This denunciation of their false authority is essential to the Church's indefectibility, since the Church would defect if she accepted as true a false spouse, and accepted as Catholic the non-catholic doctrines, disciplines and liturgy which have emanated from Vatican II, Montini, and Wojtyla.

Fraternity of St. Peter: Abp. Lefebvre's Child

The disastrous effects of the diplomacy of Archbishop Lefebvre and the false ecclesiology upon which it is based, can be seen in the production of the Fraternity of Saint Peter and of the Indult Mass. The sole reason why we have either of these things is that Archbishop Lefebvre asked for them, and worked very hard to bring them about.

The idea of a religious congregation working within the structures of the *Novus Ordo* diocese, yet at the same time retaining the traditional Mass and theology, was the dream of Archbishop Lefebvre from the beginning. This dream came to fruition when the protocol was put in front of him for signature. He had finally obtained what he had for so long, through skillful diplomacy, sought and engineered. And while it can be said that

we would not have any traditional priests were it not for Archbishop Lefebvre, it can also be said that we would not have a Fraternity of Saint Peter, were it not for Archbishop Lefebvre.

I believe that the Fraternity of Saint Peter, together with the Indult Mass, will, with time, outrun the Society of Saint Pius X. It only makes sense: if Wojtyla is the Pope, and Vatican II a true Catholic Council, then how can we logically resist them when they offer us a niche of tradition? How can we logically say that their doctrines are erroneous or their liturgy death-dealing? We obviously cannot. With the Fraternity of Saint Peter, “you can have your cake and eat it too,” that is, you can have tradition and Wojtyla at the same time. If you stick it out with the Society of Saint Pius X, you have the constant gnawing problem of authority. The “authority of Christ” has excommunicated the Society of Saint Pius X. What possible response do they have to this problem except, “the authority of Christ is wrong.”

We also see the fall of the Church’s valiant youth in the significant number of defections from the Society of Saint Pius X. When priests quit this group, they always go *leftward*, that is, always get closer to the Novus Ordo via the Fraternity of Saint Peter or Indult. They never move away from the Novus Ordo. This says something about the training which they receive in the Lefebvrist seminaries.

An example of this is Fr. John Rizzo. The now Fr. Rizzo was a seminarian of mine in Ridgefield. When I knew him he was very strong in his theological positions, and wished to have nothing to do with the Novus Ordo. Now we read that he has been accepted into a Novus Ordo diocese, and is functioning under their auspices. What happened? Ten years of Lefebvristism is what happened. He had pumped into him for ten years that the hard-line position of the “evil nine priests” was schismatic, because it did not recognize the Pope as the Pope. Well, hats off to you, Society of Saint Pius X, for taking a good seminarian and ruining him, for he has done nothing else than taken your theological positions to their logical conclusions. If you do not abandon your inconsistent and dangerous positions, you are going to see the Fr. Rizzo fiasco eventually happen on the grand scale.

No Logical Basis for an Apostolate

For as long as the Society recognizes Wojtyla as having papal authority, it possesses no logical basis upon which to justify an apostolate.

When the traditional priest functions, that is, when he says Mass and distributes the sacraments without the permission of the local bishop, he must somehow justify his functioning without authorization. The only possible justification he could offer is, “the Church would want me to do this.” No authority has authorized him to say Mass and distribute the sacraments, so he must have a coherent and convincing argument that the Church — ultimately Christ — would want him to be there.

But if the traditional priest says that the authority of Christ is vested in Wojtyla or the local bishop, then how can he possibly make a case that the Church would want him to carry on an unauthorized apostolate? If the authority of Christ can be found in the local bishop, then how can the authority of Christ want the traditional priest to function against the local bishop? If the authority of Christ is vested in Wojtyla, then how could Christ de-

sire a group of priests to have an apostolate in defiance of Wojtyla? Is Christ against Christ?

And, on the other side of the coin, if the authority of Christ is not vested in Wojtyla, then how would Christ or the Church authorize the apostolate of those who insist that the heretic Wojtyla is a true Pope? How could Christ or the Church desire the apostolate of priests who seek to bring the faithful into the fold of heretical false shepherds? Who denounce as schismatic those who do not recognize the false shepherds?

What all this boils down to is that you cannot separate the authority of the Church from the authority of Christ, and you cannot separate the authority of the Church from the Church itself. It is all one. You therefore cannot claim to represent the Catholic Church if you are acting against its authority. Nor can you claim to represent the Catholic Church if you are recognizing a false authority. *Where Peter is, there is the Church.* If your apostolate is not Peter's, then your apostolate is not the Church's, nor Christ's. To recognize as Peter, therefore, him who condemns your apostolate, is to condemn your own apostolate out of your own mouth.

This business of recognizing the authority of the Pope, on the one hand, but "doing your own thing," on the other, has been a tell-tale sign of many heretics and schismatics. It was the attitude of the Jansenists and Gallicans, and of the Old Catholics. It was condemned by Pope Pius IX:

What good is it to proclaim aloud the dogma of the supremacy of St. Peter and his successors? What good is it to repeat over and over declarations of faith in the Catholic Church and of obedience to the Apostolic See when actions give the lie to the fine words? Moreover, is not rebellion rendered all the more inexcusable by the fact that obedience is recognized as a duty? Again, does not the authority of the Holy See extend, as a sanction, to the measures which We have been obliged to take, or is it enough to be in communion of faith with the See without adding the submission of obedience, — a thing which cannot be maintained without damaging the Catholic faith?...In fact, Venerable Brothers and beloved Sons, it is a question of recognizing the power (of this See), even over your churches, not merely in what pertains to faith, but also in what concerns discipline. He who would deny this is a heretic; he who recognizes this and obstinately refuses is worthy of anathema. (*Quæ in patriarchatu*, Sept. 1. 1876, to the clergy and faithful of the Chaldean rite.)

And we cannot pass over in silence the audacity of those who, not keeping to sound doctrine, contend that they can — without sin and damage to catholic profession — withhold obedience to those judgments and decrees of the Apostolic See, whose object is declared to regard the general good of the Church, her laws, and her discipline, so long as they do not touch dogmas of faith or morals. (*Quanta Cura*, 1864)

The position of the Society is therefore not a Catholic position. It is nothing less than a disaster that nearly all of the Church's youth, *the valiant of Israel*, have been filled with non-catholic principles in their battle against modernism. It means that there is no voice of truly Catholic resistance to modernism, save for the few priests in the world who denounce the modernists as non-authority. It is the Church's Gelboë.

A False Notion of the Church

The Society's fundamental problem is that they are laboring under a false notion of the Church. They look at Wojtyla's election by a college of Novus Ordo cardinals, and from it conclude that he is a legitimate pontiff.

Because even they see the problem of being in communion with a heretic, they say that John Paul II is the head of two churches, the one, the Conciliar Church, the other, the Catholic Church. Sometimes he speaks or acts as the head of the Conciliar Church; at other times, he speaks and acts as the head of the Catholic Church.

How do we know which is which? By means of Archbishop Lefebvre who has the mission from God to sift the doings and sayings of these modernist popes, and to instruct us as to what to believe, what to do, and what to think. Now that the Archbishop is dead, the sifting authority has been transferred to Fr. Franz Schmidberger.

From this principle one would have to logically draw the conclusion that the infallibility and indefectibility of the Catholic Church, the deposit of Faith, the salvation of all the faithful, are in the hands of Fr. Franz Schmidberger. The Catholic Church, the Catholic Faith, the validity of the sacraments, what we should believe to be saved, all hangs in the balance of the good judgement of Fr. Franz Schmidberger.

This type of ecclesiology, or Church theology, could be compared to "distinctive ring" service on telephone lines. If a fax is coming in you get one ring; if a phone call is coming, you get another. So, by comparison, if Wojtyla says something Catholic, you get a distinctive ring from the Society; if he is saying something modernist, you get a different kind of ring from the Society.

It is needless to say that such a system not only is absurd, but also reduces to ashes the infallibility of the Catholic Church. The authority, in such a system, is no longer the Pope, but the Superior General of the Society of Saint Pius X, for the present Fr. Franz Schmidberger.

Their system fails to understand that it is the possession of papal *authority* which makes a pope a pope. This authority, protected by the Holy Ghost in matters of faith, morals, liturgy and general discipline, *cannot* prescribe for the Church false doctrines or evil laws, which it would be necessary for the faithful to reject or resist. If therefore it is necessary to resist their doctrines, morals, liturgy and general discipline, one must conclude that these "popes" are not true popes, since they do not possess papal authority. This is true despite whatever election process by which they have been designated for that office.

To perceive, however, the Novus Ordo "popes" as true Popes — which the Society does — is to identify the Catholic Church with them, for *where Peter is, there is the Church*. But to identify the Catholic Church with them establishes a type of "gravitational pull" which the Society members have toward John Paul II and his Church. Somehow, some way, the Society has to return to the bosom of Wojtyla. This gravitational pull toward the Novus Ordo, seen as the Church, accounts for the liberalism of the Society priests, and for their many defections to the Novus Ordo, or to the Fraternity of St. Peter.

Their notion of two Churches, one Catholic, one Conciliar, does not conform to reality. The reality is that Wojtyla was elect-

ed to be the Catholic Pope, and claims to be the Catholic Pope. He does not claim to be the head of anything else but the Catholic Church. The reality is that he is trying to foist upon the structures of the Catholic Church a new religion, that of modernism. Because he is attempting to replace the Catholic Faith with a new religion, it is impossible that he have the papal authority which he claims to have or appears to have, or which he was designated to have. Why? Because the nature of authority is to bring the community to its proper ends. Since the maintenance of the Catholic Faith is an *essential* end of the Catholic Church, anyone who would attempt to thwart that end could not possibly retain the authority of the Catholic Church, which is the authority of Christ. It is therefore impossible that these Vatican II popes be true popes, since they intend an essentially disordered end for the structures of the Catholic Church.

The Society looks only at the external structures of the Church, notices their continuity from before the Council to after the Council, and concludes that the Novus Ordo is the Catholic Church. In fact, novus ordite or modernist clergy are in possession of Catholic structures, but that does not mean that they represent the Catholic Church.

Thus the Society has a deadly attraction to the modernist hierarchy in possession of our Catholic buildings. This deadly attraction is devastating, for it makes their battle a battle to obtain recognition from modernists. The “legitimacy” which the modernists can provide is no legitimacy at all, but only a sham appearance of it, at the expense of the purity of the Catholic Faith. Yet the Society is dazzled, hypnotized by this lure of “legitimacy,” something like the deer on the highway, which stops and fixes its stare on the headlights of the oncoming vehicle, and thus meets a tragic end.

Because the modernists are attempting this wicked scheme of filling our Catholic Churches with their heretical abomination, it is the solemn duty of Catholics to *denounce them as false authority*, thereby making a Catholic stance of preserving the infallibility and indefectibility of the Catholic Church, as represented by her true hierarchy endowed with true authority.

The Future of the Traditional Movement

Like it or not, the future of the traditional movement is very much bound up with the future of the Society of Saint Pius X, or at least with those who are now members of it. They are the vocations to the priesthood in the Church’s time of crisis, and, as such, are the *valiant of Israel*.

Like a rocket which has been fired off-course, these vocations, these priests and seminarians, are proceeding at full speed toward a reconciliation with the Church’s enemies. Nothing could please the modernist more, nor the devil. It is nearly all of the energy and power of the Catholic Faith collected into one misfired weapon.

It is inevitable that some of the members of this Society will end up with the Novus Ordo, in one form or other. Probably the Society will strike an agreement with the Novus Ordo, achieve “recognition” on terms which it perceives better than those of the Fraternity of Saint Peter, and become absorbed into the modernist religion. In my opinion, such an agreement will cause the disaffection of about 20% of the present adherents of the group, who will leave and re-group, but only to start the process all

over again. They will carry the torch of Lefebvrism, of an impossible Church theology, of having a foot in both religions, Catholic and modernist, of sifting Vatican documents and decrees. And, inevitably the stresses and strains of contradiction will pull it apart once again.

The real future of the traditional movement, which is the future of the Catholic response to the modernist enemy, lies in a *Catholic* stance toward papal authority and the nature of the Catholic Church. For this reason I feel that it is of urgent and supreme necessity that we Catholic priests and laity, who want no compromise with the enemy, work together to establish Catholic seminaries. It is of equal importance that young men come forth from our parishes, give up the many worldly allurements of our present age, and present themselves to the Church for the holy priesthood.

If we fail in this endeavor — to produce the correctly trained Catholic priest — we shall fail before God to have protected our most valuable possession, our Catholic Faith. And this sacred treasure which has been handed down to us with precious care by our ancestors, sometimes at the price of their own blood, will have been thrown, through our negligence, like trash to the modernist dogs.

We cannot fail to produce the straight-thinking Catholic priest in these times, the priest who knows who the Church's enemy is, where he is, and wants to fight him with zealous and holy ardor, rather than to sign an agreement with him. If we fail in this endeavor, we will receive what we deserve: these chapels and schools which we have so carefully and painstakingly preserved from modernism, will be manned by priests — if even validly ordained — who have traded the purity of the Catholic Faith for recognition by the modernist heretic.

An Appeal to the Society of St. Pius X

You have nearly all of the Church's valiant youth in your ranks. In your seminaries, you have trained them to think that coexistence with the modernist hierarchy is the solution to the Church's problems. Because of this, you have given birth both to the Indult Mass and to the Fraternity of Saint Peter and to other organizations of similar nature.

You continue to dialogue with the heretics, in an effort to be re-absorbed by them. You denounce as schismatic any priest who says that the heretics do not have authority over the Catholics. You have persecuted them, driven them away, calumniated them, and made them live, in many cases, in poverty and misery.

But even now your organization groans under the strains of the inherent contradictions of your position, and contains within its walls "liberal" and "conservative," who are defined by what price they set for compromise with the modernist heretic, whom they regard to be the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

As you approach your Chapter meeting of this July, and elect your new Superior General, abandon once and for all your desire of coexistence with the heretic. Declare once and for all *war* on those who have destroyed our Faith. Denounce them as heretics, and take the Catholic stand that those who inflict upon the Church a different faith cannot possibly have the mission from Christ to rule the Church. Before anything else, it is the mission of the Church to witness unto the truth. "For this was I

born, and for this I came into the world, to witness unto the truth." If Vatican II is not the truth, as you know it is not, then he who teaches it to the Church as truth cannot have the mission from Christ to teach the truth.

Cease to take the Church's youth who present themselves to you for training, and to turn them into apostles of an impossible theology which logically brings them to embrace the Novus Ordo.

Cease to be the Church's Gelboë, in her struggle against the Philistine.

Fraternitas, Fraternitas, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

(*Sacerdotium* 12, Summer 1994)

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