

April '82

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April 1982 - Conference with the seminarians
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SEMINARY, RIDGEFIELD, CONN.

Subject: "Concerning the Unity in the Society"
(Reproduced from a tape recording):

"I am very happy to meet with you and speak with you, as I did in Ecône and Zeitskoffen. Each time I do some conferences for the seminarians. It is very important while I am still alive, that the young priests and seminarians know the motive (our attitude) of our life in the Church, in this time of great confusion. It is very difficult in these times to pick the good way (the Catholic attitude) in the Church. You know that. Perhaps for some of you, you had some difficulty in choosing the right way, to choose the right seminary. And I think that if you have chosen the seminary of St. Pius X, it is because you think we are right in the spirit of the Fraternity. And you know that we are always between 2 ways (between 2 extremes)."

ONE EXTREME

"For some priests and seminarians, they think the attitude of the Fraternity is too hard and outside the bishops and hierarchy of the Church. This mentality is: 'that it is better to accept some of the reforms (of Vat. II)...because they come from the pope and from Rome and all bishops accept this reform and they cannot be very bad.' This is impossible, and I said to them: 'If you think so, then you cannot remain in the Fraternity. It is impossible. You must choose either the spirit of the Fraternity or accept the reform of Vat. II.' They preferred to go outside the Fraternity."

"Two professors, one in Zeitskoffen, and one at Ecône, preferred to leave the Fraternity and begin to say the New Mass and New Office. What a pity that this Father at Ecône did...he had some influence over some of the Italian seminarians there...and he influenced them to leave. It was a very great pity and great sadness for us because I had great hopes for priests for Italy... Italy needs many many traditional and true priests. The seminaries in Italy are very very bad. All seminaries there are modernist. In the parishes it is not so bad, because some of the older priests are conservative and good. But perhaps more than in France, Switzerland, Poland, and Belgium, that the situation of seminaries in Italy perhaps is worse, worse than the other countries. Many seminaries are closed. The seminary in Turrain (sp?) with 300 rooms is closed. No seminarians. So they need good priests and it was very sad for us to lose these Italian seminarians at Ecône. In Zeitskoffen, the professor left, but took no seminarians with him."

THE OTHER EXTREME

"There is also another tendency...some young priests and seminarians, they think that it is necessary to do the Ritual without recognizing the pope, cardinals, bishops, etc...i.e., no more Catholic Church now...it is finished...and so we must abandon all these people and do a new Church, i.e., a Catholic Church but outside of Rome, far from Rome. And so some young priests, 3 years ago, left the Fraternity because I said that that (their proposition) is impossible. I cannot say that Rome does not exist now...no Rome, no cardinals, no bishops,...etc. It is impossible that Jesus Christ would abandon His Church into such a situation. It is impossible!"

"Where are we going if we have no more pope, bishops, cardinals, or Church?? If no more visible Church? Where is the Church if this is so?"

"And so we can see that these priests found another Church. No more Catholic Church. Now some priests receive consecration as bishops. They are having some meeting with Fr. McKenna and 6 other priests and some bishop (i.e., bishop Thuc) and he ordains other bishops. They had a meeting and perhaps in some weeks or months ahead they will choose another pope. That is a logical conclusion of this tendency. It is very very dangerous!"

"Fr. G---, a dominican priest, was a friend of Ecône...he gave good spiritual conferences and spiritual exercises at Ecône. But always he said: "No Pope...he does not exist." I said: "That is not true. You cannot say that." And so now he...is with Palmar de Troya in Spain...because he thinks perhaps the true pope is in Palmar de Troya...yes, yes! A great theologian thinks this! He is a very intelligent man...very extraordinary..."

"Your place is not in the Fraternity"

"The consequence of this tendency is schism with Rome, saying Rome is finished. That is absolutely impossible. I do not accept that! A young priest said: 'I do not recognize the pope...no pope in Rome...and I cannot pray for the pope.' (With this attitude): Your place is not in the Fraternity. Not in the Fraternity. Because we must pray for the pope (said emphatically)...because the pope is bad...his spirit is bad, is liberal...it is not that we say the pope has good doctrine and is traditional...no. But it is a big difference between saying "the pope is not good" and saying, "he does not exist".

"In the history of the Church you have some examples of holy men who speak against the pope...but they recognized him as the pope...and they said to the pope, "you have no right to do that...no right..." St. Paul did this with St. Peter...St. Paul said to St. Peter: "You have no right to do that...you do not walk in the way of the Gospel...you are against the Gospel..."

"We in this time, we must do that and say: "You have no right to give a new Mass and new catechism...you have no right to destroy the Catholic Church..." They know that...they know that. But the time is coming when they will say: "...yes we are doing wrong..." But they will not say this now. Perhaps they will admit their guilt in 2 years, or 3 years, or 35 years, I do not know. God knows. But they know now they do a very bad thing in the Church. But they do not recognize that the bad thing comes from the council of Vatican II. When I said that to the pope or cardinals in Rome, they said: "...no, no, you cannot say that...certainly there are many things wrong in the Church, many things bad...but we cannot say Vatican II is not good, that the New Mass is bad..." But I said just that to them: "I am sure that the New Mass is bad. I am sure that Vat. II is a bad spirit. There are some things in Vat. II that are good but especially on 'Religious Liberty' we cannot accept such a declaration...it is impossible."

THE TRUE WAY

"Now you can see how it is very difficult for you and me and for all the priests of the Fraternity to choose the True Way, the way of God, the way of the Catholic Church. I think that the priests

that do as Fr. Compani (who left with the Italian seminarians from Ecône), or as Fr. G---...they choose the bad way. To Fr. Compani, I wrote: "Now you choose the way to destroy the Church...when you say the New Mass you help in destroying the Church..." Also, 5 or 6 new priests abandoned the Fraternity in France (because they do not believe in the pope) and I said to them: "You do a schism...you have no more Church...it is finished! For you there is no Church...who represents the Church? Nobody. It is finished!" "

"It is very difficult to know the thing we must refuse and the thing we must accept. It is very difficult. In the story of the Reform, from Church History, we must say that they (the saints) remained conformed to the Tradition of the Church and the Theology of the Church...and that is very difficult. Now, it is impossible to accept 'this' or 'that' because it is against the Tradition and Theology of the Church."

"So we must be careful. Do not judge with sentimental judgment, but judge with reason and good sense, with the sense of the Faith, because it is evident that modernism is not only the error of this day alone...because St. Pius X condemned it after it had existed perhaps about 2 centuries. And so the influence of modernism in the Church, and the effects we see in the Church, make it dangerous for us...we must be very careful not to refuse obedience when we have no right to refuse obedience, and know when we have a right and a duty to refuse obedience."

"Thus, in the Fraternity, Ecône is the example of our attitude, or our actions and judgments in this time of the confusion in the Church."

DEVIATIONS FROM ECÔNE

"I am afraid, i.e., I can say that I am afraid that I know that in some seminaries (of the Society) they change the custom of Ecône. If we choose a certain act in Ecône it is not without reason, without a motive. And so I think in this time when there is so much confusion, if we begin to change here, e.g., in Albano, they do some new rule (or rubrics), or in Zeitskofen, or here (in Ridgefield), ...where is the unity?? Slowly, slowly,, although you do something that is not so very important, slowly slowly, perhaps we may realize a division in the Fraternity. That would be very sad. Our fortitude, our strength...we are strong because of our unity. Because the Fraternity has a superior general, not because I am superior general, but because you have a superior general. I hope, while I am still alive, I can see with my own eyes the new superior general, my successor...(laughingly): ...yes...why not? I think that it would be a good thing to have...at least a Vicar General...while I am still alive...and if I get sick or die, then he who was nominated by the districts will take over and continue the Fraternity...its very important that you have continuity in the Fraternity."

THE GOOD CATHOLIC SENSE

"Many people come to the Fraternity. This morning I saw more people come to Mass here at the seminary, more that I have seen ever before...it is a very good thing. Why do these faithful come here? They are more or less afraid of this tendency of, e.g., Fr. Fenton, Fr. McKenna, or others. They are afraid of them. The faithful have

the good sense to judge these men to be wrong and that they have no right (to do what they have done). But the Fraternity is a strong organization of the Church. The faithful know that we follow the good way, i.e., the Catholic Church ...we do not like to go outside of the Catholic Church, but we remain in the Church...and they know that I am going to Rome to speak with the pope and the cardinals...they know that and they like that. "

"If some faithful follow some of these priests (e.g. "Sede Vacante" priests), that teach: 'no more pope in Rome', the number of these followers are very few. It is the same everywhere (i.e., very few followers), not only in America, but everywhere. If today we began to say in the Fraternity that there is no more pope, no more cardinals, no more priests, many people would abandon us."

"They have the sense (good sense). They know that it is possible to have some objection against the direction of the pope... they know! They are not against us when we are against the reform of Vatican II...they are with us...but not if we abandon the Catholic Church...no, no. It is very very important to know this fact."

THE BREVIARY OF POPE JOHN XXIII

"I know that for some of you and some of the professors here, it is very difficult to change the breviary, the office, and take the breviary edited by Pope John XXIII. But you know that this reform is not truly of Pope John XXIII. It was done during the pontificate of Pope Pius XII. Myself, I know that because when I was apostolic delegate in Dakar, and when I was going to the episcopal conference in Mada-gascar...in West Africa, etc., for the episcopal conferences, I received a letter from Rome to speak with the bishops in Africa to ask questions about the reform of the breviary, during the pontificate of Pope Pius XII."

"I know that there are some things that are not very good (in the Pope John XXIII breviary)...but there are some things good in it. For example, with the centuries, the popes canonized many saints. More and more feasts were created and they took the place of the Temporal Cycle...do you understand? If you have many feasts, feasts, feasts, each day we say always the office of some feast, and no more the Mass of the Temporal...and this Mass, especially the Masses of Lent, are very ancient and magnificent, full of the doctrine of penance and of the Redemption of Jesus Christ. They are very good Masses. And so with this reform of Pope Pius XII, during all of Lent we can say these ancient Masses, and that is a good thing; that is not a bad thing. But I know, e.g., the suppression of the Octave of the Epiphany is a pity...it was very nice, a big feast. But we cannot say that it is a sign of modernism. To say that it is a sign of modernism is too exaggerated. You know that in June, for example, in the breviary before Pius XII we have certain days, 3 or 4 octaves in the same time, and we do the commemoration of the Sacred Heart, of St. John Baptist, of Corpus Christi, etc.... 3 or 4...it is too much."

"It is very important to conserve the Temporal cycle. And as to the reform of Pope Pius XII to the new translation of Psalms...Pope John XXIII was against that. He said that. I heard that myself from Pope John XXIII that he was against the new psalter."

"Thus, we cannot say always: 'that is modernist, this is modernist, that is modernist.' Perhaps it was that certain men when in doing this reform of the breviary, in their minds they intended it to be the preparation of a future reform that is modernist. But to say that this reform (edited under Pope John XXIII) was modernist, I think that is exaggerated. I do not think it is modernist. We cannot say that it is."

"You know that in the breviary, what is the most important thing? It is not the lessons (of Matins)...but it is the psalms. That is the very traditional prayer, the psalms, and all psalms (in the Pope John XXIII breviary) remain intact. No change of the psalter. We say in one week all 150 psalms (when we pray the Pope John XXIII breviary), and that is what is important in the breviary. That is what Pope St. Pius X said. When Pope Pius X did his (liturgical) reform, he said, the basis of the breviary is the psalms."

"I think that it is very good if we can pray in the same manner in all our houses. I give you an example where there is difficulty over this: In St. Mary's, Kansas, I sent 3 sisters last year to Kansas. They are accustomed to pray the breviary of Pope John XXIII. They arrived in Kansas. In all our houses, the sisters pray with the priests, with the brothers, and sometimes some of the faithful likewise pray with them. When they arrived in Kansas, Fr. Collins and Fr. Berry, pray with the old breviary. So they cannot pray with them...the sisters say their prayer in the convent and the Fathers say their prayer in the Church...they cannot pray together. That is a pity. I think that it is very important, i.e., that the sisters, the fathers, the brothers, and the whole community pray together, all the prayers...so that there is a unity in the community, unity in the prayer, a unity in the Mass, a unity in Communion, etc., all this unity is very very important...and many good consequences result in the life of the Community from such a unity."

"Now the 3 deacons I will ordain tomorrow, should I raise them to the priesthood next year, along with the one, DeLallo, at Ecône, there will be 4 new priests for America...if, e.g., 2 of these are stationed at the same priorate and if one says: 'ah no, no, I can say the old breviary only', and another says: 'ah no, no, I take the breviary, the new breviary, the breviary of the Fraternity...', then there are 2 priests who cannot pray together...what a pity. Thus begins a division in the Fraternity. This cannot be. I think that before you receive another superior general, I think it is very important that I give to my successor a unified society..."

"That is for the breviary and it is the same for other things as well. We must preserve the Tradition as we have in Ecône and all the other seminaries...That is the reason why I ask Fr. Debruk (sp?) to put together the 'diurnal' ...it is very well prepared...and so we publish the diurnal with all the hours from Lauds to Compline. And so if we do another book with Matins, we will have a complete breviary. It will be a good thing because it is always more and more difficult to find a good breviary. I like you to maintain strength in unity here at the seminary."

CONCERNING ROME

"Cardinal Seper died in December (1981) and now Cardinal Ratzinger is in charge of the Congregation of the Faith. The pope chose him to be intermediary between Rome and the Fraternity."

"When I was in Rome, I phoned for Cardinal Ratzinger to see if he would meet with me and he said yes. I spoke with him for 1 hour and 45 minutes...we discussed as always about the same things."

"Before, perhaps one or two years ago, the first question they always put to me was: 'You are against the pope'. I answered, 'No, I pray for the pope; our seminaries pray for the pope, etc. But we are against certain ideas of the pope.' Now the problem is finished. They know now we are not against the pope...but we are against some actions and ideas of the pope's, yes."

"The second charge was always: 'But you are against the Council of Vatican II.' I said, 'I am not against the Council itself, but I am against many things said and done in the Council.' I refused to sign 2 decrees: 'Religious Liberty' and 'Gaudium et Spes'. The other decrees I signed, but I know and I said that if I know before that the reform come from the Liturgy, I do not sign in the council; but I know that it was passive from this decree that we have so bad a reform."

"You know that the pope said (3 weeks after his nomination) we must judge the council in the light of Tradition. Perhaps he feels we must accept all the decrees and interpret this decree by the light of Tradition. But he does not say this. He says we can accept the light of Tradition to judge what we must accept and what we must refuse. Because our rule is the magisterial teachings of 20 centuries...Tradition."

"In the council, when some Father asked Mgr. Felici, the Secretariat of the Council, what was the Theological note of the Council, he said: 'This Council is a pastoral council, not dogmatic.'"

"Secondly, if the Council defined something as infallible, it is infallible. But he does not say that anything was infallibly defined. Thus nothing is infallible in the Council."

"Thirdly, we must judge the texts by the Norm of Theological Interpretation, i.e., with Traditional Theology. I had no objection to this note of the Council and I told Cardinal Ratzinger this!"

"At this point, it is different. Before they said: 'You must accept today's teaching of the Church and not judge it by what was taught before.' That is impossible, that is modernist! But no more do they say this to me now. Slowly, slowly, I think that with patience, strength, and fortitude, they accept what we stand for. But there is still one obstacle left. They cannot accept our stand on the liturgy, i.e., that we say that the New Mass and the New Reform is bad."

CHANGES IN THE DIVINE OFFICE MADE BY PIUS XII **

1. Simples are reduced to commemorations.
2. Semi-doubles are suppressed, henceforth are only of simple rite.
3. The following Sundays are to be celebrated under the double rite of first class: the four Sundays of Advent; all Sundays from the first Sunday of Lent to Low Sunday inclusive; Pentecost Sunday.
4. All Octaves have been suppressed with the exception of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. The days within these octaves are elevated to double rite.
5. Only the following have first Vespers: feasts of first and second class; all Sundays; any feast of our Lord occurring on a minor Sunday.
6. Dominical prayers, Suffrage of the Saints, and Commemoration of the Cross have been suppressed.
7. Ferial prayers - said at Vespers and Lauds only and then only on the following days: Wednesdays and Fridays in the ferial office of Advent, Lent and Passiontide; on all ember days, with the exception of the ember days of Pentecost when the ferial office is said. The rubrics of the Breviary. prescribing their recitation at other times also, are abrogated as of January 1st, 1956.

**Taken from "Matters Liturgical"