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ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE

April 25, 1983 - Conference with the seminarians of  
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SEMINARY (Reproduced from a tape recording)

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"My dear seminarians:

I think you understand my conference of yesterday, and the consequences of it. Now, I read to you the nomination I am doing for the seminary:

'After the consultation of the General Council, Msgr. Marcel Lefebvre, Superior General of the Fraternity of St. Pius X, nominates Fr. Williamson as superior of the Community of Ridgefield, i.e., director of the Seminary in Ridgefield, to replace Fr. Sanborn who is nominated for (no other) function. That on 25 April 1983, '

+Marcel Lefebvre  
Superior General  
Fraternity of St. Pius X

"It is a very important nomination, i.e., the nomination to be superior of the seminary. I hope that the seminary of Ridgefield shall have the same orientation and attitude as the other seminaries of the Fraternity. I know that the formation here in philosophy and theology for the priesthood, were very good. I know that you were in a good climate for that formation. But unfortunately on the point of the Liturgy, your training was not the same way, the same attitude, the same as in the other seminaries of the Fraternity. I hope that you have understood yesterday's conference concerning this subject of the Liturgy."

#### ON THE POPE

"Today I have the intention to give you other explanations of our attitude concerning the pope. That is another thing that is very controversial. You know yourselves that there are some priests who say: 'There is no pope now since 1965...no pope in Rome.' What is the Fraternity's attitude toward the pope in this circumstance? We think that it is a big presumption, i.e., a very good presumption that the pope is pope. And so we presume that the pope is pope, in our actions and in our attitudes; we act assuming that the pope is pope. So we pray for the pope. I am going to Rome to meet with the pope."

"To say with certainty, metaphysically, that the pope is pope ...I do not know for sure...I think he is...but I do not know. I have no metaphysical certitude that the pope is pope. I think it is a very great (i.e., very good) presumption that the pope is pope. So we must pray for him and have relations with him, as pope. That is why I cannot accept that in some priorates or houses that they refuse to pray for the pope. Many faithful are scandalized when they know that the priests do not pray for the pope, because 80% - 90% of the faithful think the pope is pope. Surely the pope is not good, that we say; for there are many motives to say that...it is very sad for the Church, but it is true. Some

of these priests abandon the Fraternity because they think there is no pope in the Church now. They say: 'If you say that there is a pope in Rome, then you must obey to the pope'...but obedience is not a virtue when it is not for the good, for the common good, or for the personal good. Obedience is a virtue when we do something by obedience for the good, not for doing evil. That is common sense. Children are not obliged to obey their parents if the parents command something that is bad, or evil. It is clear! It is the same for all authorities, ie, when they abuse their power. When authority asks something bad, we must refuse, it is clear. All authority receives its power from God...they have this power in order to realize the common good for society, for the family, the Church, the city, etc. That is clear. So, if the popes ask us to say this (New) Mass, this bad Mass done with 'ecumenism', we do not accept...it is against our Faith. If the Pope gives us the text of 'Religious Liberty', we cannot accept, because it is against the Tradition of the Church. I said just that to Pope Paul VI when I had the last audience with him. (I asked Pope Paul VI): 'What must we do?' 'Some popes, as Pope Pius IX said he is against this 'Religious Liberty', and the Council of Vatican II says: 'we must accept this religious liberty.' Who is right? Who is wrong?' Pope Paul VI said to me: 'We cannot discuss about theology now.' I said to him: 'I choose Pope Pius IX's view (on 'Religious Liberty') because he (represents) Tradition.' He speaks the same as Pope Leo XIII. I do not accept the declaration of 'Religious Liberty' in the Council of Vatican II.' "

"That is very important for the faithful, because if you say: 'We have no pope, i.e., no popes since 1965' (since Pope Paul VI, as they say, became a heretic when he signed the decree on 'Religious Liberty', thus he was no longer pope), then, as they say, 'there are no cardinals because there is no pope...if he designated some cardinals, since he is not a pope...he has no right to make cardinals...and if these cardinals are not cardinals, they have no right to choose another pope...thus they cannot perform a (valid) conclave.' Well, if this is true, then where are we going? There is no pope, no more cardinals, no more conclaves, no more, no more. So tell me, how will we get another pope? (since the line of successors of St. Peter and the Apostles is broken)...impossible...the pope must thus come out of the sky???"

"So, you know, in 'St. ----' in Canada, there is a pope in Canada now...and he said: 'I am nominated (pope) by God', not by conclave, but by God. Well, he said that and the man of Palmar de Troya, (Clemente) he said the same thing: 'I am nominated by God.' Why not a third pope? Thus, people look for authority...it is natural...and (especially) priests, they cannot remain without authority (above them)...so they 'create' an authority (a false authority). You know that some bishop, i.e., Msgr. Ngo D'Thuc, he made some bishops, and now they can have some meetings to look for (an authority), i.e., to make (for themselves) another pope. That is very dangerous. We cannot do a rupture with Rome. Rome is the center of the Church. We cannot have 'any other pope' than the pope who is the true successor of St. Peter, the pope who is in the Seat of St. Peter. And the Seat of St. Peter is Rome!

It is the diocese of Rome. The bishop of Rome becomes Pope because he is the Bishop of Rome. When the cardinals choose a pope, they do not choose 'a pope' but they choose 'the Bishop of Rome', because each Cardinal is a 'parish priest' of the parishes in Rome. So they are parish priests of Rome and they choose 'their bishop'. Because the Bishop of Rome is in the Seat of St. Peter, he becomes the pope. That is the rule in the Catholic Church. So we cannot have 'any other pope' than the successor of St. Peter, in the Seat, the Diocese of Rome. That is (also) the attitude of the Fraternity. It is very important that you know this attitude and you have this attitude, so that in the future you may show the good way to the faithful...so that they may remain true Catholics, and not become schismatic."

### "Concerning the Validity of the New Rite Sacraments"

"Fr. Williamson tells me some of you have a difficulty in understanding, concerning the New Rite of ordination, and over the 'New Rite' Sacraments. The rule of theology for the condition of validity of Sacraments, can be found in (your manuals) of Theology. We must perform an application of these conditions...to the new rite Sacraments of the reform of Vatican II. In some cases it is very difficult to know if it is valid or not. Especially in the vernacular translations of the form of the sacraments. In latin it is easier to know if its valid or invalid, but in the vernacular, it is very difficult to know if some words invalidate a sacrament. So we must do, in some cases, a detailed study of that case. You know that many priests today change the form of the Sacrament! That is another difficulty in determining validity or invalidity, e.g., 'What did this bishop say when he did this sacrament?' A bishop said, e.g., concerning the form of Confirmation...that it was certainly valid (in the vernacular).' We ask: 'Well, what did he say? What did he do?' We must perform an examination of these things before we can say they are valid or invalid. We must study each case."

"It is very difficult, as in the case of the ordination of new priests, because: '...what do they have as the intention when they perform the Sacraments? What is a Sacrament for the young priest now (in the Conciliar Church)?' Is it a sign, a symbol? (For them)...it has no signification. Many of these young priests, they do not know what 'Grace' is...they do not know. They do not believe in Original Sin. What do they do when they give the Sacrament of Baptism? What do they think this Sacrament does? They do not know! It is very difficult, we know that. But we cannot say: 'All the Sacraments are invalid.', without performing an examination...we cannot say that. We must do a study. For example you may say, in this country (they do this), in this diocese, (they do that), etc...we must consider these things before passing judgment. We cannot say, 'a-priori', that all sacraments are invalid...no...For example, we do not know what oil they use for the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you read in your dictionary of theology about the Sacrament of Confirmation, the conclusion is that, if (as was the case before Vatican II), they do not use olive oil, then it is not a valid Confirmation. But now, in the new Canon Law, either olive oil or 'other oils' may be used!! Valid? Invalid?

If they use olive oil or peanut oil? It is invalid if it is not olive oil, because in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, they say we must use olive oil, not any other oil, for validity. The situation is very difficult now for us...but I think after 10 or 20 years it will be even more difficult for you, because the situation is getting progressively worse with time...they change...no rite to give the Sacrament (no rule), etc."

"Now, for priestly ordinations it is the same situation. We must see what they have done in each case, and to determine if the form was valid or not, we must do a study. In some cases, some theologians are against the validity, while some theologians are for validity, etc."

"In the Anglican Ordinations, you know that the Church spent 3 & 1/2 centuries (studying its validity), before finally giving a decision about the validity of Anglican Ordinations, i.e., that they are invalid. It is only after 350 years that we are finally sure that the Anglican Ordinations are invalid!! (laughingly): Oh...it is very difficult to come to a decision (on the new rite) in one week!!"

"If we think truly that a Sacrament is (most likely) invalid, then we must redo the Sacrament conditionally. I have done so many times with Confirmations."

#### ANNULMENT OF MARRIAGES

"These annulments of marriages pose another difficulty for the true priests, as you. The annulments of the diocese are good or authentic if their is a strong motive in concordance with the Tradition of the Church. The annulment is either true or not true, right or not right. It is difficult to say...we must do another study...what is the principle of judging... It is difficult...if you are going to the Chancery in the diocese, and what shall they say?: 'That is not your offer; that is our offer...you have no right to know our motive for this annulment.' Thus we must do by ourselves this examination...and it is not easy. Sometimes, the two persons who got an annulment are really married and they go ahead and get re-married in a 'Catholic marriage'...it is terrible!"

"Cardinal Seper himself said to me: 'Many couples from Spain go to America to get an annulment of their marriage, and they return in Spain and they re-marry in the Church with the annulment they got in America.' They know that in some dioceses in the U.S., it is very easy to have an annulment. Terrible! That is a situation before God! You know that in some dioceses there are 1,000's of annulments annually...and so the situation is clearly very bad. But if the people come and ask: 'Is my Baptism valid? Is my Confirmation valid?' --We must study the question and if we have difficulty in giving our judgment, we must ask the seminary, to the professor, about this case, etc, as we always did with Rome before the Council, where in some diocese when there was a very difficult case, we wrote to Rome asking for a solution to the problem, (to the Sacred Penitentiary)...and also now the Sacred Penitentiary is still, more or less, good...and they still give answers. I know

some priests in the Fraternity who wrote to the Sacred Penitentiary, and they received an answer."

"We must help the people. We cannot abandon the faithful. That is why it is very very important for you to study very deeply and seriously your Moral Theology, and True Canon Law...not the 'New Canon Law,' but the true canon law."

### "THE NEW CANON LAW"

"Yes, it is true, the 'New Canon Law' is another book of the reform of Vatican II. Now there is the 'New Mass' (new missal), the 'New Bible', (i.e., an 'ecumenical Bible'), ecumenical catechism, and now an 'ecumenical canon law'. It is of the same spirit...the pope himself says that this new canon law is striving to write into juridical language the 'new ecclesiology of the Council of Vatican II'. That signifies it is another book imbued with the bad spirit of ecumenism. Perhaps there are still some rules in this book we can use. We use, e.g., the newer rule of the Eucharistic Fasting (i.e., the rule of Pope Pius XII): you know we ask the Faithful to observe a 3 hour fast before Communion, whereas before we could not take something after midnight. We had to fast before from midnight before Communion. In some cases then we can follow the newer rules. We cannot say, e.g., to a man who takes Communion after one hour only of fasting, who Confesses in Confession, that 'it was not good for me to take Communion after only one hour of fasting,' you cannot say to him: 'you have committed a Mortal Sin'. No. I cannot say that, because the Church now gives 50 minutes before the Communion as the time required for the fast. But you can say to the penitent: 'you do wrong, you cannot do that...you have done, perhaps a venial sin because it is a lack of respect for Communion', etc. You can urge him strongly to follow the 3 hour fast but you cannot say he does a Mortal Sin (when there is no mortal sin.). We must take into consideration the new rules of the Church. They are the commandments of the Church and we cannot do this commandment. It is the same for Mass...e.g. if a man confesses he went to 'Sunday Mass' on Saturday evening (the new rule of the Church permits this)...you can chastise him for doing so, but you cannot say to him, 'you have done a Mortal Sin,' etc. Yes, you can say to the penitent: 'You did a bad thing because you must sanctify Sunday...and this permission of the Conciliar Church is very bad...you must sanctify Sunday, not Saturday, etc.'"

"We must take care not to impose Mortal Sins on people who havenot committed any. We must, nevertheless, preserve the 'true canon law', the 'true Missal', the 'true Pontificale', the 'true Bible', etc. We refuse this ecumenical Bible...that is incredible, the Word Himself in the Bible...and what is this ecumenical Bible? It is a compromise between Catholics and Protestants to censure or criticize the Holy Ghost! The Scripture is drawn by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And so they criticize the Holy Ghost, and they make a mixture of words with the Word of God. How is it possible that in Rome in the Bibliothec Library of the Vatican, they sell this 'ecumenical Bible'?? Incredible!! I think that in all Catholic Libraries we can find this 'ecumenical Bible.' We cannot accept this! It is impossible!"

"We must conserve the true canon law. In the instruction in the new canon law they talk about 'Eucharistic Hospitality'. What is this 'Eucharistic Hospitality'? It means that when a Protestant comes to receive Holy Communion and he says I have the True Catholic Faith in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and if he says that, then you must give him Communion. That is incredible!! It is impossible, impossible! He has no other Catholic Faith, only in the Real Presence, and so we must give him Communion. He may have no Faith in the Sacrifice of the Mass, he has no Faith in the papacy, he has no Faith in... Sanctifying Grace...and we must still give him Communion? Impossible! It is in the new canon law! We cannot use this canon law. It is the same in all the other books that come from this reform of the Council of Vatican II. If you have some other questions you can ask Fr. Williamson or me...I am ready to give you an answer..."

"I desire to give you the True Catholic Faith"

"My desire, my preoccupation is to give to you and all the seminarians in all our seminaries the True Catholic Faith, and the True Tradition. It is not my opinion. I do not like to hear people say: 'I have the same thinking as Msgr. Lefebvre'..No.No. It is not the thinking of Msgr. Lefebvre, but it is the thinking of the Church. It is the ideals of the Church. Personally I have no ideal, I have no thinking, I am nothing! I only have what the Church taught me in my seminary, during all my life, the True Church's teaching,...and no other preoccupation than this!"

"So, if there is something you have some hesitation over, about what we must think, I give to you the answer of the Church, i.e., what the Church thinks. You can read these things in many books...I say always to the seminarians of Ecône, that you have a big library, with all the books filled with the Tradition, with all the books of the Fathers of the Church, i.e., the Patrology, ...some 245 books of Patrology alone...you can read what is the Tradition, what is the concepts of the Church. You have all the books of Moral Theology...all these books as written before Vat.II. You can consult these books and see if I do not give you the doctrine of the Church. It is not my doctrine, it is not my ideas. That is very important, because that is what gives us the Truth (i.e., Church doctrine) and we are very strong in our Faith by this idea that we continue in the doctrine of the Church, as St. Paul says in his epistles: 'you must conserve the doctrine, you must keep what I have taught you before,' etc.' 'If I have said something against my teaching that I taught you before, then you cannot accept that.' (says St. Paul). And so that is what makes (St. Paul) very strong, very sure, and that is what is useful for us, i.e., what the Tradition says. My preoccupation is to give you this Tradition. Against Tradition nobody can say anything."

"I hope now you shall have here, as before, a good relation with your (new) superior, with your directors, your professors. I do what is necessary to give you the number of professors necessary for your studies, for your preaching, and I hope that you

will be very happy and very strong in your faith, and I hope to return here before the end of the year to give you the ordination. It is my great desire to give you ordinations, as the Church has done during many centuries...."

"(Concerning the Tradition of clerics receiving the 4 minor orders, then the Subdeaconate, a slow approach to the diaconate and finally the priesthood), it is incredible (the Vatican suppressed these, i.e., the minor orders and Subdeaconate). It was so beautiful, this way to go, slowly slowly slowly to the priesthood, to the Altar, to go to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This way which begins by the Tonsure, etc...that is very very beautiful! We must thank God that we are able to conserve this Tradition ...all Tradition...God bless you!"