

Bishop Fellay's Doctrinal Preamble

It seems necessary to comment on the April 15th, 2012 Doctrinal Preamble proposed by His Excellency Bishop B. Fellay, Superior General of the SSPX, to Cardinal Levada. It was a secret for almost a year and was finally made public this past few weeks. This version of the Doctrinal Preamble met strong protests at the General Chapter. Consequently Bishop Fellay withdrew it without however repudiating it. This text consequently gives us an idea of the concessions, which Bishop Fellay would agree to concede, should he be allowed to do so.

As a matter of fact, Bishop Fellay seems to accept to some extent:

- 1.- Vatican II
- 2.- the N.O.M.
- 3.- the New Code of Canon Law.

The Council

“II.- We declare that we accept the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church in the substance of Faith and Morals, adhering to each doctrinal affirmation in the required degree, according to the doctrine contained in No. 25 of the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council. (1)”

“(1) Cf. the new formula for the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity for assuming a charge exercised in the name of the Church, 1989; cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 749, 750, §2; 752; CCEO canon 597; 598, 1 & 2; 599.”

This profession of faith says: “I also adhere with religious obedience of will and faith to the doctrines which, either the Roman Pontiff, or the college of bishops, pronounce when exercising an authentic magisterium, even if they have no intention of proclaiming them in a definitive act.” This profession of faith is preceded by an introduction explaining the meaning of the said profession: “It consequently proved essential to prepare adjusted texts in order to update them as far as their style and their contents were concerned and attune them with the teachings of Vatican II and documents developing them.”

This is Archbishop Lefebvre's comments about this document issued by Cardinal Ratzinger: “The errors of the Council and its reforms remain the official norm that has been confirmed by Cardinal Ratzinger's March 1989 profession of faith”. (Abp. Lefebvre, *Spiritual Journey*)

“The new profession of faith which was drafted by Cardinal Ratzinger explicitly includes the acceptance of the Council and its consequences. It is the Council and its consequences, which have destroyed the Holy Mass, which have destroyed our Faith, which have destroyed catechisms and the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ over civil societies. How could we accept this! [...] We have to keep the Catholic Faith and protect it by all possible means.” (Abp. Lefebvre, Le Bourget, November 19th, 1989)

“This is leading us to a contradiction since, since at the same time as Rome gives to the Fraternity of St Peter, as an example, or to Le Barroux Abbey or some other group, an authorisation to say the traditional Mass, at the same time they ask young priests to sign a profession of faith in which

they accept the spirit of the Council. This is a contradiction: the spirit of the Council is expressed in the New Mass. How can one wish to keep the Traditional Mass and accept the spirit that destroys the Traditional mass? This is a total self-contradiction. One day, slowly, they will demand from those to whom they have granted the Mass of St Pius V, the Traditional Mass, that they also accept the New Mass. And they will just say that this is only complying with what they have signed, since they have signed that they accept the spirit of the Council and the Council's reforms. One just cannot place himself in such a contradictory situation, in such an incredible *non sequitur*. This is quite an uncomfortable situation. This is what makes things so difficult for these groups, which have signed this: it is a dead end for them." (Abp. Lefebvre, Friedrichshafen homily, April 29th, 1990)

"III, 1.- We declare that we accept the doctrine regarding the Roman Pontiff and regarding the college of bishops, with the Pope as its head, which is taught by the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* of Vatican I and by the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II, chapter 3 (*De constitutione hierarchica Ecclesiae et in specie de Episcopatu*), explained and interpreted by the *nota explicativa praevia* in this same chapter."

"III, 3.- Tradition is the living transmission of revelation 'usque as nos' and the Church in its doctrine, in its life and in its liturgy perpetuates and transmits to all generations what this is and what She believes. Tradition progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Ghost, not as a contrary novelty, but through a better understanding of the Deposit of the Faith."

There is a contradiction between these two sentences, inasmuch as the expression "living" has precisely been constantly used by the Modernists in order to imply their doctrinal evolutionism and their "contrary novelties".

"III, 4.- The entire tradition of Catholic Faith must be the criterion and guide in understanding the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which, in turn, enlightens - in other words deepens and subsequently makes explicit - certain aspects of the life and doctrine of the Church implicitly present within itself or not yet conceptually formulated (8)."

"(8) For example, like the teaching on the sacraments and the episcopacy in *Lumen Gentium*, No. 21."

This means that not only the Council in the light of Tradition, but also Tradition in the light of the Council.

To say that the Second Vatican Council "in turn, enlightens – in other words deepens and subsequently makes explicit – certain aspects of the life and doctrine of the Church implicitly present within itself or not yet conceptually formulated" is absurd as far as it flatly contradicts a number of them.

"III, 5.- The affirmations of the Second Vatican Council and of the later Pontifical Magisterium relating to the relationship between the Church and the non-Catholic Christian confessions, as well as the social duty of religion and the right to religious liberty, whose formulation is with difficulty reconcilable with prior doctrinal affirmations from the Magisterium, (1) must be understood in the light of the whole, uninterrupted Tradition, in a manner coherent with the truths previously taught by the Magisterium of

the Church, (2) without accepting any interpretation of these affirmations whatsoever that would expose Catholic doctrine to opposition or rupture with Tradition and with this Magisterium.”

Bp. Williamson, who used to be Bp. Fellay’s professor, explains:

The first part here (1) is perfectly true, so long as it means that any Conciliar novelty “difficult to reconcile” will be flatly rejected if it objectively contradicts previous Church teaching. But (1) is directly contradicted by (2) when (2) says that no Conciliar novelty may be “interpreted” as being in rupture with Tradition. It is as though one said that all football teams must wear blue shirts, but football team shirts of any other colour are all to be interpreted as being nothing other than blue! What nonsense! But it is pure “hermeneutic of continuity”. (*Eleison* No. 300 and Open Letter to the Priests of the Priestly Society of St Pius X of Maunday Thursday 2013 by Bp. Williamson)

The Mass

“III, 7.- We declare that we recognise the validity of the sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments celebrated with the intention to do what the Church does according to the rites indicated in the typical editions of the Roman Missal and the Sacramentary Rituals legitimately promulgated by Popes Paul VI and John-Paul II.”

Archbishop Lefebvre said that it could be valid, but that it was nevertheless dangerous since it furthers heresy (*favens haeresim*). As Fr. de La Rocque explained in his two conferences of May 12th and 18th, 2012 on the Roman doctrinal discussions, to acknowledge the validity of the N.O.M. without mentioning that it is dangerous would be hypocritical and an unacceptable mental reservation.

Moreover, this “legitimately promulgated” expression has always been disputed, and not only in traditional circles. In his editorial to the Friends and Benefactors of the French District, Fr. de Cacqueray wrote: “The new Mass can in no way be pleasing to God because it is misleading, harmful and ambiguous”.

It just cannot be enforced by a law as such in the whole Church. As a matter of fact the purpose the liturgical law is to serve with authority the common good of the Church and all that is required. Paul VI’s new Mass being short of this cannot be supported by a law: it is not only evil, it is illegitimate, despite the apparent lawfulness it was enwrapped with and still is (Fr. Jean-Michel Gleize, *Disputed Vatican II*)

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The *Novus Ordo Missae*, in particular, is far too dangerous for the Common Good of the Church to be regarded as a true law.

The Canon Law

“III, 8.- In following the guidelines laid out above (III,5), as well as Canon 21 of the Code of Canon Law, we promise to respect the common discipline of the Church and the ecclesiastical laws, especially those which are contained in the Code of Canon Law promulgated by John-Paul II (1983) and in the Code of Canon Law of the Oriental

Churches promulgated by the same pontiff (1990), without prejudice to the discipline of the Society of Saint Pius X, by a special law.”

Bp. Fellay accepts the new Code of Canon Law, “in the light of Tradition” (III, 5), while Abp. Lefebvre had declared “this Canon Law is unacceptable”. (COSPEC 99B, March 14th, 1983) For him it is more even harmful than the Council itself, since it puts into laws the letter and the spirit of Vatican II, going as far as ignoring important corrections like the *Nota explicativa*.

In 1983, Archbishop Lefebvre, who had already progressively been disappointed by Modernistic texts from Pope John Paul II, was terribly shocked by the new Code of Canon Law converting into laws the deviations of the Council. » (La Porte Latine, quoted by Avec l’Immaculée: <http://aveclimmaculee.blogspot.jp/2013/03/i-quelques-citations-de-ou-sur-mgr.html>)

“Our concern became even more vehement with the aberrations of the new Code of Canon Law, not to say its heresies.” (*An Open Letter to Confused Catholics*, chapter 21)

“One discovers an entirely new conception of the Church.” (Conference, Turin, March 24th, 1984)

“We can find in it the doctrine that was already suggested in the *Lumen Gentium* text of the Council, according to which the college of bishops united to the Pope holds the supreme power in the Church, and this in a regular and permanent way.” (*An Open Letter to Confused Catholics*, chapter 12)

“This work, namely the Code, is in perfect accord with the nature of the Church, especially as has been proposed by the Second Vatican Council. Moreover, this new Code can be conceived as an effort to expose in canonical language this doctrine, i.e., conciliar Ecclesiology. The elements of this Ecclesiology are the following: Church = people of God; hierarchical authority = collegial service; Church = communion; and lastly the Church with Her duty to ecumenism. Each one of these notions is ambiguous and will allow Protestant and Modernist errors to inspire from now on the legislation of the Church. It is the authority of the Pope and of the Bishops which is going to suffer; the distinction between the clergy and the laity will also diminish; the absolute and necessary character of the Catholic faith will also be extenuated to the profit of heresy and schism; and the fundamental realities of sin and grace will be worn down.” (*Letter to Friends and Benefactors* No. 24, March 1983)

“Well, in the new Code of Canon Law there are two supreme powers in the Church: the supreme power of the Pope, and then of the Pope with the bishops. Consequently there are two ordinary subjects of this supreme and total power in the Church. It is exactly what the *Nota explicativa* had corrected during the Council. For, if the bishops have with the Pope and not without the Pope the supreme power in the Church, they have a right to demand to exert this power which is theirs with the Pope and to demand from the Pope that they may participate in the exercise of this power over the Universal Church. This never ever happened in Church history. They exercised this power when the Pope summoned them in a council and allowed them to participate in his power in the council. It is in fact because they were meeting with the Pope that they then by an extraordinary act [...] had this power over the Universal Church and not in an ordinary manner! Consequently this is restricting the power of the Pope. This means that in practice they are not taking into account the *Nota explicativa* of the Council in the new Canon Law. That had been a small revolution in the Council. And the Pope felt obliged to intervene and to correct what was in that decree of the Church and adjust it according to the faith of the Church. These are examples I am giving you, which matter to our faith.” (COSPEC 100A, May 20th, 1983)

“The faithful are those who, inasmuch as they are incorporated in Christ by baptism are constituted as the people of God, and who for this reason, having been made partakers in their manner in the priestly, prophetic and royal functions of Christ, are called to exercise the mission that God entrusted to the Church to accomplish in the world. [...] There is no longer any clergy. What, then, happens to the clergy? [...] It is consequently easy to understand that this is the ruin of the priesthood and the laicization of the Church. [...] This is precisely what Luther and the Protestants did, laicizing the priesthood. It is consequently very serious.” (Conference, Turin, March 24th, 1984)

“You know that the new Code of Canon Law permits a priest to give Communion to a Protestant. (Canon 844) It is what they call Eucharistic hospitality. These are Protestants who remain protestants and do not convert. This is directly opposed to the Faith. For the Sacrament of the Eucharist is precisely the sacrament of the unity of the Faith. To give Communion to a Protestant is to rupture the Faith and its unity.” The Protestants must make “an abjuration in order to remove this obex [obstacle] that their baptism might bear fruit. After this, grace will remain in their souls and they will be worthy of salvation. But, as long as they remain attached to their errors and deny truths which are part of the faith, they cannot receive grace.” (Conference, Turin, March 24th, 1984)

“What is the object or aim of canon law, of the fundamental canonical laws? You have two books, which you may read on that subject: *De norme generales juris canonici*. Two volumes by Professor Michiels, a Franciscan, which give the answer – the general norms of law – and consequently the foundations of the ecclesiastical law itself, and of canon law. Well, he says it openly: *Ut patet fundamentum vitae supernaturalis ecclesiae curae et potestati concredita, est fides.* This aim is the faith. [...] Take as an example the fact that the new canon law no longer requests in a Protestant Catholic mixed marriage to commit in writing to the Catholic baptism of the children, this a serious violation of the faith, a serious violation of the faith.” (COSPEC 100A, May 20th, 1983) “Then what should we think about this? – Well, this Code of Canon Law is unacceptable.” (COSPEC 99B, March 14th, 1983)

This is certainly enough to prove that this Declaration or Doctrinal Preamble of April 15th, 2012 by Bishop Fellay is blatantly at variance and even in contradiction with the line of the Archbishop about the Council, the Mass and the Canon Law. He was however just about to sign an agreement on this basis on June 13th, 2012, if it had not been rejected by Cardinal Levada – as not enough –, a refusal confirmed by the Pope’s letter to Bishop Fellay dated June 30th.

So despite the fact that the Superior General has been roaming all-over the world these past eight months in order to reassure people that he was not going to “sell” the Society, one may still be somewhat sceptical. This document is evidence that the worst so-called “gossips” were not that wrong.

Top Priority

The top priority to “overcome the crisis” clearly is not to “overcome our abnormal canonical status”, of which the Archbishop was saying that it is “secondary”, but to keep our Catholic Faith, without yielding to Liberal pressures, which would make us lose it. Let us always remember these words from the Archbishop during a spiritual conference to his seminarians on December 21st, 1984, which, after unsuccessfully trying the impossible in May 1988, he supported until his death:

“Some are prepared to sacrifice the fight for the faith by saying: ‘Let us first re-enter the Church! Let us first do everything to integrate the official, public structure of the Church. Let us be silent about dogmatic issues. Let us be silent about the malice of the [New] Mass. Let us keep quiet over the issues of religious freedom, Human Rights, ecumenism. And, once we are inside the Church, we will be able to do this, we will be able to achieve that...’ That's absolutely false! You don't enter into a structure, under superiors, by claiming that you will overthrow everything as soon as you are inside, whereas they have all the means to suppress us! They have all the authority.

“What matters to us first and foremost is to maintain the Catholic Faith. That's what we are fighting for. So, the canonical issue, this purely public and exterior issue in the Church, is secondary. What matters is to stay within the Church... inside the Church, in other words, in the Catholic Faith of all time, in the true priesthood, in the true Mass, in the true sacraments, and the same catechism, with the same Bible. That's what matters to us. That's what the Church is. Public recognition is a secondary issue. Thus, we should not seek what is secondary by losing what is primary, by losing what is the primary goal of our fight!

“We cannot place ourselves under an authority whose ideas are liberal and who little by little would condemn us, by the logic of the thing, to accept these liberal ideas and all the consequences of these liberal ideas, which are the new Mass, changes in the liturgy, changes in the Bible, changes in catechism, all these changes...”