

LIFE UNDER THE BANE OF SUBJECTIVISM

III—TURN OF THE TIDE

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Reversing Subjectivism's Influence

29. Evil is not something, but *the lack of something*—a *negative* which we conceive after the fashion of a *positive*.¹ It is the lack of a good; but not of any good at all: it is the lack of a *due* good. Blindness is not evil in a tree, for sight is not due to a tree, but it is evil in a horse. Theft is not evil in a dog, for a dog is not bound by the rule of morals; but it is evil in a man, for a man is bound by that rule. So is subjectivism an evil, the lack of something due in the act of judgement; the lack of relation to reality.

Now, no evil is greater than the good of which it is a privation. No matter how universal its extent, then, the evil of subjectivism can be remedied and its harm reversed. The principal power on earth capable of applying that remedy, of reversing that harm, is the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church was founded by Almighty God for the good of mankind: first (principally), for the eternal salvation of all men; second (instrumentally), to aid them in the ordering of their lives so as to dispose them to embrace that salvation. She is a mother guiding men to avoid the evils which are incident to their flawed existence: she is a teacher correcting error and proclaiming the truth—*Mater et Magistra*. Though she may seem to exercise little influence on this man or that, yet she does influence them through her teaching and the example of her members.

The Church, as English author Hilaire Belloc remarked early in the twentieth century, is the one thing in this world different from all other. She must, of necessity, involve herself in the material; yet she is not material. Men comprise her members and her ministers; yet she is not something human. Her Founder and Head is God the Son, Jesus Christ, second person of the Blessed Trinity. Her soul is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The end and reason for her existence is union with God the Father of man, the creature He made in His own image. While her members are fallible and defectible, she is *infallible and indefectible*. It is this *quasi-*

¹ The reality of evil is the absence of due good. In giving this lack, this negative, the appearance of something positive, the mind creates, as it were, a reality in mind. Hence *evil* is a mental construction. In the same way is *darkness* a mental construction. The reality is the lack of light in the ambient air. We clothe that negative with the marks of a positive by labelling it as if it were a reality.

Divine character of the Catholic Church which underlies Our Lord's promise that the gates of Hell will not prevail against it.²

Yet the Church has herself suffered from the subjectivist blight—or rather, her bishops, priests and members have suffered from it. And before she can exercise again the influence for good she exercised in ages past, that blight must be removed.

Subjectivism's Attack On Religion—Modernism

30. The noxious flowers to which Protestantism had given birth produced in due course lethal fruit with the emergence of thinkers who questioned whether there was any objective ground for the assertion that God had revealed His truth to men. These called themselves *Deists*, or *Free-Thinkers*, and claimed that religion was something at which one could arrive through natural reason.³ Typical of these was the Protestant, Hermann Reimarus (1694-1768), according to whom the Bible was a tissue of lies and deceit, the purpose of the writers of the New Testament, the service of selfish ambition. Reimarus stands at the head of a school of biblical critics who deny any reality to the transcendent.

It was not long before this evil precipitated a new heresy within the Catholic fold, a heresy Pope Pius X was to categorise as “the synthesis of all heresies”—*Modernism*. Why he so described it may be shortly related. Heresy is the obstinate post baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with Divine and Catholic faith.⁴ He who holds what he chooses to hold and rejects what he chooses to reject of the Catholic Church's teaching, as St Thomas says, no longer adheres to the Church as to an infallible rule but to his own will.⁵ Now, while every heresy causes the loss of the Catholic faith, its particular character is determined by the ground on which it is advanced. Here the ground could not be more universal, for Modernism insists that all assertion of the existence of being which transcends the material is illusory.

Hence, the *Modernist* joins the *Gnostic* heretic in his assertion of the possession of a knowledge higher than that provided by Divine revelation, for he is possessed of a knowledge higher even than that of the ancient Gnostic, the knowledge (as he thinks) *that there is nothing transcendent*. He joins the *Pelagian* in his insistence that the Church is in error in asserting man cannot aspire to heaven without the assistance of God's grace—for he knows *that all assertion of 'God's grace' is an illusion*. He joins the *Arian* in denying the Divinity of Christ—for he knows *that all assertion of 'Divinity', whether by Christ or anyone else, is illusory*. And so on, for each of the other heresies. In Modernism Protestantism reaches its fulfilment for the heresy ends, as Pius X noted, in atheism.

In his signal encyclical, *Pascendi* (8.9.1907), the saintly pope condemned Modernism comprehensively, establishing structures to ensure its suppression. But its

² *Matthew* 16: 18; and cf. *Matthew* 28: 20.

³ Implicit in this claim was the contention that being is confined to the experimentally verifiable. *Deism* is the intellectual root of those variants of the Protestant spirit *Unitarianism* and *Freemasonry*.

⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2089.

⁵ *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 5, a. 3

proponents persisted and the enormous social upheavals caused by two cataclysmic wars—where the Protestant principle dominated the Catholic—permitted Modernism to endure as a latent force among the Catholic faithful. Bishops and seminary heads, ignoring the strictures imposed by successive popes (notably Pius XII in *Humani Generis*, 12.8.1950) against allowing scope to modern philosophy in their students' studies, failed in their duties. The result was the defective formation of a great number of young priests and religious. The more exposed they were to the novelties and shifting ground of modern philosophy, the more were they attracted to Modernism's simplistic explanations. The heresy's momentum grew and, during the pontificate of John XXIII, it resurfaced to find expression in attitudes favourable to Protestantism among bishops and their *periti* at the Second Vatican Council.

Subjectivism's Attack on Religion—Freemasonry

31. Meanwhile, another of Protestantism's evil fruit, Freemasonry, had been working quietly to bear the souls of men away from their reliance upon God. In 1884, Pope Leo XIII laid out the Masonic program in detail.⁶ Here are its more salient elements:

- i. human nature and human reason ought in all things to be sole mistress and guide of the soul;
- ii. nothing has been taught by God;
- iii. the teaching and authority of the Catholic Church should be of no account in the civil state;
- iv. Church and state ought to be altogether disunited;
- v. the state should be without God;
- vi. authority comes not from God but by command, or permission, of the people;
- vii. states ought to be constituted without regard for the precepts of the Church;
- viii. it should be lawful to attack with impunity the very foundations of the Catholic religion, in speech, in writing, and in teaching;
- ix. the religious orders should be uprooted and scattered;
- x. all religions are alike and there is no reason why one should have precedence;
- xi. those things grasped by the natural light of reason—the existence of God, the immateriality of the human soul, and its immortality—can no longer be considered certain;
- xii. in educating the young nothing should be taught as certain concerning religion;
- xiii. each man must be at liberty to follow the religion he chooses, or none at all;
- xiv. all men have the same rights and are, in all respects, equal and of like condition.

32. Because of the connection between them, in whatever country Protestantism predominated there occurred an inclination to follow Masonic doctrine, as in respect of that most basic of issues, the right and obligation to educate children. It is God, and God alone, Who gives parents the power to bring children into the world. It is God alone who endows them with the entitlement to educate them. No one, no group of men, no society, no state authority, is entitled to deprive parents of this

⁶ In the encyclical *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884).

entitlement. In Protestant dominated countries the state tended to establish school systems. While there is nothing intrinsically evil in such a system—parents can delegate the exercise of their right to educate their children to others, even to teachers employed by the state—it opens the way for abuse. For, inevitably, such school systems are funded from the public purse, that is, from taxes levied on the populace at large. Such a system is inherently unjust. For, consistent with their obligations, the costs of education of children are properly to be borne by their parents, and by no one else.

The parents of children who chose to have their children educated other than in a state run system soon realised the injustice. Not only were they paying for their own children's education, they were assisting through their taxes, to pay for the education of the children of all others.

This injustice was felt particularly by Catholic parents who were fundamentally opposed to the education of their children in secular institutions. Something of this injustice was retrieved by the device of 'state aid', whereby a refund of part of the moneys of which the parents should never have been deprived was returned by way of 'grant', or 'subsidy'. But this provided only a *material*, not a *formal*, restoration of justice as the state invariably regarded itself as entitled to impose conditions on these returns. Moreover, because of perceived favouritism, the existence of these 'grants' bred a spirit of resentment among those who were blind to the issues. Things were further obscured with the increasing intrusion of government into people's lives through socialism. Even as the state contributed to the needs of (chiefly) Catholic parents, it embedded the Masonic claim of state entitlement in the detail. The way was open for the further intrusion of Masonic principle.

America's Bishops Embrace Masonic Principle

33. Masons had exercised great influence in the founding of the United States of America, and a Masonic bias was present in the Protestant cast of her founding documents. This manifested itself in the school systems conducted by the various States that made up the Union with the effects mentioned above. In the 1947 case of *Everson v. Board of Education* the United States Supreme Court entrenched Masonic principle when it endorsed a rigorous separation of Church and state. It was no accident that the writer of the majority judgement, the Mason, Justice Hugo Black, chose to draw on the thought of Unitarian and Deist, Thomas Jefferson, the country's Third President.⁷

Before proceeding further, let us remind ourselves of the issues at stake. Freemasonry is of the Devil. It arose out of the rejection of the Divine authority in the Church God had founded, the Catholic Church. Its whole being, and the program it endorses (summarised above) is aimed at the suppression of the authority God gave to His Church and, by this means, to remove God's authority from among men. Hence, when Freemasonry calls for *separation of Church and state*, that is, calls for the removal of religious influence upon civil government, its focus is not the

⁷ *Deism* was the forerunner of Freemasonry.

separation from government of the influence of any particular religion, *but only of the one that has the right to have its principles incorporated in the operations of the state*, the religion founded by God, the Catholic religion.⁸

34. How did America's Catholic bishops address this entrenchment of Masonic principle? They issued a pastoral letter the following year entitled *The Christian In Action*.⁹ The reader of this pastoral letter will be bemused to discover that the American bishops did not—

- insist that the institution established on earth for man's eternal salvation is the Catholic Church, *and no other*;
- assert that far from harming the operations of the state, the involvement of Christ's Church in those operations could not do otherwise than assist in achieving the welfare of its citizens, and even more, could marvellously enhance the achievement of that end;¹⁰
- note that while it might be conceded that America had flourished in large measure under the influence of Protestantism, it had done so because Protestantism was underpinned by Catholic principle.

Nor did they reiterate the warnings the Church had issued for two centuries about the evils of Freemasonry¹¹; nor warn of the further evils that would flow from the continued toleration of Masonic influence in the running of their country. Instead they treated the ruling of the Supreme Court as a matter of faulty interpretation. Far from rejecting *Masonic* principle, they adopted it, explicitly acknowledging the licitness of two critical elements each of which the Church had repeatedly condemned, *separation of Church and state* and *religious liberty*.¹² There were to be grave consequences not only for America, but for the rest of the world.

Advance Of The Masonic Program

35. It is enlightening to review the Masonic program exposed by Leo XIII and observe how, increasingly since about 1960, its influence has come to dominate world thinking.¹³ In particular, one should note how the formation of children, once passed the age of innocence and committed by their parents to secular schools, has now been conformed to that program, in—

- the removal of all deference to God;
- the removal of reference to God;
- the reduction of the study of religion to a comparison of religious opinions;

⁸ Men may opine on the varieties of religion to which to give their adherence. But the Devil sees things with crystal clarity. He knows that there is only one religion which will lead them infallibly to God.

⁹ Cf. *Pastoral Letters of the United States Catholic Bishops*, Hugh J Nolan Editor, Washington DC, 1983, pp. 82-9.

¹⁰ *Immortale Dei*, nn. 19 and 22; *Longinqua oceani* (6.1.1895).

¹¹ Clement XII, Bull *In Eminenti* (28.4.1738); Benedict XIV, Constitution *Providas* (18.3.1751); Pius VII, Constitution *Ecclesiam a Jesu Christo* (13.9.1821); Leo XII, Apostolic Constitution *Quo Graviora* (13.3.1826); Leo XIII, Encyclical *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884).

¹² Leo XIII, *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884); *Immortale Dei* (1.11.1885); and *Libertas praestantissimum* (20.6.1888).

¹³ Anyone who doubts this sea change should attend his local library and study a copy of a 1965 newspaper, comparing its content with that of a current issue.

- the rejection of Divine revelation as containing any element of truth (coupled with the implication that human reason is the highest principle);
- the lauding of *religious freedom*—that everyone should be free to choose his religion, or no religion;—and,
- the consequent flourishing among them of atheism.

Of the elements of the Masonic program listed above, items i, ii, iii, v, vi, x, xi, xii and xiii have been put in place; and the children so formed have been disposed thereby to endorse the remaining elements of the program, and any passing ideology.

In every city or town in western countries one may see churches reflecting the presence of adherents of the Catholic faith and of the various Protestant denominations. Each will have, more or less, a measure of grandeur, testifying to the faith of its members in God. It is sobering to reflect that none of them have had more influence on the societies they serve than the adherents of the idolatry practised in the dowdy Masonic Temples to be found in their midst.

The Devastation Of Catholicism

36. In various of the countries of the world prior to 1965, Christ's Church exercised great influence for good through formal protocols known as *concordats*, among them, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Bolivia, Columbia, Brazil, Malta and Ireland. Such agreements were the happy result of the implementation by their governments of the Church's perennial teaching as, for example, found in Leo XIII's *Immortale Dei* (1.11.1885):

“The Catholic Church... has for her immediate and natural purpose, the saving of souls and securing our happiness in heaven. Yet in regard to things temporal, she is the source of benefits as manifold and great as if the chief end of her existence were to ensure the prospering of our earthly life... [W]herever the Church has set her foot, she has straightway changed the face of things and has tempered the moral tone of the people with a new civilisation and virtues before unknown. All nations that have yielded to her sway have become eminent by their gentleness, their sense of justice and the glory of their high deeds.” [n. 1]

Man's very nature and existence are given him by God, as is his disposition to live in society. So, too, the order and subordination under authority which arises in society, *no matter what form it may take*, is derived from its Author.

“Hence, it follows that all public power must proceed from God. For God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world... so that whoever holds the right to govern holds it from one sole and single source, namely, God, the Sovereign Ruler of all... Then, truly will the majesty of the law meet with the dutiful and willing homage of the people, when they are convinced that their rulers hold authority from God, and feel that it is a matter of justice and duty to obey them, and to show them reverence and fealty, united to a love not unlike that which children show their parents.” [nn. 3 & 5]

There was a time when, universally, states were governed by the rule of Christ's Church, and man and society flourished together.

“Christian Europe... subdued barbarous nations and changed them from a savage to a civilised condition, from superstition to true worship. It... rolled back the tide of Mohammedan conquest... stood forth... as leader and teacher... in every branch of national culture; bestowed on the world the gift of a true and many-sided liberty and... founded numerous institutions for the solace of human suffering... A similar state of

things would certainly have continued had the [universal] agreement of [Church and state] been lasting... had obedience waited upon the authority, teaching and counsels of the Church, and had this submission been specially marked by greater and more unswerving loyalty. For... [as] Ivo of Chartres wrote to Pope Paschal II: *When kingdom and priesthood are... in complete accord the world is well ruled and the Church flourishes and brings forth abundant fruit. But when they are at variance, not only do smaller interests not prosper, but even things of greatest moment fall into deplorable decay.*" [nn. 21, 22]

In the forty five years since 1965, these *concordats* have been systematically dismantled at the instigation of the Vatican to the detriment of the citizens of the countries involved, and of the world at large. In lieu of the *Catholic* principle they represented, the Vatican has substituted the *Masonic* principle of *separation of Church and state*. Item iv in the *Masonic* program set out above has been implemented.

37. After 1965, priests were invited to embrace the *secular* in the administration of the sacred. Many, in consequence, embraced the secular completely. In the next twenty years 46,000 priests, on one assessment, abandoned their vocations.¹⁴ Another, which compares figures published by the Vatican Secretary of State for 1969 and 1976, shows the number of priests fell in those seven years alone by 70,000.¹⁵ The loss to the Catholic faithful was traumatic. Millions abandoned their faith. This loss might be regarded as reflecting the implementation of any of the elements of the *Masonic* program set out above, but the most telling is that listed as item xi, *those things grasped by the natural light of reason—the existence of God, the immateriality of the human soul, and its immortality—can no longer be considered certain.*

Of no less concern was the slide by those priests who remained in the practice of their priesthood into Modernism, or semi-Modernism. The pride characteristic of this heresy marked their attitude of systematic disobedience to the Church's directives and to the teachings and practice of the Catholic faith. By their misrepresentation of the faith, these priests worked greater harm among the faithful than the bad example of those who had abandoned their vocations. Many among them, bishops included, eventually lost their way and abandoned the faith.

38. The permission of the incursion of the secular into the realm of the sacred had another tragic effect. By the nature of his vocation the religious devotes himself to God: his life and conduct are marked by this exclusivity which is manifested especially through the vow of chastity. It is for this reason that, while characteristic of the secular, sexual expression is anathema in the realm of the sacred. Inevitably after 1965, religious men and women began to compromise the chaste ideal to which they had bound themselves. Great numbers of brothers and nuns rejected their vocations, leaving convents and monasteries abandoned and desolate throughout the world. Item ix of the *Masonic* program set out above was implemented.

¹⁴ Figure quoted by George Weigel in *The Courage to be Catholic*, New York, 2002, p.27.

¹⁵ Cf. Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum, A Study of Changes in the Catholic Church in the XXth Century*, Sarto House, transl. from 2nd Italian Edition by Fr John P. Parsons, Kansas City, 1996, p.182.

Many who remained, effete and largely directionless, abandoned the traditional structure of religious life and began to conduct themselves like members of some secular corporation. Others gave themselves over to novelty, subverting the holiness of their calling to the demands of passing ideologies. With this loss of holiness of life from its midst, the welfare of all members of society suffered, and suffers still.¹⁶

39. Due in large measure to the abandonment of their vocations by members of the religious *teaching* orders, Catholic education languished, then failed completely. The school children who now passed through these Catholic schools were deprived of the knowledge and the discipline of the faith essential to its practice. Statistics demonstrate an almost total failure of adherence to the faith in former students. Catholic schools have become little more than state schools by another name. As with their secular peers, Catholic school children suffered the implementation of items i, ii, iii, v, vi, x, xi, xii and xiii of the Masonic program set out above.

But for these children the effects were worse than for their peers in state schools. For, misled by teachers infected as well by Modernism as by Masonic principle, they believed that the religion conveyed to them so poorly was the Catholic faith, when it was nothing but a parody of the faith.

40. Just when it was essential that appropriate discipline be applied to the conduct of priests and religious to limit the harm that was occurring, a lassitude marked by an unwillingness to exercise authority descended upon Vatican authorities. As breaches of discipline went unpunished, the harm was compounded. The effect of this was the tacit endorsement of the Masonic principles that—

- the teaching and authority of the Catholic Church should be of no account;
- authority comes not from God but from the people;
- it should be lawful to attack with impunity the very foundations of the Catholic religion;
- each man must be at liberty to follow religion as he chooses.

This abandonment of authority communicated itself to the Church's bishops who allowed breaches of the Church's laws to go uncorrected.

The Second Vatican Council

41. The bishops of the Catholic Church were summoned to Rome late in 1962 for what they were assured would be the Church's 21st Ecumenical Council. In his Opening Speech of 11th October 1962 Pope John XXIII said as much—

“Mother Church rejoices that by the singular gift of Divine Providence, the longed-for day has finally dawned when... the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council is being solemnly opened here beside St Peter's tomb.”

What was the aim of the Council? A perusal of the Pope's Opening Speech reveals a number of relevant passages:¹⁷

¹⁶ Notably in the absence of a Catholic hospital system.

¹⁷ Opening Speech in *The Documents of Vatican II*, Walter M Abbott S J, General Editor; London, 1966, p.710 at p. 715.

- “In calling this vast assembly of bishops, the latest and humble successor to the Prince of the Apostles... intended to assert once again the magisterium which is unfailling and perdures until the end of time in order that, taking into account the errors, the requirements and the opportunities of our time, it might be presented in exceptional form to all men throughout the world.”
- “Illuminated by the light of this Council, the Church, we confidently trust, will become greater in spiritual riches and, gaining the strength of new energies, will look to the future without fear. In fact, by bringing herself up to date where required, and by the wise organisation of mutual cooperation, the Church will make men, families and peoples really turn their minds to heavenly things.”
- “The salient point of this Council is not... a discussion of one article or another of the fundamental doctrine of the Church which has repeatedly been taught by the Fathers and by ancient and modern theologians, and which is presumed to be well known and familiar to all. For this a Council was not necessary. But from the renewed, serene and tranquil adherence to the teaching of the Church in its entirety and precision... the Christian, Catholic and apostolic spirit of the whole world expects a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and formation of consciousness... studied and expounded through the methods of research and the literary forms of modern thought.”
- “We might say that heaven and earth are united in the holding of the Council, the saints in heaven interceding to protect our work, the faithful of the earth persevering in prayer to the Lord, and you, applying the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to ensure that the work of all may correspond to modern expectations and the needs of the various peoples of the world...”

Nowhere did Pope John XXIII expose a doctrinal or disciplinary issue that needed addressing. Indeed, in the third passage cited he denied any such need. He focussed instead upon the perceived need to accommodate the Church to “the requirements and opportunities of [the] time”; “to bringing the Church up to date where required”; to achieving “a doctrinal penetration and formation of consciousness... studied and expounded through the methods of research and the literary forms of modern thought”; and “to ensur[ing] that the work of all... correspond[ed] to modern expectations and the needs of the various peoples of the world...” This, as a careful analysis of them will show, marked a radical departure from the focus of each of the previous twenty Ecumenical Councils of the Church.

The Issue

42. Let us recall the principle of subjectivism. It is this: truth is not measured by reality, but by assertion; by opinion. Thus, when Henry Tudor asserted that he was not lawfully married to Queen Catherine of Aragon, it was sufficient for him *to assert it* for it to be held to be true.¹⁸ The assertion was endorsed by innumerable of his subjects, and by subsequent Kings and Queens of England. *But it was not true; for it was denied by reality.*

Pope John XXIII asserted that the Second Vatican Council was an ecumenical council; that is, a council whose determinations would be infallible and, therefore, binding upon the Church. Consistent with the subjectivist principle, it was sufficient

¹⁸ The assertion reinforced by legislation passed by a compliant parliament.

for him *to assert it* for it to be held to be true. The assertion was endorsed by innumerable bishops and priests, and by subsequent popes. But merely because the Pope asserted it, *it did not follow that it was true if it was denied by reality.*

Now, it will be objected immediately that the cases cannot be compared. The Pope is, after all, Christ's Vicar on earth: he does not always speak infallibly but even his passing words should be treated with respect. A pope is infallible "in very rare situations," as Pope Benedict XVI said in the first public statement he made after his elevation in 2005. He is infallible in those circumstances defined in the Decree *Pastor Aeternus* (1870) by the Vatican Council: namely, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is—

- when carrying out the duty as pastor and teacher of all Christians,
- in accordance with his supreme apostolic authority,
- he explains a doctrine of faith or morals
- to be held by the universal Church.

Pope John's pronouncement that the Second Vatican Council was an ecumenical council did not fall within those circumstances. It was not, then, *eo ipso* infallible. It had to be weighed against the reality that makes a council of the Church ecumenical to determine whether or not it was true.

But there was a problem. While the Church has defined when a pope is infallible, she has not yet defined when a council is infallible (that is, ecumenical). In other words, she has not formally identified the *reality* to which a council must conform in order to be an ecumenical council.

When Is A Council Ecumenical?

43. The *reality*—that which makes a council ecumenical—can only be ascertained by recourse to the metaphysical doctrine of causality. Regrettably, by the time Pope John XXIII had his inspiration that the Church needed an ecumenical council, the teaching of metaphysics (and the rigour of thought which is its accompaniment) was languishing. Ten years or so earlier, in *Humani Generis*, Pope Pius XII had lamented its abandonment in Catholic seminaries and had warned of the consequences.

A pope can summon the world's bishops to meet together in council for any number of reasons as, for example,—

- to get to know them better;
- for a communal feast;
- to discuss some moral issue which is troubling the Church's members, such as the current plague of sexual abuse;
- for the funeral of a great prelate;
- for a general synod; or,
- to determine some issue essential to the faith.

It is not the *summoning* of the bishops—the conforming to the legalities—that makes a council ecumenical, even a summoning (reflecting the Church's universality) from every jurisdiction. The summoning, the gathering, is merely the *matter*. The council only becomes ecumenical when this *matter* is accompanied by the appropriate *form*. An ecumenical council's *form* is determined by its *final* cause which, remotely taken, is the good of the Church; and, proximately taken, is the need to determine some

issue whose clarification is essential for the Church to carry out her Divine mission of the salvation of men. Only when a council is formed by this essential determination does it become an ecumenical council.

The Reality Of Vatican II

44. What Pope John XXIII essayed in summoning the Church's bishops to the Vatican in 1962 may be seen from the extracts from the Opening Speech quoted above. It was to accommodate the Church's teaching to the demands of the secular world. Indeed, he coined a particular word to encapsulate this aim—*aggiornamento*. He called the Council "to bring the Church up to date". *But the Church had no such need*. The Church is outside time: the Church is timeless.

With Vatican II the ordination which had marked each of the previous twenty Ecumenical Councils was reversed: instead of the resolution of an issue giving legitimacy to a Council, a Council resolved to give legitimacy to an issue. More precisely, instead of the resolution of a *doctrinal* issue giving legitimacy to the Second Vatican Council, the Second Vatican Council resolved to give legitimacy to a *secular* issue. What was the result? The *end* essential for an ecumenical council being absent, the *formality* ensuring that the determinations of the Council would be infallible was likewise absent. The Second Vatican Council was not an ecumenical council of the Church.¹⁹

It was the Council's initiative of licensing the entry of the secular into the realm of the sacred that enabled the subjectivist evils of Freemasonry and Modernism to make the inroads into Christ's Church detailed above. Now appears the significance of the attendance of members of the American episcopacy. For they brought to the Council their endorsement of those elements of Masonic doctrine, *separation of Church and state* and *religious liberty* which the Church had long condemned. Here is the cause of the effects that led Pope Paul VI on 29th June 1972 to lament, "through some fissure the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God." Vatican II was not just a fissure: it was a gate thrown wide open!

Vatican II's Contribution To The Greatest Scandal

45. In the history of the Church there have always been clergy and religious inclined to succumb to sexual temptation but, except in times of dissipation, they were relatively few.²⁰ The rigours attendant on the practice of their vocations assisted many, perhaps most, of those so inclined to cope. Vatican II's licensing of the entry of the secular into the realm of the sacred removed the buttressing effect of a rigorous religious life. The weak not only found an excuse for indulging their weaknesses, but were deprived of the institutional support and example that might have preserved them from this folly. The abandonment of the exercise of authority by the Vatican and the Church's bishops served to increase the scope of the evil.

¹⁹ Pope and bishops do not make themselves infallible: God alone does that; and He does not bestow that charism without adequate reason. Infallibility is like virtue: it cannot be abused: it exists only for the welfare of the Church and the Catholic faithful.

²⁰ As may be seen, for instance, in a perusal of *The Dialogue* of St Catherine of Siena (c. 1382) or of the *Life of Saint Teresa* (c. 1565).

Corruptio optimi pessima—once embarked on this course, the depths of degradation to which these consecrated persons could descend was measured only by the heights to which they had originally aspired. The resulting evils have tarnished not only the victims and their families, but also the bishops and priests who sought, foolishly, to protect the offenders. The scandal to the Church has been immense.

Christ's Church Will Triumph

46. The Catholic Church has Christ's guarantee of infallibility: it is she, and no philosopher or theologian, who will determine the issues at stake—

- i. what precisely it is that makes a council of the Church's bishops ecumenical; and,
- ii. whether in truth Vatican II was an ecumenical council of the Church.

These issues must be determined, we contend, before the restoration to its fulness of the salutary influence of the Church upon the world. At the heart of the business is the exposure of that intellectual imposture which grounds the denial of the authority of God, and of reality—subjectivism.

47. We shall end this project where we began it, with Chestertonian good sense and the prospect of a return of mankind to sanity.

“[The] peril is that the human intellect is free to destroy itself. Just as one generation could prevent the very existence of the next generation by all entering a monastery or jumping into the sea, so one set of thinkers can in some degree prevent further thinking by teaching the next generation that there is no validity in any human thought. It is idle to talk always of the alternative of reason and faith. Reason is itself a matter of faith... The creeds and the crusades, the hierarchies and the horrible persecutions were not organised, as is ignorantly said, for the suppression of reason. They were organised for the difficult defence of reason... Insofar as religion is gone, reason is going...”²¹

The apotheosis is upon us. Modern man is hard at work, decorating his body with the marks of Satan, gathering with his fellows for the charge down the Gardarene slope. Who can save him? Only his Creator and Redeemer. Twenty centuries ago Almighty God established the means of man's salvation, the Catholic Church. That is the means He will use.

48. It is only a matter of time before Christ stirs His Church to action to expose the lies that have for so long afflicted the world, lies which have infiltrated, at the last, the minds even of those whom He has chosen to speak in His name.

Michael Baker

May 30, 2010—*Trinity Sunday*

²¹ G K Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, London, 1908; my copy, Fontana Books, 1963, pp. 33-4.