

## TWO WORM-RIDDEN POPES—PART II

### In which the writer expresses a change of mind

“John XXIII inflicted a wound on the Church from which it will take centuries to recover.”

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In the first paper bearing this title we considered the prophecy uttered by Our Blessed Lady to the children at La Salette in 1846 that that there would appear in the century, or centuries, to come two worm-ridden popes, and expressed this view—

“Only among those associated with the *Second* Vatican Council, after John XXIII, are there to be found popes who have sought to recede from the meaning of the Church’s sacred dogmas....

Recently there has come to our attention the lengthy Letter written in the year 2000 by theologian, Fr Luigi Villa, associate of Padre Pio, to the Catholic episcopacy setting out a history of the priest, Angelo Roncalli, who became successively, Bishop, Patriarch of Venice, Cardinal, and Pope John XXIII. The Letter reveals aspects of Roncalli’s character and beliefs of which, it seems, leading commentators on the disaster of Vatican II were largely ignorant. It makes for disturbing reading.<sup>2</sup>

If only a quarter of what Fr Villa alleges be true, long before his election to the Chair of Peter, Roncalli had lost any adequate understanding of Christ’s Church as a divine thing, and had, in great measure, lost his Catholic faith. It is clear that our omission of John XXIII from the field of candidates for the title ‘worm-ridden’ was an error.

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The gift of the Holy Spirit called *Understanding* confirms and embellishes the virtue of faith. By it the baptized soul is enabled to see the things God has revealed as God sees them.<sup>3</sup> Among the things He has revealed is His Church and (with it) the realisation that she is not a human but a divine thing. We give testimony of this belief when, each Sunday, we proclaim in the Nicene Creed that the Church is *Una, Sancta, Catholica et Apostolica*. The acknowledgement distinguishes faithful Catholics from heretics. The gifts, like the virtues, grow like the fingers on a hand. If a Catholic should lose just one of the gifts, it follows that he has lost the others. If he has lost the gifts, it is inevitable that he has lost the virtues they adorn. What remains is only a chimera, an appearance of virtue.

In the year 2000, Pope John Paul II proposed John XXIII for beatification. In the same year, in one of his audio/videotapes, theologian and canon lawyer, the late Fr Gregory Hesse, remarked that Roncalli’s disobedience while Patriarch of Venice to Pius XII’s Decree of June 1949 condemning Communism and any involvement in its activities, rendered it impossible he could be a fit candidate for beatification. Fr Villa goes further in exploring Roncalli’s accommodation with Communism, showing how he facilitated the concession to the Russian Communists which

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<sup>1</sup> *Phoenix from the Ashes; the Making, Unmaking and Restoration of Catholic Tradition*, Kettering OH (Angelus Press), 2015, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced at [https://www.superflumina.org/PDF\\_files/john-XXIII-beatified.pdf](https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/john-XXIII-beatified.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> St Thomas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q.8, a. 6 corpus. *Understanding* is contrasted with *Knowledge*, the Gift whereby the faithful soul is enabled to see the things of Creation, their order and purpose, as God sees them. Cf. St Thomas *ibidem*.

confirmed the Second Vatican Council's dysfunction, and how the scandal it generated has facilitated the Communist theory of antipathies in society which so afflicts our modern world.

Fr Villa explores Roncalli's involvement in other anti-Catholic activities; his friendship with Freemasons and indulgence towards Freemasonry in the face of the Church's condemnation of that deistic sect; his sympathy with Modernism and active support for those, such as the Benedictine, Dom Lambert Beauduin who, ignoring the Church's prohibitions, conducted experiments with the Church's sacred liturgy. He exposes Roncalli as a friend of Modernists like Ernesto Bonaiuti, defrocked and excommunicated head of Italian Modernism, and his radically misplaced sympathy for Bonaiuti "as one who loved the Catholic Church".<sup>4</sup>

Theological principle meant nothing to Roncalli. The Church's insistence on the immense benefits to the State and the world's peoples that would flow from the Church's involvement in the State's activities, as Leo XIII had proclaimed in *Immortale Dei* (November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1885), and which grounded Pius XI's encyclical on the Social Reign of Our Blessed Lord, *Quas Primas* (6<sup>th</sup> December, 1925), was anathema to him.

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What did Our Blessed Lady mean when she used the adjective 'worm-ridden'? In the first paper we expressed the view that the two popes to whom she referred, bound by their acceptance of the Petrine office to defend and maintain the faith, would fail to do so.

That Paul VI was one of the two worm-ridden Popes there can be no doubt. The reasons have been set out in a number of papers on this website, in particular in that entitled *Paul VI of Most Infelicitous Memory*...<sup>5</sup> Who was the other?

In the first paper we nominated Benedict XVI for his abandonment, or purported abandonment, in February 2013, of the office of Father of all the Faithful, coupled with an attempt to qualify the unity of the office of Pope by presenting himself as 'Pope Emeritus' after the election of Jorge Cardinal Bergoglio as his 'successor'. The Pope is bound by canon law. As the first of the faithful, he must conform his behaviour to its demands. The consequences of Benedict's failure to address the demands of the 1983 *Code* in respect of resignation from office were explored in the first edition of this paper. Benedict was right to insist that he was still Pope, for he had not abandoned the Office but its powers, as his 'resignation' stated. He ceded those powers to another who was to insist, in due course, that he did not regard himself as the Vicar of Christ. If the thesis here be accepted, he never was!

But Pope Benedict XVI's shortcomings pale to insignificance against those of John XXIII. Accordingly, we now think that John XXIII was the other 'worm-ridden pope'.

### **But John XXIII and Paul VI are Saints!**

Against this thesis it will be argued that the Church has, through the mouth of Pope Francis, declared each of these Popes to be a saint, John XXIII on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and Paul VI on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Even if it be true that Jorge Bergoglio was never validly elected as pope, this would

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<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding that he had died excommunicated and unannealed.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.superflumina.org/PDF\\_files/paul-vi-of-infelicitous-memory.pdf](https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/paul-vi-of-infelicitous-memory.pdf)

not invalidate declarations of sanctity he had made, for the Church supplies jurisdiction where there is doubt, whether of law or fact. See Canon 144 § 1 of the 1983 Code.<sup>6</sup>

The reason why these ‘declarations of sanctity’ should not stand in the way of our thesis is that, since the conclusion in December 1965 of the synod denominated ‘the Second Vatican Council’, each Pope since Paul VI has exercised not one, but two offices. He remains the head of Christ’s Church and Vicar of Christ. But he is also the head of her counterfeit, a human institution inspired by the devil, which Paul VI and his Secretary of State labelled ‘the Conciliar Church’, which Pope John Paul II (in his first encyclical) labelled ‘the Church of the New Advent’, but which is best identified (from its source) as ‘the Church of Vatican II’.

To the objection, then, that they are saints, one is entitled to respond: “Of course, they are saints, saints of the Church of Vatican II!” The most superficial reading of their respective histories reveals that it impossible either could be a saint of the Catholic Church.

### **The Sedevacantist Thesis**

It is clear neither of these two popes could be regarded as orthodox Catholics. Yet each was elected by the cardinals. How is it possible that an heretical, or semi-heretical, candidate could be elected to the Chair of Peter?

Let the reader bear in mind the Church’s firm teaching that the state of the soul of a priest does not affect the validity—or licitness (for that matter)—of the sacraments he confects. Were it otherwise there would be doubts as to the worth of any of the sacraments for no one can know the internal dispositions of any priest. No one, not even the Church, can know the state of soul of any of the faithful, let alone that of her priests or bishops. *De interniis Ecclesia non iudicat*. The Church accepts that she must operate—and the faithful with her—on the basis of *what is objectively observable*.

Let us now consider the position of a man, apparently a faithful Catholic, who in his heart and mind—i.e., covertly—is a heretic. Can he be elected pope? The relevant distinction to be applied is that between *validity* and *liceity* (lawfulness). *Validity* of an action addresses the question, *does it happen?* *Liceity* addresses an entirely separate question, *is it permitted to happen?* Will the election of such a man be valid? Of course it will be. Will his election be lawful? As regards the cardinals, on the supposition that they know nothing of the malice affecting the defective candidate - Yes. As regards the man himself - No, it will not be lawful. The candidate will know himself a fraudulent tenant of the office to which he has been elected. YET HE WILL BE VALIDLY ELECTED!

The legislation at the time of Angelo Roncalli’s election was the Apostolic Constitution *Vacantis Apostolicae Sedis* (December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945) of Pius XII. The relevant provision was this one—

34. None of the Cardinals may in any way, or by pretext or reason of any excommunication, suspension, or interdict whatsoever, or of any other ecclesiastical impediment, be excluded from the active and passive election of the Supreme Pontiff. We hereby suspend such censures solely for the purposes of the said election; at other times they are to remain in vigour.

‘Active’ here means he can vote: ‘passive’ means he can be elected.

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<sup>6</sup> See [https://www.superflumina.org/PDF\\_files/deux-papes-vermoulus.pdf](https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/deux-papes-vermoulus.pdf) for an analysis of both these issues.

So, yes; even though Roncalli may have been a Mason, even though he was certainly a Modernist, even though he was a friend and supporter of atheistic Communists, he was validly elected.

Such a provision protects the Church as it protects the faithful against individual malice. The Church is a mother and provides for her children even where her ministers may fail, realities sedevacantists choose to ignore. The issue is well explained by theologian, Fr Brian Harrison, in a paper published in the year 2000.

“[I]f a heretic, apostate or Freemason can thus validly be elected as Pope, then obviously he can validly remain acting as Pope until he dies. The cardinals he appoints will be true cardinals, the bishops he appoints to Sees will have true jurisdiction... and the legislation by which he binds us will have to be obeyed (insofar as it does not command us to sin or do something manifestly opposed to the common good of the Church). Thus, the continuity of the framework and structures of the universal Church will be preserved until, in God's Providence, a more worthy Pontiff is elected.”<sup>7</sup>

The reader who checks the source of the above quotation will observe that we have excised from it a sentence dealing with the validity of a defective Pope's canonisation of saints and the associated certainty that those he canonises are in heaven. The reason is that Fr Harrison has ever regarded the ‘Second Vatican Council’ as a valid (and legitimate) ecumenical council of the Church. He would not accept the distinction arising upon the suggestion of that ‘Council’s’ invalidity, that there is not one Church operating in the Vatican but two, the one of God, the other of man.

It is notorious that on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1983, in the apostolic constitution, *Divinus Perfectionis Magister*, Pope John Paul II emasculated the processes of beatification and of canonisation in such wise as to alter the very meaning of what is meant by the term ‘saint’. The processes set forth in *Divinus Perfectionis Magister* reflect the systematic errors embraced by the bishops of the ersatz ‘Council’. Whatever the legal situation for the Catholic Church, which time and the Church's indefectibility will eventually resolve, the result is that the ‘saints’ declared as such since January 1983 are only saints of that novel entity, ‘the Church of Vatican II’.

There can be no certainty they are also Saints of the Catholic Church, until the canonical process of each has been exhaustively reviewed in line with the protocols laid down for the protection of Christ's Church and her faithful by Prospero Cardinal Lambertini (afterwards, Pope Benedict XV) his *De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et de Beatorum Canonizatione*.<sup>8</sup>

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November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025—*Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

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<sup>7</sup> *A Heretical Pope Would Govern The Church Illicitly But Validly*, Roman Theological Forum, n. 87, May 2000, see [a-heretical-pope-would-govern-the-church-illicitly-but-validly.pdf](#)

<sup>8</sup> Needless to say, if Our Blessed Lady's revelation at La Salette of two ‘worm-ridden popes’ refers to John XXIII and Paul VI, this militates against the sedevacantist thesis there has been no valid pope since the death of Pius XII.