

The Post-Conciliar Church: A Question of Schism

This chapter first examines whether the Council's novel pronouncements were indeed binding all members of the Church in conscience to adhere to these teachings or were these new pronouncements merely to be taken as suggestions.

This chapter then explains how many Catholics have gradually adopted a Protestant mind-set (over a period of decades) without ever even realizing it. And finally, this chapter explains the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, clarifying the specific conditions under which a Pope is infallible and explaining how a Pope may fall into error — even heresy.

The Status of Vatican II Documents

Archbishop Piamonte¹⁹¹ says that those who reject Vatican II, in spite of the fact that Vatican II did not infallibly define any doctrine or condemn any proposition, can be punished for teaching doctrines condemned by the Church. It is in fact those who profess the errors of the Council who can be punished because the sin of heresy as well as the teaching of any condemned doctrine is a punishable offence. No Catholic can ever be obliged to accept the errors that the Popes have condemned, even if those errors are later taught by a pope or by a council exercising its non-infallible, *non-defining magisterium*. Even Cardinal Felici, Secretary General of the Council, made it clear that all of the Council's pronouncements were not obligatory for all Catholics to accept, when he clarified the Council's position about its own teachings, saying: "We have to distinguish according to the schemas and the chapters those which have already been the subject of dogmatic definitions in the past; *as for the declarations which have a novel character, we have to make reservations.*"

It is not, as Archbishop Piamonte says, "those who profess their

allegiance to the Council of Trent and are openly defiant of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council” who are “running the risk of committing the serious offence of heresy,” — but rather it is those who depart from the defined doctrines of the infallible *magisterium* of the Church in order to embrace the novel teachings of Vatican II who run the risk of committing the serious offence of heresy.

Heresy “is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and Catholic faith, or it is likewise the obstinate doubt concerning the same.” (can. 751)¹⁹² Canon 750 states, “All that is contained in the written word of God or in tradition, that is in the one deposit of faith entrusted to the Church and also proposed as divinely revealed either by the solemn magisterium of the Church or by its ordinary and universal magisterium, must be believed with divine and Catholic faith ...” From these premises it follows strictly that one cannot be convicted of heresy, as it is likewise clear that no one can be punished or declared to be schismatic merely for not accepting the novel and heterodox teachings which the Council refused to set forth with a definitive act or impose by exercising its authority to pronounce the contrary anathemas.

Modernist Rome has gone to absurd lengths to impose the heretical doctrinal novelties of Vatican II on the Catholic faithful. *Vatican II, however, did not define any point of doctrine*,¹⁹³ and therefore its teachings do not require an assent of Faith (can. 752), since they do not pertain to the formal object of faith (St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, II^a II^{ae}, q5, a3).¹⁹⁴ From these premises it follows strictly that one cannot be said to have severed the bonds of communion with the Church for rejecting those Vatican II doctrines which clearly oppose the authoritative magisterial pronouncements of previous popes. Yet this is precisely the preposterous position of the Modernist Roman Curia: Those who refuse to be subject to a heretical conciliar *counter-magisterium* that did not define any doctrine or pronounce any anathema have been anathematised as schismatics.

In a document from the *Pontificia Commissio “Ecclesia Dei”*, N. 117/95, dated 29 Sept., 1995, signed by Msgr. Camille Perl, it is stated:

Father Peter R. Scott, District Superior of the Society in the United States,* has publicly stated that he deplors the ‘liberalism’ of ‘those who refuse to condemn the New Mass as absolutely offensive** to God, or the religious liberty and ecumenism of the post-conciliar Church.’ With such an attitude, the Society of St. Pius X is effectively tending to establish its own canons of orthodoxy and hence to separate itself from the magisterium of the Supreme Pontiff. According to canon 751 such “refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or the communion of the members of the Church subject to him” constitutes schism.

The malicious audacity of the Modernist in the Roman Curia who signed that document is plainly evident. I have already pointed out that Pope Pius VI condemned the proposal to make a ‘*Novus Ordo*’, and the Council of Trent anathematised the proposition that the traditional rites could be changed into new rites. The Popes have forcefully condemned the doctrines and practices of religious liberty and ecumenism as well. These are not private “canons of orthodoxy” but authoritative pronouncements of the supreme magisterium of the Church which continue to bind the Catholic conscience. Msgr. Perl, however, states in an official protocol that such refusal to accept the conciliar errors and aberrations that the magisterial authority of the Church has condemned in the past constitutes schism! If Msgr. Perl is right, then it logically follows that we must become heretics in order to avoid becoming schismatics.

Roman Protestants

* When this was written, Father Peter Scott was U.S. District Superior of the SSPX.

** I do not intend here to deal at length with the problem of whether or not the *Novus Ordo* is intrinsically evil. What is absolutely offensive to God is the violation of divine law by replacing the received and approved rite of Mass with a vulgar, watered down and Protestantized rite of ‘Masse’. Nevertheless, there is heresy in the Missal of Paul VI: In the Good Friday liturgy the *Conciliar Church* prays for the Jews, “**ut ... in sui fœderis fidelitate proficere.**” The key word is *proficere*, i.e. to go forward, advance, continue ... Hence, the *Conciliar Church* prays: “Let us pray for the Jewish people ... that they may continue to grow in faithfulness to His covenant.” Thus the *Conciliar Church* prays that the Jewish people continue on in the *sin of infidelity* by clinging to their obsolete Mosaic Covenant observance.

Fully grasping this doctrinal absurdity which is the end result of Modernist Rome's obsession for Vatican II, Bishop Salvador Lazo,¹⁹⁵ with his characteristic wit, once commented: "You say I am schismatic? But you are a heretic! What is worse — to be a schismatic, or to be a heretic, and therefore also a schismatic?"

It is those who profess the heterodox teachings of Vatican II who, as has been demonstrated above, have departed from the doctrine of the Catholic Faith and have, in the objective order, fallen into heresy. Likewise, as I have already demonstrated earlier, it is those who adhere to the *Novus Ordo* and spurn the traditional Roman Rite who have fallen into *schism*. The *Conciliar Church*¹⁹⁶ is not a renewed Catholic Church, but rather it is a *Reformed Church*¹⁹⁷ — a Church that has, by means of heretical Conciliar doctrines and schismatic reformed liturgy, undergone a transformistic evolution ... a metamorphosis that has effected the fulfilment of the Sixteenth Century Reformers' dream: ***Protestant Rome***.

Father Hubert Jedin, one of the premier historians of the modern era, already pointed out in 1968, that a new Protestant Reformation is taking place in the Church:

We know that today the inner process of schism, the formation of a "Confession" (denomination), lasted not years, but decades. Melancthon and Calvin claimed to be "Catholic" until the end of their lives while the adherents of the old faith were calumniated as "Papists."*

The faithful long clung to the Mass and their saints, and the church regulations introduced by Lutheran magistrates took over many Catholic customs — even processions and pilgrimages. The bulk of the simple faithful never understood that the "Reformation" was not a reform of the Church but the construction of a new Church set up on a different basis. In retrospect one must therefore maintain: *the schism of the Church succeeded by nothing so much as by the illusion that it did not exist*. The illusion was wide-

* Today the adherents of the old faith are called Traditionalists, whereas in fact they are the only true Catholics, while the Vatican II conciliar "Catholics" are Modernists, and therefore at least material heretics.

spread in Rome and in the German episcopate, among many theologians, among the majority of clergymen and among the people.

The parallels between now and then are obvious. ... The Church's present crisis ... is in its innermost essence, as in the 16th Century, a matter of uncertainty and disorientation in the Faith.¹⁹⁸

The *Conciliar Church* of Rome, however, has not yet formalised its break with Catholicism *in so far as it has neither formally imposed its Conciliar heterodoxy on the faithful under pain of anathema nor has it formally mandated the celebration of its schismatic new rites.* By the grace of the infallibility bestowed upon the Church by Christ and preserved by the restraining presence of the Holy Ghost, neither the Council nor the post-conciliar Supreme Pontiffs have formally imposed their errors on the Universal Church. The formal condemnations by the popes of doctrines later professed by Vatican II, along with the solemn definitions and professions of faith that contradict the doctrinal novelties of Vatican II, make it luminously clear that no Catholic may in good conscience adhere to or profess the errors of Vatican II, since the errors of the Council truly constitute an abomination that has made the Church desolate.¹⁹⁹

Papal Infallibility

Catholics are understandably confused, since they have always sought after secure moorings on the firm ground of papal doctrine to protect their faith from being diluted or washed away by the polluted waters of heresy. Some even refuse to admit that the Pope (or a council) can err, and follow him into error. That is gravely sinful because the Church teaches that in matters of faith and morals, we are bound to give assent to the infallible teaching of the Church, “established in the faith as ye have been taught” (Col. 2:7), rather than to the fallible and erroneous doctrines of an erring pope (or council). “*Prima salus est rectæ fidei regulam custodire.*” (Our first salvation is to guard the rule of right faith.)²⁰⁰ “But faith”, St. Thomas explains, “holds all the articles of faith by means of one medium ... the First Truth pro-

posed to us in the scriptures *according to the sound understanding of the teaching of the Church*, and thus any man who falls short of this medium, is totally wanting in faith.”²⁰¹

The Pope is infallible when he defines a doctrine *ex cathedra*, but he is otherwise quite capable of making even the gravest of errors against the doctrine of the Faith. That a pope can personally fall into error in matters of faith, there can be no doubt. We know from history that it has already happened before.²⁰² *That Pope John Paul II had fallen into objective Christological heresy there can also be no doubt.*²⁰³

For Pope John Paul II, Christ’s “descent into hell” refers not to His soul but His *body*. Elaborating on his understanding of the words, “He descended into hell”, the Pope, in his General Audience of January 11, 1989, explained: “If the Letter to the Ephesians speaks of ‘the lower parts of the earth’, it is because the earth receives the human *body* after death and so it received the human body of Christ ... Christ passed through a real experience of death ... He was placed in the tomb. *It is a confirmation that this was a real, and not merely an apparent, death. His soul separated from the body, was glorified in God, but His body lay in the tomb as a corpse ... Jesus experienced the ‘state of death’, that is the separation of body and soul*, as in the case of all people. ***This is the primary meaning of the words ‘He descended into hell’ ...***”²⁰⁴

If that is not clear enough, “This is precisely what the words about the descent into hell meant: the heart or the womb of the earth.” In his belaboured exposition, the Pope explained “the words ‘He descended into hell’; ... are linked to what Jesus Himself had foretold when ... He had said: ‘For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth’ (Mt. 12:40).”

The Pope elaborated further, “the concept of the ‘descent into hell’ ... *It is Christ — laid in the tomb as regards the **body** but glorified in His soul admitted to the fullness of the beatific vision of God ...*”. “... there was, on the one hand, the body in the state of a corpse, and on the other, the heavenly glorification of His soul from the very moment of His death.”²⁰⁵

By contrast, the Catholic understanding of the Article of Faith, “He descended into hell” is as follows. The Fourth Lateran Council professed: “Firmly we believe and we confess simply ... the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ ... having suffered on the wood of the Cross and died, descended into hell ... *But He descended in His soul* ...”²⁰⁶ The Profession of Faith teaches that the “descent into hell” does not refer to the body but to the soul.

For John Paul II, *the soul did not descend into hell* but “... in Christ’s case also there was ... *the heavenly glorification of His soul from the very moment of His death.*” Now one thing is certain, hell is not the same thing as heaven. The Profession of Faith says He “descended into hell ... He descended in His soul”. John Paul II says there was “the heavenly glorification of His soul from the very moment of His death.”

How does the Pope explain the words of St. Peter: “In spirit (Christ) went and preached to the spirits in prison” (1 Pt. 3:19)? — “This seems to indicate *metaphorically* the extension of Christ’s salvation to the just men and women who had died before Him ... With the entrance of Christ’s soul into the beatific vision in the bosom of the Trinity, the ‘freeing from imprisonment’ of the just who had descended to the realm of the dead before Christ, finds its point of reference and explanation.”

The Pope explained further, “In this is manifested and put into effect the *salvific power* of Christ’s sacrificial death which brought redemption to all, even to those who died before His coming and His ‘descent into hell’ *but who were contacted by His justifying grace.*”

The Pope’s explanation clearly expresses the heresy of Peter Abelard, whose condemned proposition reads: “That the soul of Christ did not descend to hell by itself but only by power.”²⁰⁷ It is also a most grievous and impious error to say that Christ’s soul entered into the Beatific Vision, as though He were not already in full possession of the Beatific Vision from the first instant of His conception in the womb of His most holy Mother. The Church has formally censured the error that “It is not established that there was in the soul of Christ while living among men the knowledge which the blessed and the

comprehensors have [cf. Phil. 3:12,13].”²⁰⁸

When the Church professes that “He descended into hell”, what is meant is that Christ’s soul went to ‘Limbo’ — “the place of rest and natural happiness, where the souls of the just who died before the coming of Christ were kept in expectation of their redemption and triumphant entry with Our Lord into heaven on the day of His ascension. This place or state of existence is generally called Limbo ...”²⁰⁹

The same manual continues:

1. It is certain that He went to Limbo, which by His presence became a paradise. It was of this abode that the words addressed to the good thief were spoken: “This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise” (St. Luke 23:43).
2. It is also considered certain that He descended into Purgatory, to console and enlighten the holy souls, and to tell them of their expected redemption. This would seem to be implied by the words of Ecclesiasticus (24:45): “I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep, and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord.”²¹⁰

Pope Innocent III explains that a pope can fall into heresy:

The Roman Pontiff has no superior but God. Who, therefore, (should a pope ‘lose his savour’) could cast him out or trample him under foot — since of the pope it is said ‘gather thy flock into thy fold’? Truly, he should not flatter himself about his power, nor should he rashly glory in his honour and high estate, because the less he is judged by man, the more he is judged by God.

Still the less can the Roman Pontiff glory because *he can be judged by men*, or rather, *can be shown to be already judged, if for example he should wither away into heresy*; because he who does not believe is already judged.

In such a case it should be said of him: “If salt should lose its savour, it is good for nothing but to be cast out and trampled under foot by men.”²¹¹

If the Pope and the bishops fall into heresy or schism, as nearly all

of them did during the Arian heresy,²¹² the Catholic may wonder what he must do in order to remain safe from the poisonous contagion of error. “What then shall the Catholic do”, St. Vincent of Lérins asks, “if some portion of the Church detaches itself from communion of the universal Faith? What other choice can he make if some new contagion attempts to poison, no longer a small part of the Church, but the whole Church at once, then his great concern will be to attach himself to antiquity which can no longer be led astray by any lying novelty.”²¹³ “Hold firmly,” says St. Thomas, “that our faith is identical with that of the ancients. Deny this and you dissolve the unity of the Church.”