

SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Mission

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To Restore and Defend Our Ecclesiastical Traditions of the Latin Rite to the
Diocese of Harrisburg

SS. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Chapel

129 South Beaver Street, York PA 17401

“...this missal is hereafter to be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may freely and lawfully be used... **Accordingly, no one whatsoever is permitted to infringe or rashly contravene this notice of Our permission, statute, ordinance, command, precept, grant, direction, will, decree and prohibition. Should any person venture to do so, let him understand he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.**”

Pope St. Pius V, Papal Bull, *QUO PRIMUM*, Tridentine codification of the “received and approved” immemorial Roman rite of Mass



Sexagesima Sunday St. John of Matha, Confessor February 8, 2026

As on last Sunday and on those which follow until Passion Sunday the Church teaches us “to celebrate the Paschal Sacrament” by “the scriptures of both Testaments” (Prayer of Holy Saturday after 7th Prophecy).

Through the whole of this week the divine office is full of the thought of Noah. God seeing that man’s wickedness was great upon the earth said, “I will destroy man whom I have created”; and He told Noah, “I will establish my covenant with thee and thou shalt enter into the ark.”

For forty days and forty nights rain fell on the earth, while the ark floated on the waters which rose above the mountain tops and covered them; and in this whirlpool all men were carried away “like stubble” (Gradual); only Noah and his companions in the ark remaining alive. Then God remembered them and at length the rain ceased. After some time Noah opened the window of the ark and set free a dove, which returned with a fresh olive leaf and Noah understood that the waters no longer covered the earth. And God told him, “Go out of the ark, thou and thy wife, thy sons and the wives of thy sons with thee” (Communion). And the rainbow appeared as a sign of reconciliation between God and men.

That his story is related to the Paschal mystery is shown by the fact that the Church reads it on Holy Saturday; and this is how she herself applies it, in the Liturgy, to our Lord and His Church. “The just wrath of the Creator drowned the guilty world in the vengeful waters of the flood, only Noah being saved in the ark. But then the admirable power of love laved the world in blood.” It was the wood of the ark which saved the human race and it is that of the Cross which in its turn saves the world.

“Thou alone,” says the Church, speaking of the Cross, “hast been found worthy to be, for this shipwrecked world, the ark which brings safely into port.” “The open door in the side of the ark by which those enter who are to escape from the Flood, and who represent the Church, are as is explained in the liturgy, a type of the mystery of redemption; for on the Cross, our Lord had His sacred side open and from this gate of life, went forth the sacraments, giving true life to souls. Indeed the blood and water which flow from thence are symbols of the Eucharist and of Holy Baptism.”

“O God, who by water didst wash away the crimes of the guilty world, and by the overflowing of the deluge didst give a figure of regeneration, that one and the same element might in a mystery be the end of vice and the origin of virtue: look, O Lord, on the face of Thy Church and multiply in her Thy regenerations, opening the fonts of baptism all over the world for the renovation of the Gentiles. “In the days of Noah,” says St. Peter, “eight souls were saved by water, whereunto Baptism being of the like form, now saith you also.”

On Maundy Thursday, when the Bishop blesses the holy oil from the olive-tree which is to be used for the sacraments, he says: “When of old the crimes of the world were atoned for by the waters of the Flood, a dove foreshadowing the gift to come, announced by an olive-branch the return of peace to the earth. And this indeed is made clear by its effects in latter times: when the waters of baptism having washed away all guilt of sin, the unction of the oil makes us joyous and serene.” The Blood of Christ is the blood of the New Covenant, which almighty God has made with man, through His Son. “Thou,” cries the Church, “who by an olive-branch didst command the dove to proclaims peace to the world.” Peace is often mentioned in the Mass which is the memorial of his Passion, “Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.” And we shall find the collect for Easter Friday, speaking of the Paschal Sacrament, as the seal of reconciliation between God and men.

Above all, however, in his divinely appointed mission as father of all succeeding generations Noah is a figure of Christ; he was truly the second father of the human race and he remains the type of life continually renewed. We are told in the liturgy that the olive-branch by means

of its foliage is a symbol of the prosperous fertility bestowed by almighty God upon Noah when he came forth from the ark, and the ark itself is called by St. Ambrose in today's office, the "seminarium," or nursery, that is, the place containing the seed of life which is to fill the world.

Now, Christ, much more than Noah, was the second Adam, peopling the world with a race of believing souls, faithful to God. On Holy Saturday, in the prayer following the second prophecy which is concerned with Noah, the Church humbly asks almighty God to "peacefully effect," by His eternal decree, "the work of human salvation," and to "let the whole world experience and see that what was fallen is raised up, what was old is made new," and that "all things are re-established, through Him from whom they received their first being, our Lord Jesus Christ." It was through the Word that God made the world in the beginning (last Gospel), and it is by the preaching of His Gospel that our Lord came to bring men to a new birth. "Being born again," says St. Peter, "not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God who liveth and reigneth for ever...And this is the word which by the gospel hath been preached unto you."

From this we can see why today's Gospel is taken from the parable of the Sower, for "the seed is the word of God." If in Noah's days men perished, St. Paul tells us, it was because of their unbelief, while at the same time it was by faith that Noah "framed the ark...by that which he condemned the world, and was constituted heir of the justice which is by faith."

INTROIT:

Ps. 43. Arise, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? arise, and cast us not off to the end. Why turnest Thou Thy face away, and forgettest our trouble? Our body is prostrate on the earth: arise, O Lord, help us and deliver us.

Ps. O God, we have heard with our ears: our fathers have declared to us. Glory be, etc. Arise, why sleepest Thou, etc.

COLLECT:

O God, who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do, mercifully grant that, through the protection of the Doctor of the Gentiles, we may be defended against all adversity. Through our Lord, etc.

O God, who through St. John didst divinely institute the Order of the most holy Trinity for ransoming prisoners from the power of the Saracens, grant, we pray, that in virtue of his interceding merits we may by Thy help be delivered from all bondage of soul and of body. Through our Lord, etc.

EPISTLE: 2 Cor. 11, 19-33; 12,1-9

Brethren: You gladly suffer the foolish: whereas yourselves are wise. For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonour, as if we had been weak in this part. Wherein if any man dare (I speak foolishly), I dare also. They are Hebrews, so am I. They are Israelites, so am I. They are the seed of Abraham, so am I. They are the ministers of Christ (I speak as one less wise), I am more: in many more labours, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea: in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren: in labour and painfulness, in much watching, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides those things which are without, my daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever, knoweth that I lie not. At Damascus the governor of the nation under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands. If I must glory (it is not expedient indeed) but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not, God knoweth, such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man, whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knoweth: that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter. For such a one I will glory: but for myself I will glory nothing but in my infirmities. For, though I should have a mind to glory, I shall not be foolish: for I will say the truth: but I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or anything he heareth from me. And lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For which thing, thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And He said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Why is St. Paul mentioned in the Mass of this day, and why is this epistle read?

Because in Rome the Station or Church service is held on this day in the Church of St. Paul and because the Church continues to encourage us to work according to the example given by St. Paul who, with the grace of God, accomplished and suffered so much; also because we should labor for the honor of God and the salvation of our souls and faithfully cooperate with the grace of God.

Why, at the beginning of this epistle, does St. Paul say so much in his own praise?

Not out of ambition for honor and glory, but to honor God, and for the love and advantage of the Corinthians, who allowed themselves to be deceived by mercenary impostors and false prophets; that he might make public the craftiness of those deceivers who assumed the appearance of the true apostles, as Satan took the form of a good angel. To shame these, and to remove the obstacles they had placed in the way of the gospel, St. Paul was obliged to reveal to the Corinthians the things he had performed and endured in propagating the holy gospel. -By trials and sufferings is the true apostle known; the false apostles, the hirelings, as Christ calls them, only care for their own bodies, for temporal advantages, not for the salvation of souls. We see this exemplified in our days by the heretical missionaries who, when there is suffering, when there is martyrdom, take to flight, for their eyes are directed only to the present life and a large income, while the Catholic missionaries rejoice if, for Christ's sake, and for the salvation of souls, they are permitted to suffer, and made worthy to endure the cruel death of the martyr.

Of whom does St. Paul relate such marvels?

Of himself, but from humility and modesty he does not say so; fourteen years before, forty-four years after the birth of Christ, St. Paul was rapt to the third heaven, that is, to the abode of happy spirits; but to preserve him in humility God permitted Satan to use the

concupiscence of the flesh, which is like a sting in the body of man, as a temptation to the apostle, and by which he was continually tormented.

ASPIRATION Grant me, O God, Thy grace that in these evil days of false doctrines I may remain steadfast to Thy holy gospel which in the holy Catholic Church remains pure and unchanged; never let me be deterred from obeying its precepts, neither by the charms of the world nor by the mockery and reproaches of the wicked.

GRADUAL:

Ps. 82. Let the Gentiles know that God is Thy name: Thou alone art the Most High over all the earth. O my God, whirl them like dust, and as stubble before the face of the wind.

TRACT:

Ps. 59. Thou hast moved the earth, O Lord, and hast troubled it. Heal thou the breaches thereof, for it has been shaken. That Thy elect may flee from before the bow, that they may be delivered.

GOSPEL: *Luke 8, 4-15*

At that time, when a very great multitude was gathered together and hastened out of the cities unto Jesus, He spoke by a similitude: The sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And other some fell upon a rock: and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other some fell among thorns, and the thorns growing up with it choked it. And other some fell upon good ground: and being sprung up yielded fruit a hundredfold. Saying these things, He cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And His disciples asked Him what this parable might be. To whom He said: To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables: that seeing they may not see, and hearing may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And they by the way side are they that hear: then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no roots: for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation they fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard and, going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

Why is the word of God here compared to seed?

Because as good fruits spring from good seed, so do good works from the word of God; and as it is impossible for any soil not sown to produce good fruits, so neither can men produce the fruits of the Spirit without the seed of the divine Word.

Why did Our Saviour cry out, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"?

To declare the necessity of heeding the word of God, since without the instruction in our holy religion which we derive from that word we cannot know what we must do to please God, and save our souls.

How, then, does it happen that, notwithstanding the excellence of the divine word, there are so many bad Christians?

The fault is with men, who, though they hear the word of God, hear, read, and meditate superficially. The divine seed finds no moisture or root in their hearts; they are overgrown with the piercing thorns of cares, riches, and sensual lusts, so that the seed of the divine word is choked up, and can neither grow nor bear fruit.

What is the effect of the word of God when heeded?

To wash away sin, implant virtue, and create the world anew. Jeremias says: "Are not My words fire" (Jer. 23, 29) which bursts out from within, consuming the vapors of sin, drying up the marshes of vice, and killing the deep roots of bad habits? Again, it is "a hammer," breaking in pieces the rocks of hardened hearts. St. Paul says: "It is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword: reaching into the division of the soul and spirit, of the joints also and the marrow" (Heb. 4, 12) - that is, cutting away from the spirit sensual lusts. St. James calls it a mirror, in which a man beholding himself and his sins becomes ashamed, and tries to get free from them (James 1, 23). It is, finally, the good seed, which, falling upon good ground, yields fruit a hundredfold.

What must we do before a sermon?

St. Chrysostom asks, "Who pours a precious liquid into an unclean vessel, before he has washed it?" We should, therefore, cleanse our hearts before a sermon by contrition, "for wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul" (Wis. 1, 4). As the ground to be sown must first be prepared, so must our hearts be cleansed, and made ready by a holy desire of learning what is good.

What must we do during a sermon?

We must listen attentively and respectfully, for it is God Who speaks to us through the preacher: "He that heareth you, heareth Me" (Luke 10, 16). If an ambassador reading the letters of his king is listened to with great attention, quiet, and respect, says St. Chrysostom, how much greater veneration should we not pay to the minister of God announcing His holy will? Be careful, therefore, not to show contempt for the preacher, for that will reach back to God, Who has said, "He that despiseth you, despiseth Me" (Luke 10, 16). Be careful not to apply what is said in the sermon to others, but rather, "take heed to thyself" (I. Tim. 4, 16). If you are free from those sins which the sermon points at, thank God, and pray that you may not fall into them.

What must we do after a sermon?

We must endeavor to practice what we have heard; for God justifies, not the hearers of the law, but only the doers (Rom. 2, 13) of it. In order to practice what we hear in the sermon it is necessary, in the first place, to keep it in our minds, to ponder it carefully and remember it. Christ, therefore, blesses those who hear the word of God and keep it (Luke 11, 28). The seed cannot bring forth fruit if not well covered with good ground, warmed by the sun, moistened by the rain and dew, and cared for in other ways. Finally, pray often to God, that He may keep alive in you the divine truths which you have heard.

Prayer

Oh my God, I am covered with shame, because the seed of Thy divine word, which Thou hast so abundantly sown in my heart, has brought forth so little fruit. Have mercy, O Lord, and change my heart, that it may become good ground, in which Thy word may take root, thrive, grow, and finally bring forth the fruit of salvation, which Thou requirest of me. Amen.

OFFERTORY:

Ps. 16. Perfect Thou my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps be not moved: incline Thy ear, and hear my words: show forth Thy wonderful mercies, Thou who savest them that trust in Thee, O Lord.

SECRET:

May the sacrifice now offered Thee, O Lord, ever afford us life and security. Through our Lord, etc.

In memory of Thy saints, we offer Thee, O Lord, a sacrifice of praise, trusting by it to be delivered from evil both now and hereafter. Through the same Lord, etc.

COMMUNION:

Ps. 42. I will go in to the altar of God: to God who giveth joy to my youth.

POSTCOMMUNION:

We ask Thee, almighty God, in humble supplication graciously to grant that they whom Thou dost refresh with Thy Sacraments may serve Thee with such behavior as is pleasing to Thee. Through our Lord, etc.

Refreshed by heavenly food we humbly beseech Thee, our God, that we may be guarded by the prayers of him in whose memory we have received them. Through the same Lord, etc.



And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard and, going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

PROPER OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 8th:

8	Sun	Sexagesima Sunday St. John of Matha, C	sd	V		Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions 8:00 AM; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM
9	Mon	St. Cyril of Alexandria, BpCD <i>St. Apollonia, VM</i>	d	W		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
10	Tue	St. Scholastica, V	d	W		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
11	Wed	Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes	dm	W		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
12	Thu	The Seven Holy Founders of the Servites, Cc	d	W		Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
13	Fri	Ferial Day		V	A	Mass 8:30 AM; Rosary of Reparation before Mass
14	Sat	Our Lady's Saturday <i>St. Valentine, Priest, M</i>	sp	W		Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions 8:00 AM; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM
15	Sun	Quinquagesima Sunday Ss. Faustina & Jovita, Mm	sd	V		Mass 9:00 AM; Confessions 8:00 AM; Rosary of Reparation 8:30 AM

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ss. Peter & Paul Chapel is open to its members at any time of the day or night for visits to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

The crowning disloyalty to God is heresy. It is the sin of sins, the very loathsomest of things which God looks down upon in this malignant world. Yet how little do we understand of its excessive hatefulness! It is the polluting of God's truth, which is the worst of all impurities. Yet how light we make of it! We look at it, and are calm. We touch it and do not shudder. We mix with it, and have no fear. We see it touch holy things, and we have no sense of sacrilege. We breathe its odour, and show no signs of detestation or disgust. Some of us affect its friendship; and some even extenuate its guilt. We do not love God enough to be angry for His glory. We do not love men enough to be charitably truthful for their souls. Fr. Felix Sarda y Salvany, *Liberalism Is A Sin*

When the Christian nations of the east had lost the faith which they themselves had transmitted to the western world; when they had disfigured the sacred symbol of faith by their blasphemous heresies; the anger of God sent upon them, from Arabia, the deluge of Mahometanism. It swept away the Christian Churches, that had existed from the very times of the apostles. Jerusalem, the favoured Jerusalem, on which Jesus had lavished His tenderest love; even she became a victim to the infidel hordes. Antioch and Alexandria, with their patriarchates, were plunged into the vilest slavery; and at length Constantinople, that had so obstinately provoked the divine indignation, was made the very capital of the Turkish empire. And we, the western nations, if we return not to the Lord our God, shall we be spared? Shall the flood-gates of heaven's vengeance, the torrent of fresh Vandals, ever menacing to burst upon us, yet never come? Where is the country of our own Europe, that has not corrupted its way, as in the days of Noah? that has not made conventions against the Lord and against His Christ? that has not clamoured out that old cry of revolt: 'Let us break their bonds asunder, let us cast away their yoke from us?' Well may we fear that the time is at hand, when Christ our Lord will rule us with a rod of iron, and break us in pieces like a potter's vessel.

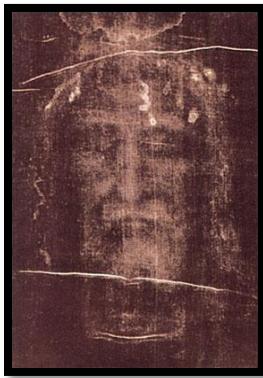
Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Sexagesima week

St. John of Matha, assisted by his faithful co-operator, St. Felix of Valois, established, under the name of the most holy Trinity, a body of religious men, who bound themselves by vow to devote their energies, their privations, their liberty, nay, their very life, to the service of the poor slaves who were groaning under the Saracen yoke. The Order of the Trinitarians, and the Order of Mercy founded by St. Peter Nolasco, though distinct, have the same end in view, and the result of their labors, during the six hundred years of their existence, has been the restoration to liberty and preservation from apostasy of upwards of a million slaves.... We are preparing for Lent, when one of our great duties will have to be that of charity towards our suffering brethren: what finer model could we have than St. John of Matha, and his whole Order, which was called into existence for no other object than delivering from the horrors of slavery brethren who were utter strangers to their deliverers, but were in suffering and in bondage... men who were even willing to change place with the poor captives, if their liberty could not be otherwise obtained.

Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Feast of St. John of Matha

Feast of the Holy Face of Jesus

Jesus covered with blood and with much sadness said to Mother Pierina: "See how much I suffer. I am understood by so few: what ingratitude on the part of those who say they love Me! I have given My Heart as a sensible object of My great love for man and I have given My Face as a sensible object of My sorrow for the sins of man. I desire that It be honored by a special feast on Shrove Tuesday. The feast will be preceded by a novena during which the faithful will make reparation to Me, uniting themselves with My sorrow." [This year, the feast occurs on **FEBRUARY 17 (Shrove Tuesday)**. The Alpha-Omega novena begins today, Sexagesima Sunday]



"I firmly wish that My face reflecting the intimate pains of my soul, the suffering and love of My heart, be more honored! Whoever gazes upon Me already consoles Me."

Our Lord to Sister Pierina

"All those who, attracted by My love, and venerating My countenance, shall receive, by virtue of My humanity, a brilliant and vivid impression of My divinity. This splendor shall enlighten the depths of their souls, so that in eternal glory the celestial court shall marvel at the marked likeness of their features with My Divine countenance."

Our Lord to St. Gertrude

OFFERING OF THE HOLY FACE TO APPEASE GOD'S JUSTICE AND DRAW DOWN MERCY UPON US



ETERNAL Father, turn away Thine angry gaze from all guilty people whose faces have become unsightly in Thine eyes. Look instead upon the face of Thy Beloved Son, for this is the Face of Him in Whom Thou art well pleased. We now offer Thee this Holy face of Jesus Christ, covered with shame and disfigured by bloody bruises, in reparation for the crimes of our age, in order to appease Thine anger, justly provoked against us. Because Thy Divine Son, our Redeemer, has taken upon His head all the sins of His people that they might be spared, we now beg of Thee, Eternal Father, to grant us mercy. Amen.

O Jesus, who in Thy bitter Passion didst become "the most abject of men, a man of sorrows", I venerate Thy Sacred Face whereon there once did shine the beauty and sweetness of the Godhead; but now it has become for me as if it were the face of a leper! Nevertheless, under those disfigured features, I recognize Thy infinite Love and I am consumed with the desire to love Thee and make Thee loved by all men. The tears which well up abundantly in Thy sacred eyes appear to me as so many precious pearls that I love to gather up, in order to purchase the souls of poor sinners by means of their infinite value. O Jesus, whose adorable face ravishes my heart, I implore Thee to fix deep within me Thy divine image and to set me on fire with Thy Love, that I may be found worthy to come to the contemplation of Thy glorious Face in Heaven. Amen

Promises of Our Lord Jesus Christ to Those Devoted to His Holy Face

1. I will give them contrition so perfect, that their very sins shall be changed in My sight into jewels of precious gold .
2. None of these persons shall ever be separated from Me.

3. In offering My Face to My Father, they will appease His anger, and they will purchase as with celestial coin, pardon for poor sinners.
4. I will open My Mouth to plead with My Father to grant all the petitions that they will present to Me.
5. I will illuminate them with My light. I will consume them with My love. I will render them fruitful of good works.
6. They will, as the pious Veronica, wipe My adorable Face outraged by sin, and I will imprint My divine Features in their souls.
7. At their death, I will renew in them the image of God effaced by sin.
8. By resemblance to My Face, they will shine more than many others in eternal life, and the brilliancy of My Face will fill them with joy.

These inestimable promises are drawn from the works of St. Gertrude, St. Mechtilde and from the writings of Sister Marie de Saint Pierre, a Carmelite who died at Tours, in the odor of sanctity.

Fight, therefore, with great determination. Do not let the weakness of your nature be an excuse. If your strength fails you, ask more from God. He will not refuse your request. Consider this-----if the fury of your enemies is great, and their numbers overwhelming, the love which God holds for you is infinitely greater. The Angel who protects you and the Saints who intercede for you are more numerous... All He asks of you is that you defend yourself courageously, and that, despite any wounds you may receive, you never lay down your arms or leave the battleground. You must not shirk your duty. This war is unavoidable, and you must either fight or die. The obstinacy of your enemies is so fierce that peace and arbitration with them is utterly impossible.

Dom Lorenzo Scupoli, *The Spiritual Combat*

"Prayer draws its merits from charity; but its imperative efficacy comes from faith and confidence." St. Thomas

THE DIVINE SEED

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

PRESENCE OF GOD: O Lord, I am here before You. Grant that my heart may be the good ground, ready to receive Your divine word.

MEDITATION:

1. Today Jesus, the divine Sower, comes to scatter the good seed in His vineyard the Church. He wishes to prepare our souls for a new blossoming of grace and virtue.

"The seed is the word of God." Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate, eternal Utterance of the Father, came to sow this word in the hearts of men; it is, as it were, a reflection of Himself. The divine word is not a sound which strikes the air and disappears rapidly like the word of men; it is a supernatural light which reveals the true value of things; it is grace, the source of power and strength to help us live according to the light of God. Thus it is a seed of supernatural life, of sanctity, of eternal life. This seed is never sterile in itself; it always has a vital, powerful strength, capable of producing not only some fruits of Christian life, but abundant fruits of sanctity. This seed is not entrusted to an inexperienced husbandman who, because of his ignorance, might ruin the finest sowing. It is Jesus Himself, the Son of God, who is the Sower.

Then why does the seed not always bring forth the desired fruit? Because very often the ground which receives it does not have the requisite qualities. God never stops sowing the seed in the hearts of men; He invites them, He calls them continually by His light and His appeals; He never ceases giving His grace by means of the Sacraments; but all this is vain and fruitless unless man offers God a good ground, that is, a heart, well prepared and disposed. God wills our salvation and sanctification, but He never forces us; He respects our liberty.

2. Today's Gospel (Lk 8, 4-15) mentions four categories of people who receive the seed of the divine word in different ways. It compares them to the hard ground, to the stony soil, to the earth choked with thorns, and lastly, to the good fertile field.

The hard ground: souls that are frivolous, dissipated, open to all distractions, rumors, and curiosity; admitting all kinds of creatures and earthly affections. The word of God hardly reaches their heart when the enemy, having free access, carries it off, thus preventing it from taking root.

The stony ground: superficial souls with only a shallow layer of good earth, which will be rapidly blown away, along with the good seed, by the winds of passion. These souls easily grow enthusiastic, but do not persevere and "in time of temptation fall away." They are unstable, because they have not the courage to embrace renunciation and to make the sacrifices which are necessary if one wishes to remain faithful to the word of God and to put it into practice in all circumstances. Their fervor is a straw fire which dies down and goes out in the face of the slightest difficulty.

The ground covered with thorns: souls that are preoccupied with worldly things, pleasures, material interests and affairs. The seed takes root, but the thorns soon choke it by depriving it of air and light. Excessive solicitude for temporal things eventually stifles the rights of the spirit.

Lastly, *the good ground* is compared by Jesus to those "who, with a good and upright heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience." The good and upright heart is the one which always gives first place to God, which seeks before everything else the kingdom of God and His justice. The seed of the divine word will bear abundant fruit in proportion to the good dispositions it finds in us: recollection, a serious and profound interior life, detachment, sincere seeking for the things of God above and beyond all earthly things, and finally, perseverance, without which the word of God cannot bear its fruit in us.

COLLOQUY:

O Jesus, divine Sower, rightly do You complain of the arid, sterile ground of my poor heart! What an abundant sowing of holy inspirations, interior lights, and grace You have cast into my heart! How many times You have invited me to come to You by special appeals, and how many times leave I stopped, after following You for a short time! O Lord, if only I could understand the fundamental reason for my spiritual sterility, my instability and inconstancy in good! Will Your light fail me? No, for You are continually instructing and admonishing my soul in a thousand ways. Oh! if so many souls living in error and not knowing You had received but a hundredth part of the light which You have given me so profusely, how much fruit would they not have drawn from it!

Will Your grace fail me? Is not Your grace my strength? O Lord, I see that neither Your light nor Your strength will fail me; what I lack is the perseverance which can faithfully withstand temptations, difficulties, and darkness; which can face courageously the sacrifices and austerity

of the Christian life. It is easy to make sacrifices and to renounce oneself for a day, but it is hard to keep on doing it always, every day of our life. Is this not the reason that You said, O Lord, that the good heart brings forth fruit "in patience"?

O Jesus, who endured with invincible patience Your most sorrowful Passion and death, give me the patience I need to keep up the struggle against my passions and my self-love, patience to embrace with perseverance all the sacrifices required by total detachment, to be able to live without personal satisfaction and pleasures, to do everything that is repugnant to me, that hurts me, that crosses me and is displeasing to my self-love.

O Lord, You know that I desire total purification because I long for union with You; but You cannot purify me entirely if I cannot accept patiently Your work: the trials, humiliations and detachments that You prepare for me. O Jesus, divine Sufferer, give me Your patience; make me, like Yourself, humble and patient.

The connection between the victory of the Divine Word and the triumph of his glorious Mother has never been more manifest than in the combats sustained by the Pontiff whom we are to honor today. St. Cyril of Alexandria is the Doctor of the Divine Maternity as his predecessor, St. Athanasius, was that of the Consubstantiality of the Word. The dogma of the Incarnation is founded upon these two ineffable mysteries, which they confessed and defended in two succeeding centuries. As Son of God, Christ must be consubstantial with the Father, for the infinite simplicity of the divine essence excluded all idea of division. To deny the unity of substance and principle in Jesus, the Divine Word, was to deny His divinity. As Son of Man, as well as true God of true God, Jesus was to be born on earth of a daughter of Adam, and yet in His humanity be still one Person with the Word which is consubstantial with the Father. To deny the personal union of the two natures in Christ was again equivalent to denying His divinity; it was also equivalent to declaring that the Blessed Virgin, who until then had been honored as having given birth to God in the nature which He assumed for our salvation, was only the mother of a man.

Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Feast of St. Cyril of Alexandria

God will have the Paraclete only in those who worship Him in *perfect* faith.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On The True Faith*

Therefore, it is unlawful, and an act the punishment of which is death, to love to associate with unholy heretics.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On Leviticus*

God, in His infinite wisdom, gave to St. Benedict a faithful co-operatrix, a sister of such angelic gentleness of character, that she would be a sort of counterpoise to the brother, whose vocation, as the legislator of monastic life, needed a certain dignity of grave and stern resolve. We continually meet with these contrasts in the lives of the saints; and they show us that there is a link, of which flesh and blood know nothing; a link which binds two souls together, gives them power, harmonizes their differences of character, and renders each complete. Thus it is in heaven with the several hierarchies of the angels; a mutual love, which is founded on God Himself, unites them together, and makes them live in the eternal happiness of the tenderest brotherly affection. Dom Gueranger, *The Liturgical Year*, Feast of St. Scholastica

The siblings were quite close. The respective rules of their houses proscribed either entering the other's monastery. According to Saint Gregory, they met once a year at a house near Monte Cassino monastery to confer on spiritual matters, and were eventually buried together, probably in the same grave. Saint Gregory says, "so death did not separate the bodies of these two, whose minds had ever been united in the Lord."

Saint Gregory tells the charming story of the last meeting of the two saints on earth. Scholastica and Benedict had spent the day in the "mutual comfort of heavenly talk" and with nightfall approaching, Benedict prepared to leave. Scholastica, having a presentiment that it would be their last opportunity to see each other alive, asked him to spend the evening in conversation. Benedict sternly refused because he did not wish to break his own rule by spending a night away from Monte Cassino. Thereupon, Scholastica cried openly, laid her head upon the table, and prayed that God would intercede for her. As she did so, a sudden storm arose. The violent rain and hail came in such a torrential downpour that Benedict and his companions were unable to depart.

"May Almighty God forgive you, sister" said Benedict, "for what you have done."

"I asked a favor of you," Scholastica replied simply, "and you refused it. I asked it of God, and He has granted it!"

Just after his return to Monte Cassino, Benedict saw a vision of Scholastica's soul departing her body, ascending to heaven in the form of a dove. She died three days after their last meeting. He placed her body in the tomb he had prepared for himself, and arranged for his own to be placed there after his death. St. Gregory the Great, *Life of St. Benedict*

This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened and no man shall pass through it; because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered by it, and it shall be shut. Ezech44:2

Know and understand well, you the most humble of my son, that I am the ever virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God for whom we live, of the Creator of all things, Lord of heaven and the earth. I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help, and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you, and to all the inhabitants on this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me; listen there to their lamentations, and remedy all their miseries, afflictions and sorrows. [.....] You go in my name, and make known my wish in its entirety that he has to start the erection of a temple which I ask of him. And again tell him that I, in person, the ever-virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God, sent you. The Blessed and Ever-Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego, Message of our Lady of Guadalupe

When the heretic Nestorius aimed to pluck from Mary's diadem its fairest gem, her highest privilege of the Divine Maternity, a Carmelite, the great St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, stopped that sacrilegious act. At the Council of Ephesus, over which he presided in 431, the doctrine, that Mary is the Mother of God, was declared a dogma of our faith. It was then, on hearing this doctrine solemnly proclaimed, that the assembled faithful of that city cried out with one voice: "*Holy, Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.*" To a Carmelite, therefore, we owe the third part of the "Hail Mary."

Very Rev. Lawrence Diether, O. Carm., *Ave Maria, A Short Commentary on the Hail Mary*

"I Am the Immaculate Conception"

And the temple of God was opened in heaven: and the ark of his testament was seen in his temple, and there were lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake, and great hail. And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: "Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ." (Apoc 11:19; 12:1,10) Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

Manifest Heretics are "the most injurious kind of tares."

But the tares, & etc., the sons of that wicked, namely the devil: thus the Syriac and Arabic. Therefore they themselves are evil, for the offspring follow their father. As the sons of God are good and divine, so are the sons of the devil wicked and diabolical. Observe: by tares and children of the wicked one, some understand heretics, because they are the most injurious kind of tares, inasmuch as they choke and destroy the faithful and faith from their foundation. So St. Chrysostom, Euthymius, and St. Augustine who, however, retracts and teaches from St. Cyprian, that tares denote all the wicked in the Church. Ss. Gregory, Ambrose, and Theophylact teach the same. For all wicked persons, by their evil life, hurt the faithful and the Church, as tares injure wheat, and choke it. Falsely then from this passage, (Christ forbids these tares to be plucked up, and subjoins, Let both grow together), the Innovators infer that heretics are not to be punished and extirpated. For by parity of reasoning they might conclude that murderers and thieves must not be punished; for they too are tares. And I say that Christ does not here absolutely forbid these tares to be plucked up, but says that no one must attempt to root them all up together; nor at a time when they cannot be distinguished from the wheat; or when there is danger of pulling up the wheat at the same time with them. But all this does not apply when anyone is a manifest heretic, especially if he teaches and infects others with his heresy. For such a one does more harm to the Church than a murderer, for the one only kills the body, but the other the soul. See I Cor. v. 13, Gal. v. 12, where the Apostle commands impious persons, especially false teachers, to be taken away and extirpated. Thus Origen and St. Augustine—the latter indeed was at first of opinion that heretics ought not to be put to death, yea, that they ought not, even to be compelled to resume the faith which they have professed in baptism. But afterwards, when he been taught by experience how perverse and obstinate heretics are, he changed his opinion and taught the contrary. He says, "I had not yet learnt either what great wickedness they would venture upon, if they could do it with impunity; or how much careful discipline could effect to make a change in them for the better." Rev. Cornelius a Lapide, *The Great Commentary, Matthew 13*

At the first apparition on February 11, 1858, she taught the child to make the sign of the Cross correctly and devoutly, and taking a chaplet from her own arm, encouraged her by example to say her rosary. This was repeated at subsequent apparitions...during which the blessed Virgin conversed with her, exhorted her to pray for sinners, kiss the ground and do penance, and finally commanded her to tell the priests that a chapel was to be built in the place and processions held. On the feast of the Annunciation, the child earnestly begged the Lady who had so often visited her to reveal her name, the blessed Virgin, joining her hands and raising her eyes to heaven, said: 'I am the Immaculate Conception.' The Roman Breviary

The Punishment Is Well Under Way

Father, the Most Holy Virgin is very sad because no one has paid any attention to Her message, neither the good nor the bad. The good continue on their way but without giving any importance to Her message. The bad, not seeing the punishment of God actually falling upon them, continue their life of sin without even caring about the message. But believe me, Father, God will chastise the world and this will be in a terrible manner. The punishment from Heaven is imminent. Father, how much time is there before 1960 arrives? It will be very sad for everyone, not one person will rejoice at all if beforehand the world does not pray and do penance. I am not able to give any other details because it is still a secret. ... Tell them, Father, that many times the most Holy Virgin told my cousins Francisco and Jacinta, as well as myself, that many nations will disappear from the face of the earth. She said that Russia will be the instrument of chastisement chosen by Heaven to punish the whole world if we do not beforehand obtain the conversion of that poor nation. Father, the devil is in the mood for engaging in a decisive battle against the Blessed Virgin. And the devil knows what it is that most offends God and which in a short space of time will gain for him the greatest number of souls. Thus, the devil does everything to overcome souls consecrated to God, because in this way, the devil will succeed in leaving the souls of the faithful abandoned by their leaders, thereby the more easily will he seize them.

Sister Lucy of Fatima, to Father Augustine Fuentes at her convent in Coimbra, Portugal, December 26, 1957

ON THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD *But he was asleep (Matt 8, 24).*

It is an article of faith in the holy Catholic Church that God has not only created the world, but that He sustains and governs it; this preservation and ruling of the whole world and of each individual creature is called Providence. There are people who think that God is too great a Lord to busy Himself about the care of this world, that to do so is beneath His majesty; it was enough for Him to create the world, for the rest, He

leaves it to itself or to fate, enjoys His own happiness, and, as it were, sleeps in regard to us. Thus think some, but only the ignorant and impious. Were He as these imagine Him, He would not or could not have aught to do with creation. If He could not, then He is neither all-wise nor almighty, if He would not, then He is not good; and if He knows nothing of the world, then He is not omniscient.

If we once believe that God created the world, (and what rational man can doubt it?) then we must also believe He rules and sustains it. Can any work of art, however well constructed and arranged, subsist without some one to take charge of and watch over the same? Would not the greatest of all master-pieces, the world, therefore come to the greatest confusion and fall back into its original nothingness, if God, who created it from nothing, did not take care of its further order and existence? It is indeed true that the method of Divine Providence with which God controls all things is so mysterious that, when considering some events, one is persuaded to admit a necessary fate, an accident, the course of nature, the ill will of the devil or man, as the fundamental cause. Yet in all this the providence of God is not denied, for nothing does or can happen accidentally, not the smallest thing occurs without the knowledge, permission, or direction of God. Not one sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matt. 10, 29-30). Chance, fate, and luck are but the ideas of insane or wicked men, which even the more rational heathens have rejected, and the course of nature is but the constant, uninterrupted, all-wise and bountiful preservation and government of creation through God. The perverted will of men or of the devil is but the instrument which God in His all-wise intention, uses to effect the good, for He knows how to produce good from evil, and, therefore, as St. Augustine says, "permits the evil that the good may not be left undone." If we peruse the history of our first parents, of Abraham, of Joseph in Egypt, of Moses, of the people of Israel, of Job, Ruth, David, Tobias, Esther, Judith and others, we will easily see everywhere the plainest signs of the wisest Providence, the best and most careful, absolute power, by virtue of which God knows how to direct all things according to His desire, and for the good of His chosen ones. The gospel of this day furnishes us an instance of this? Why did Christ go into the boat? Why did a storm arise? Why was He asleep? Did all this occur by accident? No, it came about designedly by the ordinance of Christ that His omnipotence might be seen, and the faith and confidence of His disciples be strengthened.

Thus it is certain that God foresees, directs, and governs all; as Scripture, reason, and daily experience prove. Would we but pay more attention to many events of our lives, we would certainly notice the providence of God, and give ourselves up to His guidance and dispensations. The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing, says David (Ps. 22, 1). And we also, we shall want nothing if we resign ourselves to God's will, and are contented with His dispensations in our regard; while, on the contrary, if we oppose His will, we shall fall into misfortune and error. God must rule over us with goodness, or with sternness, He is no slumbering God. Behold! He shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel (Ps. 120, 4).

The two feasts consecrated to the Dolours of our Lady will teach us in due course what place her compassion had in the economy of the Redemption. The Queen of heaven herself showed her predilection for the Order which made itself her apostle, in the striking outpouring of holiness which marked its origin. The simultaneous blooming of seven lilies, gathered on earth to-day by the angels, was a sight new even to heaven. St. Peter of Verona had a vision of them when they were implanting themselves on Monte Senario; and the future martyr saw the blessed Virgin smile as she gazed on that mountain where countless other flowers sprang up to perfume holy Church. Florence, the city of flowers, had never before given such blooms to God. Hell multiplied its attacks against the noble city, but could not prevail against Mary within its walls. We shall be reminded of these things by the feasts of St. Juliana Falconieri and St. Philip Benizi, which were established before the one we are keeping today. Let us unite our gratitude to that which the Church feels for the Religious family of the Servites. The world owes to them the grace of a new development in the knowledge and love of the Mother of God, who became our Mother at the price of unparalleled sufferings.

Dom Gueranger, The Liturgical Year, Feast of the Servite Founders

Pray, pray a great deal, and make sacrifices for sinners, for many souls go to Hell because they have no one to make sacrifices and pray for them. Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Lucia of Fatima

The Reason for Unbelief is the Love of Sin

The Psalmist said that the works of God tell His praises in all tongues, and St. Paul taxes with folly and impiety those who will not accept this testimony. So, too, we may say that the men of these times have no excuse if they do not recognize the blessed Virgin in her works. May she extend the field of her beneficence and take pity on that worst of diseases—that weakness of soul which refuses to see out of a secret fear of the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence, and struggles against the truth until the mind is filled with contradictions and the heart with darkness, so that it seems as though the reason itself were given over to that reprobate sense which St. Paul describes as striking the pagans in their flesh.

Dom Gueranger, The Liturgical Year, Feast of the Apparition of our Lady of Lourdes

It is not, we must ever remember, upon the conduct of the soul in the moment of temptation that victory or defeat depends. It is upon its conduct in the lesser events of life. It is upon the constant struggle to keep the will from becoming enslaved to the mere tastes and inclinations. The result of a great battle does not depend upon the moment's struggle, but upon the discipline and training of the troops in the past. Before a blow is struck or the first shot fired the issue of the conflict is practically decided. The conflict, therefore, must be unceasing; the opportunities of training the will present themselves every hour. Man is to be the master of all his powers and all his inclinations, and of all those external things that God has placed in the world around him; he is to be the slave of none. He must wrestle with everything that tends to gain too much hold upon him till he has taught it its proper place. And then in the hour of temptation he will find that his will does not fail him. It is his attitude and bearing towards the small things that will decide the issue in those great moral conflicts upon which the welfare or ruin of his soul depends.

Rev. Basil W. Maturin, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Discipline*

The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church.

Pope Eugene IV, Cantate Domino, 1441

Finally, it must be observed that two contradictory propositions cannot be true at the same time or false at the same time; one is true, the other false. On the other hand, Pelagianism and Predestinationism are doctrines simultaneously false; they are not contradictory in this, but in other respects. For instance, Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism erroneously maintain that "God wills equally the salvation of all men, namely, the elect and the reprobate." The contradictory proposition: "God does not will equally the salvation of all men," is true. This indeed is what the Predestinationists, Calvinists, and Jansenists declare and in so doing they do not err, but they do err by denying the will of universal salvation, which is affirmed by Augustine when he says: "God does not demand the impossible." Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.

Jesus Christ addressing the Jews:

Whither I go, you cannot come... You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you, that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin. (John 8, 22-24)

Pope Benedict XVI addressing the Jews:

I come among you to express to you the esteem and the affection which the Bishop and the Church of Rome, as well as the entire Catholic Church, have towards this Community and all Jewish communities around the world... Second Vatican Council... gave a strong impetus to our irrevocable commitment to pursue the path of dialogue, fraternity and friendship, a journey which has been deepened and developed in the last forty years, through important steps and significant gestures.... I too, in the course of my Pontificate, have wanted to demonstrate my closeness to and my affection for the people of the Covenant. I cherish in my heart each moment of the pilgrimage that I had the joy of making to the Holy Land in May of last year, along with the memories of numerous meetings with Jewish Communities and Organizations, in particular my visits to the Synagogues of Cologne and New York. Furthermore, **the Church has not failed to deplore the failings of her sons and daughters, begging forgiveness for all that could in any way have contributed to the scourge of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism.** May these wounds be healed forever! The heartfelt prayer which Pope John Paul II offered at the Western Wall on 26 March 2000 comes back to my mind, and it calls forth a profound echo in our hearts: **"God of our Fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the nations: we are deeply saddened by the behaviour of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant."**... In exercising justice and mercy, Jews and Christians are called to announce and to bear witness to the coming Kingdom of the Most High, for which we pray and work in hope each day... **Christians and Jews share to a great extent a common spiritual patrimony, they pray to the same Lord, they have the same roots, and yet they often remain unknown to each other.**

Pope Benedict XVI, address at the Great Synagogue of the Jews of Rome, January 17, 2010

Modern Novus Ordo Church embraces the "revolutionary state of mind" of the new theology governed by "science and human reason" which, based upon evolution denies the very concept of substance and the existence of any fixed nature of creation, and not on the truthfulness of God!

Freemasonry is a body of superimposed secret societies spread throughout the world.

Its aim is to destroy the present civilization based on Christian principles, to establish in its place an atheistic rationalist society which, in fact, leads straight to materialism although it is supposed to have science and reason as a religion. Appearances have often changed but this aim has remained unalterable.

The inner nature of the struggle is spiritual. It is a conflict between rationalism and the Christian idea, between the rights of God and the rights of man, who will become a man-god, directed by a state-god. In order to reach this final aim it was necessary to begin by undertaking the overthrow of monarchies representing the principles of authority and tradition, and to replace them, little by little, by the universal atheist Masonic republic.

The role of Freemasonry is to create the revolutionary state of mind rather than to act directly. [.....]

Freemasonry cannot do less than thank the sovereign Pontiff for his last encyclical. Leo XIII with incontestable authority and a wealth of proofs, has just informed us once more that there exists an impossible abyss between the Church, of which he is the representative, and the revolution of which Freemasonry is the right arm. It is better for those who are hesitating not to keep up vain hopes. All must come to understand that the time has arrived for choosing between the order, which rests upon Revelation, and the new order which knows no other foundation but science and human reason, between the spirit of authority and the spirit of liberty. *Vicomte Leon de Poncins, The Secret Powers behind Revolution, Freemasonry and Judaism*

Now they don't even "profess the Faith"!

They say we live for pleasure . . . and there is some truth in their words, many among the Cardinals and other officials do live this kind of life. We must enter new paths: temperance, chastity, innocence, zeal for the Faith, ardor in the cause of religion, contempt for death, and the desire for Martyrdom have exalted the Roman Church and made her mistress of the world. It is not enough to profess the Faith, to preach to the people, to denounce vice, and to extol virtue. We must make ourselves like those who have sacrificed their very lives for the heritage of the Lord. Pope Pius II, 1463

The Novus Ordo Church has followed the World into Lawlessness

St. Paul has foretold the coming of one whom he calls the lawless. No word more truly describes the state of the modern world. All ages have, indeed, been lawless, in the sense of violence which breaks the law. **But the modern world is lawless in that it rejects the idea of law, and destroys the basis of law, by resolving all authority into the will of numbers.** The idea of right as limiting popular aspirations is extinct. Facts are taken to be just, because accomplished; as if robbery could become lawful by completion. The logic of facts is the series of wrongs which, once begun, necessitate each other. And the logic of facts is now one of the supreme reasons of state. The popular will may aspire after its neighbour's house and goods, all right and justice notwithstanding; for the popular will is a law to itself, and makes law by its aspirations. What it desires it wills, and what it wills is right. What is this but the reign of license, the corruption of liberty, the extinction of morality, the negation of justice, which is the negation of God? And yet such is the substitute in the modern world for the even law of nations and of God, which, at least by public recognition, ruled and sustained Christendom.

And with this lawlessness comes the supremacy of might. Once, right and might met together, sanctioning and confirming each other's acts. Now, might without right tramples down right without might. The weaker perish, and the stronger reign, till by mutual destruction men and nations execute on each other the just judgment of God. That this is in store for Europe, if these principles prevail, who can doubt? That this will be the solution of the Roman question, if this sacrilege be not repaired, is sure as the sun to-morrow. Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, Commenting on the Overthrow of the Papal States

One who, by the grace of God, has vowed something greater than conjugal chastity, (i.e., continency) will be damned if he takes a wife, after the vow which he promised to God, though he would not be damned if he had taken a wife previously. Why? Because he who has taken the vow of continency and nevertheless afterwards takes a wife, has looked back. A virgin, if she married, would not sin; a nun, if she married, shall be accounted an adulteress of Christ. She has looked back from the place to which she had come. Such is the case of those in monastic communities. Whoever goes back into the world is not held as one who never entered. He has looked back. Therefore let each one, as he can, fulfil his vow to God: "Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God." Let no one look back or have delight in that which lies behind him and which he has forsaken. St. Augustine, Commenting on Lot's Wife

Dogma is the Proximate Rule of Faith!

Grasping these authentic notions relating to the preservation, elucidation, and transmission of Catholic doctrine, both on questions of dogmatic Faith and Christian morals, is absolutely essential in our day, when wicked or ignorant ecclesiastics seek to undermine the Sacred Deposit. Learning and treasuring these truths will help us to accomplish what St. Jude exhorts the faithful to do in his canonical epistle: "To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). If this seems like an impossible task in our day, we should take heart and recall that St. Jude is, along with St. Rita, the patron saints of the impossible.

Br. Andre Marie, MICM

"Nothing is more unworthy the soldiers of Jesus Christ than to slay those whose lives might be spared, or to mutilate and disfigure the image of the Creator.... Wherefore we order you to watch carefully over those who may fall into the hands of our troops so that no harm may befall them, and that they may be able to congratulate themselves on their captivity."

Pope Gregory IX, who became pope in 1227 letter to his military commander fighting Saracen mercenary troops employed by the excommunicated Emperor Fredrick II against the Holy See

"The end of Christian perfection is charity, by means of which one is attached to God. And to this attachment by means of charity, every one, if he desires to attain salvation, is in duty bound. It is effected by keeping the commandments and by union with the will of God. Thus is everything excluded that is contrary to the essence and the habit of charity, namely mortal sin."

St. Albert the Great

Cardinal Henry Edward Manning – The true Revelation of God is both a Definite and Certain participation in God's own knowledge. IT is this fundamental truth of revelation that our Neo-Modernist hierarchy reject!

What, then, is the knowledge which God has restored to man through revelation but a definite knowledge, a participation of His own? The truth which has been revealed, what is it in the mind of God who reveals it, but one, harmonious and distinct? What was that knowledge as revealed by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but one, harmonious and distinct? What was the conception of that knowledge in inspired men, but one, harmonious and distinct also? And what was that knowledge when communicated by those who were inspired to those who believed, but one, harmonious and distinct as before? And what is this unity and harmony and distinctness of knowledge, which God revealed of Himself through Jesus Christ, but the faith we confess in our creed? Our baptismal

faith, its substance and its letter, the explicit and the implicit meaning, article by article, is as definite, severe, and precise, as any problem in science. It is of the nature of truth to be so; and where definiteness ends, knowledge ceases. Observe, then, the distinction between finite knowledge and definite knowledge. Is not science definite? And yet it is also finite. The theory of gravitation, definite as it is, it is finite too. [.....] Go through the whole range of physical sciences, what is it but an example of the same condition of knowledge, definiteness in conception with finiteness of reach? [.....] If we have not a definite knowledge of what we believe, we may be sure we have no true knowledge of it.

But, further, it is evident that knowledge must also be certain. When we speak of certainty, we mean one of two things. Sometimes we say, that a thing is certain; at other times, that we are certain. When we say a truth is certain, we mean, that the proofs of that truth are either self-evident, or so clear as to exclude all doubt. This is certainty on the part of the object proposed to our intelligence. But when we say we are certain, we mean that we are inwardly convinced, by the application of our reason to the matter before us, of the sufficiency of the evidence to prove the truth of it. In us, certainty is rather a moral feeling, a complex state of mind. As light manifests itself by its own nature, but sight is the illumination of the eye; so certainty means truth with its evidences illuminating the intelligence, or, in other words, the intelligence possessed by truth with its evidences.

This we call certainty. I ask, then, is there not this twofold certainty in the revelation which God has given? Was not the revelation which God gave of Himself through Jesus Christ made certain on His part by direct evidence of the divine act which revealed it? Is it not also certain on our part by the apprehension and faith of the Church? Was not God manifest in the flesh that He might reveal Himself? Did not God dwell on earth that He might teach His truth? Has not God spoken to man that man might know Him? Did not God work miracles that man might believe that He was present? What evidence on the part of God was wanting that men might know that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of God? And if there was certainty on the part of God who revealed, was there not certainty also on the part of those that heard? Look back into the sacred history. Had not Prophets and Seers certainty of that which they beheld and heard? [.....] What, then, is the first condition of faith but certainty? He that has not certain faith has no faith. We are told that to crave for certainty implies a morbid disposition. Did not Abraham, and Moses, and Daniel, the Apostles and Evangelists desire certainty in faith, and crave to know beyond doubt that God spake to them, and know with definite clearness what God said? Was this a morbid craving? Surely this is not to be reproved. But rather the contrary disposition worthy of rebuke. How can we venture to content ourselves with uncertainty in matters where the truth and honour of God and the salvation of our own souls are at stake? This truly is not without sin. [.....] And yet, what is the very idea of Revelation but a Divine assurance of Truth? Where faith begins uncertainty ends. Because faith terminates upon the veracity of God; and what God has spoken and authenticated to us by Divine authority cannot be uncertain.

Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, *Grounds of Faith*

Those men (the Church Fathers) are to be believed, moreover, in accordance with the following rule: Only that is to be held as certain, valid and beyond doubt, which either all or most of them have confirmed in one and the same sense – manifestly, frequently, and persistently, as though a council of masters stood in agreement – and which they have accepted, kept, and handed on. On the other hand, what some saint, learned man, bishop, confessor, or martyr has individually thought outside of, or even contrary to, the general opinion must be considered his personal, particular, and quite private opinion, entirely removed from the common, public and general opinion. St. Vincent of Lerins

"The group holding power in the SSPX have decided to stage a drama, unfortunately not a good Shakespearean play, but a poor play by Fernandez. They will follow two narratives: one for liberals, the other for hardliners. Unfortunately, nothing has changed for many years – secret meetings with the Roman hierarchy and the search for a practical agreement without doctrinal agreement. This makes no sense. As Bishop Richard Williamson said, it is a betrayal of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre's struggle, a betrayal of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church." - Bishop Michal Stobnicki. Comment on the SSPX threat to consecrate new bishops

Death of the West

British writer Lois McLatchie Miller has penned a thoughtful essay regarding abortion and immigration as a warning for American readers. She notes "three grim milestones" that the United Kingdom will reach in 2026: (1) For the first time in modern history, the number of deaths will exceed the number of births. (2) British women will abort a third of their babies. (3) The number of foreigners living in the U.K. will match the number of aborted children since the procedure's legalization. As Miller soberly observes, "by ending unborn lives on an industrial scale, the native British population has created a demographic vacuum it now plugs with immigration, and in doing so, has brought itself to the brink of quiet obliteration." What a profound and tragic insight.... Miller concludes, "abortion is no longer just a moral issue, but one of national survival. A society cannot abort a third of its future generation and expect to remain intact. Britain is not simply declining, but aborting itself out of existence." When "a culture decides children are optional," she warns Americans, "the future becomes optional too."

J.B. Shurk, American Thinker, 2-6-2026

COMMENT: The insight is tragic but not profound. American controversialist, Patrick Buchanan, wrote a *Death of the West* in 2001 spelling out the consequences of abortion and uncontrolled immigration to replace those killed. That was 25 years ago and Buchanan argued at that time the demographic destruction of the West was most probably irreversible. When any society turns away from God, God will eventually turn away from them. In the very near future, Islam will be cutting off heads in Piccadilly Square. Buchanan gave the warning for "American readers" 25 years ago. No one listened then and no one will listen now. The only option is to rebuild the Church which can rebuild the West but this is a fix that will take centuries.

Pope Leo XIV is continuing ‘irreversible trajectory’ of Pope Francis: SSPX statement

In addition to spelling out the Francis/Leo crisis, the statement addresses the silence of conservative bishops in the Church, the Traditional Latin Mass and the Novus Ordo, and more.



LifeSiteNews | John-Henry Westen | Feb 5, 2026 — Today the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) released a major statement explaining the reasons behind their announcement of upcoming episcopal consecrations. This comes from Superior General Davide Pagliarani, and it directly addresses the current pontificate of Pope Leo XIV, describing it as continuing the “irreversible trajectory” set by Pope Francis. The document outlines why the

SSPX believes these consecrations are necessary, while still expressing some hope for dialogue with Rome.

In addition to spelling out the Francis/Leo crisis, the statement addresses the silence of conservative bishops in the Church, the possibility of sanctions, their hopes, the ultimate reason for their action and their perspective on the Traditional Latin Mass. Let me read the key portions directly from the statement, but I encourage you to read the full statement.

They spell out the Francis and Leo crisis

Furthermore, the major orientations already taking shape in this new pontificate – particularly through the most recent consistory – only confirm this. **An explicit determination to preserve the line of Pope Francis as an irreversible trajectory for the entire Church is discernible.**

It is sad to acknowledge, but it is a fact that, in an ordinary parish, the faithful no longer find the means necessary to ensure their eternal salvation. Missing, in particular, are both the integral preaching of Catholic truth and morality, and the worthy administration of the sacraments as the Church has always done. This deprivation is what constitutes the state of necessity. In this critical context, our bishops are growing older, and, as the apostolate continues to expand, they are no longer sufficient to meet the demands of the faithful worldwide.

In what way do you believe that last month’s consistory confirms the direction taken by Pope Francis?

DP: Cardinal Fernández, speaking in the name of Pope Leo, invited the Church to return to Pope Francis’s fundamental intuition expressed in his key encyclical, *Evangelii gaudium*. Put simply, he believes that the Gospel should be proclaimed by reducing it to a primitive and essential expression, a series of concise and striking formulas – the “kerygma” – with a view to eliciting an “experience,” an immediate encounter with Christ. Everything else should be set aside, however precious it may be.

In concrete terms, all that is Tradition is considered as accessory and secondary. It is this method of the new evangelization that has produced the doctrinal emptiness characteristic of Pope Francis’s pontificate, and is keenly felt by many in the Church.

In a similar vein, one must provide new and relevant answers to the emerging questions of our time, but, according to Cardinal Fernández, this is to be done through synodal reform, rather than by rediscovering the classical and ever-valid answers provided by the Tradition of the Church. It is by these means, in the “breath of the Spirit” of this synodal reform, that Pope Francis has been able to impose catastrophic decisions upon the whole Church, such as authorizing Holy Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried, or the blessing of same-sex couples.

In summary, through the “kerygma,” the proclamation of the Gospel is isolated from the whole corpus of traditional doctrine and morality. And through synodality, traditional answers are replaced by arbitrary decisions, with a high risk of being absurd and doctrinally unjustifiable. Cardinal Zen himself considers this method manipulative and considers attributing it to the Holy Ghost blasphemous. Unfortunately, I fear that he is right.[...]

[...] the Church is in danger of busying herself with both everything and nothing. Ecological concerns, for example, or the preoccupation with the rights of minorities, of women, or of migrants, risk causing the essential mission of the Church to be lost from view. If the Society of Saint Pius X strives to preserve Tradition, with all that this entails, it is solely because these treasures are vital for the salvation of souls, and because it aims at nothing else but the good of souls, and that of the priesthood—ordered to their sanctification.[...]

[...] 2019, when Pope Francis, on the occasion of his visit to the Arabian Peninsula, signed, together with an imam, the well-known Abu Dhabi declaration. Together with the Muslim leader, he affirmed that the plurality of religions had been willed as such by divine Wisdom.

It is evident that a communion founded upon the acceptance of such a statement, or which would include it, would simply not be Catholic, since it would constitute a sin against the First Commandment and the denial of the first article of the Creed.

I consider such a statement to be more than a simple error. It is simply inconceivable. It cannot be the foundation of Catholic communion, but rather the cause of its dissolution. I believe that a Catholic should prefer martyrdom rather than accept such an affirmation.

They address the silence of conservative bishops in the church to the crisis of Pope Francis and Leo

[...] the fear of breaking a fragile stability by behavior deemed “disturbing” reduces many pastors to a constrained silence, **when they should be raising their voices against scandalous teaching which corrupts faith or morals.** The necessary denunciation of errors that undermine the Church – required by the very good of souls who are threatened by this poisoned nourishment – is thereby left undone. One may enlighten another in private, if able to discern the harmfulness of a given error, but it may be only a timid whisper, in which truth struggles to express itself with the required freedom – especially in the shadow of tacitly accepted, contradictory principles. Once again, souls are no longer enlightened and are deprived of the bread of doctrine for which they remain hungry. Over time, this progressively alters mentalities and gradually leads to a general and unconscious acceptance of the various reforms affecting the life of the Church. Towards these souls, too, the Society feels a responsibility to enlighten and not to abandon.

Realistically sees possibility of sanctions

[...] Cardinal Fernández’s response does not address the possibility of an audience with the Pope. It also evokes the possibility of new sanctions.

What will the Society do if the Holy See decides to condemn it?

DP: First of all, let us recall that in such circumstances any canonical penalties would have no real effect.

Nevertheless, should they be pronounced, the Society would certainly accept this new suffering without bitterness, as it has accepted past sufferings, and would sincerely offer it for the good of the Church. **It is for the Church that the Society works.** And there is no doubt that, should such a situation arise, it could only be temporary, for the Church is divine and Our Lord will not abandon her. [...] We are sure that one day the Roman authorities will acknowledge, with gratitude, that these episcopal consecrations providentially contributed to preserving the faith, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls.

They make the comparison to the China Communist Party naming bishops without the Pope's approval

Let us take the current case of relations with the Chinese government. Despite a genuine schism of the Chinese Patriotic Church, despite the uninterrupted persecution of the underground Church faithful to Rome, despite agreements regularly renewed and then broken by the Chinese authorities, in 2023, Pope Francis approved, *a posteriori*, the appointment of the Bishop of Shanghai by those authorities.

More recently, Pope Leo XIV himself ultimately accepted, *a posteriori*, the appointment of the Bishop of Xinxiang, designated in the same manner during the vacancy of the Apostolic See, while the bishop, faithful to Rome—who had been imprisoned several times—was still in office.

In both cases, these were clearly pro-government prelates, imposed unilaterally by Beijing to control the Catholic Church in China. It should be clearly noted that these were not merely auxiliary bishops, but residential bishops, that is, ordinary pastors of their respective dioceses (or prefectures), possessing jurisdiction over the local clergy and faithful. In Rome, it is perfectly well known for what purpose these pastors were chosen and unilaterally imposed.

The Society's case is entirely different. For us, it is obviously not a matter of favoring a communist or anti-Christian power, but solely of safeguarding the rights of Christ the King and of the Tradition of the Church, at a time of general crisis and confusion in which these are gravely compromised. The intentions and the ends are clearly not the same.

They lay out the request ignored by the Pope since last summer

Last summer, I wrote to the Holy Father to request an audience. Having received no reply, I wrote to him again a few months later, in a filial and straightforward manner, without concealing any of our needs. I mentioned our doctrinal divergences, but also our sincere desire to serve the Catholic Church without respite, for we are servants of the Church despite our irregular canonical status.

To this second letter, a reply from Rome reached us a few days ago, from Cardinal Fernández. Unfortunately, it took no account whatsoever of the proposal we put forward, and offers nothing that responds to our requests.

Still retains hope Pope Leo will acquiesce

A Pope is first and foremost a father. As such, he is capable of discerning a right intention, a sincere will to serve the Church, and above all, a genuine case of conscience in an exceptional situation. [...]

In fact, the superior general suggests that the consecration of new bishops will be a grace for the whole church when they happen

I would like to emphasize that this is a time for prayer and preparation of hearts, souls, and minds. We must prepare ourselves to receive the grace that these consecrations will occasion for the whole Church. This should be done with recollection, peace, and trust in Providence, which has never abandoned the Society and will not abandon it now.

The ultimate reason: for the salvation of souls

[...] it is for the Pope himself, as such, that we preserve this treasure until the day when its value will once again be understood and when a Pope will wish to make use of it for the good of the whole Church. [...]

[...] The very law of the Church provides for it. In the spirit of ecclesiastical law, which is the juridical expression of this charity, the good of souls comes before everything else. It truly represents the law of laws, to which all others are subordinate and against which no ecclesiastical law can prevail.

The axiom “suprema lex, salus animarum”—“the supreme law is the salvation of souls”—is a classic maxim of canonical tradition which is explicitly taken up by the final canon of the 1983 Code. In the present state of necessity, it is upon this highest principle that the entire legitimacy of our apostolate and of our mission towards the souls who turn to us depends. For us, we fulfil a role of supplying for a deficiency, in the name of that same charity.

About the Traditional Latin Mass

As far as I am aware, Pope Leo XIV has maintained a certain discretion on this subject, which arouses great expectation in the conservative world. Very recently, however, a text by Cardinal Roche on the liturgy—intended initially for the cardinals participating in last month's consistory—was made public. **There is no reason to doubt that it corresponds, in its broad lines, to the orientation desired by the Pope.** It is an unambiguous text, and above all, logical and coherent. Unfortunately, it is based on a false premise. Concretely, this text, in perfect continuity with *Traditionis custodes*, condemns the liturgical project of Pope Benedict XVI, according to whom, the ancient rite and the new rite are two more or less equivalent forms, expressing the same faith and the same ecclesiology, and therefore capable of mutually enriching one another. Concerned for the unity of the Church, Benedict XVI sought to promote the coexistence of the two rites and, in 2007, published *Summorum Pontificum*. For many, this occasioned a providential rediscovery of the Mass of all time; but over time, it also gave rise to a movement calling the new rite into question—a movement deemed problematic and which *Traditionis custodes*, in 2021, sought to stem.

Faithful to Pope Francis, Cardinal Roche is now attempting to promote an elusive unity of the Church according to an idea contradictory to that of Benedict XVI. While maintaining the assertion of a continuity from one rite to the other through reform, Cardinal Roche firmly opposes their coexistence. He sees in it a source of division, a threat to unity, which must be overcome by returning to an authentic liturgical communion. “The primary good of the unity of the Church is not achieved by freezing division, but by finding ourselves in the sharing of what cannot but be shared.” In the Church, “there ought to be only one rite”, in full syntony with the true meaning of Tradition.

This is a just and coherent principle, since the Church, having one faith and one ecclesiology, can have only one liturgy capable of expressing them adequately. But it is a principle applied to a wrong conception of Tradition. Consistent with the new post-conciliar

ecclesiology, Cardinal Roche conceives Tradition as something evolving, and the new rite as its sole living expression for our time. The value of the Tridentine rite can therefore only be regarded as obsolete, and its use, at most, a "concession", and "in no way a promotion."

That there is a present "division" and incompatibility between the two rites now appears more apparent than ever. But let there be no mistake, the only liturgy that adequately expresses, in an immutable and non-evolving manner, the traditional conception of the Church, of Christian life, and of the Catholic priesthood—that is, Tradition—is the liturgy of all time. On this point, the opposition of the Holy See appears more irrevocable than ever.

Direct calling into question of the Novus Ordo

[...] instead of sincerely questioning the intrinsic deficiencies of the new Mass, and therefore the overall failure of the reform, instead of facing the reality that churches are emptying and vocations are declining, instead of asking why the Tridentine rite continues to attract so many souls, Cardinal Roche sees no other solution than an urgent preliminary formation of the faithful and seminarians. [...] For almost two thousand years, souls—often illiterate—were edified and sanctified by the liturgy, without the need for any prior formation. Failing to recognise the intrinsic incapacity of the Novus Ordo to form and edify souls and continuing to demand ever better prior formation seems to me to be the sign of an irremediable blindness. One arrives at shocking paradoxes: the reform was intended to foster a greater participation of the faithful; yet the faithful abandoned the Church en masse, because this insipid liturgy failed to nourish them—and this would supposedly have nothing to do with the reform? [...]

[...] how can it then be understood that this Mass of all time stands in irreducible opposition to the new Mass, remains the sole true liturgy of the whole Church, and that no one may be prevented from celebrating it? How can it be known that the Mass of Paul VI cannot be recognized, because it constitutes a considerable departure from the Catholic theology of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and that no one may be compelled to celebrate it? And how are souls to be effectively turned away from this poisoned liturgy, to drink from the pure sources of Catholic liturgy?

COMMENT: Complaining about conservative bishops being mute dogs is rank hypocrisy coming from the SSPX who have been dancing the two-step with Neo-modernist Rome since 1997, nearly thirty years of "doctrinal discussions"! Dogma is the proximate rule of faith for all the faithful. It is immutable in both the truth it expresses and the manner in which it is expressed. It forms the formal object of divine and Catholic faith. The very definition of heresy is the denial of dogma. The heresy of Neo-modernism denies this truth. They believe that dogma evolves and changes its meaning over time as the Church develops a deeper and richer understanding of God's revealed truth. Consequently, a Catholic must always turn to the pope to know what any particular dogma means today. Thus, the pope becomes the proximate rule of faith for Neo-modernists. The SSPX, just like Rome, are Neo-modernists. The SSPX cannot call the Neo-modernist heretics because the SSPX does not hold dogma as their proximate rule of faith. They can only offer opinions and thus, for thirty years they have been exchanging opinions with Neo-modernist Rome. The SSPX during the entire pontificate of Francis/Bergoglio did and said nothing to oppose his gross heresy and immorality. Why is it suddenly an issue now? Because at that time it was not in the interest of the SSPX to stir the pot. Their pretense of being at the service of the Church has never been true. From the beginning they have worked to consolidate control of Catholic tradition imposing upon it their own distorted conceptions of doctrine and liturgy while denying any help to those who do not conform in every detail. Bishop Richard Williamson, since being expelled from the SSPX, helped our little Mission. He did not agree with us entirely but his charity was not thereby stifled. Supplied jurisdiction is entirely generated by the needs of each individual Catholic and Bishop Williamson exercised that supplied jurisdiction in helping us at Ss. Peter & Paul Roman Catholic Mission. Bishop Williamson's charity extended to the needs of the faithful over the world and he provided six bishops, at least some of which are continuing as he did. That is really the reason the SSPX got rid of him. For the SSPX, there is no state of necessity. They have denied it certainly over the last 15 years and they cannot reclaim it now. If they want to get their house in order they should ask Bishop Michael Stobnicki, consecrated by Bishop Williamson for the eastern Slavs, and who the SSPX expelled from their seminary, to help them.