



RES

NOVAE

ROMAN PERSPECTIVE - English Edition

International monthly newsletter of analysis and prospective ■ N° 11 ■ September 2019 ■ Année I ■ 3 €  
Published in French, English and Italian

## PRÉSENTATION

In an ever changing world and in a Church constantly in the spotlights, the important informations and the meaning to give them may be buried under a mass of commentaries, opinions and fake news. At a time when it is urgent to restore the magisterium and pontifical authority so that the Church may continue its mission received from Christ, *Res Novae* intends to be an informational and analysis tool at the service of the petrinian power. By subscribing now you will help with the start of *Res Novae* and its development.

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Subscription : €30.00 yearly ;  
E-subscription : €20.00 yearly ;  
Donor subscription : starting at €50.00. To subscribe to the print edition outside France, please contact us.  
IBAN : FR76 3006 6108 4500 0201 7170 155. The monthly newsletter *Res Novae* is published by EHN (12, rue Rosenwald, 75015 Paris).  
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Director of publication : Ch. Sergent.

## THE ÉDITORIAL

# About the Bergoglian pontificate Part II - Expected failure

In our conclusion to part I of this article we wrote that the « progressivism » of the present pontificate was overcome by the state of Catholicism in the Western world. We should add that it is developing in an all new context than what was the one of the lively and joyful era of the council and of the times right after, when the Church was still rich in men and moral resilience. One could qualify today's progressivism as a « second progressivism », undermining a Church weakened to the extreme because of the absence of defences against contemporary relativism. One must note the often contradictory aspect of Pope Francis statement : he gives his support to contemporary globalist theories, but at the same time, he professes a social anti-liberalism in continuity with what is known as the « social doctrine of the Church » ; he showed openness to liberal doctrinal views (on moral, as we said previously, but also in ecclesiology), while offering a royal path to the Society of Saint Pius X, patented opponent to this liberalism ; and so forth, thus delivering an impressionist teaching which does not bother with rigorous theology, but which goes along with a sense of authority forgotten since a long time.

All in all, no matter how the relatively moderate and sometimes compensated openness of the *Amoris lætitia* pontificate might be, it powerfully accelerates the fading of catholicism in the mist of ultra-modernity. If, indeed, there are still hardcore catholics – though we should not overestimate its importance and their strength – who try to resist the havoc of this openness, the entire ecclesial body is exhausted, and the resurgence of an ultra-conciliar pastoral ministry of the Church can only weaken it even more. Interesting enough, it is certainly self-consuming too.

## Liturgy : marriage of contraries

The *motu proprio* of 9 September 2017, *Magnum Principium*, has rectified canon 838 which concerns with liturgical translation. It thus reverted instruction *Liturgiam authenticam*, published in 2001 by John Paul II, organising the correction of defective liturgical translation whose responsibility was attributed to the episcopal conferences. Like a pendulum swinging back, the conferences have again the responsibility to « faithfully prepare versions of the liturgical books in vernacular languages, suitably accommodated within defined limits », the Holy See keeping as a prerogative to « review » the translated books and no longer to « approve » them ; subtle precision, but symbolically of great significance.

In matter of declaration of sanctity, the pope has had frequently recourse to « equipollent canonisation » (that is decided by a simple decree of the pope confirming an ancient cultus of the person, when his predecessors seldomly used it, liberally interpreting this procedure to canonise John XXIII, who then only had one miracle officially recognised. On 11 July 2017, he introduced « the offering of life » (the baptised has accepted a premature death in the service of others) among the criteria allowing the introduction

to a process for beatification followed by canonisation, alongside and equal to the criteria of martyrdom and the practice of heroic virtues.

In rupture with the style of the previous pontificate, Pope Francis wilfully transgressed the established norms. On Holy Thursday, 28 March 2013, he washed the feet of detainees of the detention centre for minors of Casal del Marmo, in the suburb of Rome, of which, two women, one Italian Catholic and the other a Serb Muslim (a decree dated 21 January 2016 from the Congregation for Divine Worship allowed it a posteriori). Likewise, on Holy Thursday, 24 March 2016, he washed the feet of eleven migrants Christian, Muslim, and Hindu, in the housing facility of Castelnuovo di Porto, near Rome.

But, on the other hand, he has granted the Society of Saint Pius X, conservatory of the ante-conciliar liturgy, repeated favours and without asking for anything in return. In Argentina, where all institutes calling themselves catholic have to obtain a recognition from the Church to benefit from the special status given by the State, Cardinal Poli, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, asked in 2015 to the Argentine minister of worship, in agreement with the Pope, to consider the Society of Saint Pius X as an organisation of faithful of diocesan right.

During the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (8 December 2015 to 20 November 2016) the Pope declared that the faithful going to the SSPX priests for confession would have the possibility to receive a valid and licite absolution of their sins. In the letter *Misericordia et misera*, signed the same day of the closing of the jubilee, he decided to extend without limits this authorisation. Likewise, on 4 April 2017, by a letter from the Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, the marriages of catholic faithful blessed by SSPX priests were authorised.

Finally, in a more subtle fashion, he did a favor to the same Society by suppressing, by *motu proprio*, published on 19 January 2018, the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission, now absorbed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The competence of this Commission (notably to establish contacts with the SSPX in view of a « return to full communion »), funded by the *motu proprio Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, of 2 July 1988, following the consecration by Archbishop Lefebvre, without pontifical mandate, of four bishops, are now exercised by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the SSPX reluctance to treat with the Commission and only wanting relation with the Congregation.

### **Traditional social doctrine and fashionable doctrines**

Pope Francis, in various occasions, has condemned liberal individualism and the belief in « unlimited material progress. » Reminding that the common good counts more than private property, he denounces the irrational devotion to marketable goods, the « consumerist vision of human beings (...) [which] has a levelling

effect on cultures » and the power of wealth. These positions have generated among some of his detractors accusations of crypto-marxism or « radical anti-liberalism ». In reality, these positions represent the most traditional chore of his teaching, consistent with the anti-liberalism of what is commonly known as the social doctrine of the Church.

In this way, in *Laudato si*, published 24 May 2015, no. 93 : « *The principle of the subordination of private property to the universal destination of goods, and thus the right of everyone to their use, is a golden rule of social conduct and “the first principle of the whole ethical and social order.”* [Laborem Exercens, no. 19]. *The Christian tradition has never recognized the right to private property as absolute or inviolable, and has stressed the social purpose of all forms of private property.* » Or, again, in the exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, published 24 November 2013, no. 56 : « *While the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. This imbalance is the result of ideologies which defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation. Consequently, they reject the right of states, charged with vigilance for the common good...* »

But these are punctual notations within the frame of a teaching on ecology. Although they contained nice developments on the care of creation entrusted to Men, though they also contained strange pagan tones (cf. the stupefying *Instrumentum laboris* of the assembly of the Synod for the Amazon), largely give way to fashionable themes such as « integral ecology » and « sustainable development ». Nobody will deny the common sense of the Pope who denounces the fact that « each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable... » But he ventures too far the pontifical authority by saying that « most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity. As these gases build up in the atmosphere, they hamper the escape of heat produced by sunlight at the earth's surface. » (*Laudato si*, n° 23)

Likewise, the positions taken on migratory issues are perceived as participating in the fashionable ideas, with the resurgence of pro-immigration themes not being corrected by any critical argument of the globalist theories that support them, nor by considerations on relations between men, citizens, or foreigners, in regards to the City they leave and the one they want to join.

Thus, on 8 July 2013, the Pope visited the Italian island of Lampedusa, located off the coast of Tunisia, open gate to Europe for many African migrants. His visit had for a goal to call on the attention of the world regarding the situation of migrants and to denounce the « *culture of well-being* » which makes Men « *insensitive to the cries of other people (...)* and even leads to the *globalization of indifference.* » On 16 April 2016, he welcomed

seventeen syrian refugees off the Greek island of Lesbos, members of three muslim families. On Tuesday 21 February 2017, he opened the sixth international forum on migrations and peace by a special audience. On 16 December 2018, he gave his support to the controversial Global migration pact, known as « Marrakech Pact » which good willingly advocates “safe, orderly and regular” migration, but in practical terms makes the states totally defenceless in the face of migratory invasions.

The strongest position was expressed in the form of an astonishing subversive action : Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, apostolic chaplain, in charge of the pope’s charitable missions, came in person, May 12th of this year, to break the seals placed by police and re-establish electric power in a building run by a radical left organisation and entirely occupied by immigrants. The utility provider, Acea Energy, had suspended service because, *Action-Diritti in movimento*, responsible for the utility bills, had outstanding charges. In protest to the cut-off, the organisation, with the help of the radical left, had occupied the building.

### Ecumenism and dialogue with non-christian religions

In the matter of ecumenism, the sensitive point is, we know it, communication. In February 2018, the majority of German bishops had approved, inspired by *Amoris Laetitia*, a document to give permission to the spouses of mixed marriages to participate together in the eucharist. Seven of them had strongly reacted against it. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had all called them to Rome... to decide, it needed to be thought about. On the way back from Romania, Sunday 2 June - the very same day the Pope had expressed a position that many thought particularly anti-ecumenical by beatifying seven Uniates bishops who had refused to bend to the communist regime -, Francis held a press conference in the plane back to Rome. To the question : « *what should the relations be between the christian churches, notably between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Christian Church ?* » He answered : « *To walk together : this is already Christian unity, but do not wait for theologians to agree to celebrate the eucharist* (non aspettare che i teologi si mettano d’accordo di fare l’eucaristia). *Communion happens every day with prayer, with the memory of our martyrs, with works of charity and even of loving one another.* » But, the official *L’Osservatore Romano* smoothed out the interview and wrote : « but do not wait for theologians to agree to arrive at the eucharist (non aspettare che i teologi si mettano d’accordo per arrivare all’Eucaristia). »

But, in other instances, there were no « smoothing out » possible to correct audacious pontifical declarations such as in the case of the commune declaration of Pope Francis and Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, on 4 February 2019, on human fraternity : « *The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed*

*by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings.* »

This sentence, attributing to the Divine Will the diversity of religion, raised many critics. In reality, it is only a development of a crucial passage of the conciliatory declaration *Nostra Aetate* : « *The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions.* She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, (emphasis added) *nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.* » (no. 2, § 2) Vatican II made it from a respect for the Seed of the Word which can be found in non-christian religions to a global respect for religions as such, respect of Buddhism, of Hinduism, of traditional religion, of Islam. Eventually, the sentence of the declaration on the fraternity is troublesome, but no less than the one, conciliary as well, that John Paul II’s prayer in Jordan, on 21 March 2000 : « *May saint John the Baptist protect Islam !* »

### How far will it go ? the offset between Roman positions and catholic remainders ?

High point of the « progressist » orientation of the pontificate, the assembly of the Synod for the Amazon which will take place in October, probably will, contrary to the latin tradition, open the door to the ordination of married men. This guaranties a liberal fever in an ecclesial body deeply weakened.

Catholicism being essentially transmission, *traditio*, this « progressist » orientation maintains and accelerates the long movement of auto-annihilation of catholicism as seen in the last council. But, it also continues the suicide of the trend that carries this orientation. For, « progressivism » which sociological translation is precisely in the fact that there is no more transmission – or is only very imperfectly done – from generation to generation, especially for what concerns the basic knowledge of the Gospel’s message and of catechism, first hurts those who support it. In other words, Catholics who reinterpret since half a century the given of tradition according to modern expectations are also the first victims of the rupture they worked for. Indeed, they themselves no longer ensure the auto-transmission, their children ceasing all practice of the faith, no longer responding to vocations, and even no longer calling themselves Catholic.

The Catholic remainders, whatever their numerical and intrinsic weaknesses, are today the ones who still try to pass on, especially with their children who still affirm their catholicism through their knowledge of catechism, the number of vocations, their Sunday and sacramental practice. Can the offset between this remainders and a Roman position, that appears to this catholics more and more disturbing, get any wider ? Not indefinitely. ◆

**Father Claude Barthe**

## DOCUMENTS

# Church crisis: the oblivion of the Word

## Part Two

Rev. Fr. Jean-François Thomas, sj

Embracing the world has immediate consequences going further than the desertification of churches, a phenomenon most visible with the disaffection for priestly or religious vocation. Embracing the world leads to a dechristianisation of the baptised themselves, to a path of slow and efficacious apostasy. Embracing the world leads to a democratisation of the figure of Christ, to a diminution, little by little, to a figure more or less historical, more or less allegorical, precursor of social and humanitarian action.

### Thinking with the world

When novelty for the sake of novelty has become the standard because it is fashionable, the risk is great to not just throw overboard the appearances but also the body of faith. It is not by coincidence if saint Ignatius of Loyola, founder of an order that did not embrace the spirit of the times, wrote in his Spiritual Exercises, *«Rules for thinking with the Church»* which are all an invitation to defend what was questioned by the heresy of the time, that is protestantism. He could have found ways of reconciliation, but he refused to do so because he knew he would have been unfaithful to the love of the Word. To tamper with the exteriority of the faith, – like Luther did –, necessarily jeopardises the interiority, unless one considers that, in any case, all is relative and everyone makes its own way to the God it imagined for himself. The argument of continuous progress and the search for pure forms, by closing itself in an archaeologism without tie to what really existed, does not take into account human reality. So, like saint Augustine on his bed of suffering and agonising, while barbarians besiege Hippone and ravage North Africa, one must repeat these words: *«Non tollit Gothus quod custodit Christus!»* («No Goth can steal what is guarded by Christ»). The fear to not have hung on to what is likely not to pass but to remain, – even in the flash of the light, in the very narrow field of view of the atheist contemporary man, led many Catholics, including ones at the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, to more often place his trust in the Goth than in Christ. Condemning oneself to be irrevocably out of the times has become the Christian great fear replacing the fear of committing a mortal sin or to be damned. What was the millennial concern of individual souls for their salvation has been disregarded. Instead, the concern is now about jumping on the bandwagon, and staying on it, even if it races towards the abyss, at a crazy speed and without a conductor.

Outspoken author Leonardo Castellani summarised it in this way: *«The interiority of the Christian faith is summarised as an infinite thirst for the salvation of the soul and the subsequent requirement to enter in contact here and now with the vital eternal truth.»* (*The scientist and Salvation*) But, of course, this Jesuit of an other time, yet a contemporary, had the Word at heart, the Word ran in his blood, (*El Verbo en la sangre*, title of a compilation of his works).

### Ahead, full speed

In a completely providential way, an unearthed letter from forgotten French writer René Schwob comes under my eyes. In this letter, he was answering a question sent by father Bourdon, from Rouen (Normandy), in 1938, to numerous personalities of the era: *«What is, according to your personal sentiment regarding the catholic priesthood, the place of the priest in the work of French national recovery?»* His answer is of interest to all priests, but also, indirectly, to all lay persons and all men of good will: *«I believe that if we had asked this question to the Curé d’Ars, he would have answered that the unique duty of a priest, were it be from a social standpoint, was to be a saint. So it seems to me that it is only from this perfect supernatural charity that his apostolate can bear fruits. And, he is then what the circumstances, the times, and the place force him to be. The important is foremost that he troubles not his mission with the worries of any politics – neither from the left nor the right. We die of an excess of democracy. May the priests at least keep out of it...»* (Unpublished letter, 8 December 1938)

Thus, all is said. The crisis in the Church finds an explanation in a full speed movement characterised by this excess of democracy, movement that started in the XVIII century. Legitimised in the XIX century, it was crowned in the nineteen sixties that saw the apotheosis of a union with the world seen no longer as a spring of errors but as a model to imitate and serve. The hatred for tradition, the rejection of what does not pass has led to the sanctification of technical progress and social justice, two currents that seem to oppose each other, but precisely are found united in their despise of things that remain, that do not pass. The new creed is about change, novelty, the advocacy of all change, its acceleration so to attain a new reality, a major change, a total change, one towards which we are irremediably moving to, whether it be political globalism or one world religion. If the fire of the Word is in the Church, she cannot consider, – unless to enunciate an assumed heresy – that God willed in his wisdom all religions, from the most crude to the most refined, as many diverse paths leading to Him, a kind of God of the gods residing in this immense pantheon.

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This is what we meant by oblivion of the Word. It is not about something that would have been accidentally forgotten, a Word reduced to a truth among many others, a truth obviously relative since submitted to the waves of times and everyone’s fad. This door that the demons use was officially opened in the Church and it is now kept wide by those who should be the supernatural doormen and guardians of the treasure. ◆