

# The Election of the Pope

(*Sodalitium* extract n ° 54 and n ° 55)

by Rev. Francesco Ricossa

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Periodically, Bp. Marc Pivarunas, CMRI (bishop consecrated by Mgr Carmona) sends his faithful a letter entitled *Pro grege* (1). That of March 19, 2002 particularly caught my attention. The American prelate (USA) - who follows the thesis of the vacant seat - responds (on p. 5) to two objections from the local district superior of the Society of Saint Pius X, Fr. Peter Scott.

“It is however absurd to say, as the sedevacantists do, that there has not been a Pope for more than 40 years, because that would destroy the visibility of the Church, and the very possibility of a canonical election. of a future Pope ”.

This objection is not new (2); what is more interesting is the response of Bp. Pivarunas. With regard to the first difficulty (the fact that the apostolic vacancy is prolonged) Bp. Pivarunas responds by alleging the historical example of the Great Western Schism. Father Edmund James O'Really SJ (3), in his book *the Relations of the Church to Society* published in 1882, wrote about this:

“We can now stop investigating what was said at this time about the position of the three suitors and their rights vis-à-vis the papacy. In the first place, since the death of Gregory XI in 1378, there has always been a Pope - with the natural exception of the vacations between deaths and elections. I think that at all times there has been a Pope truly invested with the dignity of Vicar of Christ and Head of the Church, even if opinions differ as to his legitimacy; not in the sense that an interregnum covering the whole period would have been impossible or irreconcilable with the promises of Christ, because this is not at all obvious , but in the sense that, in fact, there is no had this interregnum ”(Pivarunas, p. 5).

The thing is so obvious that it is useless to insist.

It is more difficult, on the other hand, to answer the second difficulty. Let us see what Bishop Pivarunas writes on this subject.

“Regarding the second 'difficulty' proposed by the Society of Saint Pius X against the sedevacantist position, that is to say the impossibility of the election of a future Pope if the seat is vacant since Vatican II , here is what we can read in Bishop Charles Journet's 'Church of the Incarnate Word': “During the vacancy of the apostolic see, neither the Church nor the Council can contravene the arrangements made to determine the valid mode of the apostolic see. election (Card. Gaetano op, *De comparatione...*, cap. XIII, n. 202). However, in case of permission, for example if the Pope has not foreseen anything that opposes it, or in case of ambiguity, for example if one does not know who the real cardinals are, or who is the real Pope, as was seen in the time of the great schism, the power to 'apply the papacy to such and such a person' is vested in the universal Church , the Church of God (ibid., no. 204) ”” (4).

With this quote, Bp. Pivarunas thinks he has sufficiently answered Father Scott: in the absence of cardinals - and only in this case (5) - the Pope can be elected, by devolution (6), by the Church.

But in reality the difficulty only changes object: what do we mean, in fact, in this context by 'universal Church'?

In his letter, Bishop Pivarunas does not specify this. No more than Journet at the place mentioned. But since Journet endorses Cardinal Cajetan's position (7), citing his work *De comparatione auctoritatis*

Papæ et Concilii cum apologia eiusdem tractatus (8), we can easily establish the meaning of this expression by consulting Cajetan himself.

### **Cardinal Cajetan, by the term 'universal Church', intends to designate the General Council**

We have seen that, in extraordinary cases, the Pope can, in the absence of cardinals, be elected by the 'universal Church'; but what does Cardinal Cajetan mean by this term?

It is enough to leaf through the *De comparatione* to find the answer - unmistakable - to our question. Already the title indicates it to us: *De comparatione auctoritatis Papæ et Concilii, seu Ecclesiæ universalis* (n ° 5) ( On the comparison of the authority of the Pope and the Council, that is to say of the universal Church ): The universal Church and the Council are one. But it is in chapter V (n ° 56) that Cajetan proceeds to an explicit definition of the terms:

“ Having considered the comparison between the power of the Pope and that of the apostles by virtue of their apostolate, we must now compare the power of the Pope and the power of the universal Church, in other words of the Universal Council, now from a point of view. general view, then, as we have announced, in certain cases and events (particular). And as the opposites, put in confrontation, become clearer, I will bring first of all the main reasons in which lies the value (of the arguments) by which it is proved [by the adversaries] that the Pope is subject to judgment of the Church, that is to say of the Universal Council. And so [that I no longer have to] put together Church and Council [I specify that]they are taken as synonyms, because the only distinction between them is that one represents and the other is represented ” (9). Moreover, the general context of the work clearly indicates to us that Cajetan by “universal Church” means General Council; the *De comparatione* responds in fact to the objections of the conciliarists according to which the Pope is inferior to the Church, that is to say to the Council (9). But there is more. Precisely when he speaks of the election of the Pope, Cajetan uses the terms “Church” and “Council” interchangeably: “in *Ecclesia autem seu Concilio*” (no. 202). And even when it comes to presenting the concrete case of the extraordinary election of a Pope, Cajetan does not speak so much of a “universal Church” he speaks rather of a General Council:“*Si Concilium generale cum pace Romanæ ecclesiæ eligeret in tali casu Papam, verus Papa esset ille qui electus sic esset*” (n ° 745) (“ if in this case the General Council elects the Pope with peace [peaceful acceptance] of the Roman Church, whoever would be elected in this way would really be Pope ” ).

It is therefore obvious that, for Bishop Journet and Cardinal Cajetan, it is the imperfect General Council (10) which, in the absence of cardinals, has the charge of electing the Supreme Pontiff.

### **Residential bishops, as ex officio members of this General Council, could elect the Pope**

Being established that it is the members of the General Council who are the extraordinary electors of the Pope (in the absence of cardinals), it remains to be seen who can participate, by right, in the General Council. The Code of Canon Law - dealing with the Ecumenical Council - lists the ex officio members of the Council with deliberative vote, in canon 223:

§ 1. The following are called to the Council and have the right to deliberative vote:

- 1 ° The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, even if they are not bishops;
- 2 ° Residential Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops and Bishops, even non-consecrated ones;
- 3 ° The Abbots or prelates nullius;

4 ° The Abbot Primate, the Abbots Superiors of monastic congregations, the Superiors General of exempt clerical congregations, but not of other religions, unless the decree of convocation provides otherwise;

§ 2. The titular Bishops called to the Council also have the deliberative vote, unless explicitly provided for in the convocation.

§ 3. The theologians and canonists who may be invited to the Council have only an advisory vote.

This canon expresses not only positive law but also the very nature of things. Let us note, in fact, that titular Bishops, deprived of jurisdiction, may not be summoned to the Council or may not have the right to vote. On the contrary, Cardinals, residential Bishops, Abbots or nullius prelates (11) even non-consecrated bishops participate by right in the Council, because they have jurisdiction over a territory (12). This means that in itself the criterion for being a member of the Council is to belong to the hierarchy by reason of jurisdiction and not of the sacred order (for this distinction, of divine right, see can. 108§3) .

Things being what they are, it seems that Bishop Pivarunas (and with it, all sedevacantists simpliciter, those consequently who do not follow the thesis of Father Guérard des Lauriers) did not respond sufficiently to the difficulty posed by the Society of Saint Pius X. Indeed, in a strictly sedevacantist position, we do not see where the bishops are. residential Catholics who could and would elect a Pope, given that all residential bishops (and other prelates who would have jurisdiction) either have been invalidly appointed by the antipopes or are in any case formally heretical and outside the Church - adhering to the errors of Vatican II - or in any case are in communion with John Paul II, head of the new “conciliar Church”. The hierarchical Church would have, in short, totally disappeared, not only in action and

formally, but also in power and materially (13).

### **Bishops without jurisdiction cannot elect the Pope**

We have seen that in abnormal circumstances the election of the Pope - according to the thought of the theologians who have dealt with the question - falls to the imperfect General Council, in other words to the Bishops and prelates who enjoy, in the Church itself, jurisdiction. The Pope is, in fact, Bishop of the universal Church: it is therefore normal that exceptionally it is the prelates of the universal Church governing, like him and below him, a portion of the flock who elect him. We have also seen that by the very nature of things, and as a consequence of what has been said, are excluded from the number of electors per accidens of the Pope, titular Bishops, Bishops consecrated with the Roman mandate but deprived of jurisdiction in the Church.

A fortiori are excluded from the number of electors - precisely because they are excluded from the General Council - Bishops consecrated without a Roman mandate under the exceptional conditions of the current (formal) vacancy of the Apostolic See. These Bishops were indeed consecrated validly and even, in our opinion - at least in certain cases - lawfully; but nevertheless they are - in the most absolute way - deprived of jurisdiction by the fact that the Bishop receives jurisdiction from God only through the intermediary of the Pope, an intermediary excluded in our case (14). Being deprived of jurisdiction, they do not belong to the hierarchy of the Church according to jurisdiction, for which they are not ex officio members of the Council and are therefore not entitled to validly elect the Pope, not even in cases extraordinary.

This point of doctrine, already established in itself, is confirmed by the practical impossibility of electing a reliable and undoubted Pope by following this path. Who will be able to establish with certainty, among the many Bishops who have been and will still be consecrated in this way, those who have the right to participate in the election and those who do not? Who has the right to convene the

Conclave and who does not? Who can be considered as legitimately consecrated and who not? In the absence of criteria of discernment (the Roman mandate, the residential seat) there are no limits per se to these consecrations neither on the part of who can authorize them (the Pope) nor with regard to the portion of territory to be governed (the diocese). The number of voters can therefore grow disproportionately without any guarantee of their catholicity, as has happened in practice.

### **A fortiori, the laity cannot elect the Pope**

If the titular Bishops, however appointed by the Pope, cannot elect the Pope, if the purely consecrated Bishops cannot either, without a Roman mandate, simple priests can still less. As for the laity, they are excluded in an even more radical way from any ecclesiastical election.

This conclusion is confirmed by the positive law of the Church, both as regards any ecclesiastical election in general and as regards the election of the Pope.

Regarding any ecclesiastical election, canon 166 states that “ if laity interfered in any way in an ecclesiastical election, so as to impede canonical freedom, the election would be null and void ” ( *Si laici contra canonicam libertatem electioni ecclesiasticæ quoque modo sese immiscuerint, electio ipso iure invalida est*).

For the papal election, it is the constitution *Vacante Sede Apostolica* of December 25, 1904, promulgated for this purpose by Saint Pius X, which is authoritative. The general principle is expressed in n. 27: “ The right to elect the Supreme Pontiff belongs solely and exclusively (privately) to the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, the intervention of any other ecclesiastical dignitary or lay power of any rank or order whatsoever, being absolutely excluded and discarded ” . Has a. 81, Saint Pius X renews the condemnation of the so-called right of Veto or Exclusive of secular power already sanctioned by itself in the Constitution *Commissum nobis* of January 20, 1904, and he concludes: “This prohibition, we want it to be extended to any intervention, intercession or other means by which the lay authorities, of whatever order or rank, want to interfere in the elections of the Pontiff ”. The holy Pontiff alludes to what happened during the Conclave which elected him to the Sovereign Pontificate, when the Emperor Franz Joseph, through the Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow, vetoed the election of Cardinal Mariano Rampolla del Tindaro, former secretary of state of Leo XIII. In the Constitution *Commissum* , Saint Pius X affirms that this presumed right of “Veto” already condemned by his predecessors Pius IV ( *In eligendis* ), Gregory XV ( *Æterni Patris* ), Clement XII ( *Apostolatus officium* ) and Pius IX ( *In hac sublimi, Licet per Apostolicas and Consulturi* ) is contrary to the freedom of the Church. His office, writes the Holy Pontiff, is to ensure that “ the life of the Church unfolds in an absolutely free manner, being far from any external intervention, as his Divine Founder wanted, and as his sublime mission absolutely requires. . Now, if there is one function in the life of the Church which requires this freedom more than any other, we must undoubtedly consider that it is that concerning the election of the Roman Pontiff; in fact ' it is not a question of a member, but of the whole body, when it comes to the head' (Gregory XV, *Æterni Patris*) ”. The exclusion of the intervention of the civil authorities naturally includes that of any member of the laity whoever they may be: “ We establish that it is not lawful to anyone, not even to heads of state, whoever they may be. the pretext, to interfere or interfere in the serious questions of the election of the Roman Pontiff ”.

As we can see, the exclusion of any lay intervention is considered by Saint Pius X not as a transitional arrangement, but as absolutely necessary for the Church to be as her Founder, Jesus Christ, wanted.

What is established by the Code of Canon Law and by Saint Pius X is perfectly in line with the whole tradition. The Code itself refers to the *Corpus Iuris canonici* (ancient ecclesiastical law) where the

decretals of Gregory IX (book I, title VI, de electione et electi potestate ) provide for the invalidity of the election made by the laity: the chapter 43 quotes the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 (Constitution XXV: Whoever consents to his own election made abusively by the secular power, against canonical freedom, loses the election and becomes ineligible ..."); in chapter 56 is quoted a document of Gregory IX of 1226 by which is declared invalid the election of a bishop made by the laity and by the canons, according to a custom called rather "corruption".

We could cite other ecclesiastical documents on this subject, among which various Ecumenical Councils: the second Council of Nicaea in the year 787 (DS 604), the second of Constantinople in the year 870 (DS 659), the first Council of the Lateran, of 1123, against the investitures of the laity (DS 712) ...

If, in the past, the Church had to defend her freedom from the influence of the Princes in the elections, with the Revolution she had to defend it from the democratic claim of having Bishops elected by the people. This is how Pope Pius VI, by the Brief *Quod aliquantulum* of March 10, 1791, condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy voted by the National Assembly. It is no coincidence that Pope Braschi linked the decisions of the French revolutionaries in this matter with the oldest errors of Wyclif, Marsil of Padua, Jean de Jandun and Calvin (cf. *Pontifical Teachings - the Church* , 81-82 , and Pius VI, *Writings on the French Revolution* , Ed. Pamphiliennes, pp. 16-20).

What then is the value of popular participation in some old elections? It is again Journet who recalls it: " In the course of time took part in the election, in various capacities: the Roman clergy (by a title which seems primary and direct), the people (but in so far as they gave his consent and approval to the election made by the clergy) , the secular princes (either in a lawful manner by simply giving their consent and support to the chosen one; or in an abusive manner by prohibiting, as Justinian, that the chosen one was consecrated before the approval of the emperor), finally the cardinals, who are the first among the Roman clerics, so that it is to the Roman clergy that today the election of the pope is entrusted again"(Op. Cit., P. 977) (15).

Therefore, for the people of the faithful, a vote only consultative or approving; and it is so by a dogmatic requirement founded on the distinction and the subordination which exist in the Church between the clergy and the faithful, a distinction which is of divine right. This is what Cardinal Mazzella, a Roman theologian, recalls, among others:

" In the third place, from the same documents, emerges and the distinction between Clerics and Laity, and the fact that the hierarchy constituted in the clerical order is of divine right; and consequently that by the same divine right, the democratic form is excluded from the government of the Church. This democratic form subsists when the supreme authority is found in the whole multitude; not in the sense that the whole multitude commands and governs in action, which would be impossible; but in the sense that - as Bellarmine says (from *Rom. Pont. L. 1, c. 6*) - where the popular regime is in force, the magistrates are constituted by the people themselves, and receive their authority from them; not being able to legislate themselves, the people must at least institute representatives who do so in their name '. But, being supposed a divinely constituted hierarchy in the clerical order, it is to it and not to all the people that the authority has been communicated by Christ; and consequently it is by institution of Christ that the right to constitute the rulers does not reside in the people , and that these do not govern the Church in the name of the people. For a better understanding of this, let's observe:

1) as Bellarmine says (*de mem. Eccles. L. 1 c. 2*), 'in the creation of Bishops are contained three things: election, ordination and vocation or mission; the election is nothing other than the designation of a determined person to the ecclesiastical prelature; ordination is a sacred ceremony by which, by means of a determined rite, the future Bishop is anointed and consecrated; the mission or vocation confers jurisdiction, and by the same token does the pastor and the prelate.

2) So electing, asking and bearing witness are very different things. Indeed, who testifies in favor of someone or asks that such be elected, does not confer on him a right to obtain a dignity; he only plays the role of a person who praises and asks. On the other hand, he who elects, canonically calls for dignity, and confers a real right to receive it (...)” (16).

In short, in ecclesiastical elections the people can bear witness to the qualities of a subject ( *testimonium reddere* ) and demand his election ( *petere*) but he absolutely cannot vote in a canonical election, and therefore elect a candidate for ecclesiastical office by giving him the right to receive - as an elected person - this office. And this conclusion is based on a principle which belongs to the faith and to the will of the Lord: that is to say, the fact that the Church is not a democratic society, but hierarchical (and even monarchical) (17 ) based on the distinction - by divine right - between Clergy and Laity. “ The “traditionalists” who attribute to people who are not part of the hierarchy of jurisdiction, and even to simple faithful, the power to elect up to the Sovereign Pontiff, are paradoxically polluted by the heresy of a Church democratic very widespread among the “modernists” style “basic community” or “the Church is us”.

### **The Roman Clergy and the Election of the Pope**

We have excluded from the power to elect the Pope the laity and the Bishops without jurisdiction (all the more reason simple priests). It remains for us to see a particular subject of the right to elect the Pope: the Roman clergy . If “ the power to elect the Pope belongs, by the nature of things, and therefore by divine right” - writes Journet at p. 977 - “ in the Church taken with its head, the concrete mode of which the election will be made, says John of Saint-Thomas, has nowhere been marked in Scripture: it is simple ecclesiastical law which will determine which persons in the Church can validly proceed to the election ” .

Current ecclesiastical law (and this from 1179) provides that only Cardinals can validly elect the Pope. This is how the oldest ecclesiastical tradition is maintained, whereby the Bishop is elected by his clergy and the neighboring Bishops. The Cardinals are in fact the main members of the Roman Clergy (deacons and priests), united with the Bishops of the neighboring dioceses, called suburban (also Cardinals). Cajetan writes that it is normal for the Pope to be elected by his church which is the Roman Church and the Universal Church, because the Pope is the Bishop of Rome and the Bishop of the Catholic Church (n ° 746 ). Cajetan even foresees that “ all the Cardinals having died, immediately succeed them [in the power to elect the Pope] the Roman Church, by which was elected[the Holy Pope] Lin before any provision of human law to our knowledge ”(n ° 745). “ The Roman Church” indeed “ represents the universal Church in the elective power”(n ° 746). As we have done about the “Universal Church”, we must ask ourselves who are the members of the “Roman Church” who could elect the Pope in the absence of Cardinals who, of this Roman Church, are the main members. Cajetan explains (n ° 202): the fact that the election belongs to this or that deacon or priest of the Roman churches, known as Cardinals, and not to others (such as for example the canons of Saint-Pierre or Saint-Jean -de-Lateran), or to this or that other suburban Bishop, and not to others, is a provision of positive ecclesiastical law and not of divine right. The Church cannot change these provisions of ecclesiastical law (n ° 202), but in the event of the disappearance of all the cardinals it can be assumed that the other members of the Roman clergy could elect their own bishop. It is obvious that to be members of the Roman clergy it is not enough to be born or to reside in Rome! It is necessary to be incardinated in the diocese and probably to have the pastoral charge of the Roman people or of the neighboring dioceses. It is easy to realize that even in this case we do not see who could, concretely, be able or want to elect the Pope, given that the Roman clergy (pastors, neighboring bishops, etc.) are currently in communion with John Paul II.

### **The Pope cannot be appointed directly by Heaven (because God does not want it)**

Faced with the so serious situation in which the Church is living, and which led to the deprivation of Authority, some thought that the solution could only come from an - exceptional - intervention from God. This thought is based on a true intuition: history and the Church are in the hands of God, and “ nothing is impossible with God ” (Lk I, 37). Among them some thought of an intervention of Enoch and Elijah, identified (wrongly, in my opinion) with the two witnesses of the Apocalypse. Others have hypothesized the survival of the Apostle John. Still others have imagined a papal election made directly by Christ and by the Apostles Peter and Paul (18). And there is no shortage of people to have published prophecies of Saints in favor of this opinion (19).

Bishop Guérard des Lauriers, in his interview with Sodalitium (n ° 13, p. 22) affirms about complete sedevacantism: “ The physical or moral person who has, in the Church, the capacity to declare the total vacancy of the Apostolic See is identical to that which has, in the Church, the capacity to provide for the provision of the same Apostolic See. Whoever currently declares 'Mgr Wojtyla is not Pope at all' [not even materialiter], must: either convene the Conclave [!] Or else show the credentials which directly and immediately establish him as Legate of Our Lord Jesus -Christ [!!] ”. We have so far demonstrated the impossibility, *rebus sic stantibus*, to convene a Conclave; let us see in this chapter if it is possible for someone to present himself with the credentials which would constitute him Legate of Jesus Christ or his Vicar.

Beyond the factual improbability of a similar event, underlined by the two exclamation marks affixed by Bishop Guérard after his exposition of this hypothesis, it seems to me that with regard to its theological possibility, Bishop Sanborn gave a correct answer:

“ The complete sedevacantists advance a second solution to the current crisis: it is Christ Himself who, by a miraculous intervention, will designate a successor. If Our Lord acted thus, and certainly He could, the man whom he would choose to be Pope would most certainly be his vicar on earth, but he would not be the successor of Saint Peter. Apostolicity would disappear, because this man could not trace his line back to Saint Peter by a line of uninterrupted legitimate succession. Certainly, like Saint Peter, he would be chosen by Christ. But in reality, Our Lord would create a new Church ”.

Q. But wouldn't Our Lord be a legitimate voter? Why couldn't He choose a pope who would also be Saint Peter's successor?

A. Yes, obviously Our Lord could choose a Pope, exactly as He chose Saint Peter? But a divine intervention of the kind imagined by the complete sedevacantists would amount to a new public revelation, which is impossible. The public revelation is definitively closed with the death of the last apostle. It is an article of faith. All revelations that took place after the death of the last apostle are in the domain of private revelation. For complete sedevacantists, it is therefore a private revelation which would reveal the identity of the Pope.

It goes without saying that such a solution destroys the visibility and legality of the Catholic Church, and makes its very existence dependent on visionaries. It also goes without saying that it leaves the papacy to the rants of the apparitionists.

The mission of the Church is to make divine revelation known to the world. If the appointment of the Pope - the very one who makes this revelation known - depended on a private revelation , the whole system would collapse. The highest authority of the Church would then be the seer, who could make or break the popes. There would no longer be any principle of authority by which to determine whether the seer is a hoax or not. Any leap of faith would ultimately depend on the honesty of a seer.

On the contrary, the Catholic Church is a visible society, and it has a legal life. Our Lord is the invisible head of the Church. The Church could no longer claim visibility if her hierarchy were designated by an invisible character, even Our Lord Himself.

Even if we admit this possibility for a single moment, there is no doubt that the one whom Our Lord would designate would not be a legitimate successor of Saint Peter. Succession is only legitimate if it meets the requirements of ecclesiastical law or established custom. But succession by divine intervention fulfills neither of these requirements. Consequently, the pope thus designated would not be the legitimate successor of Saint Peter”(20).

Jesus could therefore (of “absolute power”) choose a Pope again, but He never will (21) (it is impossible of “ordered power”) because it is He Himself who established that His Church, founded on Peter, would be unwavering; “The gates of hell will not prevail against it”. And this truth of the indefectibility of the Church already gives us the basic reason for what we maintain in the title of the next chapter.

The Church cannot remain totally deprived of electors for the Pope

Vatican Council I solemnly defined:

“ So if anyone says that it is not by the institution of Christ or of divine right that Saint Peter has, and forever, successors in his primacy over the universal Church, or that the Roman Pontiff does not not the successor of Saint Peter in this primacy: let him be anathema ”(DS 3058, Const. Dogm. Pastor Æternus, canon of chap. 2).

That there will “always” be a successor to Peter is therefore a truth of faith; this truth is an integral part of that concerning the indefectibility of the Church: if the Church were deprived of a Pope, she would no longer exist as Jesus founded her. To return to Cardinal Cajetan, “ Christus Dominus statuit Petrum in successoribus perpetuum: The Lord Jesus Christ has established (that) Peter (be made) perpetual in his successors ” (n. 746).

Of course, this definition cannot and must not be understood in the sense that there will always be, at every moment, in action, a Pope seated on the Chair of Peter: during the vacancy of the See (for example in the period between the death of a Pope and the election of his successor) that does not happen. In what sense then should we understand the Vatican definition?

It is again Cajetan who explains it to us: - by anticipation - “ impossibile est Ecclesiam relinqui absque Papa et potestate electiva Papæ: it is impossible for the Church to be left without the Pope and without the power to elect the Pope ” (no. . 744). Therefore, during the vacancy of the See, there must remain in some way the legal person who can elect the Pope: “ papatus, secluso Papa, non est in Ecclesia nisi in potentia ministerialiter electiva, quia scilicet potest, Sede vacante, Papam eligere, per Cardinales, vel per seipsam in casu: the papacy, once the Pope has been removed, is found in the Church only in a ministerially elective power, for she [the Church] can, during the vacancy of the See, elect the Pope through the intermediary of the Cardinals or, in (accidental) circumstances of itself”(210).

It is therefore absolutely necessary that - during the vacancy of the See - there should still be the possibility of electing the Pope: it is the indefectibility and apostolicity of the Church that demand it (22).

### **The election of the Pope in the current situation of the Church**

This is precisely the objection raised by Archbishop Lefebvre to the sedevacantists, and taken up by Abbot Scott against Archbishop Pivarunas. Of course, an objection cannot nullify a demonstration, and Bishop Pivarunas is right - and Father Scott wrong - that the See is currently vacant. But we have



seen that if simplifying sedevacantism is capable of demonstrating the vacancy of the See, it cannot, on the other hand, explain how the power to elect a successor still exists today. Of all the various explanatory attempts analyzed so far, none is conclusive: neither the simple faithful, nor the simple priests, nor even the non-residential Bishops can elect the Pope. In addition, in the strictly sedevacantist perspective, there would currently no longer be any Catholic residential cardinals or bishops,

The only possible solution to this difficulty comes, in our opinion, from the so-called Cassiciacum Thesis, presented by Father Guérard des Lauriers, a Thesis that the sedevacantists persist in refusing without realizing that it is the only one that allows to really defend the thesis of the vacant See.

According to this Thesis, in the current situation of authority in the Church, the power to elect the Supreme Pontiff still subsists in the Church, not in deed, formally, but in power, materially, and this is sufficient to ensure the continuity of the Apostolic Succession and to guarantee the indefectibility of the Church.

For the moment, an election of the Pope is impossible and because the See is still occupied materially and legally by John Paul II, and because, as we have demonstrated in this article, there is no, of electors capable of carrying out this election.

The election is however potentially possible, on the one hand because in principle it cannot be otherwise, as we have seen, on the other hand because, in fact, the voters canonically entitled to elect the Pope exist materially. According to the Thesis, in fact, the Cardinals created by materialiter “popes” retain the power to elect the Pontiff, just as the Bishops appointed by materialiter “popes” to the various episcopal see, occupy them materially and could, once returned to the public and integral profession of the Faith, to be electors of the Pope in the absence of Cardinals. The “Pope” himself, who only materially occupies the See, could, anathemizing all errors and fully professing the Faith, formally become Pope at all costs. As we can see, the Cassiciacum's thesis responds to the objections raised against sedevacantism by the “modernists” and by the “Lefebvrists”, while the other sedevacantist theses are not capable of it. For the demonstration of this point of the Thesis, we refer the reader to what we have already written on this subject (23).

### **The duty of Catholics**

Having reached the end of this exposition, which is obviously a summary of the question of the election of the Pope in the current situation of the Church, we can draw some conclusions.

What is the current duty of Catholics? Above all, keep the faith. This duty (to preserve the faith) immediately implies another: that of not recognizing the “authority” of John Paul II and of the Vatican Council II. Recognizing the “authority” of John Paul II and of the Second Vatican Council implies in fact adherence to their teaching which is - on certain points - in contradiction with the Catholic faith infallibly defined by the Church.

But the simple Catholic cannot and must not go further. It is not for the simple faithful (not even priests and bishops without jurisdiction) to declare with authority, officially and legally, the vacancy of the Apostolic See and to provide for the election of an authentic Pontiff. But the Catholic's duty is to pray and to work, each in his place and according to his skills, so that this official declaration - by the college of cardinals or the imperfect general council - becomes possible. The tragedy of our time - which dictates the gravity of the present crisis - consists precisely in the fact that none of the members of the hierarchy has so far fulfilled this role. Currently, it seems impossible that the bishops or cardinals manage to condemn the errors of Vatican II and put the occupant of the Apostolic See in the condition of anathematizing these errors too, on pain of being formally declared a heretic (and therefore deposed, too). materially, from Headquarters); but, let us remember, what is

impossible for men is possible for God. And as to our question, we know that God cannot forsake His Church, since the gates of hell will not prevail against Her, and that He will be with Her until the end of the world.

### **Appendix**

There remain two problems, still concerning the election of the Pope, not directly related to our question (the possibility of electing a Pope in the current state of affairs): that of the certainty of the validity of the election. because of the peaceful acceptance of this election of the Pope by the Church, and that of the holiness of the election. Journet speaks of it in the cited work. I will say a few words about it, too, because there are two arguments there that could serve as an objection to our position (the formal vacancy of the Apostolic See).

#### **Peaceful acceptance as a certainty of the validity of the election of the Pope**

An election, even the election of the Pope, can be invalid or doubtful; in line with Jean-de-Saint-Thomas, the same Journet reminds us of this ( The election of the Pope. V. Validity and certainty of the election ). “ The Church - writes Journet - has the right to elect the Pope, and therefore the right to know with certainty the chosen one. As long as there is still doubt about the election and the tacit consent of the universal Church does not exist. did not come to remedy the possible defects of the election, there is no pope, papa dubius, papa nullus. Indeed, points out Jean-de-Saint-Thomas, as long as the peaceful and certain election is not manifest, the election is supposed to last again.”(P. 978). However, any uncertainty about the validity of the election is dispelled by the peaceful acceptance of the election made by the universal Church: “ The peaceful acceptance of the universal Church currently uniting itself with such elected as the head to whom it submits, is an act in which the Church commits her destiny. It is therefore an infallible act of the self, and it is immediately knowable as such. (Consequently and mediately, it will appear that all the prerequisites for the validity of the election have been fulfilled. ” (Pp. 977-978) What Journet affirms is found among almost all theologians.

This doctrine includes a very serious objection against all sedevacantism (including our Thesis). Father Lucien did not hide this difficulty when he wrote: “ Without answering our argument, some say that it [our thesis] is certainly false, because its conclusion, according to them, is contrary to the faith or to the less close to heresy. They recall in fact that the legitimacy of a Pope is a dogmatic fact, and they add that the infallible sign of this legitimacy is the adhesion of the universal Church. However, they point out, for several years after December 7, 1965 [date from which Paul VI was certainly no longer Pope formally], no one in the Church has publicly questioned the legitimacy of Paul VI. It is therefore impossible, they conclude, that he ceased to be a legitimate Pope on that date, since the universal Church still recognized him. These objectors also affirm that even today the universal Church adheres to John Paul II, since no member of the magisterial hierarchy has challenged him: yet this hierarchy (all the residential bishops united to the pope) authentically represents the universal Church ”(24). I refer the reader to the masterful answer given by Father Lucien to this objection. On the one hand, he recalls that the Constitution Cum ex apostolatus of Pope Paul IV - who, even if it no longer has legal value, always remains an act of the magisterium - teaches a contrary doctrine (the thesis of the peaceful acceptance of the Church as certain proof of the validity of an election , is therefore only theological opinion). Moreover, he underlines that this opinion is based on the fact that it is impossible for the whole Church to follow a false rule of faith, adhering to a false pontiff: this would be in contradiction with the indefectibility of the Church. Now, in our case, among those who recognize the legitimacy of Paul VI and John Paul II, there are many who do not adhere to

the novelties of Vatican II; in fact, they do not recognize Paul VI and John Paul as the rule of the faith and therefore, always in fact, they do not recognize its legitimacy (cf. pp. 108-111). In short,

### **The holiness of the election**

If the preceding objection is indeed important, the one based on the sanctity of the election is not at all; but since many faithful have quoted me, it seems to me opportune to answer, and with the very words of Journet. Many people, in fact, mistakenly believe that it is the Holy Spirit who guarantees the election by inspiring the cardinals, for which the chosen one of the Conclave would be chosen directly by God. Journet recalls that when we speak of the holiness of the papal election, “We do not mean by these words that the election of the Pope is always done by an infallible assistance since there are cases where the election is invalid, where it remains doubtful, where it therefore remains in suspense. We do not mean either that the best subject is necessarily chosen. We mean that, if the election is made validly (which, in itself, is always a benefit), even when it would result from intrigues and regrettable interventions (but then what is sin remains sin before God), we are certain that the Holy Spirit, who, beyond the popes, watches over his Church in a special way, using not only the good, but also the evil that they can do, could not have wanted, or less allow this election than for spiritual purposes, day. But these are mysteries that only faith can penetrate”(Pp. 978-979). In short, divine Providence watches over the Church in a very special way, but this does not prevent the election of the Pope from sometimes being null, doubtful, or, if it is valid, that it has for its object a person less worthy of this charge than any other. At the last conclaves, therefore, God was able to allow, for impenetrable reasons, that subjects be elected who did not objectively have the usual will to bring about the good and the end of the Church, and that consequently, while being the elected to the Conclave (“popes” materialiter), they have put and still put an obstacle to the reception, on the part of God, of divine assistance and of pontifical authority (they are not “popes” formaliter), authority which, without this obstacle, would have been conferred on the chosen one of the conclave who really accepts the election.

### **SODALITIUM ADDENDUM # 55**

An article by Professor Tello

Professor Tomás Tello Corraliza (from Mérida, Spain) sent us on January 22, 2003 a very kind letter about the article “The election of the Pope”, to accompany the sending of a study on the same theme composed by him (in Spanish and English) and dating back to 1994. His previously unpublished writing has since been published in a German translation of the journal *Einsicht*(n ° 1, February 2003, pp. XXXIII- 15-23). Professor Tello is a complete sedevacantist, so he supports the possibility and the necessity of the election of a Pope. We will limit ourselves to making a few brief observations. The professor, after having posed the problem (impossibility of election by the college of cardinals, need for a supplementary law to proceed to the election of the Pope), presents to the reader, in the footsteps of contemporary authors who have already approached on this subject, quotes from seven “classic” authors: Cajetan, Vitoria, Saint Robert Bellarmine, John of Saint Thomas, Dom Grea, Billot and Journet. In our article “The election of the Pope”, we have already seen what to think of the doctrine of Cajetan taken up by Journet. Dom Gréa, he thinks that only the cardinals, or the Roman Church, can elect the Pope. Bellarmine thinks that it comes down to the General Council in agreement with the Roman Church (clergy of Rome, suburban bishops: which is fundamentally also the position of Cajetan). The other authors attribute the suppletory power of electing the Pope to the imperfect General Council (imperfect because, precisely, deprived of a Pope). The most interesting quotes

proposed by Tello (taking up Johas) are those of the theologian Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546) and taken from his work *From potestate Ecclesiae* : Tello declares to follow Vitoria's position. After having established that in the absence of cardinals, the election of the Pope returns to the whole Church, Vitoria specifies however that it is necessary to exclude from this right the simple faithful (n ° 19) and the clergy below the episcopate (No. 20); this is exactly what we wrote in our article ...

In n ° 21 Vitoria thus exposes its thesis: in the hypothesis of this extraordinary case (absence of cardinals) the electors would be the bishops meeting in Council. Professor Tello thinks he has thus proved his thesis: the Pope's electors still exist (in action): they are the “faithful” bishops. And it is here, on the contrary, that Professor Tello and others with him are mistaken. In our article (pp. 6-7) we have amply demonstrated that not all bishops can participate by divine right in a Council - and therefore in a possible papal election - but only bishops with jurisdiction. That's what Cajetan says. But this is also what Vitoria asserts in the quotes advanced by Tello, when he explains that the Bishops could elect the Pope because “they are the Shepherds of the flock”, below the Supreme Pontiff, which is true only and exclusively of the residential bishops who govern - with a diocese - a portion of the flock. Being excluded from the election the titular bishops (with all the more reason the “sedevacantist” bishops consecrated without a Roman mandate), the conclavists find themselves without electors, unless they accept as such the bishops (or cardinals) materialiter than on the contrary. They refuse.

### **An interesting novelty in the position of The Tower of David**

The Tower of David is the sedevacantist review run by Father Xavier Grossin. In the January issue (n ° 20, pp. 6-8), Father Grossin speaks about our article, supporting, among other things, the same position as Father Paladino (and of LH Remy): election of the Pope by the intermediary of the apostle Saint Peter.

Apparently Father Grossin's article is violently opposed to ours (Father Ricossa is incorrigible, he sins against the Holy Spirit, he resists grace, becomes ever more stupid, writes nonsense, condemns himself definitively to the absurd, is in bad faith, etc.). In reality, putting aside all passion for reading, we realize that Father Grossin concedes a lot to our position, to the point that we can wonder if - without realizing it - he is not adopting not just the [loathed] Thesis of Cassiciacum !

What he recognizes can be reduced to two things:

Within the framework of the “apparitionist” thesis, he admits that the person chosen by Saint Peter should then be canonically elected by the imperfect General Council (“ the designation by Saint Peter in no way detracts from the apostolicity. The imperfect General Council could ratify the choice made by Saint Peter and settle matters canonically. The man appointed would necessarily be bishop or should be consecrated bishop, which would make him legitimate successor of the Apostles. I do not see where the problem is ”) (p. 8) ). In this way, it follows that in the final analysis it is the Council which elects the Pope, and not Saint Peter. This is our position.

But who has the right to be part of the imperfect General Council? On this point, Father Grossin makes an important concession: “ we have admitted that true bishops could abjure and meet in an imperfect general council ” (p. 8). Very good ! But no doubt he does not realize that - by this affirmation - he essentially accepts the Thesis that he claims to refuse ...

By setting out our position (“ he establishes that it is to the imperfect General Council, that is to say to the residential bishops, having ordinary jurisdiction over a territory, that belongs the legal right to elect a pope in the event of failure of the Sacred College”) Father Grossin can only approve of it, writing: “ very good ” (p. 6). Not only. He clearly admits that these bishops would be those who currently belong to what he calls the “conciliar sect”. Naturally, he puts conditions there: the

abjuration of the conciliar heresies, the refusal of the conciliar sect, the fact of having been validly consecrated. As regards the first two conditions (which, moreover, form only one) we are in substantial agreement, whatever Father Grossin may say. As for the fact that said bishops must be validly consecrated, we allow ourselves to observe the following: in himself, the bishop (and even the bishop of Rome) enjoys jurisdiction even before receiving the sacrament of order. (all the more so the episcopal consecration). Pius XII, among others, recalled this expressly in the case of the election to the papacy of a layman. It would therefore not be necessary that the aforementioned bishops - after abjuration of errors - be already consecrated: it is enough that they want to be consecrated (at least under conditions). In any case, Father Grossin recalls that the Eastern bishops are validly consecrated. But why insist? The Tower of David, about the solution proposed by Sodalitium writes: “ we do not reject this possibility at all ” (p. 6). But then, if we agree, why so many insults?

(PS: according to Father Grossin Sodalitium would identify the conciliar sect and the Church, which would make the Institute “ the extreme right of the conciliar sect .” Naturally this identification exists only in the imagination of the Abbé Grossin Let us note, among other things, that if for Father Grossin a validly consecrated bishop of the “conciliar sect” can, after abjuration, become by the same fact a bishop of the Catholic Church, this means that he- even does not believe in the legal existence of the “conciliar sect”).

## Notes

1) The letter Pro grege can be obtained at the following address: Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, Mater Dei Seminary, 7745 Military Avenue, Omaha, NE 68034-3356, USA

2) Peter Scott only takes up the two objections already adopted by Archbishop Lefebvre in 1979: “ The question of the visibility of the Church is too necessary for its existence for God to be able to omit it for decades. The reasoning of those who affirm the non-existence of the Pope puts the Church in an inextricable situation. Who will tell us where the future Pope is? How will he be appointed since there are no more cardinals? ”.

3) Father O'Really was a professor at the Catholic University of Dublin.

4) Bishop Pivarunas does not give the references of Journet's quote. It is Excursus VIII, The election of the pope, from the work The Church of the Incarnate Word, vol. I The Apostolic Hierarchy, p. 976, Ed. Saint Augustin, Saint-Just-la-Pendue 1998. The bold characters are from Mgr Pivarunas.

5) After having convoked the Vatican Council I, Pius IX, by the Apostolic Constitution Cum Romani Pontificibus of December 4, 1869, took care to specify the conditions of the pontifical election, in case he died during the Council. Following the example of Julius II (during the Fifth Lateran Council) as well as of Paul III and Pius IV (on the occasion of the Council of Trent), he established that the election was the exclusive responsibility of the College of Cardinals, with the explicit exclusion of the Council Fathers ( Pontifical Teachings, The Church, n° 326). This prescription was taken up by Saint Pius X ( Vacante Sede Apostolica, n. 28) and by Pius XII ( Vacantis Apostolicæ Sedis, of December 8, 1945, n. 33). Prescription is not only disciplinary, it also has a basis in the rejection of conciliarist theories.

6) Journet explains: “In the event that the conditions provided for have become inapplicable, the task of determining new ones would fall to the Church by devolution, this word being taken, as Cajetan notes ( Apologia de comparata auctoritate papæ et concilii, cap. XIII, n° 745), not in the strict sense (it is to the superior authority that there is, in the strict sense, devolution in the event of neglect of the

inferior), but in the broad sense, to signify any transmission, even made to an inferior ”( op. cit . pp. 975-976).

7) Tommaso de Vio, known as Gaetano (Cajetan) from the place of his birth Gaeta, 1468-1533, entered the Dominicans in 1484, began teaching in 1493. He was Master General of the Order from 1508 to 1518, he participates in the Fifth Lateran Council, was appointed Cardinal in 1517. In 1518 he was appointed legate of the Holy See to proceed against Luther, and worked on the drafting of the bull of Leo X, *Exsurge Domine*, against the heresiarch. Bishop of Gaeta in 1519, he was again legate, in Hungary this time, from 1523 to 1524. He was buried in Rome in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. “Cajetan is famous for his classic commentaries on the whole theological sum of Saint Thomas, commentaries to which remain linked and his name and his imperishable reputation... Particularly attached to the Apostolic See, Cajetan defended in depth and brilliantly its prerogatives in his famous treatise *On auctoritate Papæ* with the Apology of the same treatise which broke the conciliarist inclinations of Pisa (1511) and prepared in advance the condemnation of the Gallican error. (...) Saint Robert Bellarmine defines him as a “man of superior intelligence and no less great piety” *The Enciclopedia cattolica* , section De Vio.

8) “The first booklet entitled *De comparatione auctoritatis Papæ et Concilii*, was composed by Cardinal Cajetan - who completed it on October 12, 1511 - in the space of two months. It was on the occasion of the Schismatic Council of Pisa, induced at that time by some cardinals against Pope Julius II, that it was composed; this is why the author strives to refute the so-called Gallican theses, supported from the 15th century on the occasion of the Council of Constance; and especially the thesis of Occam and Gerson affirming the superiority of the Council over the Pope. Against (this thesis), Cajetan demonstrates (...) that the Pope as successor of Peter enjoys the primacy, that is to say the full and supreme ecclesiastical power with all the prerogatives which are annexed to it. The King of France Louis XII submitted this work for examination by the University of Paris, which entrusted the defense [of its own position] to the young and eloquent author Jacques Almain. *De auctoritatæ Ecclesiæ, seu sacrorum Concilium eam representativeem, contra Thomam de Vio, Dominicanum* '(Paris, Jean Granjon, 1512), Cajetan replied with another pamphlet, the *Apologia de comparata auctoritate Papæ et Concilii* , completed on November 29, 1512 ”( translation from Latin made by us of the introduction by Father Pollet, op, to the reissue of the two pamphlets by Cajetan, made by the Angelicum, in Rome, in 1936).

9) “*Examinata comparatione potestatis Papæ ad Apostolos ratione sui apostolatus, comparanda modo est Papæ potestas Ecclesiæ universalis seu Concilii universalis potestati, nunc quidem absolute, postmodum vero in eventibus et casibus, ut promisimus. And quoniam opposita iuta se posita magis elucescunt, afferam primo rationes primarias in quibus consistit vis, quibus probatur Papam subesse Ecclesiæ seu Consilii universalis iudicio. And ne contigat sæpius Ecclesiam and Consilium iungere, pro eodem sumantur, quoniam non nisi sicut repræsentans et repræsentatum distinguuntur* ”.

10) We say “imperfect” because in the absence of the Pope, a General Council is precisely imperfect (cf. *De comparatione* , n ° 231, where it is spoken of the Council of Constance which meets for the election of Martin V), in that he is deprived of his Head, who is the only one able to convene, direct and confirm an Ecumenical Council (can. 222; Cajetan, op. Cit. , Chap. XVI). We recall that - according to Cajetan - it is to this imperfect General Council that the task of deposing the heretical Pope falls (no. 230).

11) “The prelates who are at the head of their own territory, separated from any diocese with clergy and people, are called Abbots or Prelates' nullius, (that is to say, not belonging to any diocese...)” (

can. 319) Prelates or Abbots nullius must have the same qualities as those required of a bishop (can. 320§2) and have the same ordinary power and the same obligations as the residential bishop (can. 323§1). ) of which they wear the habit and the liturgical insignia (can. 325) even if they are deprived of the episcopal character.

12) The other Abbots and superiors of clerical religions exempt, although without jurisdiction over a territory, have jurisdiction over persons (their own subjects) independently of the diocesan Bishop. They are therefore Ordinaries, even if they are not local Ordinaries (can. 198). In this case too, the criterion for participating in the Council is jurisdiction and not the episcopal order.

13) Considering that this position refuses the material succession on the episcopal seats, admitted on the contrary by the sedevacantism 'formaliter' but not 'materialiter' of Father Guérard des Lauriers.

14) As I have already proved elsewhere (F. RICOSSA, *Les consecrations épiscopales*, CLS Verrua Savoia 1997) the Church teaches that it is not through the intermediary of the Consecration but only through the Pope that the Bishop receives jurisdiction from God, even if Vatican II teaches the contrary. There is no point in objecting against this doctrine repeatedly taught by the ordinary magisterium, giving historical examples of episcopal elections (and consecrations) during the vacancy of the see. These elections only demonstrate the non-illegality - in the event of a vacant seat, for example - of episcopal consecrations, but do not demonstrate that the elected officials enjoyed episcopal jurisdiction, that they did not, in fact, receive with the confirmation of their canonical election, that of the Pope. This does not prevent them from having believed in good faith to have jurisdiction already before the papal confirmation, given that the doctrine that we defend (according to which episcopal jurisdiction comes from the Pope and not from consecration) was clarified by the magisterium at periods subsequent to these historical facts, while it was still being discussed at the Council of Trent. I would point out, among other things, that Cajetan's doctrine on this subject - in this too, a faithful disciple of Saint Thomas - is the one we have just recalled (cf. no. 267).

15) Journet concludes by referring to the Dictionary of Catholic Theology, under the heading Election of the popes, for “a historical exposition of the various conditions under which the popes were elected”. I take this opportunity to note how disappointing the DTC is on the issue we are dealing with (and this is not a unique case). The editor of the column “election of the popes” limits himself to a historical exposition, on the other hand, omitting the theological and dogmatic points of view which are much more important: a point of view which has misled - by omission - many readers and researchers.

16) Camille Card. MAZZELLA, *De Religione et Ecclesia, Prælectiones Scolastico-Dogmaticæ* , Roma 1880. I thank Monsignor Sanborn who pointed out this quote to me years ago (whereas it is my fault for the errors in the translation).

17) Cf. SAINT PIE X, *EP Ex quo nono* , 12/26/1910, Ds 3555, where the opposite error professed by the Eastern schismatics is condemned. Recently Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, on the other hand denied that the Church is a monarchy.

18) This was the case - among others - of the “seer” of Palmar de Troya, Clemente Dominguez, who would have been elected Pope directly by Heaven after the death of Paul VI.

19) For example the publisher Delacroix who published the “Visions of the Venerable Elisabeth Canori Mora on the intervention of Saint Peter and Saint Paul at the end of time” and who presents the book as a confirmation of the conclusions of the book of Father Paladino, *The Eclipsed Church?* , published by the same publisher, where allusion is made (p. 274) to these visions and other prophecies.

20) To be complete, I report the answer that Bishop Sanborn gives to the sedevacantists who - implicitly or explicitly - consider, on the other hand, as possible the solution of the Conclave: “Q. Why is complete sedevacantism not viable?

A. Because it deprives the Church of the means of electing a legitimate successor of Saint Peter. It fundamentally destroys the apostolicity of the Church.

The complete sedevacantists try to solve the problem of apostolic succession in two ways. The first is conclavism. They argue that the Church is a society that has the inherent right to elect its own leaders. Therefore the small remnant of the faithful could come together and elect a Pope. Assuming that such a task can be completed, it raises several issues. First: who would be legally designated to vote? How would these voters be legally designated? Second: in the name of what principle could one oblige Catholics to recognize as legitimate successor of Saint Peter the one who would win such an election? Conclavism is in fact only an elegant euphemism to designate the reign of anarchy where it is the fiercest who lead the pack. The Catholic Church is not a pack, but a divinely constituted society governed by its own rules and its own laws. Thirdly, and this is the most, we cannot go from the natural right of men to choose leaders, to the right to elect a Pope. The Church is not a natural institution in the same way as a civil society. Members of the Catholic Church have no natural right to appoint the Roman Pontiff. It was Christ himself who originally chose Saint Peter to be the Roman pontiff and the terms of appointment were then legally fixed ”. MGR DONALD J. SANBORN, *The Church is not a natural institution in the same way as a civil society. Members of the Catholic Church have no natural right to appoint the Roman Pontiff. It was Christ himself who originally chose Saint Peter to be the Roman pontiff and the terms of appointment were then legally fixed ”. MGR DONALD J. SANBORN, Explanation of the Thesis of Bishop Guérard des Lauriers* , 06/29/2002. Contact the author: Most Holy Trinity Seminary 2850 Parent Warren, Michigan 48092 USA; .

21) What we have said is not in contradiction with what Bishop Guérard des Lauriers wrote in the same interview published in issue n ° 13 of *Sodalitium*: “For lack of M. [that is to say of the legal person, therefore of the residential Bishops authorized to convene an imperfect General Council where the canonical monitions would be addressed to John Paul II], no canonical resolution ! Jesus alone will put the Church back in order, in and through the Triumph of His Mother. And it will be evident to all that salvation will come from on high ”(p. 33). This divine intervention will not indeed be contrary to the divine constitution of the Church as it was established by Jesus Himself. A return of the Bishops and / or of the “pope” materialiter to the public profession of the Faith would be (will be) moreover a miracle of such an extraordinary moral order that it would have to be put on the same level as the conversion of Saint Paul. . Under what circumstances will this happen, we do not know.



22) On the subject, the reader will be able to read with profit what Father Goupil sj wrote ( The Church , 5th ed., Laval 1946, pp. 48-49) and the commentary made by B. Lucien ( The current situation of authority in the Church , Brussels 1985, p. 103, n ° 132). See also F. Ricossa, L'abbé Paladino et la Thèse de Cassiciacum , Verrua Savoia, pp. 12-22).

23) B. LUCIEN, The current situation of authority in the Church. La Thèse de Cassiciacum , Brussels 1985, chap. XD SANBORN, De Papatu materiali , Verrua Savoia, 2001. The review Le sel de la terre contests, in its n ° 41, the demonstration given by Mgr Sanborn. We will come back to this issue in the next issue.

24) B. LUCIEN, op. cit. , p. 107.

Novusidtes L C

SSPX Maintstream

Psuedo-Traditionalist

SSPX Resistance

- Fr Chazal Opinion

Totalists

- Fr. Cekada Totalist
- Opinionist totalism
  - Conclavists
  - Mystical conclavist
- CMRI / Bp Dolan Totalism (Mainstream)
  - Homealoners

Thesis (Mainstream)

Estranged disciples of the thought of Bp Guerard