

A REFUTATION OF THE ARGUMENTS OF THE CLERGY OF ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT CHURCH

By Mr. Frankie Logue

It is in the spirit of fidelity to my baptismal vows, to the preservation and propagation of the Roman Catholic Religion, and to the immutable teachings of Our Holy Mother the Church that I offer the following considerations, entirely submitted to the future decisions of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and, in the mean-time, to the corrections and will of the clergy of the Roman Catholic Institute and of the Institute of the Mother of Good Counsel.

I - The Body and Soul of the Church and Membership thereof

According to the clergy of St. Gertrude the Great Church, the following syllogism applies to the current Crisis in the Church:

1. Heretics are not members of the Church.
2. Those who are not members of the Church cannot be her Head, nor designated to be so.
3. Bergoglio (Francis) is a heretic.
4. Therefore, Francis cannot be a true Pope, nor can he be validly elected to the Papacy.

This argument, however, falls into the *fallacy of division*, whereby the subject is divided from its qualifier. In reality, a *declared* heretic cannot be a true Pope, nor elected to the Papacy, but Bergoglio (Francis) is an *undeclared* heretic. Therefore, no conclusion is possible here. This argument simply does not apply.

That Francis is not a member of the Catholic Church *coram Deo* (before God), I concede as probable, inasmuch as he is probably pertinacious *in the factual order*. That Francis is not a member of the Catholic Church *coram Ecclesia* (before the Church; legally), I deny, since he is not pertinacious *in the legal order*. Let us recapitulate Catholic principles on membership in the Church: those who have received Catholic baptism are legally members of the Church, until they cease to be so through (1) pertinacious and notorious [public] heresy, (2) pertinacious and notorious schism, (3) pertinacious and notorious apostasy, (4) excommunication. In our current situation, whereby a legal declaration of the Church is lacking, and the Conciliar hierarchy functions within the legal organisation of the Catholic Church, one cannot presume *legal pertinacity* — nor, therefore, its legal effects.

So, in a word — this argument does not hold, as Francis is not legally pertinacious, and has not legally been separated from the Catholic Church, even if his actual membership in it in the eyes of God is highly doubtful.

Furthermore, the conclusion drawn from this argument, namely that anyone can set themselves up as judge and jury to condemn any man to no longer be a legal member of the Church, and to legally declare their office vacant, as if they themselves were the Legate of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is extraordinarily dangerous, and warned against by theologians, such as John of St. Thomas:

*“[I]ndeed, a great confusion in the Church would follow, if it was allowed that the admonition is made by a **private man**, and that the manifestation of this heresy having been made without being declared by the Church and proclaimed to all, in order that they avoid the Pontiff, that all should be required to avoid; for a **heresy of the Pope cannot be public for all the faithful on the report of a few**, and this report, not being legal, does not require that all believe it and avoid the Pontiff; and therefore as the Church proclaims him legally elected by legally designating him for all, it is necessary that she deposes him by declaring and proclaiming him as a heretic to be avoided.”*

The **proper** conclusion that must be drawn in the face of an imposition of a false religion is that no one can force us to abandon or diminish our Catholic Faith, that the men imposing this false religion of Vatican II have absolutely no authority to do so, but continue to materially occupy their Sees until converted or deposed. We pay them no heed, but we do not intend to judge all the Sees of the world to be legally vacant. The Church is not a mob.

II - The Election of Heretics to the Papacy

The clergy of SGG further affirm that, since Francis is a heretic, he cannot be elected to the Papacy, quoting in their stead various canonists who affirm that the election of a heretic would be invalid. Let us remember, however, that canonists speak as just that — *canonists* — and therefore discuss those who are legally declared heretics, rather than undeclared heretics who are legal members of the Catholic Church. The election to the Papacy of a Lutheran, for example, would be invalid, but everyone knows that the situation of Francis is *not* the same as a Lutheran. Furthermore, Pope Pius XII *remitted* what would be the legal effects of undeclared heresy in his *Vacantis Apostolicae Sedis*, when he said that any excommunication or interdict would not be an impediment either to the active (electing) or the passive (being elected) power of election.

As well as this, we must not treat this as a certain Catholic doctrine, for it has not been decided by the Magisterium of the Church, and has even been disputed by theologians. Fr. Passerini, O.P. was the Vicar General of the Dominican Order in the 17th century, and wrote an entire treatise on the election of the Sovereign Pontiff, in which he affirms:

*“The election of a heretic is **not**, by Divine law, invalid by that very fact, but it may be made invalid, if the elect is not willing to be corrected. Wherefore, to invalidate such an election, **the decision of the Church is necessary.**”*¹

So we can see that this is not a certain doctrine by which we may draw the massive conclusion that all the Sees of the world are both formally and materially vacant, but rather, just a probable opinion. One may not draw certainty from probability.

III - The Acceptance of an Election

The clergy of SGG affirm that he who is able to be elected is necessarily able to accept the Pontificate. However, this affirmation is contrary to common sense and Canon Law. Canon 219 of the 1917 Code tells us that *“The Roman Pontiff, legitimately elected, immediately upon accepting the election, obtains by divine law the full power of supreme jurisdiction”*²; despite being cited by the clergy of SGG in favour of their argument, it actually refutes them, since it affirms that he who is designated to the Papacy receives the full power of supreme jurisdiction *upon accepting the election*, and acceptance which we wait for *before* considering him to be the Pope.

The Papacy is a *gratia gratis data*, a grace freely given: to accept it is a human act which requires knowledge and consent. An election done through fear and force, for example, is invalid. Pope Pius XII further lays out Catholic theology on the matter:

*“Even if a layman were elected pope, he could accept the election only if he were fit for ordination and willing to be ordained. But the power to teach and govern, as well as the divine gift of infallibility, would be granted to him from the very moment of his acceptance, even before his ordination.”*³

¹ “Electio haeretici non est de iure divino ipso facto irrita, licet sit irritanda, si electus nolit corrigi. Unde ad talem electionem irritandam, necessaria est Ecclesiae sententia.” [Passerini OP, Tractatus de Electione Summi Pontificis, Cap. XXXII n. 6]

² 1917 Code of Canon Law, Canon 219

³ Address of Pope Pius XII to the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, October 5, 1957.

The Holy Father therefore points out that to *accept* the election is something distinct to *being elected*. If we were to believe the assertions of the clergy of SGG, the election of a layman unfit for ordination would simply be invalid: but Pius XII distinguishes for us — he would be elected to the Papacy, but not able to accept the election.

IV - Apostolic Succession

The clergy of SGG affirm in their article that what makes Apostolic Succession to be formal is the legal designation to the See (as opposed to an illegal designation coming from outside the Church of Christ, as in the case of the Greek Schismatics). This assertion, however, is contrary to the teachings of Sts. Antoninus of Florence and Robert Bellarmine, both of whom affirm that **authority** is the form of the Papacy (and, therefore, of Apostolic Succession).⁴ What is called *legitimate* material succession is that legal designation to a See by him who has the right and power of designation, whereas *illegitimate* material succession (as in the case of the Greek Schismatics) is that illegal possession of a See without any legal designation to it whatsoever.

The clergy of SGG rightly affirm that Francis cannot be a true Successor of the Apostles, since he lacks the Apostolic Faith. Indeed, the Thesis of Cassiacum does not affirm him to be such. However, the Apostolicity of the Church consists of the Apostolicity of *Faith* and of *Succession*. She must have both the same Faith and the same line of legitimate successors. It is solely in the latter sense that the Apostolicity of the Church is preserved in the Novus Ordo, whereas the Faith is preserved in traditionalists. The Apostolicity of the Church is indeed a question that is unresolvable in the totalist system.

It is well-established that the Church must have *both* formal *and* material succession at all times. The Church must enjoy a material unity, in order that it be a single moral body, one and unique, from the time of St. Peter until the second coming of Our Lord. This material unity requires that there be an uninterrupted line of successors legally designated to receive Authority.

The Church must also enjoy a *formal* unity, which requires formal succession. However, although material succession must be physical, formal succession, on the contrary, may be moral without being physical. A Pope having died, for example, does not compromise the continuity of the Church or of the Papacy, since the Church intends to elect a new Pontiff and retains the ability to do so (indeed, St. Antoninus, O.P. says that this in this power of election consists the Papacy during vacancies of the

⁴ “... quantum ad jurisdictionem, quod est quasi formale in papatu...” St. Antoninus, *Summa Theologica*, Pars III n. 3

Holy See). So the Church must always either have a Pope or the ability to elect one (cf. Cajetan, O.P.) So this succession from one Pope to another is moral; it would be physical if one Pope designated his successor, for example.

Totalism is thereby rendered ineffectual, since either (1) the Church lacks the ability to elect a Pope, which would compromise her Apostolicity, or (2) the Church retains the ability to do so, but does not wish to, which similarly compromises her Apostolicity.

The Thesis of Cassiciacum solves this problem by maintaining that the Apostolic See is occupied, that material continuity is preserved (which continuity totalism is unable to explain) but that the elect is impeded from receiving Authority – maintaining, however, the moral continuity of formal succession.

V - White smoke in Cincinnati?

The clergy of SGG then go on to make certain unfounded claims regarding *designation*, which is the power of election to a particular See. They:

1. Claim that traditional clergy have designation;
2. Claim that, because we affirm that the Novus Ordo has the power of election, that it has the power of excommunication;
3. Mix up the distinction between the *Sessio* and the *Missio* of the Church.

The claim of the clergy of SGG that traditional clergy have designation is particularly dangerous, since it would imply that they have the power of election. One would certainly hope that another ‘conclave’ is not around the corner, since such a gathering would certainly be schismatic, and would give rise to a sect. Let us not see any white smoke in Cincinnati.

The assertion of the Thesis of Cassiciacum that the Novus Ordo has the power of election does indeed carry with it that the Novus Ordo has the power to *remove* designation, or the power of ‘non-designation’, in the words of the clergy of SGG. This is **not**, however, equivalent to excommunication, any more than taking away the title of President-elect in the month of December (before his inauguration) would be equivalent to removing his US citizenship.

Finally, there seems to be a misunderstanding regarding the *Sessio*-*Missio* distinction. The *Sessio Ecclesiae* regards the legal structure of the Church, the act of ‘sitting’, or of occupying, the Apostolic See and the Sees around the world, and the *Missio Ecclesiae* regards the Mission of the Church, namely that of preaching the Faith, administering Catholic sacraments and practicing Catholic discipline.

The Thesis of Cassiciacum affirms that the *Missio* is continued by traditional clergy all throughout the world, whereas the *Sessio* is continued by the Novus Ordo. That the *Sessio* is continued by the Novus Ordo does **not** mean that traditional clergy are somehow not continuing the Mission of the Church.

VI - Where is the Church?

The clergy of SGG make continual reference to the existence of a Novus Ordo Church, as if it were a separate organisation from the Catholic Church. In that case, I ask: when did this separation take place? 1958? 1963? 1965? 1969? And furthermore, I echo the question of Bishop Sanborn: why do you not therefore require an abjuration of error from those coming from the Novus Ordo?

In reality, there is no Novus Ordo Church or Conciliar Church. There is the Catholic Church, whose Sees are materially occupied by those who lack Authority owing to their objective intention to impose a false religion upon the faithful.

If there indeed is a legal separation between the Novus Ordo and the Catholic Church: **where is the Catholic hierarchy? Where is ordinary jurisdiction, or the ability to recover it?** The totalist position implies the **extinguishment** of the Catholic Church, whose hierarchy, they would have us believe, has completely disappeared off the face of the Earth, with no possibility of recovering it (unless we are to submit to 'Pope' Michael).

VII - Conclusion

Let us conclude by restating the Thesis of Cassiciacum: Francis was validly elected by a conclave; but the elect (Francis), in not having, in a habitual manner, the intention to realise the Good-End of the Church, places an impediment in himself to receiving the Authority of Christ. As long as said impediment remains, Francis remains the elect, but he does not have Authority over the Church. That is to say — Francis is pope materially, but not formally.

Habemus papam materialiter, sed non formaliter.

Dedicated to Our Blessed Lady on the Vigil of her Immaculate Conception +
Frankie Alphonsus Gallagher Logue
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