Editor's note: This piece, originally written in November 2011, is a companion to the article: "But He Didn't Preach Explicit Heresy? Francis' Scandalous Interfaith Video." Catholics are rightly disturbed by Francis' latest interfaith film. But we cannot forget that pan-religious activity was encouraged by all the Conciliar popes, including Pope Francis' immediate predecessor. To give just one instance, interfaith orientation was on full display during the Pontificate of the allegedly conservative Pope Benedict XVI. See my report below from when I attended Pope Benedict's pan-religious gathering at Assisi in 2011. This was the type of activity that furthered laid the groundwork for Pope Francis' bolder approach.

A pan-religious prayer meeting for peace was held at Assisi on October 27, 2011. I traveled to Assisi to cover the event.

The ceremonies started at St. Mary of the Angels Basilica. Members of various world religions had been invited by Pope Benedict to attend the gathering, which marked the 25th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's first Assisi meeting in 1986.

There are Catholics throughout the world greatly disturbed by these pan-religious gatherings, as these events place the one true Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ on the same level as false creeds, something the Popes of the past, throughout the entirety of Church history, never permitted.

However, since Vatican II and the new ecumenism it fostered, the pan-religious spirit is the trend of the moment, with disastrous consequences. Not only does it foster religious indifferentism — a deadly heresy condemned by Pope Leo XII, Pius VII, Blessed Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII — it also opens the door for false gods to be invoked inside Catholic churches, as was the case at the latest Assisi assembly in October.

The day consisted of a morning ceremony held inside the Church of Saint Mary of the Angels, and an afternoon ceremony held in the courtyards immediately outside the basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi.

The group consisted of the Pope, virtually all the Cardinals of the Roman Curia, representatives from the Eastern Orthodox, Anglicans, and various Protestants. The delegates from the various world religions numbered around 300. Yet the vast majority of religions represented were not even Christian by any name, but were: Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Sikhism, Baha'ism, Confucianism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Shintoism, Mandaeism, and "Traditional Religions" such as those found in Africa, America and India.

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At the morning event at Saint Mary of the Angels, various speakers from the different world religions addressed the group with what were called "Testimonies of Peace". This was done on a special platform erected in the sanctuary inside Saint Mary of the Angels.

Speakers included Dr. Olav Fyske, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and Rabbi David Rosen, International Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee. An Armenian Orthodox Metropolitan, a Buddhist, and a Muslim each took a turn giving their "Peace" testimony — a tedious procedure that seemed to go on much longer than it actually did. An agnostic named Professor Julia Kresteva from France was also invited. From the podium inside the Church, she sang the praises of humanism — including feminism — and called for believers and non-believers to "listen and learn."

The crowning scandal of the morning came from the invocation of false gods inside the church.

Nigeria's Professor Wande Abimbola, representative of the African Yoruba religion, took to the pulpit. As even the Associated Press reported, Abimbola "sang a prayer and shook a percussion instrument as he told the delegates that peace can only come with greater respect for indigenous religions. 'We must always remember that our own religion, along with the religions practiced by other people, are valid and precious in the eyes of the Almighty, who created all of us with such plural and different ways of life and belief systems,' he said."

Abimola claimed that all the religions represented at Assisi "are valid and precious in the eyes of the Almighty, who created all of us with such plural and different ways of life and belief systems". The hymn he chanted was in honor of the god Ifa and his wife Olukum.

It must be noted that this Yoruba invocation did not come as a surprise. It was not something sprung on the Pope and the delegates without warning. Abimbola's entire speech and prayer were already printed in the full color "Assisi 2011" booklet that was part of the official press kit handed out to journalists prior to the event (I got my booklet on October 26). All participants at the event on stage and in the audience likewise had the book that contained Abimola's pagan invocation, and his encouragement to religious indifferentism.

Abimbola was not the only one to invoke strange gods while standing in the sanctuary of the basilica.

Hindu Acharya Shri Shrivatsa Goswami, from the Radhararamana Temple in India, likewise followed suit, opening his "Testimony of Peace" with a prayer to one of Hinduism's false gods: "O infinite bodied Lord! I see YOU in each hand and feet, in each eye and head, in

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each name and being. I bow down to YOU in all of them." He also trumpeted religious indifferentism stating, "the truth is one", but "announced in different ways."

This too was contained in the official Assisi 2011 booklet issued to all members of the press and delegates. The Hindu closed with an ad lib not included in the booklet, however, when he uttered the pantheistic prayer, "I bow and revere god in each of you."

Thus false gods were invoked in Saint Mary of the Angels church, a grave sin against the First Commandment carried out as part of the Assisi III celebration.

"All the invocations of the pagans are hateful to God because all their gods are devils." Saint Francis Xavier wrote these words to Saint Ignatius about the pagan religion of Hinduism. Francis Xavier, writing from India at the time, merely restates the truth from the infallible Sacred Scriptures: "The gods of the gentiles are devils". (Psalm 95:5) This immutable truth was trampled under foot at the latest Assisi gathering.

The new pan-religious "Spirit of Assisi", as it has come to be called, is a counterfeit peace plan that eclipses the true peace plan of Our Lady of Fatima.

Peace will not come from desecrating Catholic churches, using the Catholic sanctuary as a platform for members of pagan religions to invoke their false gods. On the contrary, such activity will only result in punishment.

And if war is a punishment for sin, as Our Lady of Fatima told us, then we can only expect disaster from these so-called "peace" initiatives that not only flout the Peace Plan given by Our Lady of Fatima, but defy the unchangeable doctrine of the Church for centuries, and defy the First Commandment itself.

Let us renew our commitment to "pray a great deal for the Holy Father" as the Fatima Message instructs us, so that he and all of the leaders of the Curia may abandon this counterfeit peace plan that only brings scandal and destruction. We continue to work and pray that the Holy Father, in union with the world's Catholic bishops, consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary as She requested, which is the only means by which Heaven promised to bring true peace to the world.

Let us also offer extra prayers of reparation for what can only be described as the desecration of the Church of Saint Mary of the Angels by the invocation of false gods by pagan leaders chanted inside the church's sanctuary.

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