

The very essence of Modernism is to deny what the Modernist appears to be affirming. Doubletalk is the language of Modernist theology.

A classic example of this Modernist deception is a recent article by Thomas Rausch, SJ which appeared in *Civiltà Cattolica*, the supposedly authoritative pontifical Jesuit magazine whose contents are vetted by the Vatican. The title alone alerts the attentive reader that another Modernist con job is in the offing: “Doctrine at the service of the pastoral mission of the Church.”

Of course, the pastoral mission of the Church is at the service of doctrine, not the other way around, for it is doctrine — that is, the Truth — that makes us free. The pastoral mission launched for all time by Christ Himself with the divine commission is precisely to free the lost soul from the darkness of error by preaching the truth — Catholic doctrine and dogma — not to accommodate those in darkness or, to allude to the preposterous theme of Chapter 8 of *Amoris Laetitia*, “integrate weakness” in the Church.

In typical Modernist fashion, Rausch affirms a Catholic truth in order to deny it throughout the rest of the article. He quotes Saint Vincent of Lerins for the fundamental Catholic truth that legitimate development of Catholic doctrine leaves intact “*the same doctrine, the same meaning and the same import*” — precisely as the [First Vatican Council](#) affirmed — and that in the course of its legitimate development, meaning only its fuller expression, doctrine “*becom[es] firmer over the years, more ample in the course of time, more exalted as it advances in age.*” That is, there is no *change* in doctrine, either in content or understanding, but only strengthening and growth of expression. Hence St. Vincent’s famous formula: “We hold that faith which has been believed *everywhere, always, by all.*” There is no “God of surprises” in the thought of St. Vincent nor in the tradition of the Church.

Having affirmed this truth, however, Rausch promptly denies it, quoting his fellow Modernist Jesuit, Fr. Spadaro, for the following proposition:

“St. Vincent of Lèrins makes a comparison between the biological development of man and the transmission from one era to another of the depositum fidei [deposit of faith], which grows and is strengthened with time. Here, *human self-understanding changes with time* and, so too is human consciousness deepened. In this regard we could think of the time when slavery was considered acceptable, or the death penalty was applied without question. So, too, this is how we grow in the understanding of the truth. Exegetes and theologians help the Church to mature in her own judgment. The other sciences and their development also help the Church in its growth in understanding. There are

secondary ecclesiastical rules and precepts that at one time were effective, but now they have lost their value and meaning. The view that the Church's teaching is a monolith to defend without nuance or *different understandings* is wrong."

Note the stealthy non-sequitur smuggled in via the italicized phrases: from St. Vincent's biological analogy regarding the growth and development of the *same, unchanging* doctrine in the Church, Rausch (citing only his fellow Modernist for authority) leaps to the conclusion that just as "*human self-understanding changes* with time" so the Church's teaching is subject over time to "*different understandings*." Of course, that is exactly the opposite of what Rausch affirmed only a few lines earlier: i.e., St. Vincent's insistence on "the *same* doctrine, the *same* meaning and the *same* import" down through the ages. God does not change His understanding of the truth, and neither does the Church change her understanding of faith and morals.

The references to slavery and the death penalty are red herrings. [The Church has always condemned chattel slavery](#) (the purported ownership of another human being and control over his natural right to marry and have children) while tolerating certain forms of bonded servitude in practice, without any "change" in the "understanding" of doctrine.

As for the death penalty, the Church has never changed her teaching on its moral legitimacy in appropriate cases. As even the new Catechism [states](#) concerning the Fifth Commandment: "Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, *the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty*, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor."

No matter what Francis thinks to the contrary, he cannot alter (to quote St. Vincent) what in the Church has "been believed *everywhere, always, by all*" regarding capital punishment; he cannot now simply declare, contrary to all of Tradition, that capital punishment violates the Fifth Commandment. He may pronounce those words, as he has in fact done, but they cannot change a constant teaching based on Revelation itself. The words spoken are merely the errant opinion of one Pope; [and this is not the first time](#) an outlier Pope has expressed an errant opinion.

The Catechism's further statement that the cases in which the death penalty would be appropriate "are very rare, if not practically nonexistent" is not a constant teaching of the Church or a change in doctrine but merely a factual contention based on an opinion concerning current penal conditions: "Today, in fact, as a consequence of the possibilities which the state has for effectively preventing crime," etc. The Church's doctrine does not

involve surveys of worldwide penal conditions and “possibilities... for effectively preventing crime,” as to which the Magisterium has no competence.

Thus, having begun by appearing to affirm, quoting St. Vincent, that doctrine and dogma do not change, Rausch ends by affirming exactly the opposite: “The rule of faith in its essence does not change, but the expressions of the doctrine *and its spontaneous understanding marked by the culture do change*, and for this reason the magisterium and the councils must ensure the correct formulation of the faith.”

That “the spontaneous understanding” of doctrine as “marked by the culture” changes over time, and must be “corrected” by “the magisterium and the councils” over time to reflect these supposed changes in understanding, is pure Modernism. With this notion, to quote Saint Pius X in his [landmark encyclical](#) on the errors of the Modernists, “the way is open to the intrinsic *evolution* of dogma. An immense collection of sophisms this, that ruins and destroys all religion.”

But, no matter what Francis’ subjective intentions may be, the ruination and destruction of all religion appears to be precisely the program of this pontificate, with its constant demagogic attacks on “rigorism” and “[monolithic](#)” doctrine and its relentless attempt to loosen the Church’s teaching and pastoral practice concerning sexual immorality. As Francis declared in an address quoted by Rausch:

“Christian doctrine is not a closed system, incapable of raising questions, *doubts*, inquiries, but is living, is able to *unsettle*, is able to enliven. It has a face that is supple, a body that moves and develops, flesh that is tender: Christian doctrine is called Jesus Christ.”

Actually, no. Christian doctrine is not the literal flesh of Christ, which grew and changed as the Christ child became a man, suffered and died and then rose from the dead, but rather the Word Incarnate, which never changes and has existed from all eternity, even before it became Incarnate in the human nature the Son assumed:

“In the *beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. *The same was in the beginning with God* (John 1:2).”

But here, sad to say, we have more Modernist double-talk from another Jesuit, the one who sits on the Chair of Peter. The one who has surrounded himself with the likes of Rausch and

Spadaro. The one who has, incredibly enough, commenced “the final battle between the Lord and the kingdom of Satan,” the battle against marriage and family [of which Sister Lucia warned us](#) and which is now being carried forward under the upside down slogan of “Doctrine at the service of the pastoral mission of the Church.”

May God defend His Holy Church against this onslaught, the likes of which she has not witnessed in 2,000 years.