In a new interview released Wednesday by the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX), Fr. Davide Pagliarani, the Society's new Superior General as of last July, fielded a wide range of questions in his first English-language interview conducted by Angelus Press. Fr. Pagliarani recently visited the United States for the first time as Superior General in order to attend the Prior's Meeting held in Winona, Minnesota, as well as to visit the Society's U.S. seminary in Dillwyn, Virginia.

In this new interview (video and full transcript below), Fr. Pagliarani is asked about such issues as the present challenges and opportunities for Tradition, current signs of growth for the Society throughout the world, the importance of seminaries and vocations, and the primary concerns facing traditional Catholic families today. Additionally, he was asked to comment on Pope Francis' recent suppression of the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei and to offer a word of encouragement for the faithful as the crisis in the Church persists.

Regarding the suppression of Ecclesia Dei, he opined that "it is not our task to first see what is going to be the future of the different communities Ecclesia Dei. We pray for them. If we can help them, we are here. But I think it will be prudent to not say anything else about the future." A very reasonable and charitable position, in the opinion of this writer.

As for a word of encouragement, Fr. Pagliarani observed, "The main danger for our faithful and even for the priests nowadays is to fall into discouragement. So I think it's time to remind us, and to remind them, that the more you get the impression that the situation is hopeless the more the moment of the victory is approaching."

Fr. Davide Pagliarani strikes this writer as a humble and holy man who clearly understands the preeminence of doctrinal purity and precision, while at the same time being full of paternal charity and solicitude. Regarding the Society's relations with Rome, his position appears at once both respectful yet duly reserved. He is clearly not anxious or "in a hurry" to obtain canonical recognition for the Society if such would require an acceptance of untenable positions. Instead, as he stated, "we will leave the last word to Divine Providence as usual."

Let us pray that Our Lord and Our Lady will bless the labors of Fr. Pagliarani and the SSPX at large with abundant good fruit in the coming years.

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Fr. Davide Pagliarani visited the United States for the first time since becoming

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Superior General of the Society of St. Pius X. Although he was available only for canonical visits during the Prior's Meeting in Winona — and additional meetings at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary — Angelus Press was able to ask him some questions for his first ever English-speaking interview.

You are relatively unknown in the English-speaking world beyond your recent election as Superior General. Can you introduce yourself?

Actually, I think this is not just a problem of the English-speaking countries. To give an example, a few weeks back in Paris, a priest asked me my name. So it's always a bit embarrassing to say I'm the new Superior General – so I was a bit embarrassed but he was embarrassed as well. Yes, actually I spent most of my time as a priest either in Italy or in the Far East in Singapore for three years and recently in the far south in Argentina for almost seven years – until last July.

You are the fourth Superior General of the Society of St. Pius X. What are the challenges and opportunities for Tradition in 2019?

I think our opportunity and our task as well, our duty, is to keep the treasure we have, to appreciate it as it merits – our Faith, the Holy Mass. I think it's important that this treasure is for us a living treasure, like the living water of the Samaritan woman. This is so important. We need more and more I think to appreciate this treasure with a prayerful life and a life were full of fervor – spiritual fervor. Yes. Maybe we need to rekindle once in a while, and this year can be the occasion to rekindle – we are preparing for the Jubilee of the Society [of St. Pius X] – to rekindle in our spiritual life this attachment this deep attachment to this treasure.

It has barely been six months since your election. Have you been traveling much?

Yes, actually I'm not traveling a lot because it is a wish of the Chapter, of all the superiors, that the Superior General remains at the General House as much as possible in order to be always available for the different needs of the Society – and joinable by the different priests or superiors who are wishing to talk to him. My duty is a duty of fidelity to the spirit of the Founder – Archbishop Lefebvre. My first duty is to do my best in order to keep (even if the situation is very different) to keep the spirit and teaching that the founder entrusted to the Society.

Are there signs of growth that you can share? For example: new priories or missions in the Society?

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Right now there are everywhere signs of growth, not only in the States but everywhere! Which is on the one hand a sign of blessing, we're blessed by that. During the last few years more and more Catholics who are getting aware of the crisis of the Church, and little by little they are getting aware of as well of their causes. So this is a quite interesting point for us – we have to follow it. We have to help them. But at the same time we cannot go everywhere, we cannot go everywhere. We need to take care of our priests. And we still have vocations, but our priests they need time to settle, they need time to share the community life, which is a very important part of our statutes and of our duties. So, we will do our best to go where Providence is calling us but at the same time first of all we can't forget it we have to take care of our priests.

As a former Seminary Rector, can you speak about the importance of seminaries and vocations, especially in the modern world?

Our seminaries are the heart of the Society [of St. Pius X]. The Society is built on its seminaries, and it exists because of its seminaries. So the Church as well doesn't need anything else but holy priests. So it is impossible to find out a better way to serve the Church. Through our seminaries we are cooperating to the goal of the universal Church. That was the great intuition of the Council of Trent, the great intuition of Bishop Lefebvre. And the more this great ideal of the priesthood is going down, is losing, the more I think it's important our fidelity to this task – which is our mission as well.

For you, what are the main concerns for traditional Catholic families today?

The main concern, the main concern of Catholic family today is the same we have as priests – the soul of their children. The world is doing its best in order to deceive them. So all the parents are concerned about that, as we are concerned as well. I think we have to teach the children together with the parents. And the parents have to teach their children together with the priests. Teach them all the virtues that the children cannot learn elsewhere: Self-denial, purity, chastity, charity. But it will work if in the families, at home, in the parish, not only they will receive the teaching but they will perceive their parents and the priests living what they preach. It works like osmosis – if really the parents they have this great ideal to form, to prepare saints, with the grace of God, it will work. But it will work if at home the children they can notice in their parents the spirit of sacrifice – which is the perfume of the cross.

Can you comment at all on the news regarding the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei?

Yes, I think we can make so far a large commentary. [It] wouldn't be prudent. But I think

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what is interesting in the last Motu Proprio concerning the Ecclesia Dei… It emphasized that the main issues which is still there, outstanding, as an outstanding issue, is a doctrinal one. And it is true. And this doctrinal deal, doctrinal issue, it is an issue concerning the Society of St. Pius X. I think in its sense, in this perspective, things are getting clearer, more clear to us – and to them, and to everybody. But I think it is not our task to first see what is going to be the future of the different communities Ecclesia Dei. We pray for them. If we can help them, we are here. But I think it will be prudent to not say anything else about the future. We will see. We will observe. And we will leave the last word to Divine Providence as usual.

At times, the world and the Church both seem crazy. Could you offer a few words of hope and encouragement for the traditional Catholics today?

The main danger for our faithful and even for the priests nowadays is to fall into discouragement. So I think it's time to remind us, and to remind them, that the more you get the impression that the situation is hopeless the more the moment of the victory is approaching. St. Pius X used to say this in order to encourage people. And the density, the present density of the darkness is functional to the shining of the truth when the moment of the triumph of the truth will come. It is important for us to keep this supernatural sight. Whatever is going on today will be used by God in order to show a deeper, a greater, a more shining more supernatural triumph of His Church and of the Truth.

Besides prayerful and monetary support, what do you see as the best way that lay faithful can assist the priests in their work?

Yes, the church is a family is a big family and the Society [of St. Pius X] as a work of the church is a family as well – a big family. And inside a family you share everything. The best way the faithful they can share everything with the priest, is to give to give them their moral support – to share their joys and their concern, because the joys and the concern of the priest are the joys and the concern of Our Lord. This proximity is the best way to fulfill this great ideal of the union between faithful and priests.

What is your impression of the United States District so far?

United States is one of these countries when as soon as you arrive feel at home. What is impressing me the most is the number of the faithful, but even more their simplicity and their generosity. And I find the same simplicity in same generosity in the priests here in the US. I think what the faithful they show is the reflect is reflecting what the priests are teaching them.

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You have spent many years in different countries and missions. Do you have a favorite story or two from your apostolic work?

Yes, what in general what impressed me the most during my priesthood, the years of my priesthood, is the very fact that having worked in different countries, in very different situations – between Asia, South America, Italy, in the missions, or as a District Superior, Rector of the Seminary… in every different situation the grace of God is working always and everywhere according to some rules, which are universal. Of course we know that – I'm not telling you anything new. But when you get this experience personally you are impressed. This is the proof that the Gospel, the law of the Gospel, the Sacraments, the Church is for everybody and there is nothing else which can make the unity among people who are so different [than] each other. This is really amazing. You can't explain this on a natural basis. The work of God, the grace of God, is behind.

Yes, I experienced several times on a personal basis… That before difficult situation striving to find a solution, fighting to find a solution, which is not coming – the solution came after I stopped to worry and I entrusted everything to the Will of God. It's not always easy to do that but I experienced several times – which is the law of the Cross, and I would say the law of the full confidence in God.

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