Anticipation and Concern

Anticipation is growing that A.D. 2020 could be the year in which the long-awaited Apostolic Constitution concerning the "reform" of the Roman Curia[1] is finally released. During his 2019 Christmas Address to the Roman Curia (more on this later), Pope Francis made reference to "the new Apostolic Constitution being prepared", entitled *Praedicate Evangelium* (Preach the Gospel), a document which has been in the works for several years and whose contents raise a number of concerns.

Vatican correspondent Edward Pentin reported for the *National Catholic Register* last May:

> "According to a draft of a new constitution for the Roman Curia, almost all Vatican departments will become known as 'dicasteries,' and *the newly named Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith will shift from being the second- to the third-most important Vatican department.*
>
> The draft places new and significant emphasis on mission and charitable works as the Vatican's key duties. It also reveals a shift toward *greater authority for episcopal conferences*, one which modifies the relationship between Curial officials, bishops and the Pope as part of *a push toward decentralization*.
>
> The Roman Curia, *based on the 'ecclesiology of Vatican II,'* exercises its service to the bishops 'in respect to collegiality, synodality and subsidiarity due to the successors of the apostles,' the draft states." (Emphasis added)

Regarding the preeminence of evangelization over preserving doctrinal unity and integrity, Pentin explains that, according to the draft document, "the ancient Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, otherwise known as *Propaganda Fide*, responsible for missionary work and related activities, would be absorbed into a larger dicastery," namely, "a new Dicastery for Evangelization, second only to the Secretariat of State, which remains the most important Vatican department."

To be clear, no faithful Catholic would say that evangelization is unimportant or secondary, provided that by "evangelization" is meant *the proclamation of Christ as the only Savior of mankind* (cf. Acts 4:12) and *the necessity of repentance, faith, and Baptism in Him for salvation* (cf. Acts 2:38). The concern is that, for Pope Francis and his closest allies – including members of his "Council of Cardinals" who are heavily involved in this "reform" effort[2] – "evangelization" has little (if anything) to do with saving souls by converting them

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to Christ and His Church. Instead, it simply means *dialogue* – for the purpose of fostering a naturalistic human fraternity (case in point: Francis' "Document on Human Fraternity") – and thus has no real connection with the preservation and transmission of the Catholic Faith.

Vatican II Connection

For those who have been following the Francis pontificate closely over the past several years, it is clear that the aforementioned concern is well-founded. To give one recent example, Pope Francis told a group of high school students in Rome shortly before Christmas: "With a non-believer the last thing I have to do is try to convince him." What many have failed to grasp, however, is the following point made by renowned Church historian Professor Roberto de Mattei:

> "*The pontificate of Pope Francis* certainly represents a leap forward in the process of the Church's auto-demolition, *following the Second Vatican Council*. However, this is only a stage, the last one of this process: we could say that *it represents its ripe fruit*.
>
> The essence of the Second Vatican Council was the triumph of pastoral theology over doctrine, the transformation of pastoral theology into a theology of praxis, the application of the philosophy of Marxist practice to the life of the Church. For the Communists, the true philosopher is not Karl Marx, the Revolution's theorist, but Lenin who carried out the Revolution, proving Marx's thought. For Neo-Modernists, the true theologian is not Karl Rahner, the principal ideologue of the revolution in the Church, but Pope Francis, who is fulfilling this revolution, putting Rahner's thought into pastoral practice. *There is no rupture, therefore, between the Second Vatican Council and Pope Francis, but historical continuity. Pope Francis represents Vatican II in action*." (Address at the 2018 Catholic Identity Conference, emphasis added)

It is precisely a "leap forward" in the Conciliar Revolution that Pope Francis is pursuing in his reorganization of the Roman Curia, a restructuring that is in "historical continuity" with the already-substantial changes made under Pope Paul VI following the Council. In his book *False Friends of Fatima*, throughout which is chronicled the conflict between "the party of Tradition and the party of the innovators"[3] in relation to the Message of Fatima, CFN contributor Christopher Ferrara explains what transpired in the aftermath of Vatican II:

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> "In 1967-68, by order of Pope Paul VI in his apostolic constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*, the Roman Curia underwent is own 'reform' in a dramatic restructuring. The restructuring was actually designed and implemented by the then Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Jean-Marie Villot. The aim was to eliminate, as much as possible, what the party of the innovators would call 'the old monarchical model of the Church' in favor of the 'new model of collegiality.'
>
> *Before the Second Vatican Council, the Curia was indeed plainly structured as a monarchy.* The Pope was the Prefect of the Holy Office, while the Cardinal in charge of the day-to-day business of the Holy Office was the Pro-Prefect (second-in-command), reporting directly to the Pope. The other dicasteries were of lower rank and, while having their own authority and jurisdiction, were subordinate to the Holy Office, with the Holy Office directly under the Pope. *This arrangement was entirely in keeping with the Divine Constitution of the Church. The Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, was at the head of the chain of command over which he wielded his authority either directly or through the Holy Office.*
>
> Long before Gorbachev announced his program of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union, the Church underwent its own *perestroika* in the Vatican. Under the 'reform' engineered and carried out by Villot, the Holy Office was renamed, becoming the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) – the name 'Holy Office' being far too old-fashioned for the party of the innovators. Far more significant, however, *the renamed Holy Office lost its supreme position in the Curia. The Cardinal Secretary of State was placed above all the other Vatican dicasteries*, including the CDF. Worse, *the Pope was no longer Prefect of the CDF*, which would now be under a Cardinal Prefect organizationally subordinated to the Secretary of State. …
>
> The net result of this sweeping administrative 'reform' was to sever in practice, but not spiritually, the Pope's direct control over the daily governance of the Church. Under this bureaucratic rearrangement, Vatican ecclesiastical decisions would tend inevitably toward the pragmatic and the self-serving, rather than the requirements of truth and justice."[4] (Emphasis added)

The subordination of the Holy Office to the Secretariat of State carried with it a profound symbolic message: *spiritual concerns are now subordinate to temporal affairs*. It should come as no surprise, then, that a "pragmatic and self-serving" culture has come to dominate the Roman Curia – one that includes a "homosexual current in favor of subverting Catholic doctrine on homosexuality," according to Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò's explosive

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testimony. Tragically, the additional restructuring Pope Francis is now pursuing (e.g., further decentralization, more autonomy for bishops' conferences, less concern for doctrinal unity and integrity) will only makes things worse.

Background to Francis' "Reform"

In order to understand the significance of Francis' "reform" efforts, we need to briefly revisit the circumstances that immediately preceded and greatly contributed to his election.

Following the abdication of Pope Benedict XVI in February 2013, the theme of "reforming" the Roman Curia was at the forefront of many minds. In his book *Lost Shepherd*, Catholic journalist Philip Lawler sketches the background to this reforming thrust, recalling the 2012 "Vatileaks" scandal (revelations of financial and sexual corruption in the Vatican) which precipitated it (and no doubt contributed to Benedict's resignation) as well as the official meetings of cardinals prior to the 2013 conclave:

> "In the days leading up to a conclave, the world's cardinals, already assembled in Rome, meet in daily 'general congregations' that have two purposes. First, since there is no pope to make final decisions during the *sede vacante* period, the cardinals work together on the necessary business of the Holy See. Second, and more important, the cardinals exchange ideas about the needs of the Church – the needs to which the next pope will be asked to respond. …
>
> The [press] leaks from the daily congregations confirmed what Vatican-watchers already knew: that the cardinals were concerned about evangelization, about resolving the sex-abuse scandal and the troubles of the Vatican bank, and about the infighting and inefficiency that had been exposed in the Roman Curia [vis-à-vis the 'Vatileaks' scandal]."[5]

Enter Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the seemingly unassuming archbishop of Buenos Aires, who captivated his confreres with some stirring remarks during the March 9, 2013 general congregation, an address which "evidently made many cardinals think of Bergoglio as a potential pope," Lawler observes. "It made such a deep impression on Havana's Cardinal Jaime Ortega that after Bergoglio's election, he sought and received permission to make the talk public."[6]

Veteran Vaticanista Sandro Magister published the text of Bergoglio's brief remarks, entitled "Evangelizing the Peripheries", following the conclave. Here are some of the more

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consequential portions:

- "*The Church is called to come out from itself and to go to the peripheries*, not only geographical, but also existential: those of the mystery of sin, of suffering, of injustice, those of ignorance and of the absence of faith, those of thought, those of every form of misery."
- "*When the Church does not come out from itself to evangelize it becomes self-referential and gets sick* (one thinks of the woman hunched over upon herself in the Gospel). The evils that, in the passing of time, afflict the ecclesiastical institutions have a root in self-referentiality, in a sort of *theological narcissism*."
- "*The Church, when it is self-referential*, without realizing it thinks that it has its own light; it stops being the 'mysterium lunae' and *gives rise to that evil which is so grave, that of spiritual worldliness* (according to De Lubac, the worst evil into which the Church can fall): that of living to give glory to one another." (Emphasis added)

These brief remarks of then-Cardinal Bergoglio contain within them the seeds of his entire pontifical program, especially as it is articulated in his lengthy 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. In this seminal document, written in response to the 2012 Synod of Bishops on "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith" (over which Benedict XVI presided), Lawler concurs that "Francis offers not only a guide to the 'new evangelization' but also an outline of his plans for Church reform. In other words, the document is a blueprint for his pontificate."[7] And this deeply flawed "blueprint" is chalk full of grave dangers to the Faith.

Evangelii Gaudium: A Deeply Flawed Blueprint for "Reform"

This brings us back to Francis' 2019 Christmas Address to the Roman Curia, during which he explicitly linked "the aim of the current *reform*" (his emphasis) to *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG). After referring to the latter as "the most important pastoral document of the post-conciliar period,"[8] he went on to quote from arguably the document's most telling paragraph:

> "Indeed, the aim of the current *reform* is that 'the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 27)."

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Then, connecting his forthcoming Constitution with Vatican II and EG, Francis explains:

> "Consequently, inspired by the magisterium of the Successors of Peter from the time of the Second Vatican Council until the present, it was decided to give the title *Praedicate Evangelium* to the new Apostolic Constitution being prepared on the reform of the Roman Curia. A missionary outlook."

In other words, literally *everything* in the Church – her "customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures" – is up for grabs in order to supposedly make her more "mission-oriented." (Does he think the Church has never been sufficiently "mission-oriented" before?) But what, according to Francis, is the mission of the Church?

"Evangelization," Pope Francis states in *Evangelii Gaudium*, "is the task of the Church" (EG, 111). While referring back to the 2012 Synod of Bishops, he observes, "The Synod reaffirmed that the new evangelization is a summons addressed to all and that it is carried out in three principal settings" (EG, 14) – in other words, among three different categories of people:

1. "those members of faithful [*sic*] who preserve a deep and sincere faith, expressing it in different ways, but seldom taking part in worship." (Presumably, this refers to Catholics who rarely attend Holy Mass but still believe *some* of what the Church teaches. Obviously, such people do not consider it grave matter, i.e. mortally sinful, to skip Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, which is a serious problem.)
2. "'*the baptized whose lives do not reflect the demands of Baptism*', who lack a meaningful relationship to the Church and no longer experience the consolation born of faith." (Technically, the lives of those in the first category "do not reflect the demands of Baptism" either, if they are not observing the Third Commandment by following the Church's precept to hear Mass on Sundays and holy days.)
3. "Lastly, we cannot forget that evangelization is first and foremost about preaching the Gospel to *those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected Him*. Many of them are quietly seeking God, led by a yearning to see His face, even in countries of ancient Christian tradition. All of them have a right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone." (Emphasis in original)

At face value, it seems that Francis is sincerely interested in reaching souls with the saving message of the Gospel, but then we read the last two sentences of EG 14 (emphasis added): "Instead of seeming to impose new obligations, they [Christians] should appear as people

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who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. *It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but 'by attraction'*."[9]

So, "evangelization" (sharing joy in some vague manner) is good, but "proselytism" (trying to convert others to Christ and His Church) is bad?[10] In the mind of Pope Francis, apparently so.

Roughly six weeks after his historic trip to Abu Dhabi last February, where he jointly signed the infamous "Document on Human Fraternity" with a high-profile Muslim leader, Francis was globe-trotting again, this time, visiting the Islamic Kingdom of Morocco (Mar. 30-31, 2019). During an ecumenical meeting with various clergy and religious, he railed against proselytism as something to be avoided like the plague:

> "… our mission as baptized persons, priests and consecrated men and women, is not really determined by the number or size of spaces that we occupy, but rather by our capacity to generate change and to awaken wonder and compassion. We do this by the way we live as disciples of Jesus, in the midst of those with whom we share our daily lives, joys and sorrows, suffering and hopes (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 1). *In other words, the paths of mission are not those of proselytism. Please, these paths are not those of proselytism!* Let us recall Benedict XVI: 'the Church grows not through proselytism, but through attraction, through witness' [NB: same 2007 homily as quoted in EG 14]. The paths of mission are not those of proselytism, which leads always to a cul-de-sac, but of our way of being with Jesus and with others." (Emphasis added)

In response to Francis' extreme aversion to "proselytism" (actively working to convert souls to Christ and His Church), Christopher Ferrara offers some refreshingly honest comments:

> "The world's response to an amorphous sharing of joy without 'proselytization' or any mention of religious and moral obligations or that the salvation of one's soul was at stake has been a collective yawn, as the past fifty years have demonstrated. After all, one can always share this joy, whatever it is, in the next life – if there is a next life – especially if no 'new obligations' [EG, 14] are involved in obtaining it and there is no risk to one's soul in saying, 'Thanks, but no thanks.' And, to the modern mind, there are 'delicious banquets' [*ibid*.] aplenty in the here and now."[11]

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Concerning the issues of "attraction" and "proselytism", Ferrara further observes:

> "This is not to deny that the Church grows by attraction – of course she does – but this spiritual attraction is aided, not impeded, by what Francis derided [in EG] as 'proselytizing.' And what is proselytizing? It is nothing more than preaching the necessity of conversion for salvation, which is precisely Our Lord's divine commission to His Church: 'And He said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned (Mark 16:15-16).' More is involved in this saving activity than a nebulous 'attraction.' An actual effort must be made to persuade people of the truth of the Gospel and the necessity of membership in the Church. Francis here [in EG] seemed to dispense with the divine commission in any active sense, which would mean to dispense with the divine commission as such."[12]

Disdain for Tradition and Those Who Maintain It

Returning to the Pope's Christmas address, while he claims that his coming "reform" of the Curia "is grounded mainly in fidelity to the *depositum fidei* and the Tradition," Francis has revealed in EG and elsewhere a deep-seated disdain for Tradition and those who maintain it. Take, for example, his excoriating remarks about Catholics who "remain intransigently faithful to a particular Catholic style from the past" (EG, 94). According to Francis, such individuals are prime examples of "self-absorbed promethean neopelagianism," which is itself a manifestation of "spiritual worldliness" (EG, 93). He goes on:

> "*A supposed soundness of doctrine or discipline* leads instead to a narcissistic and authoritarian elitism [similar to the 'theological narcissism' he lamented in his pre-conclave address quoted above], whereby instead of evangelizing, one analyzes and classifies others, and instead of opening the door to grace, one exhausts his or her energies in inspecting and verifying. … It is impossible to think that a genuine evangelizing thrust could emerge from these adulterated forms of Christianity.
>
> This insidious worldliness is evident in a number of attitudes which appear opposed, yet all have the same pretense of 'taking over the space of the Church'. In some people we see *an ostentatious preoccupation for the liturgy, for doctrine and for the Church's prestige*, but without any concern that the Gospel have a

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> real impact on God's faithful people and the concrete needs of the present time." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 94-95, emphasis added)

Here we see that concern for doctrinal, disciplinary, and liturgical integrity is somehow opposed to "a genuine evangelizing thrust" (despite compelling evidence to the contrary[13]) in the mind of Pope Francis. This is no doubt why the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith will be further displaced from its pre-conciliar primacy in Francis' restructured Vatican.

For Francis, it seems, fidelity to Tradition is synonymous with "rigidity", one of the most popular insults in the Bergoglian lexicon. During his Christmas address, he emphasized how, according to him, "there is a need to be wary of the temptation to *rigidity*. A rigidity born of the fear of change, which ends up erecting fences and obstacles on the terrain of the common good, turning it into a minefield of incomprehension and hatred. Let us always remember that behind every form of rigidity lies some kind of imbalance [i.e., mental illness, another classic Bergoglian insult]. Rigidity and imbalance feed one another in a vicious circle. And today this temptation to rigidity has become very real."[14]

Translation: Francis is very concerned about the revival of Tradition he sees spreading around the globe, particularly among young people. Case in point: his statement to Fr. Antonio Spadaro, S.J. in November 2016 concerning young people who prefer the Traditional Latin Mass: "And I ask myself: Why so much rigidity? Dig, dig, this rigidity always hides something, insecurity or even something else. Rigidity is defensive. True love is not rigid." Perhaps it was this nagging concern that prompted the following remarks in August 2017:

> "The direction traced by the [Second Vatican] Council was in line with the principle of respect for healthy tradition and legitimate progress [a demonstrably false assertion] (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 23), in the liturgical books promulgated by Blessed Paul VI, well received by the very Bishops who were present at the Council, and now in universal use for almost 50 years in the Roman Rite. …
>
> … After this magisterium, after this long journey, We can affirm with certainty and with magisterial authority that *the liturgical reform is irreversible*." (Address to Participants in the 68th National Liturgical Week in Italy, emphasis added)

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Endgame: "Irreversible" Change

And thus, we arrive at what can safely be assumed is the Pope's endgame regarding Curial "reform": *irreversible change*. As Francis once told Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, former Superior General of the Jesuits (2008-2016), "I ask the good Lord to take me once the changes are irreversible."

Interestingly, in his Christmas address Francis compared the coming Curial "reform" to none other than Pope Paul VI's introduction of the *Novus Ordo Missae* in 1969 – that is, to abrupt and radical liturgical *changes* the likes of which the Church has never before seen. Stashed away in a footnote, we find:

> Saint Paul VI, some fifty years ago, when presenting the new Roman Missal to the faithful, recalled the correspondence between the law of prayer (*lex orandi*) and the law of faith (*lex credendi*), and described the Missal as "a demonstration of fidelity and vitality" [again, demonstrably false]. He concluded by saying: "So let us not speak of a 'new Mass', but rather of 'a new age in the life of the Church' (*General Audience*, 19 November 1969). Analogously, we might also say in this case: *not a new Roman Curia, but rather a new age*." (Footnote 18, emphasis in original)

Whether it is called a "new rite"[15] or a "new age", *new* is the operative word, and it stands in sharp contrast to St. Paul's admonition about "avoiding the *profane novelties* of words and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called" (1 Tim. 6:20).

So, what sort of "irreversible" changes can we expect to see in the coming "new age" of Curial "reform"? For starters, Francis clearly favors an expanded role for episcopal conferences, namely, "a juridical status…which would see them as subjects of specific attributions, including genuine doctrinal authority…" (EG, 32). Considering that individual bishops already have (and *always have* had) direct authority from God to teach the Faith,[16] what could it possibly mean for bishops' conferences to be given "genuine doctrinal authority"? What would such "authority" grant them that individual bishops do not already possess?

In this writer's humble opinion, such "authority" would amount to an illicit license for bishops to collectively deviate from Catholic faith and morals in their respective territories, thus leading their local flocks into heresy and schism. Such a scenario is already well underway in Germany, where Cardinal Reinhard Marx, president of the German Episcopal

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Conference and close advisor to Francis, is leading the Church in Germany down a dangerous "synodal path", one which Cardinal Marx claims has papal approval.

As for making the Church more "mission-oriented" (EG, 27), the stated pretext for reform, we can surely expect to see more ecumenical and interreligious overtures emanating from Francis' restructured Vatican – all in the spirit of his Abu Dhabi initiative, which is itself the logical end of Vatican II, as Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò has observed. Similarly, it would not surprise me at all to see overlaps between the Pope's post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Amazon Synod, which is slated for imminent release, and the forthcoming Apostolic Constitution concerning the Roman Curia.

Perhaps most telling of all regarding "irreversible" change, however, is the manner in which Francis concluded his Christmas address and the nefarious prelate to whom he paid tribute:

> "The Roman Curia is not a body detached from reality, even though this risk is always present. Rather, it should be thought of and experienced in the context of the journey of today's men and women, and against the backdrop of this *epochal change* [a theme discussed earlier in the address]. …
>
> Cardinal Martini, in his last interview, a few days before his death, said something that should make us think: '*The Church is two hundred years behind the times*. Why is she not shaken up? Are we afraid? Fear, instead of courage? Yet faith is the Church's foundation. Faith, confidence, courage… Only love conquers weariness'." (Emphasis added)

Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, S.J. (1927-2012), former archbishop of Milan (1979-2002), was the leader of the infamous St. Gallen Mafia that conspired to get Cardinal Bergoglio elected at both the 2005 and 2013 conclaves. His vision for getting the Church "up to date" included such things as downplaying the gravity of sexual sins (in particular, adultery and sodomy), denying that any souls end up in hell, Communion for the divorced and "remarried", whitewashing Islam, introducing *viri probati* (married priests) and female deacons – sound familiar? Precisely for this reason, CFN's longtime editor John Vennari (RIP) referred to Pope Francis as "The Martini Pope".

Restoration: Cling to Our Lady's Promise

We are now approaching the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (February 2), also known as Candlemas, the final day of the Christmas season. On that day in A.D.

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1634, Our Lady appeared to Mother Mariana de Jesus Torres (1563-1635), a Conceptionist nun in Quito, Ecuador, under the title of *Buen Suceso* ("Good Success"). The Blessed Virgin spoke to Mother Mariana about "various heresies" that would arise "at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century" in Ecuador and elsewhere.

"In order to free men from bondage to these heresies," Our Lady explained, "those whom the merciful love of my Most Holy Son will destine for that restoration will need great strength of will, constancy, valor and much confidence in God. To test this faith and confidence of the just, there will be occasions when everything will seem to be lost and paralyzed. This will be, then, the happy beginning of the complete restoration."[17]

Whatever "irreversible" changes Pope Francis and his allies have in mind, we know that Christ will eventually save His Church and effect a "complete restoration" through the triumph of His Mother's Immaculate Heart. Our job is to remain faithful, resist errors, and exercise, as Our Lady said, "great strength of will, constancy, valor and much confidence in God."

Our Lady of Buen Suceso of the Purification, pray for us!

This article has been update since publication.

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[1] According the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, the term "Roman Curia" denotes "the ensemble of departments or ministries which assist the Sovereign Pontiff in the government of the universal Church."

[2] On April 13, 2013, exactly one month after his election, "Pope Francis announced the first major decision of his papacy: he chose eight cardinals from around the world to make up a sort of 'advisory board,' with a bishop as secretary, that will meet periodically to infuse energy into a reform of the Roman Curia that the College of Cardinals asked for during their pre-conclave meetings in early March." (Robert Moynihan, *Inside the Vatican*, Apr. 22, 2013). Members of that "advisory board" included (and still include) Cardinal Reinhard Marx, leader of the German bishops' heterodox "synodal path", and Cardinal Oscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga of Honduras, another notorious Modernist mired in financial scandal.

In late September 2013, Francis announced his decision "that such a group…be instituted as a 'Council of Cardinals', with the task of assisting me in the governance of the universal Church and drawing up a project for the revision of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* [issued by John Paul II in 1988] on the Roman Curia. It will be composed of the same

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persons previously nominated…." As of this writing, the "Council of Cardinals" has met with Pope Francis for a total of 32 working sessions, the most recent being held on Dec. 2-4, 2019.

[3] Christopher A. Ferrara, *False Friends of Fatima* (Pound Ridge: Good Counsel Publications, 2012), p. 11. Available in full for free online (see here).

[4] *Ibid*., pp. 25-27.

[5] Philip F. Lawler, *Lost Shepherd: How Pope Francis is Misleading His Flock* (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 2018), pp. 5, 6.

[6] *Ibid*., p. 6-7.

[7] Lawler, *Lost Shepherd*, p. 22. Francis himself states in *Evangelii Gaudium*'s opening paragraph: "In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy [of the Gospel], while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come."

[8] Although the transcript published by the Vatican has Francis saying "*Evangelii Nuntiandi*" (Paul VI's 1975 document), he clearly said "*Evangelii* ***Gaudium***" during the video broadcast of his address.

[9] It may surprise some to learn that "by attraction" is actually a quote from Benedict XVI: "The Church does not engage in proselytism. Instead, she grows by 'attraction'…" (Homily delivered on May 13, 2007 in Aparecida, Brazil).

[10] For an excellent discussion of the rampant confusion concerning proselytism (i.e., when/how it assumed such a negative connotation), see Dr. Taylor Marshall and Eric Sammons, "Does Pope Francis want to stop Conversions to Catholicism?" (Dec. 12, 2019).

[11] Christopher A. Ferrara and Thomas E. Woods, Jr., *The Great Façade: The Regime of Novelty in the Catholic Church from Vatican II to the Francis Revolution* (expanded Second Edition) (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2015), p. 385.

[12] *Ibid*., pp. 385-386.

[13] Whereas the more "progressive" (Modernist) orders of priests and religious – those more concerned with social work than the salvation of souls – have been in sharp decline since Vatican II (and some are literally dying out due to a lack of vocations), the more traditional priestly societies and religious orders within the Church are the ones thriving

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(see here for a statistical study).

[14] In his excellent commentary on the Pope's Christmas address, Dr. Peter Kwasniewski offers the following insights into what "tradition" and "change" appear to signify in the mind of Francis: "As I tried to wrap my mind around this address, I came to the conclusion that the key to understanding Francis is to see that he confuses the traditional concepts of spiritual oldness (sinfulness) and newness (renewal by the grace of Christ) with, respectively, tradition and change, and therefore with rigidity and flexibility, legalism and life in the Spirit. So while the Church sees in Christ the New Adam and prays at Christmas to be renewed by His newness so that the oldness of sin may be purged from us—a process of lifelong conversion for which the Church's very tradition, developed under the guidance of Divine Providence, offers powerful assistance—Francis instead sees in *tradition* the Old Adam and the Pharisee, and in *evolutionary creativity* the New Adam and the man of the Gospel."

[15] In Italian, *nuovo rito della Messa* ("new rite of Mass"), a phrase used by Paul VI himself in the same general audience (Nov. 19, 1969) from which Francis quotes!

[16] Cf. Code of Canon Law (1983), can. 375 §1-2, 386 §1-2.

[17] Marian Therese Horvat, Ph.D., *Our Lady of Good Success: Prophecies for Our Times* (Los Angeles: Tradition in Action, Inc., 2006 – Third Edition), pp. 54-55. See here for an important article by the same author.

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