

Questions for Viganò: His Excellency is Right about Vatican II, But What Does He Think Catholics Should Do Now?

Archbishop Viganò has spurred a long-overdue, Church-wide debate about Vatican II. If nothing else, everyday Catholics are now able to see for themselves what some of the most well-known clergy and theologians in the world truly think about the Council. All cards are on the table.

It seems to me every Catholic is being given the chance by God to know the truth, and that He doesn't want us to go to our judgement ignorant of what's been going on these past 60 or so years. He wants us to think, pick a side, and "test all things" (1 Thess. 5:21) and not just be blind followers.

Speaking for myself, I find a lot of the claims made by mainstream churchmen who say Vatican II was pretty much like every other Council (and that it in no way "ruptured" with the past) to be wholly unconvincing. I've explained my views on *Catholic Family News* before. [Read them here.](#)

But I'm also starting to wonder if Archbishop Viganò needs to give more advice to laity and priests on what to do next. He's certainly diagnosed the problem, but what are his solutions, if any? What, in other words, is it that he believes Catholics in the 21st century should do in response to the crisis?

In his many remarks, His Excellency has frequently borrowed terminology from the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (1905-1991). On multiple occasions, he's spoken of "the Conciliar Church," a term Lefebvre often used when describing the post-Vatican II religion. In his response to Fr. Thomas Weinandy, Archbishop Viganò [called](#) Vatican II "the *de facto* first council, for all practical purposes, of a schismatic church" — another favorite of Lefebvre's.

What are Catholics to Do?

As far as I can tell, His Excellency is in lockstep with Archbishop Lefebvre on the root cause of the crisis. He has proposed a possible solution for the Church at the macro level — the Church should simply "forget" the Council. Yet, he has not yet necessarily addressed what ordinary Catholics should do until that happens. He clearly does not expect Pope Francis to consign the Council to the ash heap of history, so what should we do until that time comes?

Would he, like Archbishop Lefebvre, start his own priestly institute to come to the rescue of the Faithful if it came to it? Which religious groups does he think are holding firm to the Church's traditions today? Does he believe it's best for the laity to attend diocesan-approved Latin Masses and to stay within the confines of the "Conciliar Church" structure? Does he think it's admissible to assist at the *Novus Ordo Missae*? Or perhaps His Excellency wishes

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Catholics to attend FSSP, SSPX, or even SSPX “Resistance” chapels? Does he think “supplied jurisdiction” allows for most traditional priests to disobey ordinary diocesan bishops? Which seminaries or convents does he think young men and women who want to try a vocation should enter?

Some Catholics may speculate that His Excellency’s constant use of “Bergoglio” is a sign that either he believes Francis is not the pope and that Benedict still is, or that Francis, by his words and deeds, has automatically removed himself from the papal throne. It would be interesting to see His Excellency to respond to that speculation.

A Duty to ‘Separate’ from the Conciliar Church?

One theory [presented in 2013 by SSPX Bishop Bernard Tissier de Mallerais](#) is that the crisis in the Church has reached such a crescendo that there now exists two distinct churches which have the same pope as their shared head.

“The Catholic Church is the society of the baptized who want to save their souls in professing the Catholic faith, in practicing the same Catholic worship and in following the same pastors, successors of the Apostles,” Tissier wrote. “The conciliar church is the society of the baptized who follow the directives of the current Popes and bishops, in espousing more or less consciously the intention to bring about the unity of the human race, and in practice accepting the decisions of the Council, following the new liturgy and submitting to the new Code of Canon law.”

“We have two churches who have the same heads and most of the same members, but who have different forms and ends diametrically incongruous,” he adds. “On the one hand eternal salvation seconded by the social reign of Christ, King of Nations, on the other hand the unity of the human race by liberal ecumenism, that is to say broadened to all religions...formally considered the conciliar church is a sect which occupies the Catholic Church.”

The statements of Archbishop Viganò the past few months seem to coincide with those of Bishop Tissier, whose remarks [have been disputed](#) even [among other SSPX members](#). It would be beneficial if Archbishop Viganò addressed the argument Bishop Tissier presents and explain if he agrees with it or what objections he would raise to it.

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Moreover, does His Excellency agree with Archbishop Lefebvre's 1991 remarks that it is "a strict duty for every priest wanting to remain Catholic to separate himself from this Conciliar Church for as long as it does not rediscover the Tradition of the Church and of the Catholic Faith"? What, moreover, would "separating" from the Conciliar Church look like in Archbishop Viganò's opinion? Should priest's leave their dioceses for traditional orders? Or should they work "from within" to bring the Church back to Tradition? Does he think the SSPX should be "regularized" or wait for the conversion of Rome back to Tradition? Does he believe we are at a point where consecrating more traditional bishops, even without the pope's approval, is a necessity?

What are the Laity to Do When Surrounded by Neo-Modernism?

Lastly, does Archbishop Viganò believe the true Church is no longer in Rome but instead in small pockets of traditional communities of priests and laity scattered about the world? Does His Excellency think the Church has been so overrun by her enemies that there's hardly any faith left on earth? To which clergy are lay Catholics supposed to submit themselves, given the proliferation of neo-Modernism in the Church? Are we to simply find a priest who is faithful to Tradition, no matter what order he belongs to, and hold on for dear life? Since Canon Law states that the supreme law of the Church is the salvation of souls (cf. [can. 1752](#)), then what is off-limits at this point? Anything? One has to wonder how much God will hold lay people accountable on Judgement Day, given that there are so many priests and bishops who have conflicting answers about these most serious questions.

It's my sincerest hope that Archbishop Viganò will address these and other pressing issues in the days, weeks, and months ahead. It is understandable that his first line of attack would be the Council and its implementation. One must make a diagnosis ("get to the roots," as Archbishop Viganò says) before proposing treatment. Yet, now that this argument has been made and an ultimate cure proposed, my hope is that he will provide to practical advice that we should follow until that cure arrives. Catholics have been praying for decades that God would grant them leaders who possess the wisdom needed to provide answers so they can obtain eternal happiness. True spiritual guidance is needed now more than ever.