Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, in a new response to two of his critics – Fr. Raymond de Souza and Fr. Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M. Cap. – shows himself indignant at the fact that these priests seem more willing to find fault among those who defend orthodoxy, rather than with those who have been spreading heterodoxy for decades. He proposes that, instead of "assuming schisms and heresies where there are none, it would be appropriate and more useful to fight error and division where they have nested and spread for decades."

He also notices that, while it is now seemingly allowed to disregard and dismiss previous Councils and the perennial Magisterium of 2,000 years, it is not allowed to do the same with the Second Vatican Council, thus establishing a two-fold standard – one in defense of heterodoxy, and another for the weakening of orthodoxy.

Additionally, the retired Italian prelate also notices that both of his critics did not enter into the substance of the debate, but, instead, ostracize the one of the opposite opinion. He states that "in defense of the conciliar *totem* the only response is the delegitimization of the interlocutor, his ostracization, and the generic accusation of wanting to attack the unity of the Church."

However, for Viganò, this method does not have any effect anymore. "I think," he explains, "that the answer [for why he is being called a schismatic and heretic] is obvious by now: a taboo has been broken, and a discussion about Vatican II, that up until now had remained confined to very restricted areas of the ecclesial body, has now begun on a large scale. And what most disturbs the supporters of the Council is the observation that this dispute is not about *if* the Council is open to criticism, but about *what to do* to remedy the errors and equivocal passages found in it."

That is to say: the discourse about the Second Vatican Council and its aftermath has already moved forward, in spite of these intellectually poor attempts at delegitimizing this debate by calling out "schismatic!"

Archbishop Viganò himself has only recently, in a September 1 statement, made it clear that he intends to remain in the Catholic Church and to fight those within her hierarchy who are undermining the Catholic Faith from within.

Both Weinandy and de Souza have each written an article denouncing the former apostolic nuncio for his criticism of the Council. In his August 13 piece, Weinandy stated: "Archbishop Viganò sees the Second Vatican Council as schismatic, and even more than this, as heretical. My concern is that, in his radical reading of the Council, the archbishop is spawning his own schism," thereby accusing the archbishop of his own schismatic attitude. And de Souza, following in Weinandy's footsteps, does the same. But while Weinandy

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wonders whether the archbishop committed the "unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit," de Souza says in his August 28 piece: "Some people, even former admirers, think he may have become a bit unstable, yet rendering an accurate assessment has been near impossible, given that he has been in hiding since 2018. His writings are all we have. And now, even Father Weinandy questions whether they are truly authentic. Priest, curialist, diplomat, nuncio, administrator, reformer, whistleblower. Is it possible that, at the end of it all, heretic and schismatic would be added to that list?"

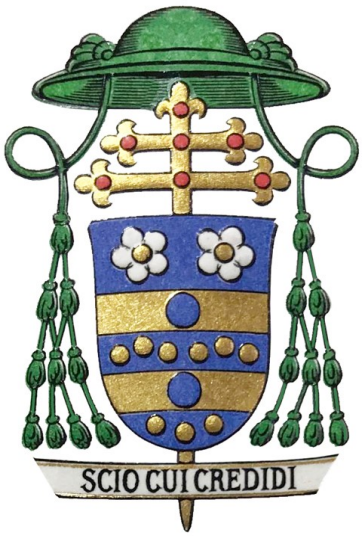
As an observer of this debate told *Catholic Family News*: this name-calling, using the words "schismatics" and "heretics" with regard to the Vatican II debate, reminds one of the political atmosphere, where dissenters are being silenced with the help of the words "racist." "It shuts down debate," the source said.

Yet we have passed this stage. We are not allowing this debate – which is so crucial for the purification of the Church – to be silenced. The truth must come out and will come out, the questions still need to be answered: How did the Church get to this disastrous situation where every aspect of her teachings – from the divinity of Christ to the indissolubility of marriage – is being questioned? And how do we free us from these false teachings and come again to the beauty of the Catholic Faith in its doctrine, its liturgy, and its discipline.

For this debate, we need the voice of Archbishop Viganò, who does not claim to know all the answers but who is willing to give his name and reputation – at the cost of being labeled a "schismatic" and "heretic" – in order to encourage others, especially other prelates, to come and join him.

Please see below for the full text of Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò's new statement:

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Archbishop Viganò's Episcopal Coat of Arms

A few days ago, shortly after another article of a similar tone was published by Fr. Thomas Weinandy (here), Fr. Raymond J. De Souza wrote a commentary titled, "Is Archbishop Viganò's Rejection of the Second Vatican Council Promoting Schism?" (here). The writer's thought is immediately expressed in the subtitle: "In his latest 'testimony,' the former nuncio holds a position contrary to the Catholic faith on the authority of ecumenical councils."

I can understand that in many ways my interventions can provoke no little annoyance with the supporters of Vatican II, and that questioning their *idol* is reason enough to merit the most severe canonical sanctions, after shouting against schism. Their annoyance is combined with a certain spite in seeing that – despite my choice not to appear in public – my interventions are arousing interest and are fueling a healthy debate about the Council and more generally about the crisis of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. I do not claim myself to have the merit of having initiated this dispute: other eminent prelates and high-profile intellectuals before me have highlighted critical issues that need a solution; others have shown the causal relationship between Vatican II and the present apostasy. Faced with these numerous and well-argued critiques, no one has ever proposed valid responses or shared solutions. On the contrary, in defense of the conciliar *totem* the only response is the delegitimization of the interlocutor, his ostracization, and the generic accusation of wanting to attack the unity of the Church. And this last accusation is all the more grotesque when we see how obviously canonically cross-eyed the accusers are: they unleash the *malleus haereticorum* [hammer of heretics] against those who defend Catholic orthodoxy, while they bow down in reverence to ecclesiastics, religious-s.j., and theologians who daily attack the

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integrity of the *depositum fidei*. The painful sufferings of so many prelates, among whom Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre undoubtedly stands out, confirm that even in the absence of specific accusations there are those who succeed in using the canonical norm as the tool of persecuting the good, and at the same time are careful not to use it with real schismatics and heretics.

How can we forget in this regard, those theologians who had been suspended from teaching, removed from seminaries, or hit by censures from the Holy Office, and who, precisely because of their "merits", deserved to be called to the Council as consultors and experts? Those rebels of liberation theology who were admonished under the pontificate of John Paul II and rehabilitated by Bergoglio must also be included; not to mention the protagonists of the Amazon Synod and the bishops of the Synodal Path, promoters of a heretical and schismatic German national church; without omitting the bishops of the Patriotic Chinese sect, recognized by the agreement between the Vatican and the communist dictatorship of Beijing.

Father de Souza and Father Weinandy, without entering into the merits of the arguments I have presented, which both of them disdainfully describe as *intrinsically schismatic*, ought to have the fairness to read my interventions *before* censuring my thoughts. In them they would find mention of the painful labor that led me to understand only in the last few years that I have been misled by those in authority whom I never could have imagined would have been able to betray those who placed their trust in them. I do not think that I am the only one who has understood this deception and denounced it: laity, clerics, and prelates have found themselves in the painful situation of having to recognize a fraud that was cunningly hatched, a fraud that consisted in my opinion of having resorted to a Council to give apparent authority to the initiatives of the Innovators and obtaining obedience from the clergy and the people of God. And this obedience was demanded by the pastors, allowing no exception, in order to demolish the Church of Christ from within.

I have written and declared many times that it is precisely in virtue of this falsification that the faithful, respectful to the authority of the hierarchy, did not dare to disobey *en masse* the imposition of heterodox doctrines and protestantized rites. Among other things, this *revolution* was not accomplished all at once, but according to a process by stages, in which the novelties introduced *ad experimentum* were later made a universal norm, with ever tighter turns of the screw. And I have likewise reiterated several times that if the errors and equivocal points of Vatican II had been formulated by a group of German or Dutch bishops, without giving them the mantle of authoritativeness of an ecumenical council, they would probably have merited the condemnation of the Holy Office, and their writings would have ended up on the Index. Perhaps it was precisely for this reason that those who upset the

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preparatory schemas of the Council took care, during the reign of Paul VI, to weaken the Supreme Congregation and abolish the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, on which in other times their own writings would have appeared.

De Souza and Weinandy apparently believe that it is not possible to change one's opinion, and that it is preferable to remain in error rather than retrace one's steps. Yet this attitude is very strange: multitudes of cardinals and bishops, priests and clerics, monks and nuns, theologians and moralists, laity and Catholic intellectuals all felt compelled, in the name of obedience to the hierarchy, to renounce the Tridentine Mass and to see it replaced with a rite copied from Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*; to throw away treasures of doctrine, morality, spirituality, and an inestimable artistic and cultural patrimony, obscuring 2,000 years of Magisterium in the name of a Council, which moreover intended to be pastoral and not dogmatic. They heard it said that the *conciliar church* was finally open to the world, stripped of hateful post-Tridentine *triumphalism,* medieval *dogmatic encrustations*, *liturgical trappings*, the *sexophobic morality* of Saint Alphonsus, the *notionism* of the Catechism of Saint Pius X, and the *clericalism* of the Pacellian Curia. We were asked to renounce everything, in the name of Vatican II. Now, after more than half a century, we see that nothing was saved of what little apparently still seemed to remain in force!

Yet, if repudiating the *preconciliar* Catholic Church by embracing the *conciliar renewal* was hailed as a gesture of great maturity, a *prophetic sign*, a way of *keeping step with the times* and ultimately something inevitable and incontestable, today repudiating a failed experiment that led the Church to collapse is considered a sign of incoherence or of insubordination, according to the adage "*No going back*" of the Innovators. At that time the *revolution* was said to be salutary and necessary, but today the restoration is called harmful and a harbinger of divisions. Back then we were told we could and should deny the glorious past of the Church in the name of *aggiornamento* [updating]; today questioning a few decades of deviation is considered schismatic. And what is even more grotesque is that the defenders of the Council are simultaneously so flexible with those who deny the preconciliar Magisterium, while stigmatizing with the Jesuitical and infamous qualification of *rigid* those who, out of consistency with that same Magisterium, cannot accept ecumenism and interreligious dialogue (which resulted in Assisi and Abu Dhabi), the new ecclesiology and the liturgical reform stirred by Vatican II.

All this, of course, has no philosophical nor even a theological foundation: the *superdogma* of Vatican II prevails over everything else, it annuls everything, cancels everything, but it does not permit itself to suffer the same fate. It is precisely this that confirms that Vatican II, **although a legitimate Ecumenical Council** – as I have elsewhere affirmed – **is not like the others**, because if this were the case the Councils and the Magisterium that

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preceded it would have had to be held as equally binding (not only in words), preventing the formulation of the errors contained or implied in the texts of Vatican II. *Civitas in se divisa* [The city is divided]…

De Souza and Weinandy do not want to admit that the stratagem adopted by the Innovators was very cunning: in order to gain approval for the *revolution* by those who thought that they were dealing with a Catholic Council like Vatican I, in an apparent respect for the norms, declared that it was only a *pastoral Council*, not a dogmatic Council. This allowed the Council Fathers to believe that the critical points would in some way be settled, the equivocal points would be clarified, certain reforms would be reconsidered in a more moderate sense. And while the enemies had organized everything, down to the tiniest details, at least twenty years prior to the convocation of the Council, there were those who naively believed that God would prevent the *coup* of the Modernists, as if the Holy Spirit could act against the subversive will of the Innovators. A naiveté into which I myself fell together with the majority of my brothers and Prelates, who were formed and raised with the conviction that Pastors – and the Supreme Pontiff first and foremost – were owed an unconditional obedience. Thus good Catholics, because of their distorted concept of absolute obedience, obeyed their Pastors unconditionally; they were led to disobey Christ, precisely by those who had made quite clear what their goals were. Even in this case it is evident that assent to the conciliar magisterium did not prevent dissent from the perennial Magisterium of the Church – it actually required such dissent as a logical and inevitable consequence.

After more than fifty years, we still do not want to take note of an uncontestable fact, and that is that there was an intent to use a subversive method that up until then had been adopted in the political and civil sphere, applying it *sine glossa* to the religious and ecclesial sphere. This method, typical of those who have, to say the least, a materialistic vision of the world, found the Conciliar Fathers who *truly* believed in the action of the Paraclete unprepared, while the enemies knew how to falsify the votes in the conciliar commissions, weaken the opposition, obtain exceptions to established procedures, and present a norm as apparently harmless in order to later draw a disruptive and opposite effect from it. And the fact that *that* Council took place in the Vatican Basilica, with the Fathers in miter and cope or in choral dress, and John XXIII in tiara and mantle, was perfectly consistent with the orchestration of a *scenography* especially designed to deceive the participants and indeed reassure them that, in the end, the Holy Spirit would remedy even the messes of *subsistit in* or the blunders on religious freedom.

In this regard, I would like to quote an article that has appeared in the last few days at *Settimo Cielo* entitled, "Historicizing Vatican Council II. Here's How the World of Those

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Years Influenced the Church" (here). Sandro Magister informs us of a study by Professor Roberto Perici on the Council, which I recommend reading in its entirely but that can be summarized in these two quotes:

The dispute that is inflaming the Church, on how to judge Vatican II, must not be only theological. Because first of all the historical context of that event must be analyzed, all the more so for a Council that in setting its agenda declared it wanted to "open up to the world."

I know well that the Church – as Paul VI reiterated in "*Ecclesiam Suam*" – is in the world, but is not of the world: it has values, behaviors, procedures that are specific to it and that cannot be judged and framed with totally historical-political, worldly criteria. On the other hand – it must be added – neither is it a separate body. In the 1960s – and the conciliar documents are full of references to this effect – the world was moving toward what we now call "globalization," it was already strongly influenced by the new mass media, unprecedented ideas and attitudes were spreading very quickly, and forms of generational mimicry were emerging. It is unthinkable that an event of the breadth and relevance of the Council should have been taking place in the enclosure of St. Peter's Basilica without measuring itself against what was happening.

In my opinion this is an interesting interpretative key to Vatican II, which confirms the influence of "democratic" thought at the Council. The great alibi of the Council was to present itself as a collegial and almost plebiscitary decision to introduce otherwise unacceptable changes. It was not in fact the specific content of the Acts nor their future significance in light of the *spirit of the Council* that cleared up heterodox doctrines that were already weaving their way through the ecclesial circles of northern Europe, but the *charism of democracy*, made almost unconsciously by the entire world episcopate, in the name of an ideological subjection that at the time saw many exponents of the hierarchy as almost subordinate to the mentality of the age. The idol of parliamentarianism that arose from the French Revolution – which showed itself to be so effective in subverting the social order – must have represented for some prelates an inevitable stage in the modernization of the Church, to be accepted in exchange for a sort of tolerance on the part of the contemporary world for what was still old and *outmoded* in what it persisted in proposing. This was a very serious mistake! This sense of inferiority on the part of the hierarchy, this feeling of backwardness and inadequacy to the demands of progress and ideologies, betrays a very deficient supernatural vision, and an even more deficient exercise of the theological virtues: it is the Church that ought to attract the world to itself and convert it and not vice-versa! The world must be converted to Christ and the Gospel, without Our Lord having to be presented as a revolutionary *à la* Che Guevara and the Church as a philanthropic

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organization more attentive to ecology than to the eternal salvation of souls.

De Souza affirms, contrary to what I have written, that I called Vatican II a "*devil council*." I would like to know where he found these words of mine reported. I assume that this expression is due to his erroneous and presumptuous translation of the term "*conciliabolo*", according to its Latin etymology, which does not correspond to the current meaning in the Italian language. From this erroneous translation he infers that I have "*a position contrary to the Catholic faith on the authority of ecumenical councils*." If he had taken the time to read my statements on this topic, he would have understood that precisely because I have the greatest veneration for the authority of the Ecumenical Councils and for the entire Magisterium in general, that I am not able to reconcile the most clear and orthodox teachings of all of the Councils up until Vatican I with the equivocal and at times even heterodox teachings of Vatican II. But I don't seem to be the only one. Father Weinandy himself fails to reconcile the role of Vicar of Christ with Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who is simultaneously both the holder and the demolisher of the papacy. But for De Souza and Weinandy, against all logic, one may criticize the Vicar of Christ but not the Council, or rather *that* Council and *only that one*. In fact, I have never encountered such solicitude in reiterating the canons of Vatican I when certain theologians speak of a "*resizing of the papacy*" or of a "*synodal path;*" nor have I ever found so many defenders of the authority of the Council of Trent when the very essence of the Catholic priesthood is denied.

De Souza thinks that, with my letter to Father Weinandy, I looked for an ally in him. Even if that was the case, I do not think that there would be anything wrong in that, as long as this alliance would have for its purpose the defense of Truth in the bond of Charity. But in reality, my intention was what I stated from the beginning, namely, to make a comparison possible from which we reach a greater understanding of the present crisis and its causes, in such a way that the Authority of the Church can pronounce on it in its time. I have never allowed myself to impose a definitive solution, nor to resolve questions that go beyond my role as Archbishop and are instead matters that are the direct competence of the Apostolic See. Thus, what Father De Souza says is not true, and even less that which Father Weinandy incomprehensibly attributes to me, that I find myself in the "*unforgiveable sin against the Holy Spirit*." I could perhaps believe their good faith if they both applied the same severity of judgment to their common adversaries and to themselves, something that unfortunately does not seem to me will happen.

Father De Souza asks: "*Schism. Heresy. Devil's work. Unforgivable sin. How is it that such words are now being applied to Archbishop Viganò by respected and careful voices?*" I think that the answer is obvious by now: a taboo has been broken, and a discussion about Vatican II, that up until now had remained confined to very restricted areas of the ecclesial body,

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has now begun on a large scale. And what most disturbs the supporters of the Council is the observation that this dispute is not about *if* the Council is open to criticism, but about *what to do* to remedy the errors and equivocal passages found in it. And this is an established fact, on which no work of delegitimization can now be undertaken: Magister also writes this at *Settimo Cielo*, referring to the "*dispute that is inflaming the Church over how to judge Vatican II*" and to the "*controversies that periodically reopen in the various 'Catholic' media about the meaning of Vatican II and the link that exists between that Council and the present situation of the Church*." Making people believe that the Council is free from criticism is a falsification of reality, regardless of the intentions of those who criticize its ambiguity or heterodoxy.

Father De Souza further claims that Professor John Paul Meenan, on *LifeSiteNews* (here) supposedly demonstrated "*the weaknesses in Archbishop Viganò's argument and his theological mistakes*." I leave to Professor Meenan the burden of refuting my interventions on the basis of what I affirm, and not on what I do not say but that is deliberately misrepresented. Here, too, how much indulgence is shown to the Acts of the Council, and how much implacable severity to those who point out the gaps, to the point of insinuating the suspicion of Donatism.

As for the famous *hermeneutic of continuity*, it seems to me that it is clear that this is and remains an attempt – perhaps inspired by a somewhat Kantian vision of the affairs of the Church – to reconcile a *precouncil* and a *postcouncil* as had never before been necessary. The hermeneutic of continuity obviously is valid and to be followed within Catholic discourse: in theological language it is called the *analogia fidei* [analogy of faith] and it is one of the cornerstones to which the student of the sacred sciences must adhere. But applying this criterion to a *hapax* that, precisely based on its ambiguity, succeeded in saying or implying what it should have openly condemned does not make sense, because it presupposes as a postulate that there is a real coherence between the Magisterium of the Church and the "magisterium" contrary to it which is taught by the Pontifical Academies and Universities, by the episcopal and seminary chairs and preached from the pulpits. But while it is ontologically necessary that all Truth be consistent with itself, at the same time it is not possible to fail in the principle of non-contradiction, according to which two mutually exclusive propositions cannot both be true. Thus, there can be no "hermeneutic of continuity" in supporting the need of the Catholic Church for eternal salvation and at the same time what the Abu Dhabi declaration affirms, which is in continuity with the conciliar teaching. It is thus not true that I reject the hermeneutic in itself, but only when it cannot be applied to a clearly heterogeneous context. But if this observation of mine turns out to be unfounded, and if they want to demonstrate the gaps in it, I will be quite happy to repudiate them myself.

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At the end of his article, Fr. De Souza asks provocatively: "*Priest, curialist, diplomat, nuncio, administrator, reformer, whistleblower. Is it possible that, at the end of it all, heretic and schismatic would be added to that list?*" I do not intend to respond to the insulting and gravely offensive expressions of Fr. Raymond KM, certainly not suited to a knight. I limit myself to asking him: To how many progressive Cardinals and Bishops would it be superfluous to ask the same question, already knowing that the answer is sadly positive? Perhaps, before assuming schisms and heresies where there are none, it would be appropriate and more useful to fight error and division where they have nested and spread for decades.

Sancte Pie X, ora pro nobis!

3 September 2020

Saint Pius X, Pope and Confessor

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