Abp. Viganò Tells Abbé Barthe: Derailing of Vatican II, Creation of New Mass are Results of "Revolutionary Forces Infiltrating the Church"

In a new and extensive interview with Abbé Claude Barthe (first published here), author of *Le Messe de Vatican II* ("The Mass of Vatican II" — see here for a review in English), Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò fields several questions related to the Second Vatican Council and the creation of what he calls "Montini's *Novus Ordo*," referring to the new rite of Mass created after the Council by the *Consilium* (liturgical committee) under the direction of then-Fr. Annibale Bugnini and issued by Pope Paul VI (Giovanni Montini).

His Excellency reaffirms a point he has emphasized several times over the past year, namely, that "well before Vatican II there were revolutionary forces infiltrating the Church that were ready to make definitive those innovations that were introduced *ad experimentum*," such as the various "transitional Missals between the 1962 Rubrics and the 1970 *Editio typica*," the latter being "Montini's *Novus Ordo*."

"Beyond the texts and ceremonial rubrics," he observes, "what makes the reformed rite unequivocally revolutionary is that it was made *malleable* to the celebrant and the community, on the basis of an adaptability completely unknown to the Roman *mens liturgica*." And further, "The same papal ceremonies in which the *Missale Romanum* of Paul VI was used derogated from the rubrics by introducing readings in the vernacular, ceremonies not foreseen, and roles reserved to clerics carried out by laymen and even women. This, in my view, confirms the revolutionary soul of the Council and of the rite inspired by it."

When asked to identify the most fundamental problem with the New Mass, His Excellency points to the fact that its architects were more concerned with "the pursuit of ecumenical dialogue" than they were with preserving "the bi-millennial rite that began with the Apostles and harmoniously developed through the centuries." As for efforts to celebrate the *Novus Ordo* in a more reverent manner, His Excellency observes that while such efforts "seem to be motivated by pious intentions," nevertheless behind such efforts there "lies a fact that none of these prelates" who encourage reverence within the *Novus Ordo* "dare confess: the failure of the Council and even more so of its liturgy."

Abbé Barthe also asks His Excellency about the Society of St. Pius X and Pope Francis' apparent solicitude for them, as well as the fate of "*Ecclesia Dei* communities" in light of recent news that "imminent reform" of Benedict XVI's *Summorum Pontificum* is coming — a subject which Archbishop Viganò addressed last week. Regarding the SSPX, His Excellency appears to advise against accepting "canonical regularization" at this time, recognizing that "once an agreement is signed with the Holy See, the independence which the Society enjoys in virtue of its position of not being completely regular would be lost, and with it, its economic independence."

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See below for the full text of the interview (first published here), which CFN is pleased to reprint at the invitation of Archbishop Viganò.

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Father Claude Barthe: Your Excellency, you have sometimes spoken of "revolutionary actions" in connection with the creation of the new liturgy after the Second Vatican Council. Could you clarify your thoughts on this matter?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: First of all, we must be very clear that the Second Vatican Council was conceived as a revolutionary event. Obviously, I am not referring to the good intentions of those who collaborated in the drafting of the preparatory schemas. I am talking instead about the Innovators who rejected those schemas together with the condemnation of Communism that the Council should have pronounced, as a large part of the world's episcopate desired. Now, if Vatican II was a revolutionary act, both in the way it was conducted and in the documents it promulgated, it is logical and legitimate to think that its liturgy is also affected by this ideological approach, especially if we bear in mind that it is the chief means by which the faithful and clergy are catechized. It is no coincidence that Luther and the other Protestant and Anglican heretics used the liturgy as their main method to spread their errors among the faithful.

Having said that, our legitimate suspicion is also confirmed when we consider who the architects of that liturgy were: prelates often suspected of belonging to Freemasonry who were notoriously progressive and who, with the *Liturgical Movement* of the 1920s and 1930s, had already begun to suggest more than questionable ideas and spread practices that were influenced by *archaeologism*, which was later condemned by Pius XII in the Encyclical *Mediator Dei*. The *versus populum* altar was not an invention of Vatican II but of the liturgists who made it practically obligatory at the Council, after having introduced it decades earlier as an exception under the pretext of a supposed return to antiquity. The same can be said for the so-called "Gothic chasuble" in the forms that preceded the Council, especially in France. It became a sort of *poncho* that was passed off after the Council as a recovery of the original form but was, in fact, a historical and liturgical forgery. By these examples, I wish to highlight that well before Vatican II there were revolutionary forces infiltrating the Church that were ready to make definitive those innovations that were introduced *ad experimentum* and had become the practice, especially in countries historically less inclined to adapt to *romanitas*.

Once we understand that the liturgy is the expression of a specific doctrinal approach — which with the *Novus Ordo* also became ideological — and that the liturgists who conceived it were imbued with this approach, we must analyze the conciliar *corpus liturgicum* to find

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confirmation of its revolutionary nature. Beyond the texts and ceremonial rubrics, what makes the reformed rite unequivocally revolutionary is that it was made *malleable* to the celebrant and the community, on the basis of an adaptability completely unknown to the Roman *mens liturgica*. The arbitrariness of the innovations is an integral part of the reformed liturgy, whose liturgical books — beginning with Paul VI's *Missale Romanum* — are thought of as a rough draft, a canvas at the mercy of more or less talented actors seeking public acclaim. The applause of the faithful, introduced albeit abusively with the *Novus Ordo*, is the expression of a consensus that is an essential part of a rite that has become a spectacle. On the other hand, in ancient societies theater has always had a liturgical connotation, and it is significant that the conciliar church wanted to exhume this pagan vision by inverting it, that is, by giving a theatrical connotation to the liturgical rite.

Anyone who thinks that the *Editio typica* in Latin corresponds to the rite that should have been celebrated after the Council sins in naivety as well as in ignorance: nothing in that liturgical book was really intended for daily use by priests, beginning with the pitiful graphic layout, which was clearly neglected precisely because of the awareness that practically no one would ever celebrate the *Novus Ordo* in Latin. The same papal ceremonies in which the *Missale Romanum* of Paul VI was used derogated from the rubrics by introducing readings in the vernacular, ceremonies not foreseen, and roles reserved to clerics carried out by laymen and even women. This, in my view, confirms the revolutionary soul of the Council and of the rite inspired by it.

Father Claude Barthe: The liturgical reform, which began in 1964 and produced a new missal in 1969, may seem more radical than its programmatic document, the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium. Do you think that Archbishop Bugnini's Consilium betrayed Vatican II, as some say, or that it developed it, as others suggest?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: Archbishop Annibale Bugnini was one of the collaborators in the drafting of the *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae instauratus* promulgated during the pontificate of Pius XII. The serious deformations of the new Missal are *in nuce* [essentially] contained in the rite of Holy Week, demonstrating that the demolition plan had already begun. There is therefore no betrayal of the Council, so much so that none of its architects ever considered the liturgical reform inconsistent with the *mens* of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. A careful study of the genesis of the *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae instauratus* allows us to understand that the Innovators' demands were only partially accepted but were re-proposed with Montini's *Novus Ordo*.

However, it must be clearly said that, unlike all the other Ecumenical Councils, *this* Council deliberately used its authority to sanction a systematic betrayal of Faith and Morals,

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pursued through pastoral, disciplinary, and liturgical means. The transitional Missals between the 1962 Rubrics and the 1970 *Editio typica,* and the one that immediately followed — the *Editio typica altera* of 1975 — show how the process was carried out in small steps, accustoming clergy and faithful to the provisional nature of the rite, to continuous innovation, and to the progressive loss of many elements that initially made the *Novus Ordo* closer to the last *Missale Romanum* of John XXIII. I am thinking, for example, of the recitation *submissa voce* of the Roman Canon in Latin, with its sacrificial Offertory and the *Veni Sanctificator*, which in the course of adaptation led to the recitation of the Roman Canon aloud, with its talmudic Offertory and the suppression of the invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Those who prepared the conciliar documents to have them approved by the Council Fathers acted with the same malice that the drafters of the liturgical reform adopted, knowing that they would interpret ambiguous texts in a Catholic way, while those who were to disseminate and utilize them would interpret them in every sense except that.

In fact, this concept is confirmed in everyday practice. Have you ever seen a priest who celebrates the *Novus Ordo* with the altar facing East, entirely in Latin, wearing the fiddleback (Roman chasuble) and distributing Communion at the Communion rail, without this arousing the ire of his Ordinary and confreres, even though, strictly speaking, this way of celebrating would be perfectly legitimate? Those who have tried — certainly in good faith — have been treated worse than those who habitually celebrate the Tridentine Mass. This demonstrates that the *continuity* hoped for in the Council's hermeneutic does not exist, and that the break with the pre-conciliar Church is the norm to which one must conform, to the satisfaction of conservatives.

Lastly, I would like to point out that this awareness of the doctrinal incompatibility of the ancient rite with the ideology of Vatican II is claimed by self-styled theologians and progressive intellectuals, for whom the "Extraordinary Form" of the rite can be tolerated as long as the entire theological framework that it implies is not adopted. This is why the liturgy of the *Summorum Pontificum* communities is tolerated, provided that in preaching and catechesis one is careful not to criticize Vatican II or the new Mass.

Father Claude Barthe: Among the criticisms often made of the new Ordo Missæ, which do you consider to be the most important?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: The most well-founded criticism lies in having wanted to invent a liturgy for one's own use and consumption, abandoning the bi-millennial rite that began with the Apostles and harmoniously developed through the centuries. The reformed liturgy — as any competent scholar knows — is the result of an ideological compromise

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between the Catholic *lex orandi* and the heretical demands of Protestants and Lutherans. Since the Church's Faith is expressed in public worship, it was essential that the liturgy adapt to the new way of believing, weakening or denying those truths that were considered "uncomfortable" for the pursuit of ecumenical dialogue.

A reform that simply wanted to prune certain rites that modern sensibilities could no longer understand could easily have avoided the slavish repetition of what Luther did at the time of the pseudo-reformation and Cranmer did after the Anglican schism: the mere fact of having adopted the innovations with which the heretics rejected certain points of Catholic dogma is an unquestionable demonstration of the Pastors' subordination to the consensus of those outside the Church, to the detriment of the flock the Lord entrusted to them. Imagine what one of the martyrs of Calvinism, or of the fury of King James, would have thought in seeing popes, cardinals, and bishops using a table in place of the altar that cost them their lives; and what respect a heretic might have for the hated Roman Babylon, which is all caught up in awkwardly mimicking what the Reformers had done four centuries earlier, although perhaps in a more dignified manner. Let us not forget that Luther's liturgical heresies were conveyed by Bach chorales, while the celebrations of the conciliar Church are accompanied by compositions of unprecedented ugliness. The liturgical breakdown has revealed a doctrinal breakdown, humiliating the Holy Church out of a mere eagerness to please the mentality of the world.

Father Claude Barthe: How can we explain the failure of Benedict XVI, Cardinal Sarah, and others who have advocated a gradual "liturgical revival" by (e.g.) celebrating the Mass towards the Lord, reintroducing the Offertory prayers, and distributing Holy Communion on the tongue?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: If a Vatican official were to give orders to decorate the Sala Nervi in the Paul VI Audience Hall with stucco and frescoes, replacing the hideous sculpture of the Resurrection with a baroque perspective, he would be considered an eccentric, especially when St Peter's Basilica is just a stone's throw away. The same thing applies, in my opinion, to attempts to make the reformed liturgy presentable by means of objectively useless window-dressing: what is the point of celebrating the *Novus Ordo* towards the East, changing the Offertory and distributing Communion on the tongue, when the Tridentine Mass has always provided for this?

This "liturgical revival" starts from the same erroneous presuppositions that animated the conciliar reform: modifying the liturgy at will, now distorting the venerable ancient rite to modernize it, now dressing up the reformed rite to make it look like what it is not and does not want to be. In the first case, we would be forcing a queen to wear clogs and dress in rags, in the second we would have the commoner wearing a royal tiara over ruffled hair or

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sitting on a throne in a straw hat.

I believe that behind these attempts, which seem to be motivated by pious intentions, lies a fact that none of these prelates dare confess: the failure of the Council and even more so of its liturgy. Returning to the ancient rite and definitively archiving the squalor of the *Novus Ordo* would require great humility, because those who would like to save it from shipwreck today were yesterday among the most enthusiastic supporters of the liturgical reform, and of Vatican II with it.

I ask myself: if Paul VI had no problem recklessly abolishing the Tridentine liturgy between one day and the next, replacing it with cobbled-together excerpts from the Book of Common Prayer, and imposing this *new* rite despite the protests of clergy and laity, why exactly should we today use any more consideration in restoring the Ancient Roman Rite to its place of honor, by prohibiting the celebration of the *Novus Ordo*? Why such delicacy of mind today, and such ruthless iconoclastic fury yesterday? And why this cosmetic surgery, if not to hold together the last conciliatory frill by giving it the appearance of what it did not intend to be?

The next Pope will have to restore all the liturgical books previous to the conciliar reform and banish from Catholic churches its unseemly parody, in whose realization notorious modernists and heretics collaborated.

Father Claude Barthe: In a 2013 interview with the Jesuit magazines, Pope Francis cited the liturgical reform as an exemplary fruit of the Council ("Vatican II was a reinterpretation of the Gospel in the light of contemporary culture"), and yet Bergoglio does favors for the Society of St Pius X. Is he interested in the liturgical question?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: I do not believe that Bergoglio has any interest in the liturgy *tout court*, and *a fortiori* in the Tridentine liturgy, which is as alien to him and disliked as anything remotely reminiscent of Catholicism. His approach is political: he tolerates the *Ecclesia Dei* communities because they keep the conservatives out of the parishes, and at the same time he maintains control over them, forcing them to limit their dissent solely to the liturgical level, while ensuring their fidelity to the conciliar ideology.

With regard to the Society of St. Pius X, we are witnessing a more subtle maneuver: Bergoglio maintains "good neighborly" relations, and while recognizing certain prerogatives of its Superiors — thus demonstrating that he considers them living members of the Church — on the other hand he may want to barter their complete canonical regularization for an acceptance of the "conciliar magisterium." It is clear that this is an insidious trap: once an

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agreement is signed with the Holy See, the independence which the Society enjoys in virtue of its position of not being completely regular would be lost, and with it, its economic independence. Let us not forget that the Society has assets and resources that guarantee sustenance and security for its members. At a time when the Vatican is experiencing a serious financial crisis, those assets are certainly enticing to many, as we have seen in other cases, starting with the Franciscans of the Immaculate, and the persecution of Father Manelli.

Father Claude Barthe: Do you think that the protective status (dependence on the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and not on the Congregation for Religious) desired by Joseph Ratzinger before and after his accession to the papacy for societies of apostolic life which practice the traditional Mass is in danger today?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: The canonical position of the *Ecclesia Dei* communities has always been at risk. Their survival is linked to their at least implicit acceptance of the conciliar doctrine and liturgical reform. Those who do not conform, by criticizing Vatican II or refusing to celebrate or attend the reformed rite, *ipso facto* put themselves in a position of being expelled. The Superiors of these societies of apostolic life themselves end up being the overseers of their clerics, who are strongly advised to refrain from criticism and to give tangible signs of alignment from time to time, for example, by taking part in celebrations in the "Ordinary Form." Paradoxically, a diocesan parish priest has greater freedom of speech in doctrinal matters than a member of one of these institutes.

It should be said that, according to the mindset of those in power in the Vatican today, the liturgical eccentricities of some communities, far from encouraging the rediscovery of the traditional rite, give it an elitist aspect and confine it to the "small ancient world" to which the proponents of the Bergoglian church have every interest in relegating it. Making the celebration of the Catholic Mass "normal" — according to the dictates of the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* — without "liturgical reservations" and dedicated spaces, would give the impression that it is really possible for any faithful to attend Mass without any other title of belonging than being a Catholic. On the contrary, this Kafkaesque bureaucratic castle forces all conservatives into an enclosure, obliging them to follow the rules of confinement and to demand nothing more than what the sovereign grace deigns to grant them, almost always with the ill-concealed opposition of the diocesan bishop.

Bergoglio's actions are now clearly exposed: his latest encyclical theorizes about heterodox doctrines and a scandalous subservience to the dominant ideology, which is profoundly anti-Catholic and anti-human. From this perspective, questions about the liturgical sensitivity of this or that institute seem to me frankly negligible: not because the liturgy is not important, but because once one is willing to remain silent on the doctrinal front, the complex

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ceremonies of the Pontifical end up being reduced to a manifestation of aestheticism that poses no real danger to the magic circle of Santa Marta.

Father Claude Barthe: Do the ban on individual Masses in St. Peter's, the three-day inspection of the Congregation for Divine Worship by Archbishop Maniago, and the fact that the Constitution on the reform of the Curia, Prædicate Evangelium, is said to strengthen the powers of oversight for the Congregation for Divine Worship, give rise to fears of a new virulence of the reform? Or does Francis have little interest in this liturgical problem?

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò: The ban on celebrating private Masses in St. Peter's, despite the choral protest of many faithful and some prelates against a real abuse by the Secretariat of State, continues in force and is as an unprecedented scandal. It is a trial balloon to test the ground and study the reactions of prelates, clergy and laity who, for the moment, are limited to the mere, very composed and in some cases embarrassing verbal lamentation. As I have already had occasion to state [see here for English translation — CFN Ed.], I believe that this ban is nothing more than an attempt to give legal semblance to a practice that is now consolidated and universal, which also confirms the doctrinal error that underlies it; namely, the primacy of the community dimension of the "Eucharist" understood as a convivial banquet, to the detriment of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass celebrated privately. But here we are touching on Vatican II, which none of the Cardinals who spoke out on the ban on Masses in St. Peter's dares to question in the slightest, even though it is clearly at the origin of the Secretariat of State's illegitimate prohibition.

As far as the supervisory powers of the Congregation for Divine Worship are concerned, in themselves they could also be considered in a positive sense, since liturgical matters are strictly within the competence of the Holy See. However, we would be sinning in naivety and lack of foresight if we did not take into account the fact that any norm promulgated by the Innovators will be used by them to obtain unconfessed aims, often opposite to those stated.

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