Part 1

Editor's Note: The following is part two of an edited transcript of a lecture given by Father Hesse at the Fatima 2000 Conference in Rome titled 'Discernment of Spirits', Nov. 18-24th. To our knowledge, this is the first time that the content of this presentation has been published on the internet. Frequent listeners of Father Hesse will recognize certain elements present in this conference, though this section is notable for certain insights concerning salvation outside of the Church and for his articulation of the Catholic understanding of the Magisterium.

"Nulla salus extra Ecclesiam Catholicam." This is one of the few parts of Church doctrine that the Church has bothered to define and redefine over and over again. Somehow people seem to have trouble understanding this. The Church has defined several times over that "outside itself there is no salvation". Some people think that means "outside the Catholic church and outside everything and everybody who wants to be in there, there is no salvation", but that is not what the Church says.

One Universal Church

Pope Innocent III at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 pronounced ex cathedra (that is, infallibly): "There is but one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all can be saved."

Pope Boniface VIII, in his bull Unum Sanctum, in 1302 said: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

It is therefore, as we see, not sufficient just to belong to a church. At the Council of Florence in 1441 (found in Denzinger-Schonmetzer [En-chriridion Symbolorum], number 1351), Pope Eugene IV defined ex cathedra, that:

"The most holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews, and heretics, and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal, but that they will go into the eternal fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they have joined with her, and that is so important to the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church until salvation; and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one *even if he pour out his blood for the name of Christ* can be saved, unless

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he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church."

That means, just as Saint Pius X said in his catechism: "Nobody who has not been baptized with the Holy Spirit and water can be saved, unless – "; and now he makes an exception that is hardly applicable practically: "unless he has not been able to be baptized; unless he has never heard anything about Jesus Christ; unless he has strived for all his life to please God and has never sinned against what he has been taught to be pleasing to God."

Only under these very strict, and all of these very strict conditions, can he be saved. That means, practically speaking, nobody outside the Church.

It certainly does not mean Protestants living in the United States, or Protestants living in England, or Protestants living in Germany who can hear the teaching of the Church wherever they want, and who can, if they really strive personally for perfection and for the truth, find the truth.

Now how do we reconcile the former ex cathedra statement with the statement I will read to you now?

"Our Lord Jesus Christ does not shrink from giving salvation to the efforts of the Protestant churches."

Do you see any possibility here to reconcile those two statements? Well, you do not, and I do not. The translation from the Latin being literally: "… To the efforts of which [the Protestant churches], the spirit of Christ does not shrink from giving salvation."

I think that you can easily see that with the ex cathedra statement just given to you, the latter can in no way be reconciled. It is stating the exact contrary. It is stating that it is the efforts of the Protestant churches that save a man – not the innocent Protestant baby that dies after Baptism and has never had a chance to become a Catholic. No. It says, "to the efforts of the Protestant churches Christ gives salvation". This is explicit, clear, and understandable heresy. The sentence is to be found in Unitatis Redintegratio, number 3, the Decree on Ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council, and this same sentence is repeated in the letter Catechesi Tradendae, number 32 of Pope John Paul II [1979].

Tradition: The Visible and Evident Will of Christ

Now mind you, I have been quoting Pope Innocent III, Pope Eugene IV and Pope Boniface VIII; and I have also, by quoting those three Popes, been referring to the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council. However, Unitatis Redintegratio, number 3, the Decree on

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Ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council says the contrary.

So is it possible that for some reason Innocent III or Eugene IV did not understand fully Church Tradition? Is it possible that the doctrine of the Church has changed? Is it possible that John Paul II, directly, openly and explicitly contradicting his predecessors, has with the help of the Holy Spirit, come to a new conclusion contradicting His predecessors? Well, let us ask Church doctrine about this. Let us ask the "visible and evident will of Christ" about that question.

Pope Pius IX wrote up a collection of errors in 1864, which is usually named Syllabus, that means "collection"; a collection of eighty theological theses or statements that the Pope in this document declares to be against the doctrine of the Church. Do we have to consider whether this document, Syllabus, is extraordinary, infallible Church Doctrine or just ordinary Magisterium? No we don't, for you remember that in Part One of this presentation I said that Pope Pius XII explained in Humani Generis that the faithful and the entire Church are bound to the statements of the ordinary Magisterium of the Supreme Pontiff.

In fact, in number 22 of that very same Syllabus, Pope Pius IX teaches that it is an error that "the obligation strictly incumbent on Catholic teachers and writers is limited to those points which have been defined by the infallible judgement of the Church as dogmas of faith to be believed by all."

This means whoever says that the Church is only bound to infallible statements of dogma is not a Catholic. The Church is bound by the ordinary Magisterium as well, and so are the successors of the Pope who pronounce this ordinary Magisterium, as you will see immediately.

Scripture and Sacred Tradition

Is Divine Revelation something that is subject to progress and improvement? In number 5 of the Syllabus, it condemns the proposition that "Divine Revelation is incomplete and therefore subject to a constant and unlimited progress that corresponds to the progress of human reasoning;" [Denzinger-Schonmetzer, number 2905]. This proposition sentence has been condemned simply because the Church has always taught and explicitly defines in the infallible document Dei Filius of the First Vatican Council: "Divine Revelation (Scripture) and Sacred Tradition, as the two sources of the faith, have been concluded with the death of the last apostle who has, as have all the apostles, received the Tradition right out of our Lord's own divine mouth."

This is said very clearly in Denzinger Schonmetzer, number 1501, and in Denzinger

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Schonmetzer, 3006.

At this point I think there is an apology needed. I am going to shower you with quotations in this speech.

But I only do that because I do not have the six hours necessary to explain to you what I have to squeeze into forty-five or fifty minutes. So I am going to shower you with quotations and you will have to look up some things on your own.



Papal Oath

I said the Pope is bound to what his predecessors teach and define. Why? In Part One, I mentioned the fact that every single Pope has sworn an oath of incoronation. I am talking

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about every single Pope up to and including Paul VI. This oath of incoronation, in Latin called Indiculum Pontificis, is something that definitely goes back in its present form to the time of Pope Saint Agatho who reigned as Supreme Pontiff from June 27, 678 until July 10, 681.

Pope Saint Agatho wrote down this text in a collection of Papal texts, privileges and decrees called Liber Diurinus Romanorum Pontificum, the "daily book [of the Roman Pontiff]". That means – and I talked about this to the Prefect of the Vatican Library just last Monday – that by the time Pope Saint Agatho wrote down the text, this text was probably already a couple of centuries old.

We are looking back at something that every single Pope has sworn to for more than sixteen hundred years. The present Pope says in a different context that the heritage of this size cannot be a formality or an historical incident. It is an explicit expression of the will of Christ. Now let us hear what this explicit expression of the will of Christ means and is.

The Pope swears, he says first "I" (not the traditional Papal expression, "We"). He said, "I swear to God Almighty and the Savior Jesus Christ that I will keep whatever has been revealed through Christ and His Successors and whatever the first councils and my predecessors have defined and declared." And then he swears that he "will keep without sacrifice to itself the discipline and the rite of the Church".

The Pope swears he will keep this just the way he found it and as it has been transmitted to him by his holy predecessors; and he swears that he will keep the things of the Church without any loss, and that he will guard and he will make sure that everybody else does so. He swears that he will make sure that nothing of what is in the Tradition coming from his predecessors will either be diminished or changed or he will make sure that nothing whatsoever new can be added to it.

Towards the end of this page-long text, the Supreme Pontiff swears and signs that he will put outside the Church whoever dares to go against this oath, saying explicitly, "whoever dares to go against this oath, may it be somebody else or I".

So you see, the Pope makes it explicit that he has to firmly adhere to what has been given to him by his predecessors. He has to faithfully conserve everything that has been transmitted and he has to make sure that nobody else touches it.

Sacred Tradition is Complete

So how do we simple Catholics judge what is Tradition? Most of us have not studied

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theology to the point of having a doctorate degree. Most of us do not have the possibility to study theology to the point of being able to distinguish exactly what is Tradition, what is Papal teaching, and what is against it. So what do we do? How do we judge? The First Vatican Council gives us the answer since it is the First Vatican Council that defines Tradition. In that very same Dei Filius of the First Vatican Council that I have already mentioned, the Church says we have two sources of the faith: Divine Revelation written down, and the unwritten Tradition coming right out of the divine mouth of Our Lord and having been heard by the apostles until the last apostle died. Those are the sources of the faith; and that is the definition of Tradition.

Yet, the Second Vatican Council, in Dei Verbum, number 8, dares to oppose this definition by saying: "There is progress to Tradition and this progress can be had and will be arrived at by the study of the faithful and by the faithful contemplating what they have heard in their heart and that this progress of Tradition comes from the intimate sense of spiritual realities which they experience."

This is a lot more than the Church has admitted to Tradition in over eighteen hundred years' teaching, and you can see the contradiction.

Now, Sacred Tradition being finished and complete with the death of the last apostle can indeed experience a new depth. It is true. Saint Thomas Aquinas said there is no Immaculate Conception. Pope Pius IX, in 1854, defined forever that there is; but Saint Thomas Aquinas was not Pope and did not pronounce ordinary Magisterium. There cannot be contradiction within ordinary Magisterium, as we have seen looking at the oath the Pope has to swear; an oath that is explicit recognition of the will of Christ. There cannot be contradiction within the magisterium; there can be further explanation and deepening, but there cannot be contradiction.

What, therefore, do we have to say about so-called magisterium that contradicts Magisterium? Well, a future Pope will have to decide about that, but I can tell you that "magisterium" of today that contradicts former Magisterium just simply is not magisterium, for the very reason that the Pope has sworn the oath of not going against what he has received from his predecessors, and for the very reason that the Pope has made sure that anybody who does so is outside the Church.

Contradictions of Vatican II

Now, this is what I will leave with you, as a result of this conference. We will go through the most important points of the Second Vatican Council, the very points or the very statements that contradict Church doctrine. It will not be necessary every single time to point out that

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this is heresy or not. To us it is totally sufficient to see that there is an explicit and clear contradiction to be found between what the Church taught, what the Church actually teaches, and what Vatican II says.

I remind you of the fact that divine truth cannot change. The magisterium cannot change and the Popes cannot contradict each other; and if the Pope does, then he just simply errs. Mind you, it would not be the first time in Church history.

Before I go through these points, I have to tell you that the Second Vatican Council itself made clear that it did not want to define doctrine. Now a Council that does not want to define any doctrine, a Council that is not interested in clearing up terms that have been somewhat doubtful until then, a Council that has no intentions to teach, but just to talk about practical advice for pastoral purposes, a Council that has been declared a pastoral Council by John XXIII who started it, and by Paul VI who finished it, such a Council can also not claim the necessary inspiration by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has been granted to the Catholic Church to define doctrine and to clear up questions of theology. The Holy Spirit has not been granted as an absolute and infallible help to the Catholic Church for practical, pastoral advice.

And I remind you of what Pope Pius VI said in his Auctorem Fidei condemning the Synod of Pistoia, when he stated that the purpose of a Council is to define things, not to make them ambiguous. Mind you, Auctorem Fidei was not written just to the bishops. Pope Pius VI wrote this document and wanted every single Catholic on earth to know it.

That means if anybody asked you and said, "How dare you contradict Vatican II? What authority do you have in contradicting Vatican II?", you can answer, "Pope Pius VI gave me this authority in Auctorem Fidei, and I have read that document." (Actually you should. It is only a few pages.) "And this document says that whenever a Council is ambiguous it is certainly against its own purpose."

Norms of Theological Interpretation

There is indeed at the end of Vatican II's Lumen Gentium an explanatory note. It is an announcement made by the Secretary General of the Council at the 123rd General Congregation, November 16, 1964, and it says: "Taking into account … and the pastoral purpose of the present Council, the Sacred Synod defined as binding on the Church only those matters of faith and morals which it has expressly put forward as such. Whatever else it proposes as the teaching of the Supreme Magisterium of the Church is to be acknowledged and accepted by each and every member of the faithful according to the mind

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of the Council which is clear from the subject matter and the formulation following the norms of theological interpretation."

The "norms of theological interpretation" referred to have been laid down by Pope Pius IX when he said, Iadem sententium, eodem sensum, (the same sentence in the same sense) … a dogma saying something said fifteen hundred years ago still says the same today, and that means if the Council of Nicea defines something it means the same today. And as the Latin language, thank God, has not changed ever since, you just have to read the Latin text to get the original meaning.

Lumen Gentium

The first statement we want to examine is from Lumen Gentium, number 1. In Lumen Gentium, Vatican II says: "Since the Church in Christ is in the nature of sacrament, a sign and instrument that is a communion with God and unity among all men …" Et cetera, et cetera.

In truth, however, the Church is neither in the nature of sacrament, nor is it a sign of the unity among all men.

First of all, there are Seven Sacraments to the Catholic Church, not eight or nine.

Second, the Church is not a "sign". The Church has been defined for eighteen or nineteen hundred years as a societas perfecta, a "perfect society". That means a real being, and not a sign.

Moreover, the Church is not a "sign of unity among all men". On the contrary, Christ prophesied that we will be persecuted. Christ said, "Non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium", "I did not come to bring peace but the sword." Christ said, "They will be scandalized about us." Christ said that we will be persecuted for His sake and Christ, as a matter of fact, prophesized in today's Gospel, the Gospel of the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, that He will finish with the whole business before the last just person is sacrificed. Christ said that the troubles will be such that there will be only a few just left. That doesn't sound like a "sign of unity among all men" to me.

And you cannot talk about the Church being a sign of unity among all men as long as the forty-sixth Surah of the Koran says that every single faithful Muslim should really start to wage war against us, and as long as the forty-seventh Surah in their Koran says "You have to kill the unfaithful dogs."

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Part III coming soon.

