

Watch Murray's lecture apart of the Father Fahey Conference focused on the Catholic Youth Movement:



By Murray Rundus

On September 13th, 2024, the now elderly Pope Francis was wheeled onto the stage at Singapore's Catholic Junior College. This was the last day of a 13-day long and multi-country trip that the Pope had made to Asia. Prior to Pope Francis getting to speak, there were several events that would have been unthinkable for an event attended by a pre-conciliar Pontiff but that those living in the age of Vatican 2 are all too familiar with. There was a pseudo-religious contemporary dance fusion, a number of 'testimonies' from pagans on the depths of their spiritual journeys, and a focus on the ambiguous need to 'walk together' and the importance of 'dialogue'.^[1] But what followed would go down in history as one of the most controversial moments of the Francis pontificate. In response to these many comments, Pope Francis offered a series of platitudes, encouraging students to 'get out of their comfort zones' and use technology in moderation. But the speech quickly turned theological as Pope Francis stated:

"One of the things that has impressed me most about the young people here is your capacity for interfaith dialogue. This is very important because if you start arguing, "My religion is more important than yours...", or "Mine is the true one, yours is not true....," where does

this lead? Somebody answer. [A young person answers, “Destruction”.] That is correct. **All religions are paths to God. I will use an analogy, they are like different languages that express the divine.** But God is for everyone, and therefore, we are all God’s children. “But my God is more important than yours!”. Is this true? There is only one God, and religions are like languages, paths to reach God. Some Sikh, some Muslim, some Hindu, some Christian. Understood? Yet, interfaith dialogue among young people takes courage. The age of youth is the age of courage, but you can misuse this courage to do things that will not help you. Instead, you should have courage to move forward and to dialogue.”[\[2\]](#)

The words of Our Lord in the Gospel of John 14:6 are enough for our readers to understand the grave and scandalous nature of such a claim “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.” Scandalous papal statements similar to this one are not uncommon for the Francis pontificate or even for the pontificates of John Paul II or Benedict XVI, both infamous for their Assisi meetings and dubious statements.[\[3\]](#) But this statement was notable for its clarity and explicit expression of indifferentism. It was the first time in the era of mass internet media, that a Pope said the quiet part out loud about such a central component of the Catholic faith, applying Vatican II in the way traditionalists argue: as an unequivocal rupture with the past. In many ways, the reactions to this statement were more interesting and telling than the statement itself, as it is exemplary of a new mindset plaguing and troubling many Catholics.

The ‘Popesplainers’

Defenders of post-conciliar innovations are not a new phenomenon in the Church. In a certain sense, such a disposition is natural for a Catholic to have. We are constantly reminded in our meditation books and spiritual readings of the importance of obedience, and one of the main Catholic apologetic goals is to defend the supremacy and infallibility under specific conditions of the Roman Pontiff as expressed in the First Vatican Council. But since the Council we have seen a tendency among certain Catholics to exaggerate the Pope’s authority. Their argument typically says that the Pope simply cannot be assumed to be wrong whenever he is teaching, irrespective of whether he is speaking in an infallible context or not. They will say that the only judge of what is infallible or fallible is the Pope himself, and so therefore what the current Pontiff says is enough to determine what is traditional or not. As for when the Pope isn’t speaking in his teaching capacity, these apologists will say that we have a universal duty to be as charitable as possible when interpreting other people and that for the highest authority on Earth, this is even more so. Practically speaking this means refusing to criticize the Pope, as each statement can be taken to be orthodox if interpreted correctly.

Chris Ferrara described this phenomenon in his book *The Great Facade*, though under a

different name called “Neo-Catholicism” which he says “presumes that lay people are incapable of understanding their own faith and the history of their own Church sufficiently to know where a given proposition or practice contradicts what they have been taught or what they have practiced before. It makes of the Pope the leader of a kind of gnostic sect, whose members depend upon the latest auguries from Rome in order to know the content of their belief and praxis. And, as is the case with the neo-Catholic claim that papal innovations are ‘by definition’ traditional, the argument presumed *a priori* that no Pope can possibly contradict his predecessors in any matter of substance. Here it must be noted, however that some modify the *a priori* argument by conceding the existence of reversals or contradictions, but holding that since only the Pope can determine if these are necessary ‘developments’ to meet changing conditions, no one may criticize or oppose the changes. The combination of the two arguments renders the neo-Catholic position non-falsifiable; the Pope becomes for all practical purposes, not merely infallible according to the strict limits of the Vatican I definition, but utterly inerrant-and not just in doctrinal matters, but in all matters.”[\[4\]](#)

Ferrara is correct that this would indeed make the position non-falsifiable within a Catholic framework. There is a natural seeking and reaching out of the human heart for wisdom and for truth, but we must be careful not to confuse truth with non-falsifiable positions. But there is something deeper than examining whether such a position is logically sound or not, because a consequence of adopting such a position makes the Catholic position one of absurdity.

The Magisterium

The presence of error within the teaching of the Church is a difficult issue for all of those who profess to be Christian, whether it be Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox. When we look to the early Church as the Arian heresy corrupted a vast majority of dioceses, the natural question arises “How have the gates of hell not prevailed?” When we look to the even more dismal state of the Church today, we see mass Liberalism, degeneracy, and insincerity within the Protestant groups, various Orthodox patriarchs contradicting one another,[\[5\]](#) and of course in our own community we see a clear illustration of the blind leading the blind with our faithless shepherds leading the faithful, the majority of which no longer have even a basic conception of the Catholic faith. The Protestant solution to this problem lies in an infinite regress of new denominations seeking to be more and more faithful to the uninterpreted scripture as the sole rule of faith, a solution that leaves one’s soul open to pride and error. The Orthodox solution is no solution at all, but rather one that asserts that multiple jurisdictions with differing beliefs on core matters concerning salvation can still be a part of One Church, even if each church has excommunicated one another, and that this is

a strength rather than a weakness.^[6] This leaves us with the Catholic solution to ecclesiastical error, the Catholic Magisterium, a system steeped in complexity which can be a strength in that it is a real solution and a weakness in that it is often difficult to understand. For the Catholic Church, not every teaching is equal in magisterial weight. The non-definitive teaching of the Pope in an apostolic exhortation is not on the same level as the teaching in the solemn Papal Bull of Pius XII which defined the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a Dogma. The teaching of the former we would call the use of the 'Authentic' or 'Ordinary' Magisterium while the latter we would call the use of the Extraordinary Magisterium and is considered infallible. Likewise, we consider infallible the Ordinary Magisterium when it is engaged Universally, meaning it is believed always and everywhere. While the Ordinary and non-universal Magisterium is not infallible, it still requires Catholics to believe it, and this is a component often emphasized by neo-Catholic Popesplainers. If indeed the Ordinary but non-universal Magisterium binds us to believe it, then is not the ordinary teaching binding under the pain of sin? A crucial component that is missing is that while the Ordinary Magisterium would normally bind us to believe it when contradicted by a magisterial teaching of a higher weight, we are instead bound to believe the higher-level teaching. It is in this sense that the modern 'traditional' Catholics get their name, rather than the calumny that traditionalists are named after an unintelligent attachment to vague 'traditions' but an adherence to the infallible Tradition of the Church over innovative uses of the fallible Ordinary Magisterium seeking to supplant former infallible teachings.

(For precedents on this see this article [The Graverobber Council-The Hussites and Vatican II - Catholic Family News](#) and for more on the nature of the Magisterium see [Clear ideas on the pope's infallible magisterium | District of the USA](#) or Salaverri's *Sacrae Theologiae Summa* 1B)



Angelico Press

SUPPORT CATHOLIC FAMILY NEWS BY PURCHASING FROM OUR REFERRAL LINK!

[HTTPS://ANGELICOPRESS.COM/CATHOLICFAMILYNEWS](https://angelicopress.com/catholicfamilynews)

The Consequence of the Popesplainer Position

If we are to accept instead that we must simply accept whatever the current teaching of the reigning Pontiff is, irrespective of if it is infallible or fallible or if it contradicts prior irreformable teaching, the very concept of the Magisterium, and therefore the strength of the Catholic position, falls apart. For if we are to say that everything is binding and that everything that is taught is traditional by definition, then there no longer exists a distinction between fallible and infallible teachings, between Ordinary and Extraordinary Magisterium. Vatican One would have been wrong for teaching that the Pope was infallible when teaching *Ex Cathedra* on a matter of faith and morals because he would in practice be infallible in every instance! The consequence of this position to explain away each action of the Pope is that the problem of error within the hierarchy is gaslit away instead of solved, while reason is thrown out the window.

The Origin of this Position

The complicated nature of the differing levels of the Magisterium has led to these crucial concepts not being taught, even in the pre-conciliar period. But we cannot blame the early 20th century catechists as there was no need to teach the faithful about the possibility of papal error or the potential for magisterial documents contradicting one another, as the hierarchy was still very orthodox! Nevertheless, we can find an abuse in Catholic apologetics that likely led to such a strange mentality of saying “black is white” entering the Church. A frequent rebuttal to the Protestant “Scripture Alone” thesis has tended to be exaggerated and often said that Scripture cannot be interpreted or understood without a higher authority. While it is true that certain passages in Scripture are complicated and the fallible nature of the mind of man requires an authority to settle disputes, guided by the light of the Deposit of Faith, we cannot assert that every passage in Scripture is incomprehensible. This is certainly not the mind of the Fathers who constantly quoted Scripture to prove their arguments, or the Angelic Doctor St. Thomas Aquinas who would in his *Summa Theologica* frequently use a Scripture verse as a one-liner to prove his point as a *Sed Contra*. It would be absurd, for example, to say that we cannot know from Scripture where Jesus was born because we need an authority to interpret Matthew 2 “When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda” for us. Yet, such an argument has frequently been used in various forms against Protestants, and if adopted leaves no room for us to accept the basis of Tradition or even our reason as well. If we cannot discern even the existence of Christ by using Scripture without the use of authority, then we have no intellectual basis to accept the Resurrection of Christ, the giving of the keys to Peter in Matthew 16, or even the apostolic origins of the Church itself! It is not too far off from this to say that indeed we cannot even know if white is white, if black is black, or where is up or down, without the Pope to tell us to do so. Contrary to this, Catholicism is a reasonable religion. It is a religion based on Scripture as a rule of faith but not the *only* rule of faith. It is one that tells us that we can trust our senses and our reason but that these things must be guided by faith and holy Tradition. For our religion to hold any legitimacy we must assert that our reason and our senses are trustworthy, and hold onto the faith of our fathers rigorously, guarding it against those who seek to change it, as St. Paul commanded us to do:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema. As we said before, so now I say again: If any one preach to you a gospel, besides that which you have received, let him be anathema”[\[7\]](#)

Pope Francis in light of the Popesplainers

Now that we understand the neo-Catholic Popesplainer position and the Catholic one, we can comfortably examine the incident of Pope Francis, and understand what to make of it. We should first understand that the neo-Catholic position does not seek to do any work that

it doesn't have to do. If the position can succeed at showing that a statement was merely a mistranslation or that the Pope was taken out of context, or that he misspoke and didn't mean such a statement, they will be sure to assert this before regressing to their true position that the Pope simply cannot be wrong. And so predictably, after the incident in Singapore, the defenders of the Pontiff rushed to say that the statement was a mistranslation. Soon the Vatican's official translation changed the words of the Pope to lessen to damage. "All religions are a path to arrive at God" was memory-holed in 1984 style and instead the Pope was quoted as saying "Religions are **seen as** paths **trying** to reach God" along with other significant changes to make the statement more ambiguous.^[8] Notably, only the English translation suffered this fate, as if the Vatican knew that the English-speaking Catholic world would be especially offended by heresy. However, after some outrage at this blatant deception, the Vatican was forced to put a proper translation on its website, which currently remains there.^[9] The next argument was simply the Pope didn't mean to say that all religions lead to God, because he has said in the past things that seem to suggest he believes that Christ is the only way to eternal life^[10] And yet, this would seem to misunderstand the nature of the modern ecumenist and conciliarist completely. It is as if the modern neo-Catholic has slept through the entire post-conciliar period! The modern ecumenist wouldn't dare say that Jesus wasn't involved in the saving of a Hindu or a Muslim, but rather that these pagans are in reality "anonymous Christians" a term famously introduced by Jesuit Karl Rahner. And so in this sense, Jesus is the only way. This is why the analogy that Pope Francis used referring to religions as "languages" is actually an accurate description of this ecumenist mentality because indeed according to this new theology, there is no longer one exclusive religion but many religions that do the same job but express their sentiments and faith in different ways, just as we express our thoughts in languages. The final argument that was used is that the Pope didn't truly mean this, but merely misspoke. This seemed to be firmly disproven when just a few days later he told another inter-religious gathering at Med24 "Unity is not uniformity, and the **diversity of our cultural and religious identities is a gift from God**. Unity in diversity."^[11] If the Pope truly misspoke, why was this written, prepared-in-advance statement so similar? The answer is that this was completely intentional.

Conclusion

Having failed at trying to avoid the issue of Papal error, the modern Popesplainer can either go the route of simply ignoring the issue, waiting until it goes away, and then return to calling traditional Catholics 'schismatics' and 'disobedient' in a matter of weeks, or he can authentically accept the conciliar religion that Pope Francis is promoting. Regardless of the option these apologists take, it is important to realize that the traditional Catholic solution remains the same. For Catholics, we must take solace in the fact that the sometimes-




complicated Magisterium and Tradition of the Church gives us the right to hold the traditional Catholic faith and attend the Traditional Mass, while knowing that the Church will not and cannot defect from the faith when it is speaking infallibly. And indeed we can contemplate the great mystery that is the crisis in the Church and how despite undergoing decades of terrible pontificates, these same Pontiffs have still refrained from imposing error on the whole Church using their infallible Magisterium. The Catholic faith is not one of scrupulously seeking a false certitude in throwing away reason, but finds peace in the deposit of faith and the traditional practices which the see of Peter is ordered to protect.

For more articles like this, subscribe to our paper!

Physical copy: <https://simplecirc.com/subscribe/17820213>

Locals Premium (PDF Copy+Access to video lectures) <https://catholicfamilynews.locals.com/>

 **Catholic Family NEWS**
 April 2025 Vol. 32 Issue 4 \$3.50US / \$3.50CDN / \$2.00UK

<p>The Authority of Saint Thomas Turn to page 5</p> 	<p>Decisive Cardinals Turn to page 9</p> 	<p>Motherhood Turn to page 16</p> 
--	---	--

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

Understanding the Crusades

Part One – The Islamic Aggression

By Phillip Campbell

The Crusades are a topic of perennial debate. Despite ending more than 750 years ago, they still provoke passionate discussion among Catholics and non-Catholics alike. For some, the Crusades are a sign of the vibrancy and strength of medieval Catholicism at the pinnacle of its influence. For others, the Crusades are reprehensible acts of religious violence – a blot on the Church's legacy that Catholics should be ashamed of.

As with other historical controversies, the truth about the Crusades tends to be overshadowed by partisan bickering; people get so invested in what they think the Crusades symbolize that the actual history becomes obscured. They are less interested in learning history and more interested in using the Crusades as a club to

bludgeon home a point. Today we will begin to rectify this with a series of articles on the Crusades, beginning with the backstory of the Crusading movement, which will give important historical context to the events that unfolded during the crusading era.

Too many histories of the Crusades begin with 1095, when the First Crusade was summoned at the Council of Clermont by Pope Urban II. This is an undesirable starting point, as it deprives us of the important background context that leads up to Clermont. Today we will focus on understanding the history of Islamic-Christian relations in the East up to the eve of the First Crusade, which will set the stage for further study of the Crusades proper in future installments.

The essential point we should understand at the outset is that the Crusades were primarily defensive



Templar Knights, by Giuseppe Rava

wars – they were a Christian response to increasing Islamic aggression in the Middle East. They were also an act of Christian solidarity, witnessing Latin speaking

Christians of the West aiding Greek speaking Christians of the East despite the tragic schism that had split the two churches back in 1054. We should keep these points

in mind when reviewing the history of this period.

The religion of Islam traces its origin to the year 610. Continued on page 7

The Modern Crusade: The Church vs Organized Naturalism

Brian M. McCall

Catholic Family News held its first in person conference since 2019 on March 1 and 2 in Florida. The theme was Christ's Program for Peace v. Satan's Plan for Disorder according to the writings of Father Dennis Fahey. About 100 people attended from around the country. Traditional Latin Mass was offered each morning by our two invited priest speakers, Father Michael McMahon, SSPX and

Father Matthew, OSB. We had a public recitation of the Rosary every day after lunch. For those who purchased the meals, there was a great opportunity to visit with the speakers and to get to know new Catholics from around the country.

Saturday opened with Mass being offered by Father McMahon. We knew the devil was not happy at the goal of this conference to expose his plans. During the Post Communion the hotel's

speakers started blaring pop music. As a few men scrambled to find a hotel worker to shut it down, I realized all the devil could do is lash out with little annoyances and this meant our goal was worthwhile.

The Six Point Plan

After breakfast the conferences opened with an introduction of the overall theme and the six points of Christ's Plan for order, according to Father Fahey:

- The Church is supernatural and supernatural. All people must acknowledge the nature of Christ's Church as the only means of salvation.
- Nations are obligated to recognize Christ's Church and that the Church has the power to intervene in temporal



affairs as guardian of the divine and natural law.

• The Christian family Continued on page 8

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS, VARIOUS BOX MAIL, NADAPHO FILE, IN 1823

[1] <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2024-09/pope-calls-singapore-youth-unity-during-interreligious-dialogue1.html>

[2] <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2024/september/documents/20240913-singapore-giovani.html>

[3] It is to be remembered that Pope Benedict participated in scandalous Ecumenical gatherings. <https://sspx.org/en/publications/april-2011-superior-generals-letter-78-36051>

[4] Chris Ferrara, *The Great Façade*, Angelico Press, p149

[5] See for example the disputes on communing Miaphysites, the rebaptism of converts and the ordination of female deacons within various Orthodox jurisdictions

[6] See for example the current schism between Moscow and Constantinople. Apologists attempt to rectify this by saying that Moscow and Constantinople may not be in communion with each other, but are both in communion with a different jurisdiction, Antioch.

[7] Galatian 1:8-9 DRA

[8] <https://www.wmreview.org/p/witness-saints-heresy>

[9] <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2024/september/documents/20240913-singapore-giovani.html>

[10] <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/33748/pope-jesus-is-the-only-door-to-eternal-life>

[11] <https://x.com/MurrayRundus/status/1836102116571779486>