

Society of St Pius X - District of Asia



St Pius X Priory
286 Upper Thomson Rd
Singapore 574402
Tel. 65/ 6459 0792
Fax. 65/ 6459 3591
district@sspasia.com

May 3, 2012

Historia Magistra Vitae – History: our Teacher in Life

The background : In 2004, an SSPX priest, prior in Bordeaux, France, refused his re-assignment, and with some other priests, wrongly criticized the formation given in one of our seminary and the leadership of Bishop Fellay, at the head of the SSPX. These priests were eventually expelled and founded the Good Shepherd Institute. Here are two letters about this crisis which give sound Catholic principles and common sense remarks which we need to keep in mind in this May 2012. The first is from the French District Superior, Fr. De Cacqueray, and the second from a concerned mother. The French originals can be found at <https://laportelatine.org/publications/lectures/2004/bordeaux/bordeaux.php>

Letter 1, From Suresnes (Paris), France, September 4, 2004

Dear Sir,

The sorrow which you express seems so sincere that I need to bring you to a better appreciation of the situation created in Bordeaux by the rebellion of Fr. L. I write "rebellion", because I find no other words to characterize the attitude of a priest who refuses to bow before the authority of his superior, who challenges it publicly and exhorts the faithful to follow his example. Unfortunately this is the present behaviour of Frs. H. and L., which no one can deny.

Your letter appears to show that you do not have a correct understanding of the government of an ecclesiastical society such as the Priestly Society of St Pius X. This government is by no way a democratic one, and the decisions and acts of Bishop Fellay, its chief, cannot, nor must not be questioned by any one of his subordinate who would think differently. Moreover, the disagreement of a priest, expressed publicly, on an important matter concerning the government of the Society of St Pius X, does constitute a grave fault on the part of that priest. In fact, if one considers it a duty to express remarks or objections, he must needs afterwards bow before the decisions of the Superior, even if this Superior judges that he should not consider these remarks. This is one aspect of Christian humility which considers that no one has the graces necessary to fulfil an office outside the legitimate office bearer himself. Moreover, common sense allows to add that no one besides this Superior has the knowledge of all the elements founding this decision, and that we have to grant him a priori an experience, the knowledge and other faculties which we do not have at the same level, at least in the sphere of his activities.

I insist on these points because they are fundamental and ignored in practice, even by those who seek to stick most closely to Tradition as the shocking facts which have and are taking place at present in Bordeaux have proven. It is impossible for me to convince you if you do not accept that the rules which I have just recalled are solidly founded. If it were the case, I would fear that you are lacking an essential element of the Catholic religion concerning the exercise of authority. On the contrary, if you do accept these rules, it seems to me that we cannot not arrive at the same conclusions.

(One paragraph is here omitted which concerns some details irrelevant for today's situation.)

Fr. L., by his present refusal to obey a decision of the Superior General which is entirely in the normal and habitual field of his responsibilities, by his refusal to acknowledge that he no longer is the prior of Bordeaux, by his stubbornness to remain within the walls of the priory of Bordeaux and in the church of Saint-Eloi is the only one responsible for the harm done to Catholic Tradition. By what aberration is he dead set in destroying the work whose brilliant artisan he himself was? Such blindness actually is not as rare as we can think and finds the same explanation since the origine of time.

Since you ask me what I am expecting of "us", and I presume that by this "us" you mean those who attended mass last Sunday in Saint-Eloi when I spoke, I will answer this: **I am expecting of the faithful of Bordeaux that they manifest their fidelity to Catholic Tradition and to Bishop Fellay, its leader**, and their obedience to the newly assigned prior, Fr. Duverger. Let them not hesitate to manifest their consternation and their disagreement to the priests who, against all the principles of authority, continue to occupy the priory of Bordeaux.

Then, it will be possible to hope to rebuild what has been so grievously damaged and to continue the good effort that has been begun. Do not believe that I minimize the good work which Fr. L. has done, he who was the instigator and the soul of this renovation. Simply remember that men pass away, that no one is indispensable, and that madness often begins when we think we are irreplaceable. Now, as the Gospel says, we must all remember that we are but "useless servants".

Hoping that this letter will help you to reconsider your opinion on the painful events taken place, please believe, Dear Sir, in the expression of my priestly regards and in the assurance of my prayers.

*Abbé Régis de CACQUERAY-VALMENIER †
District Superior*

Letter 2 – From a Concerned Mother to Fr. De Cacqueray, Sept. 14, 2004

Reading your various documents on your site 'crisefraternité', it seems to us, humble faithful, that this crisis in the bosom of the Society is to be attributed first of all to pride. We all suffer, each one at his post, according to the place one has in the religious or civil society, also according to one's duty of state, in one's family, of injustices, bullying, sanctions. We have learned in the catechism, in our priories, that as long as these do not touch dogma and the respect due to the Good Lord, that we should accept them supernaturally when it is to avoid a greater evil. It is sure that such an attitude requires a lot of abnegation, of self-denial, of humility, and especially to have a serious recourse to prayer and meditation, even more when one considers himself unjustly accused. Priests above all should give us this example.

We do not want to know who is right and who is wrong : we can only judge of the lack of supernatural spirit and of the spirit of sacrifice of some of the protagonists of this crisis. My British husband, myself French-Italian, cannot stop telling our French friends how much France is blessed by God because it has so many good SSPX priests, so many schools too, when other countries cruelly lack these. In Mexico too there are souls to conquer for God, souls which are as important as French souls, faithful who are also so loving. Apostolate, the spirit of mission must not exist only in France. Italy, Scotland, Mexico have also need of good priests, ready to give themselves, ready to rebuild, to restore churches, to have hands full of blisters! May the example of Archbishop Lefebvre re-assigned and sanctioned to Tulle (*in 1962*) give strength and courage to Fr. L.

As we faithful who have children, must prepare ourselves to leave our children one day, even to see them disappear brutally, priests too must give this example of detachment of the goods of this earth to be solely attached to the only desirable good : the Heart of Jesus..

We have enough trust in God not to be disturbed in this crisis although we are saddened by it. The Society of St Pius X is going through a crisis just like our families go through sometimes. But we are sure that the Society is a work willed by God, that its founder is a saintly bishop who watches over it from above, and that therefore it will not disappear. In the midst of this beautiful work, numerous are the faithful of the Adoring Homes praying that all the priests be holy priests, ready for everything, heroism, and even martyrdom. And let there be in our seminaries non many future priests but many holy priests, because it is not the quantity that matters most, but the quality.

In our priory, mothers have got together to offer their first Sunday mass for vocations in our families, and the mass is said for this intention.

Let similar works spread here and there in France and elsewhere and vocations will blossom. Why don't you use your internet site to make known these works among your readers, since now more than ever the SSPX needs it?

United in prayer,

Carla de Condé - McKenna
03140 Charroux
France