

Response to a letter of Fr Chazal by Fr François Laisney

Singapore,
April 19, 2013

Reverend and dear Father,

Since when can you hold that the burden of proof is on the accused? Is it not rather on the accuser? You are the ones who accuse Bishop Fellay of being a liberal; you are the ones who should prove it! Therefore you got it all wrong when you write: *“So you start by saying that we have failed to prove Bishop Fellay wrong Fine! But prove it!”*

Then you go on saying that you merely quote Bishop Fellay. Here again there is another great defect the quotes you give may be imperfect, even defective, but it is wrong for you to interpret them in the worst light possible, ignoring the circumstances and the context. Have you ever read St. Thomas in his Summa?

Whether doubts should be interpreted for the best? ... Yet it is better to err frequently through thinking well of a wicked man, than to err less frequently through having an evil opinion of a good man, because in the latter case an injury is inflicted, but not in the former. (IIa IIae qu. 60 a.4 ad 1m)

Thus the habit of interpreting for the worse the saying of another man is a great vice. St. Thomas explains (ibid. a.3) that:

*this is due to a man being ill-disposed towards another: for when a man hates or despises another, or is angry with or envious of him, he is **led by slight indications to think evil of him**, because everyone easily believes what he desires.*

It is rather evident that such “ill-disposition” towards “the authorities of the SSPX” is permeating the writings of yourself and your companions. Such a disposition is not virtuous.

To show how viciously you pretend to quote Bishop Fellay, one only needs to check the quote in your letter. This is what you write:

The double-speech of Menzingen is an on-going and well-documented process; based on the idea that the Vatican II and the New Mass are fixable and therefore, we cannot demand the Novus Ordo to condemn them .>>> Feb 15th interview at Nouvelles de France.

Now there is an apparent end of quote(>>>) though it is not a standard end, without an opening quotes, thus one does not know whether the “the idea that the Vatican II and the New Mass are fixable” is really in the interview, though this is insinuated: such an insidious method is already malicious. Moreover that passage pretends Bishop Fellay said: “we cannot demand the Novus Ordo to condemn them”; now looking at the original of the interview, one finds that Bishop Fellay said: “nous ne nous attendons pas à ce que Rome condamne Vatican II avant longtemps. – We are not expecting Rome to condemn Vatican II SOON.” That last word completely changes the meaning of

the sentence! Yes, we do ask that Rome condemns the errors of Vatican II and of the New Mass, but realistically we are not expecting it soon. Hence, to cut off the last word leads to the idea that Bishop Fellay thinks that Vatican II and the New Mass are “fixable”, to use your word; but on the contrary, this is NOT what he said!

I used to say: “Don’t trust the modernists when they quote the Fathers of the Church; go and check the quote!” Now I have to add: “don’t trust Father Chazal and the likes when they quote anybody, especially the authorities of the Society of St. Pius X. Go and check the quote!” Your devious way of distorting the saying of others, cutting off essential words, makes me lose every confidence in your intellectual honesty.

Another example of such a vicious quote: you write “As you quote later so brilliantly, a new Church has ‘clearly manifested itself’ after Vatican II.” My answer is: where? The only place I can find is my quoting the passage of Archbishop Lefebvre’s declaration of 21st Nov. 1974:

On the contrary we refuse and have always refused to follow the Rome of neo Modernist and neo Protestant tendencies, such as were clearly manifested during the Second Vatican Council, and after the Council in all the resulting reforms.”

Who does not see that, again, you viciously distorted the quote? Archbishop Lefebvre speaks of “neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies”, he does not speak of “a new Church”; this is your vicious way to make someone say what he does not say!

Then you go on saying “regularisation is ... indifferent”. No, it is not indifferent, it is **in itself good**. Because order is in itself good, especially within the Church. **Regularisation is not to submit to the “Novus Ordo”, but to the canonical order: this is quite different.** The hierarchical order in the Church is not of the making of the Vatican II innovators, but was established by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself; such orderly customs were from apostolic times, and codified in ancient laws in the Church. No one can reject the goodness of such order without sin.

By saying that “regularisation is indifferent”, you reject the goodness of such canonical order. Ergo... It seems that you have never listen to Archbishop Lefebvre who insisted on the importance for the Society of St. Pius X to have been approved by Bishop Charrière, this being our birth-right: we were truly a “work of the Church”, approved by the Church. He gave – rightly – great importance to that fact. It is only against his will that he was denied that canonical order, when Canon Law was used against its very purpose (in 1975 the early sanctions were against Canon Law; then in 1976 the canons regarding *dimissorial letters*, established to assure the goodness of the candidates to the priesthood, were used to prevent him to ordain good seminarians, who would say the Traditional Mass: that was the beginning of the un-canonical situation of the SSPX). Archbishop Lefebvre was so convinced of the goodness of that canonical order that he was willing to sign the imperfect *Protocol* in 1988, in an effort to restore it.

You try to justify yourself saying: “to submit to evil out of obedience is a sin.” But here you fail to distinguish between the **possession of the authority** that comes from Our Lord Jesus Christ, which in itself is good, and the **exercise of that authority** which may be a misuse – an abuse – of it. Canonical regularisation in itself is the submission to the authority that comes from Our Lord, i.e. to the possession of it; it does not imply the following of abusive orders, i.e. the abusive exercise of it. Thus

canonical regularisation is not “*to submit to evil*”. In the early 70’s there were many good traditional priests, who were properly subject to their legitimate superiors, while not following the abuses promoted by them. The idea that resistance to abusive orders requires a rejection of the authority itself from which they emanate is an error, and far from the examples of the Saints.

Again you try to justify yourself by mentioning the FSSP, ICKSP, IBP [*Institut du Bon Pasteur*] and Campos. But we should not condemn in them that which is not bad in them, but rather that in which really lies their error. The great mistake of the FSSP was not to love proper canonical order, but rather to think they could resist the pressures of modernist bishops even if they did not have a bishop: indeed at the moment of ordination, if a modernist bishop says “*I will not ordain your priests if you do not teach Vatican II in your seminaries*”, what could they say? Hence they were led into teaching the modern errors (in particular Fr. Basile’s thesis) in their seminaries. They preferred canonical order to having a bishop: *that* was their error.

Until proof to the contrary, those who have left us have not obtained any bishop or any representation on the Roman Commission, and so, they have handed themselves over, bound hand and foot, into the hands of the progressives. Under such conditions, they will never manage to maintain Tradition. (Archbishop Lefebvre, One year after the Consecrations)

Archbishop Lefebvre rightly judged that fidelity to the Faith, to the liturgy, to morals, required a bishop – nay four of them. This has made the strength of the Society of St. Pius X ever since.

A further error of Campos was to think they could stand alone: union makes strength. Bishop Fellay had been faithful in inviting Bishop Rangel to discuss important things, such as the proposals of Cardinal Hoyos in 2000 (meeting of January 13, 2001, at which I was present, and to which Bishop Rangel had sent the then Fr. Rifan), but Fr. Rifan made a deal without consulting Bishop Fellay beforehand. And not surprisingly Rome had practically imposed upon him the necessity of separating himself from us: left alone, he was unable to withstand the pressures. (By the way, this also applies in the other direction to the loose association of the so-called ‘resistance’, comprising already some declared sedevacantist and Feeneyite – their lack of proper bond is a sure recipe for disaster: one cannot keep for long the faith when away from the Church).

The history of the Donatists precisely shows that: they were first schismatics, then heretics. Thus what you said about the Donatists, unfortunately, manifests your ignorance! The Donatists’ errors were not merely about sacramental validity, but also – and even before – on the matter of “communion with the wicked”; they refused communion with the Church, under the pretext that by communicating with the (supposed) wicked Bishop of Carthage, Cecilius, the rest of the Church had “fallen”. And St. Augustine strongly rebuked them by stating the Catholic principle that “in the Church communion with the wicked does not harm the good, so long as they do not consent to the wicked deeds.” But you have practically rejected this Catholic principle.

Then you go on judging the Pope (Benedict XVI) to be heretic, with no restrictive clause. It is one thing to point out evil deeds and teaching, as Bishop Tissier did in his study on this Pope, but it is another to pronounce a judgment on the person; especially a Pope. St. Thomas Aquinas says (*ibid.* ad 3m):

It is one thing to judge of things and another to judge of men... when judging of things we should try to interpret each thing according as it is, and when judging of persons, to interpret things for the best as stated above.

Who cannot see that you fail to do what St. Thomas teaches? Now evil deeds and modern errors are mentioned on the site of DICI and of SSPX.org, but so are the good ones. However in your writings, only the evil ones are shown and even the good are interpreted in an evil light (such as your interpretation of *Summorum Pontificum* and of the Rosary Crusades). This is typical of a bitter zeal, which was denounced by Archbishop Lefebvre.

How quick you are in judging! It seems that the very fact to suspend judgement is beyond your ability. You have already judged Pope Francis! At the end of our life Our Lord Jesus Christ will not require from us a correct judgement on all men, but rather if we did our duty. And your duty was, in the Society of St. Pius X, to obey your superiors who did not impose anything incorrect upon you, but simply to go to your assigned priory and minister to the faithful who needed priestly ministry. In this you failed.

I am amazed to read you: "In case of such entanglement, as for the wheat and the chaff, what do we do? Do we go on the field? No!" Really, you have not read St. Augustine, nor St. Cyprian! They would answer you very simply: **if you are not in the field of Our Lord Jesus Christ, you will not be gathered in the barn of Our Lord Jesus Christ, you will not go to Heaven!** Your resounding "No!" is a very clear affirmation of schism! If we are IN the Church, we are IN the field of Our Lord. By the way, it seems you confuse two parables: in the field, you have the wheat and the cockle (Mt. 13:24-30); on the threshing floor, you have the good grain and the chaff (Mt. 3:12). St. Cyprian, and after him St. Augustine, rightly point out that if you leave the threshing floor, in order not to be in the company of the chaff, **you prove yourself to be chaff**, since only the chaff is blown away from the threshing floor! Read St. Augustine and perhaps you might listen to him more than you will to me.

In the meantime, you pretend to "keep whatever attachment to the visible Catholic Church as possible, like praying and recognizing Pope(s) and Bishops." These are words without deeds when at the same time you heap on them the harshest judgements, interpreting all their deeds in the worst possible way, and refusing any possibility of a proper canonical regularity.

Beware, dear Father, of the fruits that are starting to appear! Some of the faithful follow your deeds rather than your words and are starting to slide: one family, for instance, as you know too well, where you started in Malaysia, is now a declared extreme sedevacantist, not even recognising the validity of your own priesthood; another faithful recently was shocked to see in our sacristy the name of the local bishop.

Does that mean that we want to be in an impossible situation? Not at all! Since 2000, Bishop Fellay has exercised prudence in this regard, and is still quite keen on those protections of the work of Tradition; thus after exercising more than twelve years of prudence, one can hardly accuse him of a lack of prudence! And it is one thing to seek a workable canonical situation, but it is another thing to systematically refuse any canonical regularisation. By the way, comparing a canonical regularisation to "getting our papers in order", as if it were mere paperwork, is to miss the essential *spiritual* point of "ecclesiastical communion", that third element in the unity of the Church according to St. Robert Bellarmine, without which no one can be saved: so it is *not* a question of paperwork. As

long as the irregularity of our situation is not *our* doing, our fault, it is not an obstacle for salvation; but as soon as one refuses that regularity itself, as if it were bad and dangerous, or a mere unnecessary formality, then such a refusal is an obstacle to salvation.

I do not follow any “false assumptions of Archbishop di Noia”: have you read my open letter to him in the Remnant? <http://www.remnantnewspaper.com/Archives/2012-1015-laisney-di-noia.htm>

I try to check your quotes, and unfortunately your reference is either wrong, or least imprecise: you assert that you are quoting Archbishop Lefebvre in a “June 1976 declaration”, well, it is certainly not in the sermon of June 29th, 1976, the only “declaration” of Archbishop Lefebvre that I know of that month. Moreover, I would refer you to my article on “Various Churches?” Beware of your thinking about the “conciliar church”: if you think it is a separate structure from the Catholic Church, then you are mistaken, nor was this Archbishop Lefebvre’s thinking, and so is very dangerous.

Now, I do not like ambiguities, and in this sense, I don’t like the April 14th statement. But between an ambiguous statement which has subsequently been retracted, and a complete sell-out there is a big difference. One could say also that there were some ambiguities in the Protocol of May 5, 1988, yet Archbishop Lefebvre signed it. And it is wrong to say that he rejected it the next day: read the text of that May 6th letter, it is the best refutation of such affirmation: Archbishop Lefebvre affirms there that he is grateful for having signed it! (http://sspxasia.com/Documents/Archbishop-Lefebvre/Archbishop_Lefebvre_and_the_Vatican/Part_I/1988-05-06.htm) The truth is that **what he asked on May 6 is the prompt implementation of that protocol**, asking for a date to fulfil it in the near future: this is far from rejecting such protocol, but rather giving it a sense of urgency. It is only in front of the delaying tactics of Rome that he saw the danger of Rome not fulfilling what was granted in the Protocol, viz. the granting of a bishop, and then he decided to go ahead. That decision was taken at the end of May. Read my book *Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican*; all the essential documents are there.

Whether “Rome is moving towards Tradition” under Pope Francis or not, one thing I know is that the Head of the Church is Our Lord Jesus Christ: I trust Him; and in the order He has established, I want to be, without compromise with error. As for the future, one thing I know is that He is in control. So I try to do my duty each day, no matter how dull it may be.

I note that you completely side-tracked my argument that the comparison of your reasons for opposing Bishop Fellay were disproportionately smaller than Archbishop Lefebvre’s reasons for resisting the Council, the New Mass and Assisi. Prudence, yes, but public rebellion as yours, no! Such rebellion was not the spirit of Archbishop Lefebvre at all. The Archbishop was not a rebel; his first stance was not ‘against’ novelties but rather ‘for’ fidelity. As a consequence, he was not quick to condemn; he knew to wait: some would have liked him to make consecrations earlier! But he waited until 1988. Many have forgotten that June 30th was the fourth date he had set: he had already postponed at least three times, in the hope of getting a proper canonical regular situation. What a contrast with the rash, quick way that you condemn both the Pope and Bishop Fellay!

I wonder whether you re-read yourself. You write that “this is the second time in a lifetime that obedience is used to disobey God.” Come on! Honestly, what “disobedience to God” has been asked of any of you??? That question was put to Fr Joseph Pfeiffer in St. Mary’s last August and he could

not answer. What sin was asked from you? You may have been asked to refrain from doing your own will, but you were certainly not asked to do something against God's will.

Some have a tendency to take their own will for the Will of God. This *subjectivism* is a very common tendency, and one ought to fight against such. If obedience is one of the three Evangelical Counsels, it is precisely because it is the remedy to such common error, so much opposed to true spiritual life: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk. 9:23).

You may have been asked to refrain from public declarations, but who cannot see that the reason for such an order – most reasonable – is the intemperance of *your* declarations? Fr. de Cacqueray is certainly not a priest you would accuse of liberalism. Now Bishop Fellay put you under the command of Fr. de Cacqueray and you refused such an assignment?! Was such a command of Bishop Fellay "*disobedience to God*"? No. Why then did you disobey? Sorry Father, your case falls flat on the ground.

Now you pretend that you want to establish "a corps, an army"! You relinquish the position you were given by your "general", becoming a loose cannon, and pretend to be able to organise an army corps!

After having broken a first promise, how one could trust you to keep a second? This is why divorce and remarriage is not good; this is the same for priests who abandon their first duty.

Your place is to repent and return to where you should have gone: under Fr. de Cacqueray. This is the only way to "fulfil the promises" you have made, promises of obedience to God through your superiors.

For this I will pray, especially to Our Lady and St. Joseph, whose great virtue was indubitably obedience (and prudence: he did not rush to condemnations, see Mt. 1:19-20).

Yours sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

Fr. François Laisney