

Bishop Fellay's

Letter to Friends and Benefactors #81

December 6, 2013

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

At this year's end it is appropriate to look back at the main events in the Church and in the Society so as to learn from them the lessons that will enable us to help advance the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this analysis of the present situation, we will not forget that “all is in the hands” of Divine Providence which, without diminishing human freedom, infallibly disposes all things so that they work together for the good of those who love God (cf. Rom 8:28). This in no way relieves us of our obligations; quite the contrary! “In this is my Father glorified: that you bring forth very much fruit” (Jn 15:8)!

It seems to me necessary to mention once more the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI and the election of his successor, Pope Francis. From the first days of his pontificate, the Supreme Pontiff from Argentina has appeared to be very different from anything that we have seen until now. The recent Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* illustrates the difficulty of categorizing an unconventional person who does not hesitate to formulate vehement and repeated critiques of the contemporary world and the modern Church. He points out many real problems; yet one might wonder about the effectiveness of the methods being extolled and doubt that they can be implemented. It is not easy to care for a dying patient, and some treatments that are even more revolutionary than the ones already applied for that purpose could very well finish him off! We do not conceal from you our fears about the future of the Church, humanly speaking. We firmly believe in the assistance of the Holy Ghost promised to the Bride of Christ, but we know that that does not prevent churchmen from being able, really and truly, to ruin souls by leading them to hell.

At first glance one could not say that the recent months of the new pontificate have improved this situation.

Although we continue to hope that an authentic taking of control inspired by God will come one day, the reality of the spiritual sufferings of the Church Militant remains nonetheless. So many of her members are ignorant even of the fact that their lives are at stake! Saint Pius X said at the beginning of the twentieth century that the main cause of the loss of souls was religious ignorance, the ignorance of the truths of the faith. This will only be aggravated, both by the decrease in the number of priests that is weighing heavily upon Europe and other regions, and also by the formation being given in the seminaries. The change of pope has in no way modified this disastrous situation, and the reaffirmation of the unfortunate direction of the Second Vatican Council makes us fear that, since the same causes produce the same effects, the worldwide situation of the Catholic Church will remain tragic, and that it is not about to improve. The canonizations of two popes closely connected with the Council and its implementation are not going to fix it. Furthermore, the recent announcements of the decentralization of papal authority—of its dilution in an expanded collegiality—have been applauded by the worst modernists, such as Hans Küng, and only increase our apprehensions about the future.

In the midst of these worries, the welfare of the entire Church must remain dear to every Catholic heart. The development of our Society that we see being accomplished before our eyes is a cause for joy and

thanksgiving, and concrete proof that fidelity to the traditional faith and discipline always procures the blessed fruits of grace.

The 43 new seminarians who entered our seminaries in the northern hemisphere in October and the 210 or so seminarians in formation in our houses are a real consolation. In the United States the construction of a new, larger and more beautiful seminary in Virginia is progressing month by month. If all goes well, in 2015 this house will open its doors to continue the important work of priestly formation taking place now in Winona, Minnesota.

At this time our dear priests are traveling through the world to minister to still more believers who discover us and call on us for help. The priests assigned to Central America and Africa do not suffice for the missions that we have started in Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and San Salvador; in Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda do receive regular visits from our missionaries, but that is so little to quench the spiritual thirst of so many, many souls.... Oh Lord, give us priests!

In a world that is increasingly hostile to keeping the commandments of God, we must have a genuine concern for forming well-tempered souls who take their sanctification and salvation to heart. This quite naturally leads us to give a great deal of attention to our schools and to their development. In these works of formation we invest the greater part of our resources and efforts, both human and material. Throughout the world, priests and religious are dedicating themselves to the magnificent task of Catholic education and teaching in more than one hundred institutions.

Well aware, dear faithful, that the salvation of a soul starts in the cradle, we struggle with all our might to preserve the treasures of the Christian home, a center of holiness in the midst of a decadent world that can only lead souls to hell. We do appreciate and share the concerns of fathers and mothers of families who have understood that the salvation of their children's souls is priceless. Yes, it is necessary to be ready to make all possible sacrifices of temporal goods—even to the point of giving one's life—in order to assure the blessed eternity of a soul.

We know that there is something superhuman in what is demanded of a Christian today. The traditional support that one used to find in the Christian organization of temporal society no longer exists. Everywhere we see an unfurling of errors in the area of faith (to the point of heresy), a relaxation of morality (particularly the abandonment of the laws of marriage and family), and an increasing lukewarmness in Christian life that is unprecedented. The new liturgy leaves many souls anemic.... *Jerusalem desolata est!* Here too, the works of the Society are seen as oases in the desert, as little islands standing in the middle of a threatening sea.

In this dramatic context, it seems to us essential to launch a new crusade in the same spirit as the preceding ones, keeping in view the requests and the promises of the Immaculate Heart of Mary as they were expressed at Fatima, but insisting more this time on its universal character. We have to put our whole heart, our whole soul into this new crusade: not just being content with the daily recitation of the Rosary, but carefully carrying out Our Lady's second request, which is penance. *Prayer and penance.* Penance, understood certainly as the acceptance of certain forms of self-denial, but especially as the very faithful performance of our duties of state.

This is why this fourth crusade will be based on the one desired by Abp. Marcel Lefebvre in 1979. A crusade centered on the Holy Mass, which is the source of all grace, of all virtue. In the sermon at his priestly jubilee in Paris, he forcefully called us to a threefold crusade: a crusade of youth, a crusade of families, a crusade of heads of families for Christian civilization.

In that sermon, our venerable founder declared: "I think I can say that we should have a crusade based on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, on the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, on that invincible rock, that

inexhaustible source of grace which is the Mass.... We must undertake a crusade, a crusade which is based specifically on this idea of sacrifice, in order to recreate Christendom, to re-establish a Christendom such as the Church desires, such as she has always done, with the same principles, the same Sacrifice of the Mass, the same sacraments, the same catechism, the same Sacred Scripture. We must recreate this Christendom! It is to you, my dear brethren, you who are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, you to whom Our Lord Jesus Christ addressed Himself in saying: ‘Do not waste the fruit of My Blood, do not abandon My Calvary, do not abandon My Sacrifice.’ And the Virgin Mary, who stands beneath the Cross, tells you the this as well; she, whose heart is pierced, full of sufferings and sorrows, and yet filled with the joy of uniting herself to the Sacrifice of her divine Son, she too says it to you: ‘Let us be Christians, let us be Catholics!’”

Abp. Lefebvre described the role that everyone—young people, families, heads of families—had to play in this crusade:

“If we want to go to heaven we must follow Our Lord Jesus Christ, carry our cross and follow Our Lord Jesus Christ, imitating Him in his Cross, in his suffering, in his sacrifice. Thus, I ask the youth, the young people who are here in this hall, to ask the priests to explain to them these things that are so beautiful and so great, so as to choose their vocations, and in whatever calling they may choose—be they priests or religious men and women, or married, they embrace the Cross of Our Lord. If they choose to form a family under the sacrament of matrimony, and therefore under the Cross of Jesus Christ and the Blood of Jesus Christ, married by the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, let them understand the greatness of this path and let them prepare themselves worthily for it by purity and chastity, by prayer and reflection. Let them not be carried away by all the passions which agitate the world. Thus, let this be the crusade of the young who must aspire to the true ideal!

“Let it be, as well, a crusade of Christian families. You Christian families who are here, consecrate your families to the Heart of Jesus, to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Pray together in the family! Oh, I know that many of those among you already do so, but may there always be more and more of you who do so fervently! Let Our Lord truly reign in your homes! ...

“Finally, a crusade for the heads of families. You who are heads of your households, you have a serious responsibility in your countries.... Just a few moments ago you sang, ‘*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat!*’ Are these just words, mere lyrics, mere songs? No! They must be a reality. You heads of families, you are the ones responsible for that, both for your children and for the generations to come. Thus, you should organize yourselves now—hold meetings and come to an understanding, so that France [your country] might become Christian again, Catholic again. It is not impossible—otherwise one would have to say that the grace of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is no longer grace, that God is no longer God, that Our Lord Jesus Christ is no longer Our Lord Jesus Christ. One must have confidence in the grace of Our Lord, for Our Lord is all-powerful. I have seen this grace at work in Africa—there is no reason why it should not be at work here as well, in our countries.”

Then, addressing his priests in particular, Abp. Lefebvre asked them: “And you, dear priests, who are listening to me now, you too must form a profound priestly union to spread this crusade, to organize this crusade so that Jesus Christ might reign. And in order to do that you must be holy, you must seek sanctity and manifest sanctity, this grace which acts in your souls and in your hearts, this grace which you receive by the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and by the Holy Mass which you offer. You alone can offer it.”

Encouraged by these vibrant words of our founder, all the members of the Society will join with you, dear faithful, in a great crusade for Our Lord and his reign, for Our Lady and the triumph of her

Immaculate Heart. When we have a declared enemy, as the Apocalypse puts it, we must respond to his attacks proportionately. *God wills it!*

We encourage you therefore to adopt a permanent spirit of crusade, although, because of human considerations, we will officially begin this new Rosary crusade on January 1, 2014, and conclude it on the Feast of Pentecost (June 8, 2014) for the purpose of collecting a spiritual bouquet of five million Rosaries in reparation for the outrages committed against the honor of Our Lady, against her Heart as a Virgin and Mother of God.

We commend to her maternal goodness your sufferings and your joys, your cares and your hopes, so that she may keep you all faithful to the Church, until heaven.

On the feast of Saint Nicholas, December 6, 2013

+Bernard FELLAY

2014 Rosary Crusade

January 1st until June 8th 2014

Goal: 5 million Rosaries

- 1) To implore from the Immaculate Heart of Mary a special protection for the traditional apostolate;
- 2) For the return to Tradition within the Church;
- 3) For the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the consecration of Russia.

Means:

- 1) Prayer and penance as asked for at Fatima;
- 2) Sanctification through the duty of state;
- 3) Spirit of sacrifice in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Note: Find the forms for the Crusade in your chapels.