

## A GLIMMER OF LIGHT

*This felicitous monograph of the eminent Vatican theologian Mgr. Brunero Gherardini is one chapter of an article published in the Italian magazine "Divinitas" (Jan-Mar 2010)<sup>1</sup>. The chapter presents a schematic synthesis of what the Society of St. Pius X has publicly stated for the last forty years in opposition to the new theology and the "new spirit" that invaded the Church after the Second Vatican Council. Perhaps this is the first sign of dawn on the horizon. As the intellectual, moral and material collapse of the church of the Second Vatican Council can no longer be denied (even by the most wildly deluded conciliar enthusiast), it is likely that the intellectual position of the Society of St. Pius X will receive increasing attention in the future ...precisely because it has tried to preserve the past. "Tradidi quod et accepi." (I Cor 15v.3)*

Mgr. Gherardini:

Trying to sum up in a synthesis the position defended by His Most Rev. Archbishop Lefebvre in favour of Tradition, and without any pretension to exhausting the subject, it seems to me that the clash is established between:

A *priestly formation* that sinks its principles in ecclesiastical Tradition and in the supernatural values of divine Revelation; and a priestly formation open to the vague culture of perennial becoming.

A *liturgy* that finds its strength in the so-called traditional Mass (and its reassertion of the Social Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ); and an anthropocentric and sociological liturgy, where the collective takes precedence over the value of the individual, where prayer ignores latria, where the assembly becomes the main actor and God gives way to man.

A *freedom* in which "liberation" comes from the observation of the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Church and the just laws of the state (all of which one has a duty to discover) together with the love and service of God; and a freedom which is becoming the one world religion – which remains silent about God's law, disengages individuals from society both ethically and religiously, and leaves the solution of all problems to individual conscience.

A *theology* that draws its contents from specific sources (Revelation, Tradition, the Magisterium, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy); and a theology that opens its doors to the worldly resolution of all the current cultural emergencies (even when in stark contrast to the above sources), in a spasmodic auto reform which leaves room for pluralism of philosophy, complying itself now to this and now to that.

A *soteriology* [doctrine of salvation] closely connected to the person and the redemptive work of the Incarnate Word, to the Holy Ghost's application of the Redeemer's merits, to the sacramental intervention of the Church and to the cooperation of baptised individuals; and a soteriology that regards the unity of mankind to be the result of the Incarnation of the Word in which (cf Gaudium et Spes §22) each man finds his own identification.

An *ecclesiology* which identifies the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ and recognises in His Sacramental Presence the

vital secret of the being and action of the Church, of its rejuvenation in the passage of time, its strengthening even in times of the most cruel persecutions, its unity and uniqueness despite schisms and defections, its sanctifying holiness despite its children's sin; and an ecclesiology that considers the Catholic Church as a component of the Church of Christ together with other components, that numbs the missionary spirit in this mythical Church of Christ that preaches dialogue but doesn't evangelize, and above all that renounces proselytism as if it were a mortal sin.

An *expiatory sacrificial Mass* which celebrates the mystery of the Passion, the Death and the Resurrection of Christ by representing sacramentally the act of vicarious satisfaction; and a Mass where the priest is only the President and all who assist play an "active part" in the sacrament thanks to the fact that Faith is not based on God who reveals Himself but is an existential answer to God who challenges us.

A *Magisterium* aware of having in its custody the sacred deposit of Divine Revelation with the task of interpreting it and transmitting it to future generations through Ecumenical Councils, through the successors of Peter (summit and synthesis of any ecclesiastical instance), as well as through the Apostles' successors, as long as they are legitimate and in communion with the Roman Pontiff; and a papal Magisterium that, far from considering itself voice of the teaching Church, submits the Church itself to the college of bishops, gifted with the same rights and duties as that of the Roman Pontiff.

A *religiosity* that realises the common vocation of man to the love and service of God, and to the love and service of his neighbour for God's sake; and a religiosity that subverts this natural order, that makes man its "focus" and, at least in practice if not in theory, replaces God by him.

From the above we can understand clearly what Society of Saint Pius X means by Tradition. That which is *not Tradition* is that which Society denies and that to which it opposes itself.

To safeguard the Faith and fight error should be the ideal and the commitment of both the Church and each one of its sons. In such circumstances, it seems difficult for me to understand if the aforementioned reproach of "incomplete and contradictory" Tradition has a real foundation. But I may understand one thing: it is not based on "the spirit of Assisi". Ω

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<sup>1</sup>Mgr. Brunero Gherardini in *Divinitas* . 1-2-3-2010. Pp.214 ss, Città del Vaticano.