

EDITORIAL

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRIESTS

November 15, 1977

Dear Father:

As a Roman Catholic priest, I believe that the Church to which I belong is the one true Church established by the Son of God for the sanctification and salvation of all men and that, in the words of Pope Pius XII, "nothing more glorious, nothing nobler, nothing, surely, more ennobling can be imagined than to belong to the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church." Consequently, I believe that the entire body of divine truth which that Church has taught throughout the centuries is every bit as important and as valid today as it has ever been and that any tampering with those truths, be it in the name of "ecumenism," brotherhood, accomodation with the world or whatever, is contrary to the will of God and offensive to Him. In a word, I adhere as fully and as firmly today as ever to the Profession of Faith and the Oath Against Modernism to which I subscribed without reservation on the occasion of my ordination to the priesthood in 1944.

Over the past fifteen years or so I have seen our beloved Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, so torn and undermined and desacralized that it is today but a shell of what it once was. So thorough has been the subversion to which it has been subjected by its enemies [Communism, Modernism, Freemasonry, secular humanism, etc.] that it now bears but little external resemblance to the traditional and historic Church for whose service I had spent 13 years of seminary training. Indeed, in many respects it gives the appearance of being far more Protestant than Catholic.

What has happened to our beloved Church since Vatican Council II is nothing short of a disaster, a tragedy of gigantic proportions surely without parallel in the history of the Christian centuries. Humanly speaking, the Roman Catholic Church is today in a shambles, a stark fact which no true priest can honestly deny unless he be totally out of touch with reality. Nor, in writing to you, is it my purpose to tell you "how bad things are" or to narrate the grim story of the steady and sorrowful decline of the Church which has occurred in recent years. You are, I assume, every bit as familiar with the appalling situation as I am.

To contend, however, that all of this has just "happened" or that it is the consequence of needed change or that it is, God forbid, the work of the Holy Spirit—how anyone, particularly a priest, can seriously accept any of these contentions is beyond my comprehension. Surely a far more logical explanation, and the one I fully accept, is that the destruction of the Church which we are witnessing today is by no means an accident but that it has been planned that way. "An enemy hath done this." There is no question, to my mind, but that the Roman Catholic Church is here and now in an advanced stage of planned demolition and that, consequently, nothing less than an uncompromising adherence and commitment to the totality of traditional Roman Catholic orthodoxy is necessary to save it.

Being thoroughly convinced, then, that our Church is currently facing a crisis without precedent in the Christian centuries, I, for one, have refused to stand idly by and to go along with all this in the name of blind obedience or for any other reason. Hence, together with others sharing that conviction, I was instrumental in forming the Orthodox Roman Catholic Movement [ORCM] some five years back, an organization dedicated to the preservation of the traditional Latin Mass and of the entirety of our God-given Faith. Our ORCM brochure, HOLDING FAST [a copy of which is sent to anyone requesting it], tells our story and presents the justification for the stand we take.

In my opinion, there is no other way of more effectively meeting the challenge posed by the crisis confronting us in the Church today than along the path the ORCM has chosen to follow. In the few years of our existence to date we have made, I believe, very satisfactory and encouraging progress, with ORCM chapels and/or Mass centers in 25 locations around the country as of this writing. We are completely Roman Catholic and not schismatic or bordering on schism in any respect, unless, that is, in the upside-down world in which we live, total loyalty to, and observance of, the Faith of our Fathers can be construed as such. We have the organization. We have the interest and support of thousands of traditional Roman Catholics from coast to coast who adamantly refuse to accept the subversion of their beloved Faith and the Protestantization of their Church. We have tremendous potential. With but six priests, however, what we don't have, obviously, is a sufficiency of priests even to begin to satisfy that potential.

Hence, this letter to you. If you agree with the thoughts so briefly outlined herein, and if you are willing to take the uncompromising stand we take, we would be delighted to hear from you and to arrange for further discussion. Perhaps your health or age would prevent you from being fully active with us. No matter, we will be pleased to have priests who can do no more than offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for us. There are scores of traditional Roman Catholic groups across the land for whom such a priest would be a God-sent answer to their fervent daily prayers. As for security, housing, financial support, etc., were you to be associated with us, I assure you that you need have no worry in the world about such matters.

While we seek only hard-line, uncompromising, thoroughly traditional Roman Catholic priests, yet we desperately need priests of such caliber in order to carry out and to expand the apostolate to which we are committed. If you are one of those and are interested, I will be very pleased to hear from you.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

Fr. Francis E. Fenton, STL

[This article is available as an ORCM REPRINT. See Literature section on Page 8.]