

Dear readers,

During the twenty years that followed the consecrations, the majority of the first groups of faithful and the leading figures in the battle for Tradition have entered into eternity. They who stood behind Archbishop Lefebvre, who assisted in the founding of seminaries, priories and chapels, who suffered great attacks during the heated times, who left their parishes, their friends, sometimes even their families, to embark on the adventure of Tradition, they experienced from up close the combat of Archbishop Lefebvre, battered from the crisis in the Church. Conscious of their responsibility, convinced of the reality of Tradition, they gave their life for the Church.



For us, things are otherwise. Perhaps we may even have had the chance to assist at the events of the year 1988. But the origins of the Tradition, we hardly know; they go back too far. A course in the history of Tradition would be useful, perhaps even necessary, to recall the reasons which prompted Archbishop Lefebvre to undertake "Operation Survival".

The third generation is born, so to speak, in Tradition, and this great number of faithful, disappointed by the current situation of the Church and having discovered the treasures of Tradition, never having known Archbishop Lefebvre, they have only the stories of previous generations. They are courageous, they are models, but they have never known the great combat! The danger of closing oneself within the small traditional world is very real.

At the priestly ordinations of June 19th, 1987, Archbishop Lefebvre had announced his intention of providing successors, to continue the work of Tradition. A few days later, he expounded his reasons to Cardinal Ratzinger in his letter of July 8th, 1987: "The practical consequences of the liberal views adopted by the Holy See at the Vatican, following the Council, are disastrous and anti-Christian. It is the uncrowning of Our Lord Jesus Christ, reducing all religions to common law, upholding an apostate ecumenism as that of Assisi. In order to stop the auto-demolition of the Church, we beseech the Holy Father, through your mediation, to obtain the free practice of Tradition by supplying the means to stay in existence and to expand itself; for the saving of the Catholic Church and the salvation of souls, [...] to conserve in the Church the graces of Tradition; the only beginning for the renovation of the Church".

Since that time, on the one hand, the situation in the Church has become still worse. On the other hand, the "Mass of all times" has been liberated and the excommunication of the bishops of the Society has been lifted. The combat for Tradition has entered into a new period. It is up to us to continue, perhaps to end this important matter. But we must remember that everything until now has been only a modest introduction to the true combat. Up to this point, it was nothing but the overture. The overture of an opera presents the personages, it introduces to us the subjects to be treated, and it familiarizes us with the various musical motifs. We have arrived at that point! The overture is finished; the opera begins! The discussions with the roman authorities will be started up; the real music will be heard. The issues at stake are of immense importance: The Church could, yes, She must come out of her crisis.

Let us turn towards our Holy Mother of Heaven to implore Her help. We thank our Holy Father, the Pope; let us pray for him. In freeing the Mass and in lifting the excommunication he has undertaken a magnificent step in favor of Tradition. The entire world has criticized him and their criticisms do not cease. It will be up to him to make the decisions on the issues for the forthcoming discussions, to therefore assume the responsibility, and to receive from it all the attacks from those people and organizations opposed to him. He deserves our support!

Father Jürgen Wegner

CONVICTIONS

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