

What is happening in the Church?

This column strives to keep the reader up to date with some of the more important statements, events, challenges that confront the Church in Canada, Rome and the world. Keeping in mind the fact that the Church militant does not just consist in the works of Tradition, but in all those who keep the true Faith, even if they do not love and defend it as they ought, it hopes to keep Catholics aware of good and positive developments, as well as the betrayals of modernism, in order to understand the situation of the Church in all the complexity of its reality.

Rev. Fr. Peter Scott

"Anglican Catholics" for the US, Canada & Australia

The leaders of the "Traditional Anglican Communion" in both the US and Canada have requested the application of the provisions of Benedict XVI's Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* of November 9, 2009.

The Anglican Church in America is not a part of the regular Anglican or Episcopal Communion, and is in fact a new Protestant denomination, created as recently as 1991 to bring together some high church Anglicans who had already separated from the Anglican Communion that is associated with the Archbishop of Canterbury. On March 3, the leaders (they are not really bishops or priests at all, since their order were declared invalid by Pope Leo XIII) of their 5,200 members, formally requested the application of the provisions of the above-mentioned Apostolic Constitution (Zenit.org).

The college of "bishops" of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, also a member of the "Traditional Anglican Communion", made a similar request on March 12, expressing the desire to "seek a communal and ecclesial way of being Anglican Catholics in communion with the Holy See, at once treasuring the full expression of Catholic faith and treasuring our tradition within which we have come to this moment". Each group is expecting its own Ordinary, chosen from within its own bishops or priests, and also the right "to retain some distinct Anglican traditions", such as the use of the Anglican liturgy (Zenit.org). This is, in fact, perfectly in accord with the Apostolic Constitution, which states in section III: "The ordinariate has the faculty to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and the other Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition, which have been approved by the Holy See, so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church".

The Australian Anglican group "Forward in Faith", which supposedly has 16 parishes, made a similar request, after unanimous vote, on February 15, 2010. However, their Chair-

man, "Bishop" David Robarts, was more explicit as to the reasons for the request and what he expects from the Catholic Church: "We are going to go along this particular track because the door has been closed to us by the Anglican Church of Australia over a long period of time...We're not really wanted any more. Our conscience is not being respected [refusal of homosexuals in ordained ministry and women bishops]...We're simply saying that we have been faithful Anglicans upholding what Anglicans have always believed...but we have been marginalized by people who want to introduce innovations. We need to have bishops that believe what we believe." A more explicit expression of belief in Protestant tenets could hardly be imagined, but the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference has appointed Bishop Peter Elliott to establish a personal Ordinariate for them (Zenit.org 02/18/2010).

The problem in all three cases is that any truly Anglican tradition is essentially Protestant in origin and nature and consequently opposed to the full expression of the Catholic Faith that they say they want to profess. The ambiguity is what is meant by the term "Catholic Faith", and for Anglicans this does not mean the precise deposit of the Faith that it does for Catholics, but the common acceptance of fundamental truths by all three branches of the "catholic" church, Romans, Eastern Orthodox and Anglicans. This is one of the errors of Modernism condemned by Saint Pius X. To embrace both Anglicanism and Catholicism at the same time is to attempt to live a contradiction. If they really wanted to be Catholic, they would convert; they would reject the heresies that are inseparable from Anglicanism, such as denial of the Real Presence and of the sacrificial and propitiatory character of the Mass. They would likewise renounce the false and novel traditions that identify them as Anglican (even when they renounce its heresies), including such things as their denial of the need for priestly celibacy; they would embrace Catholic Tradition that alone expresses the fullness of the Faith. This exercise in ambiguity and confusion can only add to the crisis in the Church and to the disrespect that the post-conciliar hierarchy has brought on itself.

Pope admits Vatican II as cause of pedophile scandal

Pope Benedict XVI's March 20, 2010 Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland is historical for more than one reason. It is first of all an admission of a grave and sinful decadence in the Church, such as has not been seen since the Council of Trent: "I can only share in the dismay and the sense of betrayal that so many of you have experienced on learning of these sinful and criminal acts and the way Church authorities in Ireland dealt with them" (§1). It is secondly an admission that the bishops are responsible for these faults, and that these were not just administrative faults, but grievous, and indeed mortal, sins: To the bishops, he has to say: "It cannot be denied that some of you and your predecessors failed, at times grievously, to apply the long-established norms of canon law to the crime of child abuse" (§11), and to the priests and religious he apologizes for the sins of the bishops: "All of us are suffering as a result of the sins of our confreres who betrayed a sacred trust or failed to deal justly and responsibly with allegations of abuse." (§10). Thirdly, it is an admission that this scandalous moral breakdown is the worst thing that has happened to the Church in Ireland since the Protestant revolt of the 16th century, and that it has done more harm to the Church in Ireland than four centuries of persecution of Cathol-

icism by the British invaders: [They] "have obscured the light of the Gospel to a degree that not even centuries of persecution succeeded in doing" (§4).

Causes of child sexual abuse

Such moral corruption in the higher echelons of the Church must have a cause, and it is the fourth and most important admission made by the Pope. We are grateful to Benedict XVI to have analyzed the reasons that brought this about in Ireland. His conclusions apply elsewhere, and are a real indictment of the post-conciliar Church. He first of all gives the principal causes, and then lists some contributing factors, in a brutally truthful and real analysis of the problem. First of all the principal causes:

"All too often, the sacramental and devotional practices that sustain faith and enable it to grow, such as frequent confession, daily prayer and annual retreats, were neglected. Significant, too, was the tendency during this period [recent decades], also on the part of priests and religious, to adopt ways of thinking and assessing secular realities without sufficient reference to the Gospel [= humanism and secularism]. The programme of renewal proposed by the Second Vatican Council was sometimes misinterpreted and, indeed, in the light of the profound social changes that were taking place, it was far from easy to

know how best to implement it. In particular, there was a well-intentioned but misguided tendency to avoid penal approaches to canonically irregular situations. It is in this overall context that we must try to understand the disturbing problem of child sexual abuse, which has contributed in no small measure to the weakening of faith and the loss of respect for

the Church and her teachings." (§4)

While still exempting Vatican II itself from responsibility, the Pope makes it quite clear that it is the new man-centered religion which is the source of the problem, which is nothing other than the adaptation of the Church to the world so much wanted by Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes*). He admits that it is a result of the lack of Faith, and that this lack of Faith is a direct consequence of the abandonment of those traditional practices that express and enliven our Faith in the divinity of Christ (such as frequent confession, daily prayer and retreats), that constantly purify the soul from its faults, that maintain a spirit of prayer and contemplation, so necessary for the separation from the world. Furthermore, and this is of fundamental importance, he admits that nobody really knew how to implement Vatican II, and yet maintain the spirit of Faith. It is the beginning of asking the fundamental question: what kind of pastoral council could it have been that was so difficult to understand and interpret that the Pope himself admits "that is was far from easy to know best how to implement it? A true pastoral council is one that gives direction, not one that causes confusion. One example the Pope himself gave of the failure to know how to correctly implement the Council has been the constant refusal to apply the Church's canonical penalties. However, this was clearly done for a reason. The Pope does not yet admit it, but clearly it was that the Council's novel consideration of human dignity excludes in practice the need for discipline, just as God's all-mercifulness evacuates the need for justice. This avowal by the Sovereign Pontiff is historical and is very close to admitting that it was the humanism and secular spirit of Vatican II itself that undermined the Faith in its practical implementation, and that consequently brought about this moral corruption.



The Pope goes on to list some of the contributing factors: inadequate screening of candidates for the priestly and religious life, insufficient formation, authoritarianism and the "failure to apply existing canonical penalties" (§4). Although the latter is the more serious, it could only have happened on account of a general, widespread lukewarmness, bringing with it indifference to the gravity of the sin and offences against Almighty God. Although the Pope does not state the obvious explicitly, he does request the conversion that is the logical consequence of it, and this as his first "decisive action" that he asks of the bishops: "This must arise, first and foremost, from your own self-examination, inner purification and spiritual renewal. The Irish people rightly expect you to be men of God, to be holy, to live simply, to pursue personal conversion daily" (§11).

It is certainly a horrifying disgrace that it takes civil investigations to bring to light a degree of moral corruption so perverse and so opposed to even natural goodness and uprightness as to cause disgust and anger amongst pagans and those who have no religion - and this in the very Church, Christ's own mystical body, of which Our Lord said: "You are the light of the world...so let your light to shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:14,16).

We are greatly saddened that it has taken such a scandal to awaken Catholics to the consequences of nearly a half century - two generations - impregnated with the spirit of Vatican II.

The remedy for the evil - justice

However, it is most reassuring that Pope Benedict XVI proposes concrete initiatives of the old-fashioned type, based upon that virtue that was put out to pasture two generations ago - justice. He insists that the perpetrators of these crimes not only personally atone for their actions, but also submit to the demands of justice in both ecclesiastical and civil law: "God's justice summons us to give an account of our actions and to conceal nothing. Openly acknowledge your guilt, submit yourselves to the demands of justice, but do not despair of God's mercy." (§7). Justice also



requires that the bishops and religious superiors "besides fully implementing the norms of canon law in addressing cases of child abuse, continue to cooperate with civil authorities..." (§11).

Justice also requires reparation for the offence given to Almighty God, and the Pope does not fail to request this either, in the form of Eucharistic Adoration in parishes, seminaries, religious houses and monasteries: "Through intense prayer before the real presence of the Lord, you can make reparation for the sins of abuse that have done so much harm..." (§14), to which is to be added Friday penances, fasting and prayer, Scripture reading and works of mercy.

Finally, the Pope begins to touch with his finger the root of this disorder: - the lack of appreciation for the religious and priestly vocation, yet all the while refusing to acknowledge its origin. This is why he orders a nationwide mission for all bishops, priests and religious, that "by exploring anew the conciliar documents, the liturgical rites of ordination and profession, and recent pontifical teaching, you will come to a more profound appreciation of your respective vocations, so as to rediscover the roots of your faith in Jesus Christ..." (§14). It is greatly to be feared that this ultimate remedy will fail, vitiated as it is by reference to documents that take the sacrificial action out of the Mass, the identification with Christ out of the priest, the total consecration to God alone out of the religious. If only such a mission were based on

the unambiguous, non-compromising, unworldly, entirely supernatural pre-Vatican II documents and pontifical teachings, what an entire transformation it would produce!

Benedict XVI's third visit to a synagogue

On January 17, 2010, the Pope followed the example of his predecessor, John Paul II, and visited the synagogue of Rome. There is nothing new in this, since he had visited the synagogues in Cologne in 2005 and New York in 2008. Of interest, however, is his insistence on Vatican II, from which comes "our irrevocable commitment to pursue the path of dialogue, fraternity and friendship" (zenit.org; 2010-01-17).

His discourse at the synagogue quotes two prayers, both prayed at the western wall in Jerusalem, the first by John Paul II in 2000, and the second by himself in May 2009. In neither of them is there any mention of Christ Our Lord, through Whom alone our prayers are acceptable to God the Father (cf. Jn 14:6: "No man cometh to the Father, but by me"; Jn 15:16: "that whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you"; Act 4:12: "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved"). Instead he professes "to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant", as did John Paul II. However, the Old Covenant, the Law, has been perfected and made void by the

New Covenant (Heb 9:14 & 15). How can the Israelites be considered the people of the Covenant, when they refused the New Covenant, and did not even respect the Old (Act 7:53), by putting to death the Just One prophesied in it?

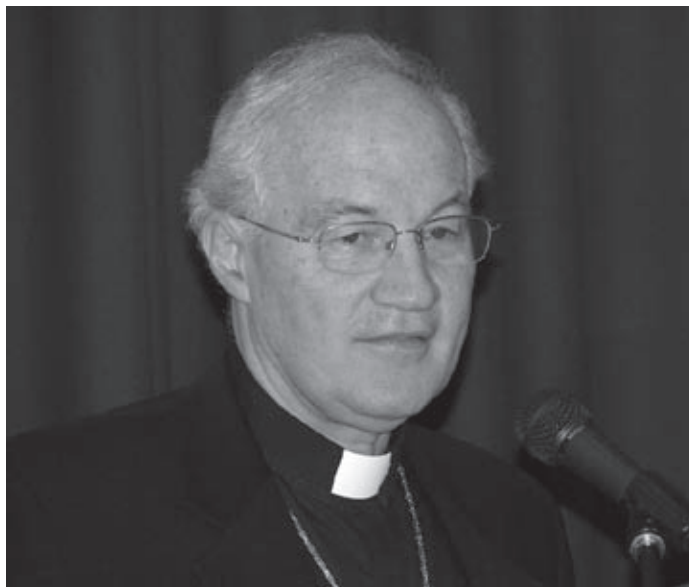
Then the Pope dared to promote "a renewed respect for the Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament" (§5), although the materialistic interpretation of the Jews refuses all the messianic references to Christ and all preparation for the New Testament. Moreover, he went on to state that "Christians and Jews share to a great extent a common spiritual patrimony, they pray to the same Lord..." (§9), a statement which is manifestly false. The Jews explicitly refuse the Trinity, the one true God. They explicitly refuse the divinity of Christ, to Whom we pray and through Whom we are bound to pray to the Father. Who cannot see that this dialogue is at the expense of grave indifferentism? The Jewish religion is presented as if it were a perfectly valid covenant between God and man, equally able to bring man into contact with the true God, so that people are perfectly free to choose whichever religion they prefer.

Quebec and Ontario bishops resist provincial governments

In two of the most liberal provinces of Canada a showdown is being prepared between the respective Ministry of Education, that funds the Catholic schools, and the bishops of the province. In Ontario it concerns the new Health and Physical Education curriculum for grades 1 - 8, to become obligatory in all publicly funded schools, Catholic and public, in September 2010, to be followed by a high school program, to become mandatory in September 2011. This program, supposedly worked out with involvement of the Institute of Catholic Education, the Ontario bishops' education arm, has as its goal to implement a policy of "equity and inclusive education", and in particular to instill

the sense that homosexuality, masturbation and transgenderism are perfectly normal, and that the term "partners" should be used, instead of husband and

wife, to avoid the assumption that partners are of opposite sexes. According to the high school course draft, two models of equality are the infamous Canadi-



an abortionist, Henry Horgentaler and Egale, a leading Canadian homosexual organization. The ministry is also requiring Catholic boards to include

sexual orientation as a ground for non-discrimination in the hiring of teachers, as well as committing to fighting "homophobia". (lifesitenews.com).

At their meeting on December 7, 2009 the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario rejected the course and sent a letter to all Catholic directors of education in the province, authored by Bishop Durocher, Bishop of Alexandria-Cornwall, stating: "The fundamental thrust of this proposed optional course reflects an ideology which is at variance with Catholic anthropology and moral teaching. Consequently, we would recommend that Catholic secondary schools NOT include the

proposed Gender Studies course in their syllabus of course offerings." Although declaring their opposition, the bishops' statement is still only a recommenda-

tion, and still only refers to the high school program. In opposition stands the official Catholic teachers union, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), which has actually made a public stand in promoting the course. (lifesitenews.com of January 15, 2010) Even if they had any power to do so, it seems unlikely that the bishops will resist these iniquitous and immoral demands of the Catholic school teachers and of the provincial ministry of education.

In Quebec, the conflict is rather reminiscent of the French revolution that attempted to do away with Sunday and introduce a ten day working week. It is the provincial Ministry of Education's plan

to eliminate Sundays and holy days, such as Christmas and Easter, from the school calendar, listed in section 19 of the province's pedagogical plan as guaranteed days off for students. Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Archbishop of Quebec, condemned the secularism that has led to this unilateral attempt at suppressing Sundays and holy days, and that this is "yet another education reform that adds an additional obstacle to the respect of Sunday, a symbol of Quebec identity that is more important than the crucifix in the National Assembly. I protest in the name of the Catholic Church and I ask the state to revoke this decision that goes against the values of civil society. The role of the state is not to impose values, but rather to respect the values

of pluralist society...I note that the total rejection of our Catholic identity leads more and more to a total mess in education. The byproducts are well known: fragile couples, broken families, massive abortions, soon euthanasia, suicides at alarming rates, evident school drop outs, work seven days out of seven... Long live a Quebec free from religion!" (Quoted in lifesitenews.com).

The Cardinal is to be praised for his frankness. However, for as long as Catholics do not sanctify the Sundays and holy days, for as long as the hierarchy promotes pluralism and secularism, can we be surprised at this radical rebellion of civil society against its one God and Lord, Jesus Christ?

Quebec: The Secularisation Continues

"Not a week goes by without talk of closing and selling churches or of demolishing convents", claims Luc Noppen, specialist in urban patrimony at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) and author of several works on the subject.

The latest religious edifice to have been sold is the imposing Monastery of the Precious Blood, at Trois-Rivières, which will be transformed into a residential building by a private company. In the sale of their convent, the Sisters of the Precious Blood did not require any particular clause as is often the case for the sale of a church or a monastery. Luc Noppen is hardly surprised: if ten years ago the sale of a church was exceptional, "today it has become a part of our every day life". Jocelyn Groulx, director of the Council of Religious Patrimony of Quebec, points out for his part that every year about twenty churches are closed in Quebec, "for lack of faithful and money to maintain them, while the priests are all in their seventies."

In Roberval, in the administrative region of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, the church St. John de Brébeuf, closed since

October 26, 2008, will also be transformed into a residential building. Eleven "condominiums" will be constructed there during the next few months. The transformation will cost about 1 million Canadian dollars. The real estate developers have promised to "respect the religious mark of the place"... The church, constructed in 1930, was placed under the patronage of the Canadian martyrs - of whom Fr. John de Brebeuf is one - canonized June 29, 1930.

At present there are still some 3000 churches and a thousand convents in Quebec, the heritage of a Catholic past that was once the pride of the inhabitants of the Belle Province. These inhabitants, however, are neglecting their heritage more and more year after year, especially since the "Quiet Revolution" of the sixties, which was marked by a separation of the State and the Catholic Church, who was once present in all the spheres of society.

