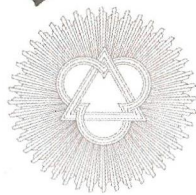


Most Holy Trinity Seminary Newsletter



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My dear Catholic people,

“The Jews have kept their faith in God.” These are Bergoglio’s words to an atheist Italian journalist, Eugenio Scalfari, who had congratulated Bergoglio on his encyclical on faith. (It is quite possible that this atheist is the only person in the world who read the whole thing, if indeed he did). This response to Scalfari on August 7th was published in Italy and subsequently throughout the whole world. It is most notable for what Bergoglio says about atheists, but we should not pass over this heretical comment about the “faith” of the Jews.

Bergoglio’s entire sentence reads thus: **“What I can say, with the Apostle Paul, is that God has never stopped believing in the alliance made with Israel and that, through the terrible trials of these past centuries, the Jews have kept their faith in God.”**

Do the Jews believe in the true God? No, they do not. We are not here talking about Jews who, owing to invincible ignorance, *think* that they are worshipping the true God, and who desire to worship the true God. We are speaking about the Jewish religion objectively.

It is the common teaching of Sacred Scripture that the Jews, on the whole, apostatized from the true faith by their rejection of Christ as true Messiah and as the Son of God.

Sacred Scripture is explicit:

If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say that he is your God. And you have not known him, but I know him. (John: VIII: 54-55)

They said therefore to him: Where is thy Father? Jesus answered: Neither me do you know, nor my Father: if you did know me, perhaps you would know my Father also. (John VIII: 19)

This is Antichrist, who denieth the Father, and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same

hath not the Father. He that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also. (I John II: 22-23)

And every spirit that dissolveth Jesus, is not of God: and this is Antichrist. (I John IV: 3)

There are, in addition, the many parables of Christ referring to the apostasy of the Jews as a result of rejecting Him as the true Messiah.

It is absolutely false to say, therefore, that the Jews “kept their faith in God,” since the object of divine faith, which is a virtue infused by God, can only be divine truth. Error cannot be the object of divine faith, that is, we cannot believe by divine faith what is contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

This is true despite any “good faith” or “good conscience.” Although invincible ignorance may excuse from guilt in not accepting the Catholic Faith, it cannot make the object of divine faith something which is contrary to what God has revealed.

By analogy, our minds, which are ruled by the first principles of reason, cannot see or comprehend something which contradicts these first principles. For example, a square circle is a meaningless notion to our intellects. We cannot know it, because it is intrinsically contradictory. So the mind cannot assent to something by divine faith if it contradicts revelation.

Whatever errors non-Catholics embrace and believe, they embrace and believe by human faith. They believe them on the authority of some human being, and not on the authority of God.

The god of the present Israelites is not the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For this true God whom they worshipped in the Old Testament has a Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of the world. In rejecting Christ, the Jews fashioned for themselves a new and false god.

This false god cannot be the object of divine faith. Bergoglio’s heresy is that he calls “faith” what is objec-

tively apostasy. It would be the same as if Moses, upon descending from Mount Sinai and seeing the Israelites worshipping the golden calf, said: "The Jews have kept their faith in God." In fact, the apostasy of the Jews in rejecting Christ was worse than their apostasy in worshipping the calf.

The atheists find justification, according to Bergoglio. In this same letter to the Italian journalist, Bergoglio made this statement concerning atheists:

First of all, you ask if the God of the Christians forgives those who do not believe and do not seek faith. Given that - and this is fundamental - God's mercy has no limits if he who asks for mercy does so in contrition and with a sincere heart, the issue for those who do not believe in God is in obeying their own conscience. In fact, listening and obeying it, means deciding about what is perceived to be good or to be evil. The goodness or the wickedness of our behavior depends on this decision.

This statement is *loaded* with both heresy and error. The heresy is that the atheist can achieve justification without supernatural faith. This is contrary to the Council of Trent.

The atheist, by definition, is someone who rejects the existence of God, even as He is knowable from the light of natural reason. The Vatican Council of 1870 defined as a dogma that the existence of God can be known by reason, citing a text of Saint Paul: "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity: so that they are inexcusable." (Romans I: 20) Saint Paul is referring to idolaters who failed to understand the spirituality and oneness of God, since these attributes of God are directly available through the light of natural reason. Consequently, *they are inexcusable*, that is, they can make no claim to invincible ignorance, which is involuntary, and which excuses from sin.

Now if this is true of the idolater, what shall we say of the atheist? Bergoglio is trying to make the case that the atheist, in his denial of the existence of God, could be in "good conscience," i.e., could deny God through an invincible and excusing ignorance. If he is in good conscience, Bergoglio says, he can obtain the forgiveness of God.

Bergoglio seriously misapplies the Catholic doctrine of conscience. It is true that a conscience which is objectively erroneous, but erring in all good faith, does excuse the erring person from sin. It is also true that someone must follow an erring conscience, *provided that his ignorance is not through his own fault*. This last proviso is of capital importance.

I will illustrate by example. A surgeon, about to perform an amputation of a leg, is absolutely certain,

through diligent verification, that the left leg of Patient X must be removed. Through no fault of his own, and without his ability to know it, Patient Y is substituted for Patient X. Patient Y needs the right leg removed. If the surgeon in that case removes the left leg of Patient Y, thinking, through no fault of his own, that he is operating on Patient X, he performs this awful deed *in good conscience*, and is therefore excused from guilt.

Another surgeon, however, who is about to operate on a patient, is not sure whether the left leg or the right leg ought to be removed. He thinks, "It's too much trouble to find out now; I am fairly sure that it is the right leg." It turns out that he is wrong. In such a case he is acting with voluntary ignorance, since he could have set aside this ignorance by simple diligence. Such a conscience is not a norm of human activity, and therefore he is held accountable and is found guilty. Although he had no malicious intention with regard to the patient, he caused harm by acting with voluntary ignorance.

So we return to our question: Can the atheist act in invincible ignorance concerning the existence of God? The answer is **absolutely not**. It is not possible to be ignorant of the existence of God, just as it is not possible to be ignorant of the first principles of reason, or that $2 + 2 = 4$.

The atheist is someone who consciously rejects a truth which is attested to by all humanity since Adam and Eve: the existence of God. There is no possibility of a guiltless or innocent ignorance concerning this. It is possible that people may err through invincible ignorance concerning some of His attributes, but they cannot err guiltlessly concerning His existence and His spirituality.

Furthermore, Bergoglio again manifests a serious lack of intelligence, since if the atheist is acting in good conscience, as he says, then he has no need to ask for forgiveness. There is no need to confess sins which we did in good conscience, though they were objectively sinful. For invincible ignorance excuses from sin, although it does not *justify* the evil we do. The invincible ignorance of the surgeon does not make right the removal of the wrong leg.

The nature of conscience. Conscience is not a special ability of our minds to discern moral truth. Instead, it is merely a judgement of our intellects concerning the rightness or wrongness of an act which we are about to perform. It is the application of the moral law to what we are about to do. Conscience receives its information from the moral law, and applies it to individual acts.

How does the atheist apply the moral law, if he does not believe in God? How could there be a moral law, if there is no God? Who is the lawmaker if there is

no God? Why are we obliged to do anything, if there is no God?

If there is no God, why would it be wrong to miss Mass on Sunday and play golf instead?

To say that the atheist is justified by following his conscience is the same as saying that you could measure something without the existence of an objective measure, i.e., a ruler. In Paris, for example, there is kept in a secure place the standard meter upon which all metric measure is based. If there is not an ultimate and unchanging ruler, then all measure and all rulers in the world become meaningless. The same may be said for conscience in the absence of God. It becomes meaningless, since it has no moral law or rule to which to compare the act about to be performed.

Supernatural faith is absolutely necessary for justification and salvation. Bergoglio in this statement is declaring that a person who lacks the virtue of supernatural faith can be justified, that is, can be right before God, can be without sin. The atheist by definition has no faith. How can he achieve this justification? Bergoglio answers: by following his conscience.

We have seen that his statement is absurd, since conscience is impossible for the atheist. Absurdity, however, is the least of his problems, since it is a **heresy** to state that someone can be saved without supernatural faith.

The Council of Trent states:

But when the Apostle says that man is justified "by faith" and "freely", these words must be understood in that sense in which the uninterrupted consent of the Catholic Church has held and expressed, namely, that we are therefore said to be justified by faith because "faith is the beginning of human salvation," the foundation and root of all justification, "without which it is impossible to please God" [Emphasis added]

The reader should please note the *obligation* which the Council imposes upon this interpretation, which is indicative of solemn magisterium. The final quotation in the passage is from Saint Paul in Hebrews XI: 16.

Moreover, the Vatican Council of 1870 declared:

But since "without faith it is impossible to please God" and to attain to the fellowship of His sons, hence no one is justified without it; nor will anyone attain eternal life except "he shall persevere until unto the end in it." [Matthew X: 22; XXIV: 13]

If any one should deny the one true God, Creator and Lord of visible and invisible things: let him be anathema.

If anyone should say that the one true God, Our Creator and Lord, cannot be known with certitude by those things which have been made, by the light of human reason, let him be anathema.

This declaration of the Council and its solemn anathemas strike both the atheist, whom ignorance cannot excuse, and Bergoglio, who attempts to put the atheist in heaven without supernatural faith.

The conclusion: **Bergoglio is a public heretic and atheists are going to hell.**

Bergoglio's "absolute" truth is relative. In this same letter to the atheist, Bergoglio states:

Second of all, you ask if the thought, according to which no absolute exists and therefore there is no absolute truth, but only a series of relative and subjective truths is a mistake or a sin. To start, I would not speak about, not even for those who believe, an "absolute" truth, in the sense that absolute is something detached, something lacking any relationship. Now, the truth is a relationship! This is so true that each of us sees the truth and expresses it, starting from oneself: from one's history and culture, from the situation in which one lives, etc. This does not mean that the truth is variable and subjective. It means that it is given to us only as a way and a life.

We are again witness to Bergoglio's lack of education in the basics coupled with a dull mind. The very term *absolute* means something that is lacking any relation to something else. *Relative* is its precise opposite, and indicates that something bears an order or relation to something else. Therefore something cannot be both absolute and relative at the same time and according to the same aspect.

Bergoglio's attempt at having it both ways, that is, absolute truth which is relative to our culture, history, and activity, is pure Modernism. Over a hundred years ago the Modernist philosopher Blondel expounded the theory that something is not true *for us* until we put it into action.

If a truth is absolute, what do culture and history have to do with it? What does a way of life have to do with it? Water will always be H₂O, in every culture and time, and no matter how we use it. The same could be said for $2+2 = 4$, and for all of the dogmas of the Catholic Church. The idea that dogmas are conditioned by culture and history was condemned by Saint Pius X in *Pascendi*.

One must also understand that the Modernist believes in historicism. This system accepts all of the dogmatic formulas of the past, but “understands” them in their “historical context.” This means, for example, that a dogmatic formula may have been understood one way at the Council of Trent, but may be understood in another way now.

It is nothing but a poor disguise for relativism of truth. It is, furthermore, a heresy.

It all goes back to Vatican II. Bergoglio’s absolutism of the atheist based on the “rectitude” of his “conscience,” as well as his nonsensical analysis of “absolute” truth flow as direct conclusions from what is stated in the Vatican II document *Dignitatis Humanae* on religious liberty.

Since ecumenism was the stated goal of the Modernists in calling and hijacking Vatican II, it was necessary to establish relativism as the Church’s philosophy and underlying thought. For how does the Catholic Church do ecumenism if it is saying that its dogmas are absolute truths to which all must adhere under pain of eternal damnation?

Relativism, on the other hand, is the dogma-killer, working as swiftly and as efficaciously as a spray can of bug killer. Relativism permits ecumenism, and furthermore *demand*s religious liberty, that is, the primacy of conscience over objective dogmas. In other words, all — including God — must respect the dictates of man’s conscience, since these dictates are the product of truth *as he sees it*.

Hence no one, not even God, has the right to coerce you if you are following the dictates of your conscience. Such a doctrine makes conscience the author of truth, and makes even ignorance of the true faith not an *excusing* cause of guilt, but instead a *justifying* cause. According to the evil doctrine of Vatican II, a man is justified in thinking whatever his conscience dictates, and no human power has the right to coerce him otherwise, since precisely he has the *right* from God to put his dictates into practice.

Objection: We are obliged to follow our consciences, otherwise we sin. Therefore we have a right to do what our conscience dictates.

Answer: We are obliged to follow our consciences, it is true, but human conscience, whether correctly formed or not, has no effect upon the objective morality of the act. A badly informed conscience, as I said above, does not justify the act, and does not create a right to do an evil act. All right is based in God, and God cannot give right to the performance of what is objectively evil, since it would be against His essence, or, in a certain analogical sense, “against *His* conscience.”

The doctrine of relativism, together with its ugly daughter religious liberty, is none other than what the

devil promised to Adam and Eve: “Ye shall be like gods, having the knowledge of good and evil.” You, Adam and Eve, shall no longer be subject to God as your First Truth and ultimate end, but will decide for yourselves what is right, true and good, without any reference to anyone else. You will be the law unto yourselves. You will be the Absolute to which all other things are related.

“I dare say that the Church has never been so well as it is today. The Church is not collapsing I am sure of it, I am sure of it!” This is a statement made by Bergoglio to the Roman clergy in the Lateran Basilica on Sept. 16, 2013. It is so absurd that it needs no comment. It is just one more indication of how incredibly obtuse this man is.

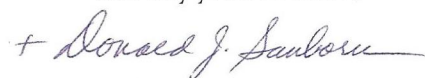
Maybe he should read *The Wanderer*. It quotes an *Irish Times* poll that only 37.5% of Irish Catholic students “state that they believe in God,” and that 83.5% believe that abortion should be legal. In 2011, 84.16% of the population as a whole said that they were Catholic, whereas only 57.8% of the students claimed to be Catholic. 61% said that they did not attend communal religious ceremonies and functions, while those who responded “yes” said that they attended only one to three times a year. Only 32.2% believed that Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ. Only 13.7% said that they followed a religion due to strong faith.

But the Church “has never been so well as it is today.”

Bergoglio’s interview with *Civiltà Cattolica*. On September 19th, the Jesuit publication *Civiltà Cattolica*, which means “Catholic Civilization,” published a 12,000 word interview with Bergoglio. This publication was founded in the nineteenth century in order to promote Catholic social doctrine in a time when Catholic civilization was in decline. It was the vehicle of much valuable and thoroughly Catholic information. Now the publication has become an organ of Modernism.

This interview is loaded with so many errors and prognostic signs of disaster that I must put off the commentary on it until October. One thing is sure, however, and it is that Bergoglio has an agenda for reform which makes the previous Novus Ordo “popes” look like altar boys.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Donald J. Sanborn
Rector