

THE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

Have you ever asked: How could this have happened?



(Above: In many places Vatican II's so-called "new springtime for the Church" involved the wanton destruction of altars and other church furnishings in the name of renewal.)

Editor's Note: This article appeared almost twenty years ago in a traditional Catholic journal. It is written in light of the history of events as known at that time. More could be written today.

Ever since the Second Vatican Council, many have been puzzled to know what caused the sudden outbreak of mass confusion and heartache that have affected Catholics the

world over — to the extent of serious rebellion against Church authority and many defections. Similar concern was voiced in the sixties by notable Church officials, among them Cardinals Ottaviani, Bacci and Santos, Bishops Buddy, Adrian, McIntyre, and Monsignor Antonio Piolanti.

In all our lives we've witnessed nothing, nothing even remotely approaching the turmoil that is so deeply affecting all Catholics— bishops, priests, religious and laity. The United Press International calls this the most startling ferment in centuries of the Church's history. Even the non-Catholic has been taken by surprise. Dr. Martin Marty, a Lutheran theologian, recently wrote:

“The Vatican II renewal has been beset by fickle theology, simplistic thinking, thoughtlessness, and a frequent compulsion to abandoning the rocking ship. Catholic theologians have been offering experiment as solution, and tentative steps as ‘the last word.’ They listen not to all the thousands of years of religious wisdom before them; they talk but have nothing to say. Not all experimenters have learned the difference between being a fool for Christ and being a damn fool.”

The Story begins a hundred years ago

The dramatic story begins over one hundred years ago with the summoning of the First Vatican Council by Pope Pius IX.

Practically the same subversive forces were threatening the Church then as now — the name “rationalism” substituting for the present-day secularism — causing the Church to suffer a deplorable eclipse. By defining the Doctrine of Infallibility, Pope Pius IX exalted the authority of the Holy See and magnified its prestige, giving to the act of Faith a depth of meaning it had not known since the early centuries and calling a halt to questioning the Authority of the Church.



But it also served as a means for the liberal infiltrators to revive rivalries among bishops, especially of Northern Europe; the evil genius of nationalism began to stir as it had many times previously. The Italian Popes and their Curia were dominating the Church, and (as the liberals saw it) this was to the prejudice of the Catholics of other Catholic nations. Then, when Pope Pius XII ruled the papacy with such a domineering hand (as they thought), they formed an alliance to stop this “autocratic” power in Italy. The active agents for carrying out this plot were not necessarily the bishops themselves, at least in the beginning, but trusted servants of the Papacy, who were nevertheless alien in thought and revolutionary in intent.

And there were others who called more openly for changes: Hans Küng, Charles Davis, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, Conger, Baum, to name a few. All claimed to be expert “theologians.” Before the Council they were considered extremists, and their ideas were viewed, in most cases, as un-Catholic, to say the least. Most of these theologians became either Vatican II *periti*, that is, behind-the-scenes advisors to so-called “liberal” bishops, mostly from Northern Europe.

They all share a common distaste for the Church, and have written books and articles since Vatican Council II that have shocked Catholic and non-Catholic alike by their free-wheeling repudiation of many traditional Catholic beliefs and their apparent disrespect for all who disagree with them. These “revolutionaries” in the Church were, and are, the real movers behind Vatican II and the new religion it spawned.

Thus Charles Davis, the *peritus* from Britain, wrote before he formally left the Church:

“Without hesitation I admit as an evident fact that there are forces within the Roman Catholic Church contrary to its present structure, which are tending to overthrow the existing institutions.”

Pope Pius XII was alarmed



Pope Pius XII was one of the most powerful Pontiffs of modern times. In his last years, he grew wary of the liberal social, political, and liturgical experiments urged upon him by his advisors, Msgr. Montini, his Foreign Minister, and others.

When the Pope saw the alarming number of worker priests who were becoming Communists, he banned the movement, over the protests of Cardinal Roncalli and the French Hierarchy, and urged that it be discontinued in all countries. Msgr. Montini was banished to Milan, and the Pope became his own Foreign Minister, being able to trust no one.

When the Pope died, the rebellious bishops and cardinals formed an alliance to prevent the election of another “autocratic” Italian Pope. Since the so-called conservatives of the conclave lacked enough votes to put their candidate on the papal throne, a compromise was reached, and the aging Roncalli — John XXIII — was elected as an “interim Pope.”

With the advent of Montini to the Chair, the liberals were jubilant; one of their own now reigned over the Church.

Vatican II

A key issue at Vatican II was how to make the Church more democratic. This was euphemistically introduced under the name of collegiality — how the bishops, as a body, could somehow rule over the Church. The liberal bishops knew that, in order to destroy the “autocratic power” of the Papacy and the Curia (as they called it), they had to stress the idea of rule by the bishops collectively; such a move would overcome the “embarrassing” doctrine of Papal Infallibility, so inimical to non-Catholics. This, if admitted, would make all previous teaching a sham and negate the decisions of Vatican Council I.

The European *periti*, who easily imposed their theories upon their bishops, were deeply imbued with the errors of Teilhardism and “situation ethics.” These errors, which ultimately destroy all divine faith and morality and all respect for constituted authority, make the individual the center and judge of all truth and morality, irrespective of what the Church teaches. Disrespect for all authority, divine and human, is the fruit of this evil root. As the Council developed, some of the original, somnolent American bishops caught this fire from their alert and more liberal European counterparts. Most of the “conservative” American laity, following their second-rate *periti*, were quick to join the revolutionary bandwagon, to bring about whatever their mentors thought best.



These liberal theologians seized on the Council as the means of de-Catholicizing the Catholic Church while pretending only to renew it. By twisting words and using Protestant terminology and ideas, they succeeded in creating a mess whereby many Catholic priests, religious and laymen have become so confused that they are now alienated from any true Catholic doctrine.

The Vatican II church is now speaking in so many strange tongues that the faithful are confused and disheartened. The liberals' efforts to win over the young (a Communist tactic) have left the elderly in anguish and despair as they witness the dissolution of their Faith. The American bishops proved to be apt students and were quick to learn these lessons from their European cousins. Even so, they could hardly have been completely won over to the "new-found religion" without influence from some other considerable elements, which made them listen readily to the "theological reformers." One such element was the nationalistic jealousies of various hierarchies toward the Italian domination of the Roman Church — especially during the tight reign of Pius XII, already referred to above. It is not so strange that the American bishops should have fallen for this propaganda tactic. This sort of Gallicanism had often plagued the Church before. And, though the Church has always boasted of being above national rivalries, most of the American bishops lined up with the North European bishops in their attempt to dispossess the Papacy of its power. Why?

One cannot but feel that the selfish desire for power was blinding them; they wanted more power for themselves, notwithstanding that the schema proposed by the liberal bishops was contrary to the Church's Magisterium. They seemed to argue that the end justifies the means.

The main issue — ecumenism



Originally, the liberal bishops only subtly and with adept semantics suggested changes in practices and attitudes which to them posed barriers to "Christian unity." Then, as they realized they were in the majority, they boldly put forth their schema of *ecumenism*. Following the "experts," the bishops compromised in matters of doctrine: using Protestant and Jewish ideas and terminology and practices; intermingling with Jews and Protestants in celebrating the liturgy; stripping the churches of all Catholic emblems, denigrating the Holy Eucharist; making a mockery of the Sacrifice of the Mass; and flinging aside the traditions and laws of the Church — all giving the impression that one church, or synagogue, is as good as another.

One of the liberal *periti*, as quoted by Xavier Rynne, stated:

"Our purpose was to bring about fundamental changes. We realized at the beginning that we had a majority, but we didn't realize until the fourth session how large the majority was. If we would have realized earlier, we would have made even greater changes."

Hans Küng and the Dutch theologians were the leaders of the movement which spread like wildfire, especially among the young. The European revolutionists, during the sessions of the Council and more so after, flooded America with their heretical propaganda. Many of them like Hans Küng, Rahner, Charles Davis, Schillebeeckx, Baum, Congar, appeared in person here at the invitation of some bishop or educator.

They wrote and distributed books and articles, they invaded our colleges, seminaries and “Catholic” schools. Especially did the religious imbibe their poison. Their propaganda was further abetted by the establishment-controlled liberal “Catholic” press in sensationally slanted reports.

Finally a factor largely contributing to this revolutionary movement has been the silence and timidity of those whose grave duty it was to call a halt on these anti-Catholic movements subverting the Church, chiefly the bishops. But these bishops were the very ones who participated in Vatican II and precipitated the mess in the first place.

Now years have passed since the death of Pope Pius XII and history is still being written. Where will it all end?

It shall not end happily for those who continue to bury their heads in the sand or who follow like blind sheep their mitered hirelings. The beginning of the solution is the recognition of the cause of all these problems. Let those who have eyes to see, see...

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