

MARCH FOR LIFE/ROSARY PROCESSION OF REPARATION – The annual St. Athanasius March for Life Rosary Procession will take place this Friday, January 19 at 12 noon in Washington, D.C. Mass will be offered at 9 o'clock Friday morning at St. Athanasius in reparation for the sin and crime of abortion. Please see the posted flyers and additional flyers in the vestibule for more details.

The Chair of St. Peter at Rome (January 18) – This feast reinforces the unique role of the pope as vicar of Christ, and that as universal pastor, he cannot err when he teaches on matters of faith and morals. How then, are faithful Catholics to explain the appearance that the pope has erred since Vatican II? Here are some of the attempts that have been made over the years. Some of you old timers will no doubt remember them.

- * It is the liberal bishops and not the pope who are responsible.
- * The council was ambiguous and the wrong interpretation has been given.
- * The real pope is being held captive and a look-alike imposter has taken over.
- * The pope didn't speak *ex cathedra*.
- * The council was only a pastoral council.
- * Nowadays it seems that it can sometimes happen that the pope teaches error. When he does, we must continue to recognize his authority, but hold fast and resist whatever erroneous teaching or evil commands he may give.
- * The pope and bishops have embraced the apostasy of the new religion and have thereby lost their offices. All the seats are empty, including that of the pope and we are today without any hierarchy whatsoever.

We understand that as glaring as some of these errors may seem today, they were the best answers that were available at the time. Only in time and with further reflection, did the error of these answers become apparent.

Let us consider today this last error, which many now call sedevacantism (Latin for “the see being vacant”). The popular name for this error is borrowed from the term that is used between the death of one pope and the election of a new one. Good Catholics, who believed the idea that all the seats are vacant, did so only to be faithful to the promise of Christ that the religion any pope would teach the Universal Church would be guaranteed by His own word and the power of the Holy Ghost. However, while defending this one truth of Christ, they unwittingly fell into an error contrary to another teaching of the Church, that the Hierarchy is perpetual, that it will last to the end of time, and that Peter will have perpetual successors. The pope and the Hierarchy cannot simply be gone! Therefore, this explanation must be rejected by Catholics.

The Chair of St Peter at Rome (continued) – This feast reinforces Catholic teaching that Christ has given to Peter and his successors a unique role in the Church as Universal Pastor. In this role as teacher Our Lord has promised that he who hears Peter hears Him. Recognizing this promise, the Church has infallibly taught that Peter and his successors cannot teach error to the Universal Church any more than Christ can. So Christ guarantees that Peter will never teach error and Peter has the special assistance of the Holy Ghost to carry this out.

Last week we considered the error of sedevacantism, which holds that there is no pope, and that there is no hierarchy. Today let us consider another error, referred to by some as "Recognize and Resist." In a nutshell, R&R holds that sometimes the pope teaches error or imposes evil or harmful practices or laws.* When he does, we must recognize his authority but resist his erroneous teachings or evil commands. Good Catholics have mistakenly fallen into this error in their attempt to protect the teaching of the Church that the pope must have perpetual successors and that somehow there must always be a hierarchy. The R&R position cannot be held because it ignores the clear teaching of the Church that the pope cannot teach error or impose evil or harmful practices and laws by virtue of the guarantee of Our Lord and the special assistance of the Holy Ghost. If we recognize the pope's authority to teach and rule the Church in matters of faith and morals, we have no choice but to assent and obey, for not to do so would be to fail to assent to Christ Himself, by Whose authority and in Whose name the pope speaks. So R&R cannot be the answer, and like sedevacantism, it too must be rejected.

(*Some have said that the pope taught error at the time of St. Athanasius, but a closer examination of the facts shows this not to be true.)

The second collection next Sunday is the monthly collection for our school. We ask each family or wage earner, who can afford to do so, to contribute at least \$30 to this collection. We thank you for your generosity.

UPCOMING DATES:

Jan 28 Septuagesima Sunday

Feb 14 Ash Wednesday

Feb 18 First Sunday of Lent (time for Easter Duty begins)

Mar 25 Palm Sunday... Holy Week Begins

Apr 1 Easter Sunday

May 27 Trinity Sunday (time for Easter Duty ends)

FIRST FRIDAY AND FIRST SATURDAY

First Friday:

6:10 AM Blessing of Candles & Procession

6:30 AM Holy Mass

9:00 AM Holy Mass

7:15 PM Confessions

7:45 PM Holy Hour (*includes Holy Communion & Benediction*)

Chair of St. Peter at Rome... conclusion) – We have been considering the past few weeks this feast, which reinforces the teaching of the Church that the office of the Chair of St. Peter (Peter and his successors, the popes) is indefectible, that is it is always free from error and must be perpetual. Its teachings are the standard and rule of Faith, despite the worthiness or unworthiness of the successor. In light of this and what we have said before, what is a faithful Catholic to do? Join or re-join the Novus Ordo? By no means! It is a false religion and to do so would be to abandon the Catholic Faith.

We have considered some answers to the question: *How is it that the New Order popes have attempted to impose on the Church erroneous teachings and harmful or evil laws or practices?* We gave particular attention to two of the most widely-held erroneous explanations: sedevcantism and recognize and resist (R&R). In light of what has been said, the following become apparent:

- ***Contrary to the teaching of the Church:*** The pope can teach error sometimes and impose harmful or evil practices and laws on the Universal Church.
- ***Contrary to the teaching of the Church:*** There is no hierarchy whatsoever. (It is *de fide* that the hierarchy must be perpetual.)
- ***Contrary to the teaching of the Church:*** We may resist the authority of the pope.
- That since it is obvious that the Vatican II popes have imposed teachings and practices contrary to Faith and morals, it must be concluded that the infallible and indefectible teaching power promised to Peter's successors is absent.
- It may be held that since the Vatican II popes possess a legal and valid election, they have a certain legal status as popes.
- It may be held that this legal status is sufficient to maintain the succession to Peter and the perpetuity of the hierarchy.

It would appear, then, that the Chair is not totally vacant, nor is it completely full. The new order popes possess some legal aspect as popes but lack the authority to teach and rule on matters of faith and morals. In the face of this situation, the proper response of all faithful Catholics is to believe what Catholics have always believed and to do what Catholics have always done. We cannot go wrong doing that!