



As Received

Open Letter to *Catholic Family* News on Sedevacantism -- PART

2

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Open Letter to *Catholic Family News*, Part II

OPPOSITION TO THE ANTI-SEDEVACANTISTS – PART II

It was a pleasure to see the many well written rebuttals to the hysterical outburst by Christopher Ferrara against sedevacantists which appeared in the August, 2005 issue of *Catholic Family News* (*CFN*). A sensible reaction by *CFN* to all of the negative response engendered by Ferrara and Co. would have been to drop the whole dirty business and go back to its mission of exposing and condemning modernist apostasy instead of attacking *CFN*'s traditionalist friends. However this anti-sedevacantist fixation gripping *CFN* is one groundhog that saw its shadow, signaling at least a few more months of tiresome tub-thumping against the "Enterprise" (Ferrara's term for sedevacantists). Evidence for this is Ferrara's second installment of *Opposition to the Enterprise* in the October, 2005 issue of *CFN*.

After reading the latest attempt to discredit sedevacantism, the first impulse is to say nothing and just move on. After all, this second article by Ferrara is the same old moldy stew of truth, half truth, misdirection, irrelevance, self-delusion and illogical, agenda driven special pleading for a lost cause. Why bother with any response at all? The arguments of the anti-sedevacantists have already been convincingly demolished. Nevertheless, after wading through Ferrara's latest effort it must be said that he artfully avoids certain issues and endlessly re-hashes threadbare overworked arguments. (It must also be mentioned that the ugly tone of personal insult and disparagement that characterized *Opposition* Part I is missing from *Opposition* Part II). Reading *Opposition* Part II is much like watching a cartoon character trying to pour molasses uphill. The more he pours it on, the more he is stuck in a mess of his own making. Still, there are a few new issues that Ferrara brings up that beg comment.

In discussing the statement in *Lumen Gentium* that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church, Ferrara claims that the expression “subsists in” is ambiguous, involves an imprecision and is problematical. To the anti-“Enterprise” crowd, their presumption of ambiguity shields *Lumen Gentium* and the term “subsists in” from any charge of being heretical. Otherwise the document and the term would surely be construed as asserting that there is salvation outside the Church. This issue is definitely problematical for Ferrara/*CFN*/Fr. Gruner et al because if they admit that “subsist” means what its drafters said it means, they shoot down their own case.

How then do we know what “subsists in” is supposed to mean? If Mr. Ferrara, a lawyer, were arguing a Constitutional case that hinged on the meaning of a particular provision of the document he would certainly research the original intent of the framers of said document. He would scoff at claims that the Constitution was a “living document” and he would insist that the meaning of the provision in question should be what the framers clearly intended. Has Ferrara researched the “original intent” of the framers of *Lumen Gentium* to clarify what he sees as ambiguity? I think he would agree that his opinion on the meaning of “subsists in” is irrelevant if the original intent of the drafters can be clearly ascertained. If Mr. Ferrara has not researched the original intent of the drafters of “subsists in” I have a source that he can refer to. I suggest that he turn to no less an authority than *Catholic Family News* (September 2005, page 15) for an article entitled, *Pope Benedict XVI and Eucharistic Sacrilege*, by John Vennari. In this article Mr. Vennari quotes a number of Vatican II experts who were instrumental in formulating the doctrine and language of *Lumen Gentium* or at least explicating its meaning. For example, he quotes Avery Cardinal Dulles, a member of the International Theological Commission as follows:

“The Church of Christ is not exclusively identical to the Roman Catholic Church. It does indeed subsist in Roman Catholicism but it is also present in varying modes and degrees in other Christian communities.” (Bold face in original).

I ask Mr. Ferrara, what is ambiguous about this explanation of “subsist”? Cardinal Dulles, an “expert” on Vatican II says that the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church are two different things.

Mr. Vennari then quotes Fr. Edward Schillebeeckx, one of the main drafters of Vatican II documents who stated:

“It is difficult to say that the Catholic Church is still one, Catholic, apostolic, when one says that the others (other Christian communities) are equally one, Catholic and apostolic, albeit to a lesser degree. ---- at Vatican Council II, the Roman Catholic Church officially abandoned its monopoly over the Christian religion.” (Emphasis added).

In this incredible statement a formulator of Vatican II documents tells us in plain language that the Catholic Church is not uniquely the one Church of Christ. He informs us that Protestant and Orthodox churches are equally one, Catholic and apostolic. Once again to Mr. Ferrara, where is the ambiguity when a drafter of Conciliar documents tells us that heretical and schismatic churches bear the distinguishing marks of one, Catholic and apostolic?

I now direct Mr. Ferrara’s attention to the July, 2005 issue of *CFN* (page 12) for additional documentation of original intent. In an article submitted by *Tradition in Action* the author quotes Cardinal Ratzinger’s remarks made in an interview he gave in 2000 to the German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*:

“Vatican II did not use Pius XII’s expression according to which ‘the Roman Catholic Church is the only Church of Christ.’ Instead it preferred the expression ‘The Church of Christ *subsists* in the Catholic Church...’ because, he said, ‘*it wished to affirm the being of the Church as such is a larger identity than the Roman Catholic Church.*’” (Bold face in original).

How can this be surpassed for original intent of the meaning of “subsist”? Cardinal Ratzinger/Benedict XVI explicitly states that “subsist” means that the Church of Christ is different from and larger than the Catholic Church. Since Ratzinger was one of the drafters of *Lumen Gentium* we have incontrovertible proof of the specific (not ambiguous, not imprecise) meaning of the expression, “The Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church.” Ratzinger clearly states that the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church are two different things.

The intellectual dissembling of the Ferrara/*CFN*/Fr. Gruner/Fr. Kramer camp is truly prodigious. Whereas Ferrara’s Oct., ’05 *CFN* article goes on interminably to convince us that “subsist in” is ambiguous, the author of the July, ’05 *CFN* article cited above states:

“In other words, Cardinal Ratzinger, as recently as the year 2000, still insisted on the **error** that the Church of Christ is broader than the Catholic Church and not strictly identical with it. Thus, non-Catholics need not convert to the Catholic Church for salvation.” (Emphasis added).

So, now the author of the July *CFN* article himself contradicts Ferrara’s claim of ambiguity and imprecision. *CFN* published Ferrara’s argument that “subsists in” is ambiguous, when three months before *CFN* published an article in which it demonstrated that “subsists in” was plainly an error (note: *CFN* and its stable of contributors are getting skittish about using the word “heresy.”)

While hoping that the reader will not be exhausted by overkill in refuting the Ferrara camp, a few more citations are shown here, drawn from *The Robber Church* by Patrick Henry Omlor. The quotations are from Vatican II “experts”.

Walter J. Burghardt, S.J.: “First, all of us who are baptized (Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox) --- all of us belong in a very real way to the Church of Christ.” (page 206).

and,

The celebrated Fr. Gregory Baum: “Concretely and actually the Church of Christ may be realized less, equally, or even more in a Church separated from Rome than in a Church in communion with Rome. This conclusion is inescapable on the basis of the understanding of Church that emerges from the teaching of Vatican Council II. (Emphasis added in original). Page 208.

Indeed, this conclusion emerging from Vatican II is also inescapable to sedevacantists, *CFN*, its editor, its contributors, modernists and “progressives”. In fact it seems to be an inescapable conclusion to everyone except the Ferrara team.

As we attempt to comprehend the blatant contradictions coming from the pages of *CFN*, the question of corporate schizophrenia naturally arises. Perhaps *CFN* should be placed on the couch to undergo some sort of corporate psychiatric evaluation. Or maybe their anti-sedevacantist agenda is simply a ploy, a strategy to stimulate controversy and increase its visibility. Whatever the case, with articles like these *CFN* is becoming an unreliable source of traditional Catholic news and analysis. As for Ferrara himself, he takes nearly ten thousand words to build a case defending the authority, integrity and legitimacy of Ratzinger/Benedict XVI, a man who flatly and clearly contradicts one of the main points of Ferrara’s article. The members of Ferrara’s team would appear less bumbling if they read their own publication, *CFN*, and got their story straight. I suggest they pool their resources and take up a subscription to *CFN* so they can discover the rebuttals to their anti-Enterprise articles, rebuttals that appear months before their own articles. How can such a house divided against itself continue to stand?

There are a few other points in Ferrara’s Oct. ’05 article that should be discussed. Ferrara writes,

“Nor has the Enterprise produced any papal interpretation of *Lumen Gentium* that amounts to a

manifest denial of the dogma that there is no salvation outside the Church.”

This statement is manifestly false since the quotation of Cardinal Ratzinger cited above, interpreting *Lumen Gentium*, explicitly confirms that there is salvation outside the Church. There is no indication that he has changed his mind since becoming “Pope” so we can safely assume that this is the “papal” position—that there is salvation outside the Catholic Church.

If the reader is not yet convinced we turn again to *CFN*, Dec. 2000 page 27. The caption under the picture of Ratzinger states:

“Ratzinger has stated openly, as one of the drafters and major influences of Vatican II that Vatican II teaches that conversion is an option. The non-Catholic need not convert to the true Church for salvation or unity. Thus, Vatican II teaches a doctrine of Christian unity that is contrary to Scripture, contrary to sacred tradition, contrary to the express will of Jesus Christ.

Now, Ferrara may find such a statement made by a future “pope” to be ambiguous but it was clear enough to the author of this particular article, John Vennari, the editor of *CFN*. Ferrara may argue that Ratzinger was not pope when those comments were made but the burden is on him to demonstrate that Ratzinger/Benedict XVI has shed those beliefs since becoming “Pope”.

If the reader is still not convinced that a “pope” teaches salvation outside the Church his attention is directed to *CFN*, July, 1999 and an article entitled *Lutheran-Catholic Accord*.

This article attacks the *Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* for the heretical and condemned interfaith practices that it encourages. Among these is the recommendation that “discourages Catholics from attempting to convert non-Catholics.” (Page 14). *CFN* further informs us that John Paul II praised the *Directory* in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*. Therefore, John Paul II praised the recommendation that non-Catholics do not need to convert to the Catholic faith to be saved. Therefore John Paul II obviously wrote that there is salvation outside the Church. Therefore Ferrara is again contradicted no less than six years earlier in the same publication that ran his article.

The same July 1999 article closely examines *The Lutheran-Catholic Accord*, exposing the cave-in by the “Catholic” Church to the Protestant concept of justification. The *Accord* was presented as the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* and received a tumultuous response from Catholics and Lutherans alike—both pro and con. For our purpose here there was pretty much general agreement that the Catholic Church finally came around to the Protestant theology that man is saved by “faith alone.” In fact the *Wall Street Journal* (11/3/99) celebrated this development by editorializing, “The joint declaration---effectively concedes the theological debate to Luther.” This conclusion was supported by the *Accord* throughout the document and was actually spelled out in the Annex of the original release which stated that one is justified by “faith alone.” It provoked such an outcry in conservative Catholic circles that a “clarification” was issued. The language of choice now is that man is saved by “grace alone.” All of this led to more protests from interested parties and the debate goes on.

The significance of the *Declaration* was not lost on *CFN* in the July 1999 issue referenced above. Mr. Vennari roundly and justly condemned the *Declaration* as being grotesque and a rejection of three de fide definitions that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. However, Mr. Vennari also reported that “*The Lutheran-Catholic Accord* and all the work leading up to it, had received the full support of Pope John Paul II.” (Emphasis added. Page 13). Vennari further reported “---on several occasions

Pope John Paul II articulated his support for this process which is aimed at the official approval of the *Joint Declaration*.” (Page 15). *CFN* has thoughtfully provided the documentation that John Paul II approved and encouraged the *Joint Declaration* and the process leading up to it. *CFN* has also demonstrated and confirmed that the *Joint Declaration* contradicted the de fide teaching that there is no

salvation outside the Catholic Church. Therefore, *CFN* has proven that John Paul II has denied, in a manifest way, this fundamental teaching of the Church. How much more proof do we have to pile up?

Additional proof of “papal” denial of the doctrine of no salvation outside the Catholic Church is contained in *The Balamand Statement* with the schismatic Orthodox. This Statement (Agreement) proclaims agreement between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox on a number of critical issues. The Agreement states, “In the search for establishing unity there is no question of conversion of people from one church to the other to ensure their salvation.” It also repudiates the “outdated ecclesiology of return to the Catholic Church.” Obviously these statements assert that there is salvation outside of the Church—in this case in the Orthodox Church. We also know that John Paul II, as “pope”, gave his public approval to the Agreement. Therefore, we have produced another example of a “papal” denial of the doctrine of no salvation outside the Church.

We know that John Paul II has publicly stated that the Old Covenant of the Jews was never revoked. From this we can agree with Cardinal Kasper and the “Catholic” hierarchy that the logical conclusion is that Judaism is “salvific for the Jews”. Therefore the Old Covenant doctrine is another case of “papal” denial of the doctrine of no salvation outside the Church. (See *Notes on The Correct Way to Present the Jews in Preaching and Catechesis*).

We now return to Mr. Ferrara’s challenge to produce papal interpretations of *Lumen Gentium* that amount to a manifest denial of the dogma of no salvation outside the Church. The simple facts are that we have shown, with the support of *CFN* and Mr. Vennari that “papal” denial of the dogma of “no salvation outside the Church has been repeated and manifest in John Paul II’s promotion of:

- 1) *Lumen Gentium*
- 2) *The Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism*
- 3) *The Lutheran-Catholic Accord*
- 4) *The Balamand Statement*
- 5) *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis*

All of the above directly deny or “amount to” denying the dogma, “no salvation outside the Catholic Church.” And, according to *CFN* (and other sources) John Paul II had given his public approbation and encouragement to all of them. Therefore this writer (not presuming to speak for the “Enterprise”) has shown conclusively that there has been ongoing manifest papal denial of this essential Catholic dogma of “no salvation outside the Church”. Mr. Ferrara is not only totally wrong but he contradicts the last ten years of editorials and articles (including his own) in *CFN*.

The reader must not forget that the documents shown above are the logical fruits of an underlying heresy that has been a part of the essence of the Conciliar Church. That is the heresy of universal salvation. This heresy is either explicit or implied in numerous documents, allocutions and encyclicals produced by the Conciliar “popes”. The encyclicals of John Paul II, such as *Redemptor Hominis* and *Ut Unum Sint* clearly suggest that all men are saved. If this is true then there is obviously salvation outside the Catholic Church. To reinforce this new doctrine and keep it constantly in the minds of Catholics it was necessary to falsify Christ’s words of consecration in the Novus Ordo mass. Christ’s words were changed from “for you and for many” to “for you and for all men.” The “for all men” wording was repeatedly condemned by popes, theologians and the Council of Trent as meaning that all men are saved. It alters the substance of the form of the sacrament and probably renders it invalid. It may be that many thousands of priests, with modern seminary formation, are ignorant of just what it is they are saying during the consecration at a Novus Ordo “mass”. However you can be certain that the creators of the new “mass” and the commissions responsible for translating it into the vernacular knew exactly

what they were doing. Salvation outside the Catholic Church is a new doctrine fundamental to the Conciliar Church and is constantly hammered into the minds of Novus Ordo Catholics with the fraudulent words of consecration.

A key to the thought processes of the anti-sedevacantist crowd is what they leave unsaid—the issues they scrupulously avoid—the elephant in the living room. Ferrara ignores the repeated statements of John Paul II and his hirelings that the Old Covenant is still in effect and not superceded by the New Covenant. This is the worst heresy since Arianism and in effect makes the Catholic Church totally irrelevant. It as much as agrees with the Talmud that Christ was an anti-Messiah and a sorcerer and the Apostles were con men. (This issue was treated extensively in my open letter to *CFN* of August 30, 2005).

Ferrara also overlooks another heresy in the quotation from *Lumen Gentium* containing “subsists in”. The particular sentence contains the words, “these elements (of sanctification) as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling to Catholic unity.” This remarkable sentence essentially claims that the Catholic Church did not possess full unity when *Lumen Gentium* was promulgated in 1964. Not only is that a heresy in itself, but it is another setback for Mr. Ferrara who has constantly claimed that there must be a legitimate sitting pope to fulfill the requirement of a visible unity in the Church. Now he is trying to defend a document that says the Catholic Church lacks that essential, visible unity. If *Lumen Gentium* is valid and authentic doctrine and the Church lacks full visible unity, then what is the “pope” a visible sign of? A sign of disunity? Who knows! Ferrara neatly sidesteps this puzzling sentence by ignoring it. But that is a topic for another day.

Observing Ferrara/Gruner/*CFN* and Company floundering in the quicksand of their own making is at once entertaining and depressing. What a debacle to behold when people who have done so much over the years attempting to restore Catholic tradition slowly sink into the muck of contradiction, timidity, word games, and hostility to their former friends. The anti-“Enterprise” camp seems to be pursuing a new agenda that it conceals from *CFN*’s general readership. This is indeed the “regime of novelty”.

It has been suggested that Fr. Gruner is behind the campaign against the “Enterprise” because sedevacantism delegitimizes his crusade to carry out the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Let’s face it, if the sedevacantists have been correct all along (and their numbers are growing) then there has been no legitimate pope to do the consecration since Pius XII. In that case all the time Fr. Gruner has spent promoting the consecration has been a waste of both time and money. Of course this in no way detracts from the fact that the Fatima Crusade has brought many people to a deeper understanding of the faith and along with it a more fervent Marian devotion. Nevertheless, the Crusade’s primary goal, the consecration of Russia, is impossible of fulfillment without a valid pope to do it. The Fatima Crusade depends on continuous and generous financial support from traditional Catholics. If enough of these Catholics begin to think that Benedict XVI is not a legitimate pope, or a least a doubtful pope, they might conclude that no authentic consecration is possible and shut off the flow of donations. Is this the real danger of sedevacantism to the anti-“Enterprise” camp, the financial threat to the Fatima industry? If sedevacantism can be discredited early and often then perhaps the flow of donations will be maintained. Unfortunately for

Fr. Gruner/Ferrara/*The Remnant/CFN* et al, its attack on the “Enterprise” has backfired. They have made themselves look disreputable and have alienated many of their supporters. Their behavior has given rise to a new term to describe them, “neo-traditionalists”.

One of the interesting and perhaps unintended consequences of the *Opposition to the Enterprise* is that it has brought numerous sedevacantists out of the closet. The *CFN* anti-“Enterprise” articles have blown the lid off the subject and have actually greatly publicized the arguments, pro and con. For years sedevacantism was spoken about circumspectly, only with like-minded people and with a certain fear of being labeled. It was much like talking about Jewish power in America. However the *CFN* attacks

have provoked so much response they have made sedevacantism almost respectable. It is now being discussed openly and widely as numerous sedevacantists break their silence. Thanks to *CFN* sedevacantism may even become fashionable.

At this point I would like to offer a few final thoughts. I have always regarded Mr. Ferrara as an intelligent and talented writer, even if I didn't always agree with his "take" on a particular issue. It is regrettable that he has placed his talents at the service of an agenda that at its core makes absolutely no sense, and can only cause division and feuding in the traditional community. Once again I urge him and the entire anti-"Enterprise" camp to reconsider their slavish defense of the honor and integrity of theologically perverted post-Conciliar "pontiffs" and spend more time defending the honor of Jesus Christ which is so befouled and debased by the very charlatans and imposters that the Ferrara camp is defending.

Benedict XVI himself (as was his predecessor) is clearly at the service of the Judeo/Masonic conspiracy that is moving the "Catholic" Church into the One World Church. Alice Baily, the theosophist and co-founder of the Lucis Trust (originally Lucifer Trust) prophesied over seventy years ago what we are seeing today:

"When we come to consider religion in the new world order, we are faced with a far more complicated problem and yet, at the same time, with a far easier one --- the new world religion is nearer than many think."

"--- Eventually there will appear the Church Universal, and its definite outlines will appear toward the close of the century." (Alice Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, pages 200, 201, 510).

Now we better understand the significance of Mikhael Gorbachev, Bolshevik, Freemason and co-founder of the United Religions Organization (the Church Universal?), lecturing the "pope" and thousands of other dignitaries, right in the Vatican (*CFN*, Jan. 2001, Mar. 2001). The frantic ecumenical outreaches of Benedict XVI, following a path laid out and followed by John Paul II, are obviously in compliance with the agenda of international Judeo/Freemasonry and the New World Order.

I submit to Mr. Ferrara that he and the anti-"Enterprise" coalition can only serve to damage authentic Catholicism and the active Catholic remnant by so vigorously and combatively defending the legitimacy and integrity of heretical and apostate shepherds who for decades have been leading their flocks to spiritual slaughter. It is our sincere hope that the anti-"Enterprise" camp will engage in some serious reflection on just what it is doing. Its sinister and highly charged pre-emptive attack against sedevacantists raises grave suspicion as to its motives.

In the meantime, we will continue to pray for enlightenment for ourselves, the anti-Enterprise camp and what remains of the authentic Catholic Church, that there will indeed be someday one flock and one shepherd.

St. Francis De Sales, pray for us.

St. Robert Bellarmine, pray for us.

St. Peter the Apostle, pray for us.

Sincerely,

Joseph C. Maurer

Note: Mr. Maurer is not affiliated with Novus Ordo Watch.

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