



THE CLOISTER

50 YEARS OF HISTORY OF THE SSPX

Ecône become a target and a Catholic symbol.

INCREASING NUMBER OF SEMINARIANS

Relatively quickly the number of seminarians increase coming from USA, France, Germany, UK and other European countries, disappointed with the new reforms of the Church, the new and poor formation in the diocesan seminaries or from religious orders. Many of them were sent to Ecône by old priests faithful to the Mass and to the traditional formation. Because of the language barrier we rented for many years a very large house in German speaking Switzerland for the candidates coming from Germany or knowing German rather than French.



This international success of the seminary of Ecône, very quickly provokes the reaction of the modern bishops as the loss of vocations increased in their dioceses. Here are some figures of the so called "spring" of Vatican II : between the year 1970 and the year 2007, 20,000 less diocesan priests in the world; 10,000 less religious priests; 250,000 less religious sisters and 54,000 parishes left without priest.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SSPX

By the end of the year 1972 the French bishops provoked a media campaign against the seminary of Ecône, accusing it to be a "savage" seminary. Even some media managed to do a photo montage showing the seminary surrounded by barbed wires and accusing the seminary to be a concentration camp for formation of right wing extremists. It went so far with physical violence that a young man shot with a bb gun at the stain-glass of the old chapel beheading the figure of Saint Augustin and two seminarians were beaten by intruders during a night.

Bishop Adam from the diocese of Sion, where Ecône belongs, published a decree to forbid the Latin mass in his diocese.

The word "Ecône" became the symbol of the defense of the Latin Mass and of the standing up for the Tradition against the modernist reforms.

The authorities of Rome started to panic and decided to send two clerics for a "canonical visitation". Some priests that were with us started as well to panic and left us.

THE FIRST CANONICAL VISITATION

What is a Canonical Visitation?

A canonical visitation is the act of an ecclesiastical superior who in the discharge of his office visits persons or places with a view to maintaining faith and discipline, and of correcting abuses. A person delegated to carry out such a visitation is called a visitor. When, in exceptional circumstances, the Holy See delegates an apostolic visitor (or visitors) "to evaluate an ecclesiastical institute such as a seminary, diocese, or religious institute ... to assist the institute in question to improve the way in which it carries out its function in the life of the Church," this is known as an apostolic visitation.^[1]

The visitation:

November 11th 1974 at 9:00 AM arrived Mons. Albert Descamps, secretary of the Biblical Commission, assisted by Mons. Guillaume Onclin, assistant secretary of the commission for the reform of the Canon Law. They have visited all the seminary; have interrogated professors and seminarians; they looked to our financial resources and accounts. During three days, with an absolute freedom they were able to see and to listen from whoever they wished. They left on the 13th of November at 6:00 PM, without having signed any "protocol" or "documents" as it should be. In fact we never knew what was their mission and the result of it. Their attitude, although friendly, was an occasion of scandal: "they were in favour of the ordination of married men; for them it is not an immutable truth; they questioned the traditional doctrine of the Resurrection of Our Lord".

The declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre of November 1974

The Canonical visitation had been such a shocking situation that his Excellency Archbishop Lefebvre felt obliged to make a clear public statement about our position.

Although you probably already read it, here we publish it again, being the chart of our foundation.

Since then this declaration has been the principle for our relationship with the authorities of Rome. What actual Rome says or does according the eternal Rome we accept it, what the modernist Rome says or does we refuse it.

The declaration of 1974: We hold fast, with all our heart and with all our soul, to Catholic Rome, Guardian of the Catholic faith and of the traditions necessary to preserve this faith, to Eternal Rome, Mistress of wisdom and truth. We refuse, on the other hand, and have always refused to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which were clearly evident in the Second Vatican Council and, after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it. All these reforms, indeed, have contributed and are still contributing to the destruction of the Church, to the ruin of the priesthood, to the abolition of the Sacrifice of the Mass and of the sacraments, to the disappearance of religious life, to a naturalist and Teilhardian teaching in universities, seminaries and catechists; a teaching derived from Liberalism and Protestantism, many times condemned by the solemn Magisterium of the Church. No authority, not even the highest in the hierarchy, can force us to abandon or diminish our Catholic faith, so clearly expressed and professed by the Church's Magisterium for nineteen centuries. "But though we," says St. Paul, "or an angel from heaven preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8). Is it not this that the Holy Father is repeating to us today? And if we can discern a certain contradiction in his words and deeds, as well as in those of the dicasteries, well we choose what was always taught and we turn a deaf ear to the novelties destroying the Church. It is impossible to modify profoundly the *lex orandi* without modifying the *lex credendi*. To the *Novus Ordo Missae* correspond a new catechism, a new priesthood, new seminaries, a charismatic Pentecostal Church—all things opposed to orthodoxy and the perennial teaching of the Church. This Reformation, born of Liberalism and Modernism, is poisoned through and it derives from heresy and ends in heresy, even if all its acts are not formally heretical. It is therefore impossible for any conscientious and faithful Catholic to espouse this Reformation or to submit to it in any way whatsoever. The only attitude of faithfulness to the Church and Catholic doctrine, in view of our salvation, is a categorical refusal to accept this Reformation. That is why, without any spirit of rebellion, bitterness or resentment, we pursue our work of forming priests, with the timeless Magisterium as our guide. We are persuaded that we can render no greater service to the Holy Catholic Church, to the Sovereign Pontiff and to posterity. That is why we hold fast to all that has been believed and practiced in the faith, morals, liturgy, teaching of the catechism, formation of the priest and institution of the Church, by the Church of all time; to all these things as codified in those books which saw day before the Modernist influence of the Council. This we shall do until such time that the true light of Tradition dissipates the darkness obscuring the sky of Eternal Rome. By doing this, with the grace of God and the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and that of St. Joseph and St. Pius X, we are assured of remaining faithful to the Roman Catholic Church and to all the successors of Peter, and of being the faithful dispensers of the mysteries of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Satis Cognitum

On the Unity of the Church (Part 5, end)

Pope Leo XIII - 1896

(Continuation from the January Cloister)

Bishops Belong to the Essential Constitution of the Church

14. But if the authority of Peter and his successors is plenary and supreme, it is not to be regarded as the sole authority. For He who made Peter the foundation of the Church also "chose, twelve, whom He called apostles" (Luke vi., 13); and just as it is necessary that the authority of Peter should be perpetuated in the Roman Pontiff, so, by the fact that the bishops succeed the Apostles, they inherit their ordinary power, and thus

the episcopal order necessarily belongs to the essential constitution of the Church. Although they do not receive plenary, or universal, or supreme authority, they are not to be looked as vicars of the Roman Pontiffs; because they exercise a power really their own, and are most truly called the ordinary pastors of the peoples over whom they rule.

But since the successor of Peter is one, and those of the Apostles are many, it is necessary to examine into the relations which exist between him and them according to the divine constitution of the Church. Above all things the need of union between the bishops and the successors of Peter is clear and undeniable. This bond once broken, Christians would be separated and scattered, and would in no wise form one body and one flock. "The safety of the Church depends on the dignity of the chief priest, to whom if an extraordinary and supreme power is not given, there are as many schisms to be expected in the Church as there are priests" (S. Hieronymus, Dialog, contra Luciferianos, n. 9). It is necessary, therefore, to bear this in mind, viz., that nothing was conferred on the apostles apart from Peter, but that several things were conferred upon Peter apart from the Apostles. St. John Chrysostom in explaining the words of Christ asks: "Why, passing over the others, does He speak to Peter about these things?" And he replies unhesitatingly and at once, "Because he was pre-eminent among the Apostles, the mouthpiece of the Disciples, and the head of the college" (Hom. lxxxviii. in Joan., n. I). He alone was designated as the foundation of the Church. To him He gave the power of binding and loosing; to him alone was given the power of feeding. On the other hand, whatever authority and office the Apostles received, they received in conjunction with Peter. "If the divine benignity willed anything to be in common between him and the other princes, whatever He did not deny to the others He gave only through him. So that whereas Peter alone received many things, He conferred nothing on any of the rest without Peter participating in it" (S. Leo M. sermo iv., cap. 2).

Bishops separated from Peter and His Successors, lose all jurisdiction

15. From this it must be clearly understood that Bishops are deprived of the right and power of ruling, if they deliberately secede from Peter and his successors; because, by this secession, they are separated from the foundation on which the whole edifice must rest. They are therefore outside the edifice itself; and for this very reason they are separated from the fold, whose leader is the Chief Pastor; they are exiled from the Kingdom, the keys of which were given by Christ to Peter alone.

These things enable us to see the heavenly ideal, and the divine exemplar, of the constitution of the Christian commonwealth, namely: When the Divine founder decreed that the Church should be one in faith, in government, and in communion, He chose Peter and his successors as the principle and centre, as it were, of this unity. Wherefore St. Cyprian says: "The following is a short and easy proof of the faith. The Lord saith to Peter: 'I say to thee thou art Peter'; on him alone He buildeth His Church; and although after His Resurrection He gives a similar power to all the Apostles and says: 'As the Father hath sent me,' &c., still in order to make the necessary unity clear, by His own authority He laid down the source of that unity as beginning from one" (De Unit. Eccl., n. 4). And Optatus of Milevis says: "You cannot deny that you know that in the city of Rome the Episcopal chair was first conferred on Peter. In this Peter, the head of all the Apostles (hence his name Cephas), has sat; in which chair alone unity was to be preserved for all, lest any of the other apostles should claim anything as exclusively his own. So much so, that he who would place another chair against that one chair, would be a schismatic and a sinner" (De Schism. Donat., lib. ii). Hence the teaching of Cyprian, that heresy and schism arise and are begotten from the fact that due obedience is refused to the supreme authority. "Heresies and schisms have no other origin than that obedience is refused to the priest of God, and that men lose sight of the fact that there is one judge in the place of Christ in this world" (Epist. xii. ad Cornelium, n. 5). No one, therefore, unless in communion with Peter can share in his authority, since it is absurd to imagine that he who is outside can command in the Church. Wherefore Optatus of Milevis blamed the Donatists for this reason: "Against which ages (of hell) we read that Peter received the saving keys, that is to say, our prince, to whom it was said by Christ: 'To thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the gates of Hell shall

not conquer them.' Whence is it therefore that you strive to obtain for yourselves the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven-you who fight against the chair of Peter?" (Lib. ii., n. 4-5).

But the Episcopal order is rightly judged to be in communion with Peter, as Christ commanded, if it be subject to and obeys Peter; otherwise it necessarily becomes a lawless and disorderly crowd. It is not sufficient for the due preservation of the unity of the faith that the head should merely have been charged with the office of superintendent, or should have been invested solely with a power of direction. But it is absolutely necessary that he should have received real and sovereign authority which the whole community is bound to obey. What had the Son of God in view when he promised the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter alone? Biblical usage and the unanimous teaching of the Fathers clearly show that supreme authority is designated in the passage by the word keys. Nor is it lawful to interpret in a different sense what was given to Peter alone, and what was given to the other Apostles conjointly with him. If the power of binding, loosening, and feeding confers upon each and every one of the Bishops the successors of the Apostles a real authority to rule the people committed to him, certainly the same power must have the same effect in his case to whom the duty of feeding the lambs and sheep has been assigned by God. "Christ constituted [Peter] not only pastor, but pastor of pastors; Peter therefore feeds the lambs and feeds the sheep, feeds the children and feeds the mothers, governs the subjects and rules the prelates, because the lambs and the sheep form the whole of the Church" (S. Brunonis Episcopi Signiensis Comment. in Joan., part iii., cap. 21, n. 55). Hence those remarkable expressions of the ancients concerning St. Peter, which most clearly set forth the fact that he was placed in the highest degree of dignity and authority. They frequently call him "the Prince of the College of the Disciples; the Prince of the holy Apostles; the leader of that choir; the mouthpiece of all the Apostles; the head of that family; the ruler of the whole world; the first of the Apostles; the safeguard of the Church." In this sense St. Bernard writes as follows to Pope Eugenius: "Who art thou? The great priest - the high priest. Thou art the Prince of Bishops and the heir of the Apostles. . . . Thou art he to whom the keys were given. There are, it is true, other gatekeepers of heaven and to pastors of flocks, but thou are so much the more glorious as thou hast inherited a different and more glorious name than all the rest. They have flocks consigned to them, one to each; to thee all the flocks are confided as one flock to one shepherd, and not alone the sheep, but the shepherds. You ask how I prove this? From the words of the Lord. To which - I do not say - of the Bishops, but even of the Apostles have all the sheep been so absolutely and unreservedly committed? If thou lovest me, Peter, feed my sheep. Which sheep? Of this or that country, or kingdom? My sheep, He says: to whom therefore is it not evident that he does not designate some, but all? We can make no exception where no distinction is made" (De Consideratione, lib. ii., cap. 8).

But it is opposed to the truth, and in evident contradiction with the divine constitution of the Church, to hold that while each Bishop is individually bound to obey the authority of the Roman Pontiffs, taken collectively the Bishops are not so bound. For it is the nature and object of a foundation to support the unity of the whole edifice and to give stability to it, rather than to each component part; and in the present case this is much more applicable, since Christ the Lord wished that by the strength and solidity of the foundation the gates of hell should be prevented from prevailing against the Church. All are agreed that the divine promise must be understood of the Church as a whole, and not of any certain portions of it. These can indeed be overcome by the assaults of the powers of hell, as in point of fact has befallen some of them. Moreover, he who is set over the whole flock must have authority, not only over the sheep dispersed throughout the Church, but also when they are assembled together. Do the sheep when they are all assembled together rule and guide the shepherd? Do the successors of the Apostles assembled together constitute the foundation on which the successor of St. Peter rests in order to derive therefrom strength and stability? Surely jurisdiction and authority belong to him in whose power have been placed the keys of the Kingdom taken collectively. And as the Bishops, each in his own district, command with real power not only individuals but the whole community, so the Roman pontiffs, whose jurisdiction extends to the whole Christian commonwealth, must have all its parts, even taken collectively, subject and obedient to their authority. Christ the Lord, as we have quite sufficiently shown, made Peter and his

successors His vicars, to exercise for ever in the Church the power which He exercised during His mortal life. Can the Apostolic College be said to have been above its master in authority?

This power over the Episcopal College to which we refer, and which is clearly set forth in Holy Writ, has ever been acknowledged and attested by the Church, as is clear from the teaching of General Councils. "We read that the Roman Pontiff has pronounced judgments on the prelates of all the churches; we do not read that anybody has pronounced sentence on him" (Hadrianus ii., in Allocutione iii., ad Synodum Romanum an. 869, Cf. Actionem vii., Conc. Constantinopolitani iv). The reason for which is stated thus: "there is no authority greater than that of the Apostolic See" (Nicholaus in Epist. lxxxvi. ad Michael. Imperat.) wherefore Gelasius on the decrees of Councils says: "That which the First See has not approved of cannot stand; but what it has thought well to decree has been received by the whole Church" (Epist. xxvi., ad Episcopos Dardaniae, n. 5). It has ever been unquestionably the office of the Roman Pontiffs to ratify or to reject the decrees of Councils. Leo the great rescinded the acts of the Conciliabulum of Ephesus. Damasus rejected those of Rimini, and Hadrian I. those of Constantinople. The 28th Canon of the Council of Chalcedon, by the very fact that it lacks the assent and approval of the Apostolic See, is admitted by all to be worthless. Rightly, therefore, has Leo X. laid down in the 5th council of Lateran "that the Roman Pontiff alone, as having authority over all Councils, has full jurisdiction and power to summon, to transfer, to dissolve Councils, as is clear, not only from the testimony of Holy Writ, from the teaching of the Fathers and of the Roman Pontiffs, and from the decrees of the sacred canons, but from the teaching of the very Councils themselves." Indeed, Holy Writ attests that the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were given to Peter alone, and that the power of binding and loosening was granted to the Apostles and to Peter; but there is nothing to show that the Apostles received supreme power without Peter, and against Peter. Such power they certainly did not receive from Jesus Christ. Wherefore, in the decree of the Vatican Council as to the nature and authority of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff, no newly conceived opinion is set forth, but the venerable and constant belief of every age (Sess. iv., cap. 3).

Nor does it beget any confusion in the administration that Christians are bound to obey a twofold authority. We are prohibited in the first place by Divine Wisdom from entertaining any such thought, since this form of government was constituted by the counsel of God Himself. In the second place we must note that the due order of things and their mutual relations are disturbed if there be a twofold magistracy of the same rank set over a people, neither of which is amenable to the other. But the authority of the Roman Pontiff is supreme, universal, independent; that of the bishops limited, and dependent. "It is not congruous that two superiors with equal authority should be placed over the same flock; but that two, one of whom is higher than the other, should be placed over the same people is not incongruous. Thus the parish priest, the bishop, and the Pope, are placed immediately over the same people" (St. Thomas in iv Sent, dist. xvii., a. 4, ad q. 4, ad 3). So the Roman Pontiffs, mindful of their duty, wish above all things, that the divine constitution of the Church should be preserved. Therefore, as they defend with all necessary care and vigilance their own authority, so they have always laboured, and will continue to labour, that the authority of the bishops may be upheld. Yea, they look up whatever honour or obedience is given to the bishops as paid to themselves. "My honour is the honour of the Universal Church. My honour is the strength and stability of my brethren. Then am I honoured when due honour is given to everyone" (S. Gregorius M. Epistolarum, lib viii., ep. xxx., ad Eulogium).

Appeal to Sheep Not of the Fold

16. In what has been said we have faithfully described the exemplar and form of the Church as divinely constituted. We have treated at length of its unity: we have explained sufficiently its nature, and pointed out the way in which the Divine Founder of the Church willed that it should be preserved. There is no reason to doubt that all those, who by Divine Grace and mercy have had the happiness to have been born, as it were, in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and to have lived in it, will listen to Our Apostolic Voice: "My sheep hear my voice" (John x., 27), and that they will derive from Our words fuller instruction and a more perfect disposition to keep united with their respective pastors, and through them with the Supreme Pastor, so that they may remain more securely within the one fold, and may derive therefrom a greater abundance of salutary fruit. But

We, who, notwithstanding our unfitness for this great dignity and office, govern by virtue of the authority conferred on us by Jesus Christ, as we "look on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. xii., 2) feel Our heart fired by His charity. What Christ has said of Himself We may truly repeat of Ourselves: "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice" (John x., 16). Let all those, therefore, who detest the wide-spread irreligion of our times, and acknowledge and confess Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the human race, but who have wandered away from the Spouse, listen to Our voice. Let them not refuse to obey Our paternal charity. Those who acknowledge Christ must acknowledge Him wholly and entirely. "The Head and the body are Christ wholly and entirely. The Head is the only-begotten son of God, the body is His Church; the bridegroom and the bride, two in one flesh. All who dissent from the Scriptures concerning Christ, although they may be found in all places in which the Church is found, are not in the Church; and again all those who agree with the Scriptures concerning the Head, and do not communicate in the unity of the Church, are not in the Church" (S. Augustinus, Contra Donatistas Epistola, sive De Unit. Eccl., cap. iv., n. 7).

And with the same yearning Our soul goes out to those whom the foul breath of irreligion has not entirely corrupted, and who at least seek to have the true God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, as their Father. Let such as these take counsel with themselves, and realize that they can in no wise be counted among the children of God, unless they take Christ Jesus as their Brother, and at the same time the Church as their mother. We lovingly address to all the words of St. Augustine: "Let us love the Lord our God; let us love His Church; the Lord as our Father, the Church as our Mother. Let no one say, I go indeed to idols, I consult fortune-tellers and soothsayers; but I leave not the Church of God: I am a Catholic. Clinging to thy Mother, thou offendest thy Father. Another, too, says: 'Far be it from me; I do not consult fortune - telling, I seek not soothsaying, I seek not profane divinations, I go not to the worship of devils, I serve not stones: but I am on the side of Donatus.' What doth it profit thee not to offend the Father, who avenges an offence against the Mother? What doth it profit to confess the Lord, to honour God, to preach Him, to acknowledge His Son, and to confess that He sits on the right hand of the Father, if you blaspheme His Church? . . . If you had a beneficent friend, whom you honoured daily - and even once calumniated his spouse, would you ever enter his house? Hold fast, therefore, O dearly beloved, hold fast altogether God as your Father, and the Church as your Mother" (Enarratio in Psal. lxxxviii., sermo ii., n. 14).

Above all things, trusting in the mercy of God, who is able to move the hearts of men and to incline them as and when He pleases, We most earnestly commend to His loving kindness all those of whom We have spoken. As a pledge of Divine grace, and as a token of Our affection, We lovingly impart to you, in the Lord, Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and people, Our Apostolic Blessing.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, the 29th day of June, in the year 1896, and the nineteenth of our Pontificate.

LEO XIII

MOVING BENCHES IN CHURCH

I assume that everyone knows about the game called musical chairs. It seems that something similar happens in our chapel. All the benches move every Sunday! With a tremendous selfishness some people push and pull the benches to obtain more space for themselves without considering what happen to others in front or behind them. I will not have any other option that to screw the benches to the floor giving equal amount of space to everyone. Of course the other option should be to practice justice, charity and respect for the common good. Is it possible?

Feast	Mass time and Events
1 S. Ignatius martyr / first Saturday	11 am Mass followed by Benediction Blessed Sacrament
2 Purification of the B.V. M	10 am Mass - 11 am Taunton - 4pm Holnest
3 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
4 S. andrew Corsini	8:00 am
5 S. Agatha	8:00 am
6 S. Titus	8:00 am
7 S. Romuald	8:00 am
8 S. John of Matha	8:00 am
9 Septuagesima Sunday	10 am Mass - 11 am Taunton - 4pm Holnest
10 S. Scholastica	8:00 am
11 Apparition of the B.V.M at Lourdes	8:00 am
12 Seven Fouders of the Servants	8:00 am / Colleton Manor Mass 11:30am
13 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
14 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
15 Our Lady's Saturday	8:00 am
16 Sexagesima Sunday	10 am Mass - 11 am Taunton - 4pm Holnest
17 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
18 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
19 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
20 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
21 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
22 Chair of S. Peter	8:00 am
23 Quinquagesima Sunday	10 am Mass - 11 am Taunton - 4pm Holnest
24 Feria - (Votive mass)	8:00 am
25 S. Matthias	8:00 am
26 Ash Wednesday	8:00 am / 6:30 pm
27 Feria -	8:00 am
28 Feria -	8:00 am
29 Feria -	8:00 am

