Boston Catholic Journal

NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

"When the Son of Man comes, WILL HE FIND FAITH ON EARTH?"

Pachamama Pagan gods worshipped in Vatican Garden

PachaPapa

Congratulating the "Newly-Weds"

No more stunning, no more frightening, and perhaps no more ominously portentous words are spoken in all the Gospels, in fact, in the entire New Testament — perhaps even in the entirety of Sacred Scripture itself ... *than these words*; words that have become increasingly fraught with significance with every passing generation. Indeed, we must wonder if they are, in fact, *spoken of this generation* ... or of one soon — very soon, to come.

"When the Son of Man comes will He find Faith on earth?" (Saint Luke 18.8)

As with so many of Christ's teachings, the troubling question Christ puts to us in asking *if He will so much as find Faith* upon His return is too often and too deftly explained away — especially by the overwhelming number of liberal theologians and bishops who have proliferated and multiplied since 1962 — which is to say, by "the learned and the wise". It would appear that either Christ does not know what He is saying, or we do not know what He is saying — although we all agree that He said something that sounds suspiciously clear.

These are twelve words, however, to which we must pay careful attention, perhaps more now than at any other time in Church history.

However reluctant we are to take Christ at His word — which becomes increasingly inconvenient to us — we must recognize that Jesus never spoke idly: His words, His teachings — and yes, *His Commandments* — were always uttered to one explicit end: *the salvation of souls* — attaining to Heaven and everlasting happiness and to avoiding Hell and eternal misery. The Jewish religious authorities — "the learned" of His own time — had scornfully dismissed Christ's warning that not so much as stone would remain standing in the great Temple [1] ... the very Temple within which, 70 years later, these words were fulfilled when Rome laid waste in days what took 46 years to build.

We tend to view such alarming statements made by Jesus — and there are many — with the same scorn and disdain today.

Indeed ... what has become of the "Faith of our Fathers"?

A mere fifty years ago we ourselves would have instinctively replied "Of course He will find faith! There simply must be some deeper, some obscure and less evident meaning to this that we do not presently understand — and what He appears to be saying, He is not really saying at all. Surely the "learned" of our own day can deftly explain the answer to this troubling question. In the end, they will conclude, Jesus is really asking something entirely different from what He appears to be asking and that it has nothing to do with our very real defection from the Faith." It is likely that many Jews of Jesus' time — both the learned and the unlearned — had replied in much the same way. In fact, they did. [2]

In other words, to us, our faith, the Faith of the Catholic Church for two millennia, could no sooner disappear than ... well, the stones of the great Temple 2000 years ago!

If, however, we take a careful inventory of our present and undeniably dismal and increasingly scandalous situation in the Church — especially as it has unfolded in the last five decades — Jesus does not quite appear as ... "perplexing" ... as so many apparently make Him to be.

CANDIDLY Ask yourself the following:

- Has the *Faith* — the One, True, Holy Catholic Faith — indeed, has Christianity itself, flourished in the last 50 years, or has it withered?
- Are *vocations* to the Priesthood and Religious life growing or dwindling?
- Are Catholics (are Christians in general) *having more children* or are they having fewer children?
- Are *Missionary efforts*, to the end of (dare we say it?) "conversion" as mandated by Christ [2] encouraged as intrinsic to Catholicism — or are they *discouraged* as impolite, obtrusive, culturally imperialistic and inherently inimical to the "Ecumenical spirit of Vatican II" — especially as

interpreted by Pope Francis for whom *"proselytism is solemn nonsense"*, to use his own words?

- Is it really the case that *"conversion" to Christ and His Church is actively discouraged* — that *especially under Pope Francis* it is no longer understood as a holy and inherently necessary endeavor — rather than being *disdained,* even dismissed, as "socially and culturally incorrect" — indeed, has it really come to this: that promoting our Catholic Faith as Christ has commanded us to, been all but forbidden by Francis and his "progressive" coterie of feckless and disaffected cardinals and bishops?

- Is our understanding of the Catholic Church, as an *absolutely unique* institution *indispensable to the ordinary means of salvation*, emphasized as urgently today (if it is emphasized at all) as it was a hundred years ago? Fifty years ago? Indeed, *is the concept itself of the singularity and indispensability of the Holy Catholic Church authentically deemed a dogma and a viable concept any longer?*

For all our insolence and equivocation, *we know the answers*, and we are uncomfortable with them, for they fly in the face of Christ and all that He taught — to say nothing of Sacred Scripture, Holy Tradition, and the Sacred Deposit of the Faith entrusted to the Catholic Church by God Himself.

Indeed, Christ's question takes on a greater sense of urgency, for the sheep are scattered and confused as never before. *The papacy of Francis has been disastrous for the Church. Why? Because he has taken Vatican II to its logical conclusion: the irrelevance of the Church.*

Ubi est Pastor? Where is the Shepherd?

Where is the Shepherd? Who is earnestly addressing this spiritual malaise and religious decay, the indolence and dereliction of the vast majority of American and European bishops who appear far more eager for secular plaudits than the now quaint and discredited notion of "the salvation of souls." Pope Francis has effectively declared this mandate defunct in favor of the rehabilitation — and sometimes

transformation — of bodies, societies, economies, and the environment. That the passing material environment of man is infinitely less important than the eternal abode of his soul often appears to elude Francis. Indeed, it appears to elude most Catholics whose mantra increasingly coincides with the world's: *Social activism! ... not interior conversion away from this world and to Christ.*

Shame! Shame on us! By our silence, our fear of being disparaged by "other Catholics" *for the sake of Christ,* we condone this travesty — are *complicit* in it ... even promote it! What will motivate us to recognize, and to redress, this frightful and ultimately deadly state of affairs?

There are, after all, *other* contenders in this world for the souls of men ... seen and *unseen*! As our own wick smolders, others blaze! The burning Crescent of Islam, poised like a scimitar, and every bit as deadly, glows and grows in the east, and with it, not an *ethnic*, but a *Religious Cleansing* to which the world remains indifferent — an expunging of every vestige of Christianity *in partibus infidelium*.

Even the European Union will no longer tolerate the inclusion of its indissoluble Christian heritage within its Constitution. Not only does it thoroughly repudiate its own Christian cultural heritage — it prohibits it — even banishes it!

Surely, then, in our effort to remedy this impending state of dissolution, we will first turn to our bishops, since they are, preeminently, the "Teachers and Guardians of the Faith". But more often than not — much more often than not — in the well-appointed office at the end of the corridor we do not find a shepherd of souls but a deeply sequestered, occasionally avuncular, and predictably remote ... "administrator".

Relegating his prime responsibility as Teacher and Promoter of the Faith ... to others, in the form of Lay committees and subcommittees largely "chaired" by liberal Catholics more concerned with social issues than the salvation of souls, are we confident that the patrimony of our faith will somehow percolate through this strata of already contaminated soil and reach our children authentically and intact?

Is our fear mitigated ... or further exacerbated ... by *our bishops' resolute lack of*

diligence in being attentive to what Catholic colleges and theologians in their own dioceses are really teaching — and who are teaching the teachers ... who, in turn, are teaching our children?

Do you think that your bishop actually — that is to say, cognitively — is aware of, or even concerned with — what the teachers themselves are actually teaching?

Not in this diocese. Not in Boston. In fact, Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley routinely fetes, praises, and holds up as exemplary the clueless "Catechists" who churn out our children to the Sacrament of Confirmation — with no clue whatever of that in which they are being confirmed. By comparison, even the dismal failure of our public schools in Boston must be deemed a stunning success.

For most of us — especially in the Archdiocese of Boston, but no less elsewhere — the answer is, as they say, a "no-brainer": it is a universally resounding no. Most of us find, to our growing dismay and deepening cynicism, that our Bishops appear to have "more important", more ... "pressing" things to do ... than to communicate the Faith to the faithful ... especially the children.

Really, we beg the question: if no one teaches the teachers — who, then, teaches the children? If they are not brought the faith by those to whom it has been entrusted — the bishops, the episcopacy — who will bring it to them?

Will they — how can they — acquire the Faith ... if no one brings it to them? Saint Paul is very clear about this:

"How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent ...?" (Romans 10.14-15)

Ask yourself candidly: *do you know more ... or less ... of your Catholic faith than your children?* Very likely more — although, in all honesty, it is probably little.

You politely assent to the now quaint Catholic notion that "parents are the primary teachers of their children", but knowing little of your own Faith, you simply shell out $50.00 per child and pan off this grave responsibility to others of whom you

know nothing, and *who themselves largely know nothing of the faith they presume to teach.*

You go through the motions as careless of what your children are taught in their 10 years of "Religious Education" as your Bishop is of what the teachers

teach. 10 years later, and $500 poorer per child, you scratch your head and wonder why Johnny still does not know God, and why Judy never goes to

Mass — and yet we have agreed that you know more than your children ...

What, then, we must ask — with growing apprehension — will your children teach their children ...?

What will they — who know even less than you — teach those who know nothing?

Total Ignorance

The momentum, as we see, is inexorable — until it culminates in total ignorance: every generation knows less of their faith than the generation preceding it. It is, in the end, the devolution from doctrine to legend, from legend to fiction, and from fiction to myth.

That is not just a poor, but a stultifying and ultimately deadly patrimony.

This default — at every level — in transmitting the authentic Catholic faith intact ... leaves Jesus question suddenly very real.

"Recently, a Gallup poll was taken on Catholic attitudes toward Holy Communion. The poll showed serious confusion among Catholics about one of the most basic beliefs of the Church. Only 30 percent of those surveyed believe they are actually receiving the Body and Blood, soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine." [4]

The problem is more than mathematical, as we have seen; it is exponential. 70% of Catholics do not possess this most fundamental, this most essential understanding of the core article of genuine Catholic doctrine: that "Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you have no life in you." Heavy stuff!

It is not just a matter of the greatest concern, but nothing less than a matter of the gravest dereliction that most Catholics do not realize — do not know — that the very Mass itself is an abbreviation of "The Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass", and that it is really a Sacrifice, the actual re-enactment of Calvary before their very eyes!

This failure of understanding ... culminates in a failure in Faith. It possesses, in significant ways, the remorseless characteristics of mathematical certainties. Not understanding, grasping — having never been taught — the most elementary features of the faith, how can they be understood to possess what they have not acquired, and how can they transmit, pass on, what they do not possess? It is inescapable.

Prognostication, of course, is for fools.

But the words of Christ are certainties that will come to pass.

"Weep not for Me, but for your children," [5] Christ told the sorrowing women on the road to Calvary.

In very deed.

Jesus' question, then — "*When the Son of Man comes will He find faith on earth?" is not a "rhetorical question" at all; it is a question fraught with enormous significance* ... the frightful answer to which appears to be unfolding before our very eyes — but that is if you take Christ at His word — and given Jesus' track record on things yet to come, we would do well and wisely to give pause for more than thought.

Are you worried now ...? Not nearly enough.

And this is all the more frightening still.

Geoffrey K. Mondello
Editor
Boston Catholic Journal

Copyright © 2004 - 2025 Boston Catholic Journal. All rights reserved.