

Is Saint Peter's the Line of Archbishop Lefebvre?



PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO

« ECCLESIA DEI »

FORMULA ADHÆSIONIS

N. _____

1. Ego N. N., _____
 promitto fidelitatem erga Ecclesiam Catholicam et erga
 Pontificem, Ecclesiæ Pastorem Supremum, Vicarium
 Successorem beati Petri in eius Primatu et Caput
 Collegii.

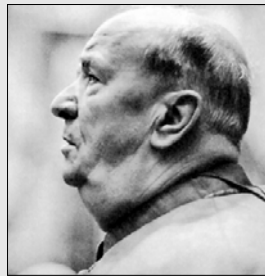
From time to time we hear voices stating that the Fraternity of St. Peter is ruled by the terms of the Protocol signed by Archbishop Lefebvre on May 5, 1988, a brag which the Fraternity still repeats to this day. These same voices go so far as to maintain that Archbishop Lefebvre repudiated what he had previously signed. It is to clarify these issues that following this article we reprint, starting on page 6, a conference given by Archbishop Lefebvre on May 10, 1988 (*Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican*, pp.95-105).

The truth of the matter is that Archbishop Lefebvre, having signed this Protocol, refused to sign the apology for crimes he had never committed, and continued to insist on the date of June 30, 1988 (the fourth and final date for the consecrations) instead of some vague, possible future date, as well as on the need for not one but several bishops, there being no other way to guarantee independence from the modernist bishops (how necessary we now see this to have been!). As pushed to the limit as he might have been, it is nevertheless not true that Archbishop Lefebvre repudiated the Protocol that he signed.

When confronted with their compromise with the postconciliar Church the priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter are wont to respond that they simply follow the protocol signed by Archbishop Lefebvre. Indeed, it is certainly true that any priest of the Society who tries to join the Fraternity is obliged to sign a *Formula Adhaesionis*, that is, a Formula of Adherence to the conciliar Church (see p.5). Although similar to the Protocol signed by Archbishop Lefebvre (see p.4), it is nevertheless different on several very important points.

The difference begins in the very first point. The St. Peter's priests not only promise fidelity to the Pope as Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter in his primacy, but also as "head of the *college* of bishops." Archbishop Lefebvre refused this profession of collegiality, insisting instead on the expression "head of the *body* of bishops." The third point admits that some might see a contradiction between the post-conciliar novelties and the Magisterium, but not that they themselves consider these novelties as directives opposed to Tradition, as Archbishop Lefebvre said and signed. If Archbishop Lefebvre signed a Protocol promising to abstain from polemics, he also clearly stated that he had

The Ottaviani Intervention raised many questions about the results which the New Order of Mass would have on the faith of the people. Among those points, the *Study* maintains that the faithful "never, absolutely never, asked that the liturgy be changed or mutilated to make it easier to understand." "On many points," the *Study* says, "it has much to gladden the heart of even the most modernist Protestant." Further, "The definition of the Mass is thus reduced to a 'supper.'" "The altar is nearly always called the *table*." "The Instruction recommends that the Blessed Sacrament now be kept in a place apart...as though it were some sort of relic." "The people themselves appear as possessing *autonomous priestly powers*." "He [the priest] now appears as nothing more than a Protestant minister."



Alfredo
Cardinal
Ottaviani

[From the *Introduction* to the *Critical Study*, signed by Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci]

"The accompanying *Critical Study* is the work of a select group of bishops, theologians, liturgists and pastors of souls. Despite its brevity, the study shows quite clearly that the *Novus Ordo Missae*—considering the new elements susceptible to widely different interpretations which are implied or taken for granted—represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session 22 of the Council of Trent. The "canons" of the rite definitively fixed at that time erected an insurmountable barrier against any heresy which might attack the integrity of the Mystery."

never indulged in polemics, and that he would not cease to condemn error, from wherever it came: "Let the Pope stop doing these reprehensible things, incomprehensible, unthinkable, and we will stop reacting." Is this the case of the St. Peter priests, who have never been known to condemn the liberal errors and heresies of the ecumenical bishops they depend upon, let alone those of the Pope?

The fourth point in the formula is the acceptance of the validity of the New Mass and the new sacraments, which Archbishop Lefebvre accepted only on the understanding, already accepted under no.3, that there are elements in the modern liturgy in contradiction with Tradition. Moreover, the use of the Latin term "*valitudinem*," which means *strength, good health, effectiveness, powerfulness*, in the text signed by the St. Peter's priests, instead of the usual term "*validitatem*," which means *validity*, indicates that they are admitting much more than simple validity, but also the effectiveness, correctness, goodness and uprightness of the new rites. Certainly this is very clear from the fact that these priests can never be heard to criticize the protestant and modernist spirit of the new Mass, which "represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass" (*Ottaviani Intervention*). If their silence must be interpreted as consent, the same cannot be said about Archbishop Lefebvre's ferocious opposition to what he did not hesitate to call a "bastard Mass," so clear is its illegitimacy. (Sermon at Lille, Aug. 29, 1976. See *The Angelus*, November, 1995.)

A major difference can also be found in the fifth point. For if Archbishop Lefebvre promised to respect the common discipline of the Church and the ecclesiastical laws contained in the 1983 code, it was under the explicit proviso that he

SIGNED BY ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE

This Protocol, signed by Archbishop Lefebvre on May 5, 1988, was the culmination of 10 months of negotiations after Archbishop Lefebvre had announced his intention to consecrate bishops. The accord on these points of doctrine illustrates Rome's recognition of the right of traditional Catholics to refuse certain points in Vatican II irreconcilable with Tradition. It showed that Rome had no opposition in principle to the consecration of bishops, and that the real opposition was a political stunt to prevent the growth of the traditional movement.

PROTOCOL OF ACCORD

I, Marcel Lefebvre, Archbishop-Bishop Emeritus of Tulle, as well as the members of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X founded by me:

1) Promise to be always faithful to the Catholic Church and the Roman Pontiff, its Supreme Pastor, Vicar of Christ, Successor of Blessed Peter in his primacy as head of the body of bishops.

2) We declare our acceptance of the doctrine contained in n. 25 of the dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican Council II on the ecclesiastical Magisterium and the adherence which is due to it.

3) Regarding certain points taught by Vatican Council II or concerning later reforms of the liturgy and law, and which do not appear to us easily reconcilable with Tradition, we pledge that we will have a positive attitude of study and communication with the Apostolic See, avoiding all polemics.

4) Moreover, we declare that we recognize the validity of the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments celebrated with the intention of doing what the Church does, and according to the rites indicated in the typical editions of the *Roman Missal* and the *Rituals* of the Sacraments promulgated by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II.

5) Finally, we promise to respect the common discipline of the Church and the ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II, without prejudice to the special discipline granted to the Society by particular law.

did not respect all the laws, and had the right to refuse, according to no.3, those laws which are contrary to Tradition, such as those promoting ecumenism. He did not promise to follow the post-conciliar laws, as do the St. Peter priests, in whose Formula of Adherence the words "without prejudice to the special discipline granted to the Society by particular law" were eliminated.

However, the real difference is that Archbishop Lefebvre absolutely insisted on independence from the modernist bishops. In this the Fraternity has totally failed. They depend upon a *Novus Ordo* commission (*Ecclesia Dei*), whose members are not traditional Catholics; they have to this day absolutely no bishops of their own, and receive the sacrament of Holy Orders from bishops ordained themselves in the new rites, and who do not hesitate to celebrate the New Mass; they are

obliged to share altars with the New Mass, and to operate within the structure of the conciliar parishes. Either they agree with the post-conciliar liturgy, laws and practices, or they are hypocritical by their cooperation. Whatever the case be, it is clear that they have compromised with the revolution in the Church.

Occasionally we are asked what a traditional Catholic must do if the only traditional Mass he can attend is one celebrated by a Fraternity priest. Our answer remains exactly the same as Archbishop Lefebvre's answer with respect to the Indult Masses, celebrated by priests who also celebrate the New Mass. To participate in such Masses is to accept the compromise upon which they are based; it is to co-operate with the destruction of the Church either by accepting it or by hypocritical silence. It is to refuse the full profession of Catholic



PONTIFICAL COMMISSION
«ECCLESIA DEI»

FORMULA OF ADHERENCE

N.

1. I,.....promise fidelity to the Catholic Church and towards the Roman Pontiff, Supreme Pastor of the Church, Vicar of Christ, Successor of Blessed Peter in his Primacy and as head of the college of bishops.
2. I accept the doctrine which is taught in n. 25 of the Dogmatic Constitution "Lumen Gentium" of the Second Vatican Council concerning the Magisterium of the Church, and concerning the adherence owed to it.
3. Concerning other doctrines which the Second Vatican Council teaches, or concerning posterior reforms be they liturgical, or canonical, which are viewed by some as being difficult to conciliate with preceding Magisterial declarations, I assume the obligation of following a positive line of study and communication with the Holy See while avoiding all polemic.
4. I also declare that I accept the validity [or, rather, the effectiveness and correctness-*Ed.*] of the Sacrifice of the Mass and of the Sacraments, celebrated with the intention of doing what the Church does, and according to the rites found in the typical editions of the *Roman Missal* as well as the *Ritual* published by the Supreme Pontiffs Paul VI and John Paul II.
5. Finally, I promise to adhere to the common discipline of the Church and to her laws, especially those which are contained in the Code of Canon Law promulgated by the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II.

.....
place date name of declarant



All priests who have left the Society of Saint Pius X to join the Fraternity of Saint Peter were obliged to sign this Formula of Adherence. It is clearly quite different from that which Archbishop Lefebvre signed, which differences have been highlighted by the editor for the sake of comparison. Note in particular that they do not want themselves among those who feel that the novelties of Vatican II, here called "doctrines," are irreconcilable with preceding Magisterial declarations, and that the word "Tradition" has been entirely removed.



PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO
«ECCLESIA DEI»

FORMULA ADHAESIONIS

N.

1. Ego N.N., _____, promitto fidelitatem erga Ecclesiam Catholicam et erga Romanum Pontificem, Ecclesiae Pastorem Supremum, Vicarium Christi, Successorem beati Petri in eius Primatu et Caput Episcoporum Collegii.
2. Accipio doctrinam, quae in n.25 Constitutionis dogmaticae *Lumen Gentium* Concilii Vaticani II de Magisterio Ecclesiae et de adhaesione illi debita docetur.
3. Circa aliquas doctrinas, quas Concilium Vaticanum II docuit, aut circa instaurationes posteriores sive Liturgiae sive Iuris Canonici, quae aliquibus difficulter cum praecedentibus Magisterii declarationibus conciliari posse videntur, obligationem assumo sequendi lineam positivam studii et communicationis cum Sede Apostolica, vitata omni nota polemica.
4. Declaro etiam, me accipere valitudinem Sacrificii Missae et Sacramentorum celebratorum cum intentione faciendi quod facit Ecclesia, et secundum ritus, qui inveniuntur in editionibus typicis Missalis Romani necnon Ritualium a Summis Pontificibus Paulo VI et Ioanne Paulo II editis.
5. In fine promitto, me disciplinae communi Ecclesiae eiusque legibus adhaerere, imprimis illis, quae in Codice Iuris Canonici a Summo Pontifice Ioanne Paulo II promulgato continentur.

locus et dies:

manu propria subscripsi:

Faith which the uncompromising practice of Tradition is. It is to say that one "prefers" the traditional Mass but that the New Mass and the errors of Vatican II need not be publicly condemned in order to protect the Faith. No person is obliged to attend such a Mass, even if it is the only way to satisfy one's Sunday obligation. To the contrary, it would be manifestly wrong for a person who understands their compromise to do so. The Archbishop presents and answers the objection very clearly: "After all, we must be charitable, we must be kind, we must not be divisive, after all, they are celebrating the Tridentine Mass, they are not as bad as everyone says—but they are betraying us! They are shaking hands with the Church's destroyers, with people holding modernist and liberal ideas condemned by the Church. So they are doing the devil's work." (Sept. 6, 1990).