

Dear Friends,  
update: June 2nd, 2014.

Laudetur Jesus Christe

Now that not only the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate but also the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate have been attacked very seriously, I hope and I will repeat my hope that the silence about all this injustice and mercilessness threatening will stop. I ask you with the words of our Holy Father *“from calve to calve”* that we would *“knock at the udder of the cow”* and *“bother our pastors, so that they will give us the milk of grace, of doctrine, and of guidance”*.

Because a lot of faithful, especially the young ones are not familiar with some events in the past I would like to present a lesson for the recent events as well as for the future by going back in history a bit. Therefore I have to fill in on some details of events which occurred long before a lot of the present blogs were actively involved with this matter or even, for some, with the Extraordinary Form of the Mass. I am of course referring to the difficulties within the Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP) in 1999. The FSSP and the Superior General, Father Bisig, were accused by 16 members of the then about 100 members of the FSSP as follows (as formulated by Protocol 512/99):

- 1 The actual line of the Fraternity in liturgical matters and implementation of the major lines set out by the Second Vatican Council.
- 2 The convocation of the General Chapter foreseen for this year (1999) as the manner of preparing for the election of participants in this election, which, according to the opponents destined to perpetuate this line by inserting it definitively in the Constitutions.
- 3 The manner of governing the Fraternity, which tends to silence all voices in opposition to the actual line, and which does not encourage a fraternal understanding between the members but carries the danger that the Fraternity is totally isolated in the Church.

While ad 1 of these accusations is similar to the accusation of the *“Crypto-Lefebvrian and Traditionalist drift”*, we can consider ad 2 and 3 as similar to the accusation against the Founder and Superior General of the FFI, Father Manelli: *“a bad management which is going into a wrong direction and is silencing the opposition”*. We can see here that nothing is new.

We also heard in 1999 not only these similar complains as nowadays concerning the FFI, but also exactly the same arguments from Rome and officially also (officially) by the FSSP that we are hearing now: *“You may not interfere into that internal problem of the Fraternity (now Friars)”*, and, *“if you do so, it will make the situation for the Fraternity (now Friars) worse”*. And so again nothing is new, the past is repeating in our recent time .

Now, that recently the [Secretary of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, the Franciscan José Rodríguez Carballo](#), has explained that this Congregation is *“particularly concerned”* with this matter: *“we are seeing true deviations”*. Above all because ***“not a few institutes give not only a pre-conciliar, but even an anti-conciliar formation. This is inadmissible, it is to place oneself outside of history. It is something that worries us greatly in the Congregation”***. And again these words are rather similar to the accusations by the 16 FSSP priests in 1999 and nowadays by the 5 rebellion friars of the Franciscan of the Immaculate. Looking further how this Congregation acts concerning the American Sisters it gives ground to consider strongly an ideologically background for the attacks based on the *“hermeneutic of failure”* which has been condemned by the several modern Popes, like Franciscus<sup>1</sup>, Benedictus XVI<sup>2</sup> and -much less known- even by Pope Paul VI in his speech to the Cardinals<sup>3</sup> on 1972.06.23, just six days before his famous expression about the *“smoke of the Satan”*.

<sup>1</sup> [Pope Supports "Hermeneutic of Continuity" Approach to Vatican II in Letter \(2013.11.15\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia offering them his Christmass greetings \(2005.12.22\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Acta Apostolicae Sedis \(AAS\) jaargang 64 \(1972\), page 498 line17](#) "... an emergency which We cannot and must not keep hidden: in the first place a false and erroneous interpretation of the Council, who would want to break with the tradition, even as regards the doctrine, an interpretation which goes so far as the Church is preconciliar rejected and allowed one considers a 'new' church, as it were reinvented from the inside, as regards the establishment of the Church, the dogma, the use and the law." [Six days later at the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29th, 1972), Pope Paul VI spoke publicly the famous words: "... that from somewhere or other, the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God."]

Therefore the accusation “*Crypto-Lefebvrian an Traditionalist drift*” is not only vague, it is above all suggestive and calling for emotional and uncontrolled feelings by some. And because it does not really indicate any concrete dogmatic faults or disobedience this vague accusation was setup to mislead as much especially the superiors and a lot of faithful.

Obviously based on the Secretary's words “*not a few institutes ..*” it is not anymore a matter of expecting, we are already aware of such attacks on other religious institutes. It is very well explaining why, without any internal complain, the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate are under similar attack as the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate. By this fact it has been proved that the case of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate is an ideological attack on both, the “*hermeneutics of continuity*” and the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum*. And so it has become a question of which religious institute, oratory, or any other religious group will be the next victim by this Congregation. This Congregation is acting like an Inquisition while it is not equipped for such task, **because it is not their task**. Such task belongs exclusively to the Congregation of Faith, which has to take care for the doctrine.

Regarding this we also have to express our following concerns. During our meeting in February this year at the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* which is working under the Congregation of Faith the validity of article 3 of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* was denied regarding all religious groups founded under the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which is the case of the Franciscan of the Immaculate. It was stated that all these groups are founded as “*Novus Ordo groups*” and therefore the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life has the right and even the duty to defend them against moving towards to “*Vetus Ordo*”.

Let us all together be “*the calves knocking the udder of the cow*” by which we “*bother our pastors, so that we will get the milk of grace, of doctrine, and of guidance*”. Therefore all faithful, all religious groups and all priests who are concerned about these developments has to pray, to speak and act defending the “*hermeneutics of the continuity*” and the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* as well as the *Franciscans of the Immaculate*, both the friars and the sisters before more victims will be made. Let us overcome our differences and pray, speak and act together as one body and one voice. While one is praying, let the other speak and again others act all together as servants of Truth, Justice and Mercy.

Jack P. Oostveen