

Abp. Lefebvre, Easter retreat, 1988

Our rule is that faith goes before obedience. The first obedience is the obedience of the faith. Faith goes before obedience to men whose duty it is to give us the faith. This position is simple, but clearly we find ourselves in opposition with those who destroy the faith. We have a double fight: there is the fight against the errors, and the fight against those who are in favor of the errors. It is difficult to be against the errors and not to be against the men who diffuse the errors. This is what makes it easy for those who attack us to say: "You battle against Rome and so you are against Rome, so you are against the Pope, so you are against the Council, so you are outside the Church." These are reactions which are entirely comprehensible, and easy to make, but false. They suppose that Rome never makes a mistake, which is false.

So, that is where we are, but if our role is to combat the errors, and also to oppose ourselves to and disobey those who diffuse the errors, that does not prevent us from trying to keep contact with them in order to try to convert them, in order to try to bring them back to Tradition. Perhaps it is an undertaking that is a bit presumptuous, perhaps a bit difficult, but at the same time, it is what God asks of us. Even if necessary to try to convert our superiors! What are we doing? But it is clear that they are in error, they are opposed to what their predecessors taught. We see the two texts. The text which is given to us now and the text which was given to us before are completely opposed. Who are we to obey then? Those who went before or those of today? We cannot obey both of them. That's a contradiction. That's what I said to Pope Paul VI when I saw him at Castel Gandolfo: "Most Holy Father, we are in an unbelievable situation. We are obliged to disobey you in order to obey your predecessors. Put yourself in our place. It's an impossible situation. Consider what a situation it is for the faithful! There is a contradiction between what the Council teaches and Quanta Cura of Pius IX." "Oh, we don't have time to do theology here." It is an easy answer to make, but it's not an answer. It is serious.

So, that is where we are, and we continue to be there. But keeping contact with Rome is a rather delicate business, rather delicate, because at the same time that we criticize them, we also have to correspond with them, we have to go from time to time to see them, at least the representatives of the Pope. Well, God permits things to happen in this way, that we keep our connection with Rome, and that at the same time we criticize Rome without fear. The letters that I've sent to the Pope with Bishop de Castro Meyer were not very tender. That is the least that one could say. The same is true of the little image that I had made which was even criticized by not a few traditionalists. It even came into the hands of the Pope. That is what Cardinal Ratzinger told me. He was clearly not very edified by it. But I finally said to Cardinal Ratzinger: "if that could but save his soul". You tell me: "We are giving lessons to the Pope!" They are catechism lessons! He lets all the devils into the Church and then he wants to be in the good books with God! He has to choose. Either he goes

completely on the side of the demons, and stays with the demons, or he keeps to the side of the good God and he drives away the demons. What do you want? It is not complicated. It is the catechism in images. In spite of that, they want to correspond with us, they want to consider us as something. It also seemed to me that a principle that should always be kept is to convince by facts rather than convince by means of a propaganda campaign which would be made in our favor by all the media, by the radio, by television, etc.

I think it's better to make ourselves known as we are rather than by means of the videos that we make, to make ourselves known by what we are doing today: a seminary here, a retreat house there, a school here, a priory there, and slowly but surely - with the grace of God, to be sure, it is God who sustains us since we seek to work for our Lord, since we seek to work for the Church, and Our Lord helps us, and that's what happens. If we made this visitation by Rome, it is because, after 12 years of combat, from 75 to 87, Rome ended by saying that it could not consider us as if we did not exist. The Society is not nothing, traditionalists (including all those who fight the same fight as us and who are close to us), it is not nothing. Thus, it's necessary that we do something and so the visitation took place, and I think that it is already a great victory for Tradition, because this visitation certainly took place (at least it did so on paper). The latest issue of *Fideliter* will tell you the details. The visitation was favorable; they expressed sentiments which were openly favorable to us, even to the point that Msgr. Perle said to the Fanjeaux sisters: "It is with works like yours that one rebuilds the Church." You cannot make a more beautiful compliment than that! I think that when he said that, he extended it to everything that he saw in the course of his trip, because he more or less passed around the same compliments everywhere, and the Cardinal as well. At the conclusion, you saw it yourselves, the Cardinal officially assisted at the Mass for the renewal of engagements on December 8. To assist at a Mass of someone suspended *a divinis* is somewhat out of the ordinary for a Cardinal. That was the conclusion, that was the conclusion of his visitation. That is written in history; it cannot be changed, it is done. When they write the history of the Society, the history of our resistance, the history of our fight, that will be part of the facts written down. That is clear.

You can say whatever you want, Rome can do whatever it wants afterwards, even to the point of making a denial, "but it wasn't for this or for that, but he didn't do that..." It is done, it is said, it is finished, it is history. Rome is obliged to recognize the work for the continuation of Tradition as a work for the reconstruction of the Church, a work for the continuation of the institution of the Church. There are obliged to recognize it.

But will our fight be sufficient, will the development of the Society be sufficient for us to manage to establish Tradition even in Rome? That is the secret of God. It is possible, it is something possible with this direction, without changing, by continuing to condemn the errors, by remaining with the truth, and Tradition. Let

Rome grant us what we ask, that we have an office at Rome, that we have an official representation at Rome, without concession, without compromise, without being asked to accept their errors. That would be a second victory for Tradition, a definitive victory for our Lord. For, why not grant us, once we have official recognition in Rome by some sort of office, why not grant us a church in Rome? There would no longer be any reason to refuse us a church. There are so many churches that do nothing in Rome. They could well grant us one and thus there would be the official return of Tradition to a church in Rome, with all the traditional ceremonies. That would be extraordinary. And there is no doubt that that would have a very great influence in Rome.

So, as I've just said, it would be a second step. It is doubtless a plan that is still more difficult to realize, but who knows? If they want to recognize the benefit of our seminaries, the benefit of our formation of priests, and give us a seminary in Rome, that would be the crowning of our work. We would take you all to Rome and we would make you do all your courses in Latin, Mr. professors. For then there would be no reason why there would not be seminarians, provided that they come with good intentions, not with the intentions of drowning us, of dividing us, of making their errors spread amongst us. But if there are young men who come from the entire world to Rome, because they want to undertake their seminary studies at Rome, and they come to us, to our seminary, we would do what Rome did throughout the centuries, at those universities: the Gregorian, the Angelicum, the Lateran. Those three great Roman universities have given 60 to 70% of the bishops to the entire world. (At least 60 to 70% of the bishops in the entire world have come from those universities) So! There is no reason why our seminary in Rome, if it pleases God, would not also furnish bishops for the entire world. As you see, we still have a bit of hope! All of that is possible with the grace of God. It is a beautiful dream, but who knows? God can make it happen. For the return of all Christendom to Tradition will only take place with the help of Rome. We can do all that we can and we surely do all that we can for the return of Tradition. But it is necessary that Rome finish the work by taking up her own Tradition back into her hands. It is not possible otherwise.