

STRAIGHTWAY

And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].

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The Changing Face of Roman Catholicism Part 1

Dr. H. T. Spence

In our last issue of *Straightway*, we observed the radical changes that Pope Francis has brought to not only the façade but also the religious and governmental infrastructure of Roman Catholicism. We must acknowledge that Pope Francis is definitely the religious and ideological product of Vatican II (1962–1965). Unlike the First Vatican Council (1870), the Second Council provided the permissions this pope needed to craft a radical “face-lift” of Romanism and make crucial administrative changes.

The Surprise of Vatican II

When “Papal Infallibility” was defined in the First Vatican Council, it declared to the Roman Church that councils would no longer be needed. In the light of this, the world was surprised, perhaps even shocked, when Pope John XXIII declared in 1959 that there would be a “Second” Vatican Council. This announcement gave the details of four sessions that were to meet at St. Peter’s Basilica (1962–1965). Between 2,000 and 2,500 cardinals and bishops, with thousands of observers, auditors, sisters, laymen and

This edition includes two more articles

The Changing Face of Roman Catholicism, Parts 2 & 3

laywomen, were invited to come for this momentous Council in Rome.

Coming out of Vatican II were sixteen key documents that to varying extents laid a new foundation for the Roman Church which we are witnessing today. A perusal of these documents shows a theme of “reconciliation” rising in its verbosity. But to what extent this reconciliation is to be found depends on who is pope at any given time. This council not only granted permission for Romanists to pray with other “Christian” denominations but also encouraged the building of friendships with all other religious faiths. Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council with his intention to bring, what he called, “fresh air” into the Church and for a “New Pentecost” to come upon the Roman Church.

Some of these major changes included the allowance of languages

other than Latin to be used during the Mass; Rome’s exoneration of the Jewish people of collective guilt for the death of Jesus Christ; the designation now of the Orthodox Church and the Protestants as “separated brethren”; the opening of “fellowship” with non-Christians; the cessation of the necessity of women to wear veils in the church; the freedom of Rome’s parishioners to now eat meat on Fridays; the permission of nuns to live in apartments outside of convents; the sanction of inter-faith marriages as part of the Church; the concept of hearing confessions in more conversational settings; and even a decree (during the December 1965 session) canceling all excommunications that led to the break (back in 1054) between the Roman and Orthodox churches.

Two of the key men at the Second Vatican Council eventually became Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. Both of these men believed that the Church had gone too far and perhaps too fast with innovations appearing within the Church. With the abandonment of the religious regalia and the acceptance of liberal ideas on sexual morality, etc., these two popes tried to slow down what they believed to be a giving-in to the “spiritual desertification” of secularism. It is interesting to note that since the Council in the early 1960s, the population of nuns in the United States has declined by more

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than seventy percent and the annual number of priestly ordinations by fifty percent. The controversy over the reason for this decline is strong and heated today between the traditionalists and the progressivists within Romanism. Is this decline because of a departure from the traditional legacy of Romanism as found in the Council of Trent (Tridentate Council of 1546) toward the contemporary mood and spirit of our times, or does this decline parallel the general decline of religion in the world?

Pope Francis and His Radical Changes

Pope Francis is the first pope to have received holy orders after Vatican II; thus, he is a “son of the Council.” Vatican II convened during his years of study in a Jesuit order in Argentina; he was ordained just four years after it ended. On the eve of the 2013 Conclave (that elected him pope), he voiced the belief that “the main threat to the church was not the encroachment of secular culture but a tendency among Catholics themselves, especially within church institutions, to retreat into ghettos of their own making.” He believed this thinking runs the risk of “theological narcissism.”

What has been this pope’s public persona? From the outset his “down-to-earth” manner and disregard for protocol in matters of dress and decorum have presented

a pope who desires to be closer to the people. His shift in religious and moral priorities has certainly diminished Catholicism’s pressure on secular society and its political leaders around the world (including our own president). This pope has softened the Church’s voice in the so-called contentious issues of sexual and medical ethics that the world has despised about Catholicism. It is evident that he is forwarding with full authority the changes that he believes are needed for his church in the contemporary world. More and more he is pressing for a “poor church for the poor,” while strongly castigating the free-market ideologies. Recently he has openly declared greater mercy for the divorced and remarried Roman Catholics, who at this time are not permitted to receive the Mass. He has also shocked the traditionalists in ceremonially washing the feet of Muslims and women, and has recently received a “transsexual” at the Vatican. Note the recent observation of “Father” H. Miguel Yanez, a Jesuit counselor of the pope (and a fellow Argentine):

Pope Francis takes Vatican II for granted. Instead of arguing about the past . . . he proposes a new kind of evangelization that is so radical that we forget about different interpretations and move on. Francis is more concerned with having a dialogue with the contemporary world . . . than he is concerned with certain points of tradition that mattered to Benedict.

Even the pope's silence on certain widely contested moral teachings of the Church has caused great concern among many at the Vatican. For instance, in the summer of 2013, Francis stated to an editor of a Jesuit journal, "We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods." This truly is contrary to the strength and expressions of his predecessors. For a number of months after he became pope, Francis did not make any major statements concerning abortion. As Rhode Island Bishop Thomas J. Tobin stated in September 2013, "I'm a little bit disappointed in Pope Francis that he hasn't . . . said much about unborn children, about abortion. Many people have noticed that." The pope's comment about the sodomite priests, "Who am I to judge?" has now made it difficult for the Church leaders to deal with this accelerated problem and especially the most recent uncovering of sodomy on a wholesale scale within the Vatican. Even Roman Catholic legislators in Illinois cited the pope's words to explain their support for the same-sex marriage bill.

One prominent word Pope Francis has drawn from the Second Vatican Council is the term *collegiality*. *Collegiality* is a principle aimed to establish a new balance of shared authority between the pope and the bishops. Although the previous two popes were leery of such a collective

authority, especially on crucial doctrines of the Church, the current pontiff has declared, "Excessive centralization rather than proving helpful complicates the Church's life and her missionary outreach." Because of this perspective Pope Francis has established a new body of nine cardinals (representing the continents) to advise him on matters he believes to be major issues of Church government. He has great concern over the authoritative voice of those who are permanent fixtures at the Vatican and their view of the Church.

To take this concept of *collegiality* to a greater step the pope has increased the use of the "Synod of Bishops," which was established by Pope Paul VI from the Second Vatican Council; this synod will address many topics of controversy that he hopes will bring about needed changes. This pope is publicly inviting the bishops to listen to their parishioners and bring their concerns to the Vatican in order for the leaders to re-appraise the Church's relevancy for this generation.

When this first session of the Synod of Bishops met (nearly 200 members), some news media reported that it was one of the strongest expressions of feelings and emotions that the Vatican has witnessed since the Second Vatican Council. Strong accusations came from the traditionalists against the pope and the sympathetic bishops,

declaring the proceedings were heresy and warning of potential schism. The document that was set forth midway in the session strongly implied sympathetic verbiage toward cohabiting couples, divorced and remarried Roman Catholics, and even same-gender unions. The outcry was intense, believing that the document would cause the Church to radically change.

Australian Cardinal George Pell, the pope's finance chief, denounced the document by saying, "We're not giving in to the secular agenda; we're not collapsing in a heap" (as he told the Catholic News Service). It is also interesting to note that American Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke told the Spanish magazine *Vida Nueva*, "The church felt like a ship without a rudder." He pled with the pope to lay aside the document for consideration, for it was attacking the traditional moral teachings of the Church, but the pope would not do so.

Francis believes that though the Church may have the revelation from God, it does not have the application of that revelation for all the times of history. He has been bold to declare that the Church does not know everything, and it has not had the answer perhaps for this generation. According to the Catholic News, the Synod is to reconvene in early October to resume the debate and provide recommendations for the future of Romanism, and to bring about what the evil heart of the

Second Vatican Council intended to produce.

It is clear that many ecclesiastical and hierarchal changes are coming through this pope. Pope Francis may be the one to dismantle the "old" Romanism in order to reshape and remold a greater deceptive "new" Romanism. Early in his pontificate his actions and words revealed that he would be the pope to change his Church and make Romanism more palatable for the contemporary. However, it must always be remembered that throughout the centuries Roman Catholicism has been the Devil's bride, and she has the ability to acclimate her religious cloak to maintain her public prominence within a given generation.

Pope Francis, who seems to have become Vatican II's lovechild, may be the one who will unravel centuries of outward traditions that he believes are no longer relevant or advantageous to the survival of the Church in this postmodern age. Though perhaps not as outwardly arrogant and overtly evil as our American president, Francis may be the one to bring about the acclimatization of the Roman Church for its acceptance in the "new world order."

The Mother of Harlots

In the United States of America, we have witnessed one man's bold manipulation of a governmental system to bring about the corrupt, radical changes in laws and lifestyles

that are aggressively hurling us into the vortex of Heaven's judgment; there will never be a return to our nation's days of glory. Apostasy has its changes as well; it must change according to the climate of its age. Romanism has been the chameleon within apostate Christianity that knows how to change according to the times and to maintain its religious and political authority in the world. With each change, Romanism, being the oldest and deepest apostasy of Christianity, will only go deeper through the gates of Hell. She has ridden the backs of many political beasts of history who have been forerunners to the coming Beast. One day she will ride the back of "the" Beast. Yet we read in Revelation 17:16, 17 of how the political powers near the end of the Tribulation Period will "hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." It is evident that Romanism will play a major role to bring about the final kingdom of the Man of Sin.

My earthly father, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence, gives a presentation worth reading in his commentary of *The Book of Revelation* (pp. 103–107). We give a few quotations from these pages to resolve this article.

There are actually two historical

Babylons and two prophetical Babylons: historical under Nimrod, founder; Nebuchadnezzar, restorer; and Rome, religious Babylon; Babylon III in the Tribulation Period. Nimrod changed the name of his father from Cush to Bel. That was religious Babylon in the birth of all religious idolatry. That was a mixture of true religion and the demonic occult—apostasy. Forty names in the Bible flow out of this historic Babylon I. However, there was not only religious Babylon in apostasy; there was also commercial, secular Babylon which was particularly set forth by Nebuchadnezzar and seen through the world conquests of the empires. Of course, both Babylon I and II, historically, were idolatrous and immoral. But prophecy speaks of two prophetical Babylons: Babylon IV, religious and commercial, restored geographically, and "Mystery Babylon," restored religiously through Romanism and 80 Caesars and 264 Popes, through Emperor Constantine and the Roman Catholic Church. Verses 1 & 2 [Revelation 17] have prepared us for the meaning of "Babylon" as we have known in history. We must now see the two prophetical Babylons in chapters 17 and 18. . . .

That "woman," we believe, will be "Romanism," as the imperial Caesars were finalized by Constantine into the accelerated apostasy of Roman Catholicism. At times since the Reformation, everything false in her has even

been embraced by Protestants and their denominationalism. The historic Reformation was a work of God to reveal the distinct difference between the “man child” that was “caught up” to God and the “woman” left behind. But the criticism about the “woman” was still identified as she fled to the wilderness with God’s providence in her behalf, only to flee that same wilderness, making open concession to preserve herself (through her famous practice of casuistry), and to be finally destroyed by Antichrist. There have been “many antichrists” as popes, and we believe the final Antichrist’s False Prophet is a pope.

Let us notice the clear identity of her “Romanism.” (1) She rides upon the scarlet colored Beast—the Antichrist. (2) She is a part of blasphemy. (3) She is a part of the seven empires and the final ten kingdoms. (4) She is arrayed in her Romish vestments. (5) And decked with her jeweled vestments and crowns and crucifixes. (6) She is a party of Babylon’s filthy fornication and sacramental idolatry. (7) On her forehead, “Pontifex Maximus” and “Mother of harlots.” (8) The millions martyred by Romanists. Just as there was an apostasy rendered against the messianic line through Shem in the days of Nimrod, there has been an apostasy against the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the name of Jesus Christ in the days of the Christian Church. There have

been “many antichrists,” and there is the final “Antichrist.” . . .

Chapter 17 sets forth the ecclesiastical and spiritual aspects of Babylon under the figure of “Mystery Babylon.” Chapter 18 sets forth the political and commercial aspects of Babylon under more the figure of a Neo-Babylon. Thus, we may conclude the four Babylons: (1) The Idolatrous Babylon of Nimrod (paganism and heathenism). (2) The Humanitarian Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar (governmentalism). (3) The “Mystery Babylon” of Christendom (Roman Catholicism: mixture of Paganism, Greek Philosophy, and Christianity). (4) The Neo-Babylon of the Antichrist (Daniel 11:36–39). Not the “God of his fathers” but “the God of forces.” . . .

Rome, like the harlot of history, just keeps coming back. Roman Catholicism is that harlot “Mystery Babylon.”

Conclusion

Throughout Church history a number of honorable remnant movements (though not formally identified with Protestantism) have taken their stand against Roman Catholicism. They desired to maintain their independence of identification and even placed themselves in history “before” the Protestant Reformation. But whatever our label or tag of distinction, we must remember that the term *protestant*, when strictly

viewed in history, is simply a principle. It is not a church government or a specific system of theology, for a number of theological systems came out of the Protestant Reformation. The term *protestant* cannot be viewed as a denomination or a declared edict of a certain church. Again, it is a principle.

Yes, there was a historical event that took place at the Diet of Spire (Spiers) in 1529, when princes and dukes took their stand against a Romanist king and the Roman Church. The princes and dukes were of Lutheran persuasion. Nevertheless, *protestantism* was a principle, an attitude that was adopted in that meeting. It became a principle of protestation against Romanism, the old apostasy. It was a call for

a freedom of conscience, of heart, and of the Word of God for an individual. It was the primary longing for the Church to be free from religious tyranny and the oppression of Christian apostasy. The protestant movement was the longing for a reviving of true Christianity. This spirit and principle must ever penetrate the heart of every believer calling for the liberty of Christ to control the life. God's true saints will always be making their "protest" against Roman Catholicism and every declining system from the Christ of Scripture. No matter what label or tag with which one identifies himself, he must be protesting the apostasy and the evil age in which he lives. [S]

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The Changing Face of Roman Catholicism

Part 2

Dr. H. T. Spence

There are two contrasting powers within the Roman Catholic Church today. Yet to some extent they are being manipulated by the same prince of darkness, Satan himself. These two influential powers are the order of Jesuit priests and the more recent lay organization called Opus Dei (presented fully in the concluding article). These two groups are playing major roles in the promotion of Romanism each from its own perspective. They are presently in a satanic struggle with one another for supremacy in the future Romanist Church. In this article we desire to briefly explore the Order of Jesuits, or properly called “The Society of Jesus.”

God’s Word establishes the fact that the kingdom of Satan is divided against itself. The Roman Catholic Church is a major part of the kingdom of Satan and his darkness on earth against God. A den of iniquity, the Roman Church is filled with immorality, with dishonesty, and with the pervading, pernicious powers of jealousy and pride. While portraying itself to be a church of humility, underneath its cloak of pretense is truly a wolf in sheep’s clothing. This calls to mind the words of God concerning leviathan, (Heb., meaning “to join the dragon”): “He beholdeth all high things: he is

a king over all the children of pride” (Job 41:34). This pride is the very heart and desire of Rome, “I will ascend . . . ; I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:14).

The Roman Church is the largest branch of public Christianity in the world. It claims one billion baptized members, fifty percent of whom live in the Americas and twenty-five percent in Europe. In September 2000, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed that salvation is available only through the Roman Church. Yet the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s issued a declaration concerning other faiths:

The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and teachings, which, although differing . . . nonetheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.

The famous seven sacraments are still an integral part of the Roman Church: Water Baptism, Confession, the Mass or Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination, and Extreme Unction (the anointing of the sick, or last rites). The central act of Rome’s worship is the Mass. Rome views the Mass as the literal body (wafer) and blood (wine) of Jesus Christ.

Amidst its religious, economic, and political powers throughout the world, the Roman Church is now in the throes of its greatest pressure for change in order to conform more to the contemporary world. How extensive will the changes be, and who will take the innovative role to bring about these changes? The struggle to lead these changes presently exists between the Order of the Jesuits and Opus Dei.

The Existence of the Jesuit Order

The most powerful movement within the Roman Catholic Church today is the formidable male religious congregation commonly called the Jesuit Society or the Society of Jesus. Though the society was founded by Ignatius of Loyola in 1534, he was initially joined by six other young men, two of whom became prominent figures within the early movement—Francis Xavier and Peter Faber. Collectively, these men began the Jesuit movement after Ignatius' supposed religious experience following a wound in battle. Part of the fabric of this movement was the trilogy vows of "poverty, chastity, and obedience" (with a specific vow of obedience to the pope).

The Jesuits have been called "God's Marines" of the Romanist Church in that they will go anywhere and do anything requested of them by the pope; they will live under the most difficult circumstances and extreme conditions in order to do

the will of the pontiff. There are no bounds or limitations to their duties and responses. Pragmatically, the "end" will justify whatever means they might use, including assassinations for the Church (within or without). They became a motivational influence at the Council of Trent (1545–1563) in reaction to the Reformation. Over the centuries they have been able to gain footings and strongholds within strategic positions and places within the universal Romanist Church and specifically within the Vatican. Their influence was also strongly felt at the Second Vatican Council beginning in 1962.

Over the centuries they have become the power and authority behind the educational system of Romanism, controlling its schools, colleges, universities, and seminaries. Time has witnessed the Jesuits move to the forefront of control, making them "the Pope behind the Pope"—or more commonly, "the Black Pope." They truly have become the most powerful force within Romanism, even greater than the pope himself. They are all over the world and with a presence strongly felt where Romanism is found. They are totally independent in authority with their leader, the "Superior General," voted upon from within their ranks rather than from the Church. Their patron saint is the Virgin Mary under her title of Madonna Della Strada ("Our Lady of the Way").

Though the Jesuits throughout

the centuries have been strong in the traditional garb of Romanism, they recently have radically changed and become the progressivists of the Roman Church. Their global ideology has mutated over the centuries forwarding in a strong Marxist movement. The Jesuits have been the motivational and financial force behind the Liberation Theology movement in South America (a very brutal approach to the overthrow of conservative governments) and the orchestration behind the takedown of top leaders in governments. The aggressive means of accomplishing their goals have no boundary of conscience. The French statesman and general Marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834) once made a poignant observation:

It is my opinion that if the liberties of this country, the United States of America, are destroyed, it will be by the subtlety of the Roman Catholic Jesuit priests, for they are the most crafty, dangerous enemies to civil and religious liberty. They have instigated most of the wars of Europe.

President John Adams, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson on May 5, 1816, stated, “I do not like the reappearance of the Jesuits. . . . Shall we not have regular swarms of them here, in as many disguises as only a king of the gypsies can assume, dressed as printers, publishers, writers, and schoolmasters?” He went on to state, “If ever there was a body of men who merited damnation on earth and

in Hell, it is this society of Loyola’s. Nevertheless, we are compelled by our system of religious toleration to offer them an asylum.”

Avro Manhattan, in his writing *The Dollar and the Vatican*, declares, “The Vatican condemned the Declaration of Independence as wickedness and called the Constitution of the United States a satanic document.”

The Society of Jesus obsessively believes that God (a false god) has raised them up to be His right arm to accomplish the global domination of the Church as well as the controlling force of the leadership of the Church. Until the days of John Paul II and Benedict XVI, the Society had been content to be the power behind the pope. In 2013 Pope Francis became the first Jesuit pope. This may be the indication that they believe they now need to step forward and gain the public control of the papacy rather than simply be a power behind the office. We must perhaps take careful note of their reason.

The Papacy versus the Jesuits

We must remember that the Jesuit Society that commenced in 1540 was a “fighting unit” that was to come directly under the pope (whoever that might be). Two predominant purposes controlled their existence: to promote the Roman Catholic doctrine as specifically taught by the Roman pope *and* to stand firm in the protection of the office of

the pope and his perspective of doctrine and practice. It truly was an exclusive organization within the Romanist Church for the pope and singularly under his authority. But over the decades of the twentieth century, there has arisen a strong contradiction in that the leanings of the papacy have created a wedge between itself and the Jesuits. A strong battle is found between the two even leading to the present papacy.

When Pope Pius XII's pontifical rule (1939–1958) found itself in the post-war new world, where two superpowers were rising against one another (the USA and the USSR), Pius rose in support of Western civilization, which was centered in Europe and protected by the USA, while having strong feelings against the USSR. But when Pope John XXIII rose to papal power from 1958 to 1963, he introduced a policy called “open windows, open fields” by which he hoped to cause countries to reappraise their governmental policies and attitudes; he hoped that the Soviets would do the same. To sweeten the pot for change, he promised to diminish a number of barriers that existed between the Church and the world; he even guaranteed the USSR that he would no longer attack them, which was a radical change in Church policy. But the world, including the USSR, viewed this as a growing weakness within the Church.

The USSR viewed the Church under Pope Paul VI (1963–1978) even weaker; this pope became known as the “gentlest” of all modern popes. Nonetheless, Pope Paul VI realized towards the end of papal reign that the Society of Jesus was radically changing from its original dual purpose. A different influence had now come among them, and they were leaning strongly into the winds of the political correctness of Marxism. A dossier had been gathered by those close to the pope revealing the changes taking place. It pressed Pope Paul VI to meet on several occasions in 1973 with Father General Pedro Arrupe, the head of the Jesuit Society. The meetings grew into an intense, emotional storm with the pope pressing for Arrupe's resignation. When Arrupe refused, the pope strongly declared, “Our demand is that the Jesuits remain loyal to the Pope.”

In the aftermath of these meetings, an international assembly of the Order, a General Congregation (as such an assembly is called), gave them some time to regroup, and Pope Paul had to wait. The pope made a final plea during the 96-day international assembly of the Jesuit leaders in 1974–1975 to remain loyal to him. The Jesuits refused to comply believing they, rather than the pope, had the greater ability to know what the Church needed to do.

In 1978 Cardinal Albino Luciani of Venice became the next pope.

Even before he became Pope John Paul I, he had strong thoughts against the Jesuits, and it was evident the Jesuits were against him. As soon as he became pontiff, the Jesuits stepped forward aggressively against him. One of the four general assistants to Arrupe, Father Vincent O'Keefe informed a Dutch newspaper that the pope should "reconsider the Church's ban on abortion, homosexuality, and priesthood for women." Of course, the interview was published. The newly-appointed John Paul I was angered over this as it implied that the Society of Jesus knew better than the pope. And only the pope had the authority to make such an exclusive statement of such a nature. When John Paul I demanded an explanation from Arrupe, the Jesuit general simply stated that he would investigate the matter; but John Paul knew the schism was coming between the papacy and the Jesuits.

As a result, John Paul I prepared a very strong speech of warning to be publicly presented against the Jesuits. This speech was scheduled for another General Congregation on September 30, 1978. One of the features to be given in this speech was a repeated reference to "doctrinal deviations" on the part of Jesuits. He wrote, "Let it not happen that the teachings and publications of Jesuits contain anything to cause confusion among the faithful."

This momentous speech was to give the clearest threat from the pope

to the Jesuits: they must return to their dual purpose, or the pope would be forced to take action against them. It is now known from John Paul's notes and memoranda written for himself and for his staff, that he was ready to liquidate the Jesuit Order as it stood and reconstruct it to a more controllable society. It is interesting to note that many Jesuits desired for this to happen because another presupposition had taken hold of the Jesuit Order that was taking it into a direction many did not want to go.

The pope never lived to deliver his speech. On September 29, 1978, only thirty-three days after his papal appointment and one day before he was to address the Jesuits' General Congregation, John Paul I was found dead in bed, mysteriously so. The rumors later surfaced at the Vatican of his being poisoned that night before going to bed.

Arrupe formally petitioned Cardinal Jean Villot (who at that time was the Vatican's secretary of state and who took the place of the papacy in the interim period between John Paul I's death and the election of his successor) for a copy of the speech that was to be given by John Paul I. The cardinal refused and stated, "It is high time the Jesuits put their affairs in order."

John Paul II and the Jesuits

When Karol Wojtyla from Poland was elected as John Paul II on October 16, 1978, his strategy was

to embrace three worlds: the world of capitalism, the world of Soviet Communism, and the world of so-called underdeveloped and developing countries. He believed the previous popes were too soft in foreign affairs. He believed his concept of the three worlds was sealed in a cold chill of superpower rivalry in the face-off between Marxist Leninism and unyielding capitalism with nothing to be salvaged. Note his strong-armed approach:

Where Catholics constituted majorities or sizeable minorities in closed societies, there they should lay claim to the socio-political space that was rightfully theirs—make an assertion of their rights, in other words, on the basis that their very presence as Roman Catholics would be enough to make such self-assertion stick.

No other world leader of his contemporary personally spoke to Soviet leaders as often and as directly as John Paul II, a practice he undertook from the beginning of his pontificate. He wanted to present a new world leadership which would demand from him a leadership in two key areas:

[1] His supreme authority in doctrine and morality would have to be vindicated and reasserted within his worldwide Church; and [2] a concrete example would have to be forthcoming of what such leadership could provide by way of solution to the international dilemma.

The two most visible presentations

of John Paul were his worldwide trips and his careful guidance of the solidarity movement in Poland. His appearance in all of these countries reestablished his authority as a global leader. He brought about freedom in Poland and was a strong influence in the tearing down of the Berlin Wall.

This approach by John Paul II brought him into confrontation with the globally powerful Jesuits. The pope would help bring about the social, cultural, and economic freedom from the military grip of Marxism. We must remember that at the same time the Jesuits and others were carrying on their own policy as creators and chief fomenters of a new movement called “Liberation Theology” (a theology based on Marxist revolutionary principles with the goal to establish the Communist system of government throughout the world). We also must remember that John Paul II had read the dossier on the Jesuits compiled under Paul VI, and he had the undelivered speech of condemnation of the Jesuits written by John Paul I. In November of 1978, within a month after his election, John Paul II sent a copy of the speech to Arrupe; it was to be a warning with the words, “I make this speech my own.” Arrupe responded with the normal protocol of words that they were loyal and obedient. But it was evident, his response was empty and meaningless.

The following words are given in the classic writing of Malachi

Martin entitled *The Jesuits*, telling what happened some weeks later on the last day of 1978:

On the evening of December 31, as a gesture of goodwill, the Pope went to the Jesuit Church of the Gesù, in order to honor the Society by his presence during their traditional year-end religious ceremonies of thanksgiving to God. John Paul let the Jesuits know beforehand that he wanted to see no Jesuit in civilian clothes. Nor did he. It was perhaps a small enough concession to the Pope, to whom each and all present had important and unique vows. But it was the only concession.

Even John Paul's retinue remarked on the polite coldness of the Jesuit notables gathered for the occasion. After the religious ceremonies, the Pope dined with the Jesuits in their refectory. He was pleasant in his remarks, one Jesuit present at the meal complained later, but "he gave us no hint about the future of the Society."

That complaint spoke volumes. The Jesuits had been able to ignore Paul VI and John Paul I. Why should they heed John Paul II? Jesuits would simply have to hold on and outlive this Pope, as they had the previous two.

Within two months of that year-end meeting between the Pope and his Jesuits, during February and March of 1979, Father General Arrupe called press conferences in Mexico and Rome at which he asserted blandly that

there was no friction between the Holy Father and the Jesuits. Yes, Arrupe acknowledged to journalists at the International Press Office of the Holy See, he had received that speech of John Paul I, which John Paul II had made his own. Rumor had it, he went on, that "it had a pejorative sense and was a reprimand" for the changes made in the Society under Arrupe's fourteen-year leadership. But that was nonsense, Arrupe said. The Pope knew that "of course, the Society of Jesus had changed," he went on. "It could not do otherwise, seeing that the Church herself has changed." There was, in reality, no friction, he concluded.

His Holiness saw it otherwise: There was grave friction. What John Paul called "friction about fundamentals" (pp. 47, 48).

The Undermining Powers of the Jesuits

The Jesuits had already undermined the powers of the pope when it came to the people throughout the world. Since they were in charge of all the education, the universities, the various schools, and the writings of Romanism, they were teaching somewhat the basics of Romanist doctrine but doing so in a subtle way that opposed any teaching coming from the pope. Their writings strongly undermined the teaching of papal infallibility and authority. They had already established the foundation for a new

Church in wedding Marxism with Christianity, that to them was truly the emerging “Society of Jesus.” Their writings and teachings were now covering every subject matter of the Church: the concepts of morality, including homosexuality and all of its diversified concepts and lifestyles in a more acceptable way; a reappraisal of the Mass, the divinity of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, the existence of Hell, the priesthood, etc. They were fast redefining and reshaping the entirety of Romanism including the very warp and woof of the fabric of the Church.

Father General Arrupe had brought radical changes during his tenure of Jesuit leadership and pressed for more publications of books that would undermine all of the traditional teachings. It was evident that no pope could stop him and his loyal Jesuit followers. No matter what concerns or appeals came from the pope to him, he always had a way of delaying the responses and any action that was requested. He would claim “misunderstandings” or that he was endeavoring to correct for the pope the “vicious rumors” that were coming to the pope’s ears. He accused the pope of being vague in his requests. He would ask for time periods, dates, persons accusing, etc., stalling investigations while his men manipulated the facts.

John Paul II deepened his press for the Jesuits to once again become

“the Pope’s men.” But Arrupe would not back off from the pursuit of the Jesuits’ rewriting Romanism. Behind the scenes he would support writings that were pro-sodomy and pro-abortion, and pro-everything the pope was against in the traditional mold. He even encouraged more Jesuits to write controversial books with his stamp of approval that promoted the moral changes America and Europe were wanting. When Roman Catholic members of Congress voted against the traditional views of the Church in these matters, and the pope demanded Arrupe and the Jesuits to put pressure on these political leaders, he simply would tell the pope: “We reject the idea that Jesuits must systematically avoid all political involvement.”

The die was cast. The pope now clearly realized that the Jesuits had their own agenda and were out to redefine the Church and its doctrines, from the divinity of Jesus to the infallibility of the pope. Since that time the battle has been continuing with intensity between the pontiff and the Jesuits. Though with political veneer the leadership of the superior general of over 27,000 Jesuits around the world will give allegiance to the Vatican, the heart of rebellion and intent of overthrow of the past of Romanism is still the hallmark of their present existence.

Conclusion

Though the Jesuits have been the

power behind the popes of the past 450 years, they have also maintained an allegiance to the popes. They have kept a low profile before the public with the unseen manipulative powers behind the papacy. But in the past century they have created their own agenda in a communist worldview, believing that Christianity and Marxism can be married ideologically. And thus, they have been on a race in time to assimilate their ideological agenda throughout the world. From within the Church they have used the Church to bring this about in governments where Romanism is found. Since the Romanist Church is found throughout the entire world, they believe this is a feasible task to accomplish.

However, in the past forty years the papacy has discovered their pervasive intent and has realized it has lost all control of the most committed of their priests, who have been the Jesuits. And now, by some strange set of circumstances, the Society of Jesus has brought forth one of its own to be the pope himself. To date, Pope Francis I has given evidence that he is “Jesuit” in heart and mind. He has endeavored to minimize the “papacy” while giving greater prominence to being “Bishop of Rome.” His agenda has been one persistently pressing radical change to Romanism in every area of its existence: from doctrine to practice. He is a man of intent, of will, and of commitment for such changes to take

place; his nativity is certainly from a sympathetic climate of socialism and Marxism. Since his incumbency as pontiff, he has endeavored to override the infrastructure of the Vatican and exercise his authority of papal rule. Perhaps God will permit the Malachy Papers to render the verdict of the dismantling of Rome by this last pope, and after him, the popes may not be as they were before. His progressivism and contemporary perspective of the Romanist Church, if permitted to continue, will be a revelation to the changes that have been rumbling in the global thought of the Jesuits for a long time. They now have a man who can bring about a “new” Romanism; but how long will it take to overthrow the traditionalists and the hard-line Romanists? Only God knows.

We are in the End Time of the last days; radical changes are sweeping the world at record speed. We are facing the dawning of a new world order both in global government, in global Christianity, and in the religious world. The Christian must be ready to face the flood of change in logic, in living, in communication, and in powers now rising with deep hatred for the true Christ and His Word. (In our next *Straightway* we want to view the powers of Postmodernism and what we are facing today.) [S]

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The Changing Face of Roman Catholicism

Part 3

Dr. H. T. Spence

Amidst the complex maze found globally in the Roman Catholic Church, the vying powers of influence are unending. Some of these, such as the Order of the Jesuits, are more pervading than others. Their influences are detectable from the local parish to the universal perspective of the Roman Church. From a public perspective, the dark chain of command begins with the pontiff and his immediate staff and colleagues, and continues through the College of Cardinals at the Vatican and around the world; there is also the plenary scope of bishops with their web of subordinates; then there is the multi-faceted corps of mendicant orders (which include men and women); and finally, there are the local priests and lay organizations. Collectively, this labyrinth of organizations is the ubiquitous extension of the pontiff, his ears, eyes, and presence by proxy. He is portrayed as the “voice of God,” Christ’s chief shepherd on earth, yea, His very “vicar” on earth.

There has always been a mystery to this “Mother of Harlots,” especially in the extensive secrecy found within the Roman system of authority. Even as the kingdom of darkness is filled with demons perpetually given to pride and jealousy against their leader the Devil, so it is with

the earthly kingdoms controlled by the Devil. Within the meticulous polity of Rome, there is the unending competing for control. There is a perpetual core of hatred, evil, and subtle plots to gain control of the top chair of Peter. Yes, there is always someone or some group of men standing in the wings ready to alleviate the papacy of its present ruler, either by death or by convincing him of their ideology and plan for world domination. It is a fearful thing to enter the “Chair of Peter,” for the men surrounding such a man can never be fully trusted; they all have their unique, evil agenda. They are always in the posture of watching and waiting for the moment of a clandestine takeover, a time to betray and make way for another man who would be more fitted to their persuasion.

It is interesting to note that the highest rate of murder per capita of residence in the world is Vatican City. Its statistical acts of murder are regular occurrences: from random killings in St. Peter’s Square to the “in-house” affairs of the Mother Harlot. Though her history has been filled with assassinations motivated by jealousy and covetousness, her end-time history is escalating with such internal hostilities of greed and power. With all the vices of

wickedness and evil agendas, history has yet to see the final outcome of what Rome will be in its final chapter.

The Struggle for Power

In the past one hundred years, Romanism has become more fragmented in thought and purpose. Its unanimity before the public is only veneer. Its powers of darkness have been like a whirlwind ever churning up the religious debris of the past as contemporary thought among Jesuits vies for a prominent position of present-day influence in the Church. The Jesuits have boldly reached a preeminence of power, and it seems they are now ready to change the purpose of Rome's existence to ride the political back of a more contemporary beast, that of Marxist Communism.

However, there has been the unassuming rise of a grassroots movement within Romanism that is gathering momentum from a least likely direction. It is a lay-movement known as Opus Dei (Latin, "Work of God"). Surprisingly, this unique entity within the Roman Church is neither a religious order (as the Dominicans, the Franciscans, or even the Jesuits) nor a religious movement (such as the Charismatic movement that came into Romanism in the late 1960s in the aftermath of Vatican II). Uniquely, it is made up of ninety-five percent laity and only five percent clergy.

The founder of Opus Dei was

Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer (1902–1975), a controversial and charismatic Spanish priest in his time. He was only twenty-six years old when he claimed to have received "direct inspiration from God" to found Opus Dei. "The Work," as it is called by its members, is "to sanctify daily work, no matter how mundane, to spread the word of Christ and to endeavour to live the life of a saint." Escrivá, after professing to have received this inspiration from God, gave his life to the creation and expansion of Opus Dei. Its beginnings were in the country of Spain in 1928; the movement was given approval by Pope Pius XII in 1950. In 1992, twenty-seven years after Escrivá's death, Pope John Paul II canonized him as a saint.

In 1982 Pope John Paul II made the religious organization into a "personal prelature," which meant that Opus Dei would have its own bishop. Such a bishop would cover all the members wherever they were, rather than through normal geographical dioceses. Two years ago (2013), the organization numbered 92,575.

The Birth of Opus Dei

Prior to Escrivá's declaration of his Opus Dei, Rome's view of spirituality was found in the context of religious monks and nuns. The monastic life, especially to be identified in the rule of St. Augustine and St. Benedict, was seen as the keystone of Rome's

definition of “spirituality.” There was a modification of this monastic life to rise in the mendicant orders of the Dominicans and the Franciscans. Further modification came through the Diocesan Priesthood (what was called the “secular” or the parish priests). Thus, all priests, both the regular and the secular, had to daily pray what was called the “divine office” (a designated series of prayers and meditations); it was these individuals that the Vatican viewed as “spiritual.” The “Liturgy of the Hours” was organized in the monastic style, with the hours of the day broken up as the monks divided their day.

Consequently, over the centuries the laypeople basically have had no “spirituality” that was uniquely their own. It was in the light of this burden that Escrivá believed something needed to be provided for them. He saw nothing for the laity within the Church save for those who felt called to embrace a “Third Order” called “tertiaries” consisting of Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and other orders.

It was out of this concern that he devised what he called “spirituality of and for the laity,” what he named Opus Dei. He believed it would be a means “by which the Catholic Faithful sanctify themselves and the world in which they live and work.” He declared that it was for all the laity, from all walks of life: homemakers, teachers, students, doctors, lawyers,

bus drivers, etc., and even for the retired laity. Escrivá believed “the goal is for each member of Opus Dei to bring their Roman Catholic Faith into their whole life, home, work, and play.” As he viewed it, they were to be leaven in the world; the laity being in the world were to bring their Romanist Christ and the Catholic Faith into that same world by the way they practiced their faith. His view of the local clergy was to “help the laity find their spirituality and to help them bring the faith to the world.”

One of the integral aspects of Opus Dei is that the members “do not wear their religion on their arm sleeves.” But they in a subtle fashion infiltrate society by their living among society. The members are very well read in all of the teachings of the Church, they are very loyal to the pope, and they know how to defend their Church dogma and faithfully practice their Romanist faith with aggression and tenacity. They are to be fully committed to the Romanist doctrine and heart. Opus Dei is founded upon an absolute surrender to the cause of Rome for the laity, and perhaps to even rise higher in character and commitment than the priests, whose failures and sins have publically escalated in recent decades.

We must keep in mind that by-and-large, Opus Dei is a layperson movement of men and women with the laity numbering about ninety-one thousand and the priests numbering about two thousand. Additionally,

within its “Priestly Society of the Holy Cross” are another two thousand priests. Finally, there is also what is called the Opus Dei “cooperators,” that number well over seven hundred thousand. They are scattered throughout more than ninety countries; seventy percent of these live as traditional families in private homes, with secular careers. The rest live a celibate life within the Church’s Opus Dei centers.

The Opus Dei network of infiltration includes key appointments in well over five hundred universities and over seven hundred newspapers and periodicals, many TV and radio stations, publicity agencies, film companies, secondary schools, publishing houses, and different types of training centers. But in a broader spectrum of encroachment, their members are found deeply entrenched (but undetected) in the governments of the world. Even in the United States they operate in various governmental agencies, including federal agencies such as the FBI and CIA.

As we have noted, the vast majority of Opus Dei followers are laypeople who embrace a very strict Romanist lifestyle and live in the world instead of withdrawing to the confinements of a monastery or convent. Priests, monks, and nuns are easily recognizable by their clothing; however, members of Opus Dei are not easily recognized, and for this reason, they have developed a

reputation for secrecy.

One of the criticisms of Opus Dei is the degree to which it was seen to be favored by Pope John Paul II and the equal support it received from Benedict XVI. On the one hand, Opus Dei stands for all that is conservative in the Romanist Church. On the other, it invented a completely new form for evangelization of the Church that includes both priests and laypeople, which was the hope of John Paul II’s project of a “Second evangelization” and his passion for the universality of “sanctity in the Church.”

The year after the canonization of the founder of Opus Dei, Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) gave the world some concept of this organization within Rome. The “Fact” prefacing Brown’s book draws attention to reports of “brainwashing, coercion and a dangerous practice known as corporeal mortification,” while noting Opus Dei’s recent construction (at that time) of a stunning \$47 million national headquarters on New York’s Lexington Avenue. It is interesting to note that Dan Brown chooses a homicidal albino monk to represent Opus Dei as a cult bent on fear and destruction.

As to what power this controversial group holds both in and out of the Vatican, it would be difficult to say. In the Vatican’s environment of scandals and secrecy, it is hard at

times to separate fact from fiction. There have been consistent rumors that this organization has had great influence over the papacy. When Escrivá was taken into sainthood in an unheard of brief segment of time in 2002, this seemed to have confirmed, in and of itself, Opus Dei's power over the pontiff.

We do not have the space in this article to enter into the unique and peculiar manner that Opus Dei devotees secretly live from the moment they get up in the morning to the time they go to bed. The beating of themselves and the popular "cilice" they wear (a spiked chain worn around the upper thigh for two hours each day, leaving small holes in the flesh) are part of the disciplined life they have chosen in their aggressive living of the Romanist "Christ." This information comes directly from the writings of Escrivá himself, who laid out his beliefs in his Opus handbook, *The Way*: "Blessed be pain. Loved be pain. Sanctified be pain . . . glorified be pain."

Converts to Opus Dei are encouraged not to tell family members or friends of their new lives; many have been forbidden from using the phone or contacting their families. Once a person becomes a member, he is controlled by the leaders of the movement.

The current Bishop Prelate of Opus Dei is Javier Echevarría Rodríguez. Members of the movement are in key

positions of the Romanist Church, which makes it very difficult for investigators to assess how far Opus has penetrated the papacy.

The Rulings of Opus Dei

Twenty-five to thirty percent of all members of Opus Dei live as "numerary" members, their housing provided by the organization. Living in this context demands a lifestyle controlled by the governing rules. They are not permitted to associate with former members or critics of Opus Dei unless they are endeavoring to draw them back into the group. They are told by the leaders to have a list of fifteen friends with the selected ones at the top to be potential candidates to join Opus Dei. They are strongly encouraged not to associate themselves with anyone who is not a potential for the organization. The women are required to wear skirts or dresses except on rare occasions in recreational activities. Hairstyles are to be simple since they are only given thirty minutes to get ready in the morning and are not permitted to attend Mass early in the morning with wet hair.

To control these members, all meals, if possible, are to be eaten in the center with the others. Members have no input as to the menus or food shopping. They are not permitted to spend any monies on sweets or even coffee at the jobs they work. Female numeraries sleep on a board placed

on top of their mattress and once a week they are to sleep without a pillow. Once a month there are all-night vigils of prayer. All of this is to discipline them to live with less sleep. All of the money they make is to be given to the organization, and thus all of their bills are paid. Even inheritances must be given over to the organization after being a member for five years.

Numeraries do go on one excursion per month with other members in their house. If the excursion happens to be a trip to the beach, the women can never sunbathe; they must be covered or people will see the red prick marks or scabs made from wearing the spiked cilice. Instead of vacations, numeraries attend an annual “summer course” of indoctrination classes or go on a pilgrimage to a holy shrine.

Their daily schedule includes Mass, one hour of meditation, rosary, spiritual reading, examination of conscience, then going to their work. There are weeknight and weekend indoctrination classes called “the circle” given by the director. The numeraries are required to live in the Center of Studies for two years. They are told where to live after that, what jobs they are to take, and the schools they are to attend. Obedience without question is given to their superiors.

There is a strong hierarchy within Opus Dei. A large part of

its deception is that it claims to never own any property outright. All Opus Dei universities, schools, and residences are controlled and financed by various foundations whose boards and directors are members or sympathizers of Opus Dei. “Supernumeraries” (or those members who can marry and live in their own homes) do not know what goes on among the numeraries. Somewhat like the Masonic Order, one has to go higher in Opus Dei to find out more of what is happening within the organization.

The Opus Dei members are controlled absolutely in all they do. They are taught that the Roman Church has absolute truth, and she only knows what is good or bad. The laypeople have no right to decide about religious things, but they all have to blindly follow their orders. This reveals that Opus Dei is not of a spirit of the new wind of Vatican II, but rather the contrary. It stands for a Church of authority and doctrines instead of one of a free spirit and conscience. And thus, those who identify with Opus Dei are constantly monitored; their daily lives are scrutinized in every detail.

Conclusion

Perhaps we need to ask to what extent are demonic powers present in Opus Dei? There certainly are differences in demonic powers; some demons are more powerful than others based on their order as angelic

beings before their fall. Thus the evil influence upon an organization or even an individual differs in the light of what demon controls such entities. Though Satan has control over the Romanist Church, his demons are ever vying for their positions of control within. What demonic powers control the Jesuits, and what demonic powers control Opus Dei? There is a hatred embroiled in the leadership of every religion, including Roman Catholicism. It is evident that Opus Dei and the Jesuits are against one another within the same apostate church.

We must acknowledge that a man would have to be demonically possessed to become a pope. But even among demons there are those who appear either innocently religious or openly evil through the people they possess and empower. It is evident that between the two previous popes their “humility” of submissiveness to Church and papal authority was what Rome has always sought among its parishioners. Because of this, Opus Dei has had a growing influence on the Church and those previous popes. But in spite of the organization’s Romanist “conservativism” and its humility of appearance, it will be found in the same plight as all other movements within Rome.

Whoever becomes the head of Opus Dei becomes the power of manipulation with obsessive control of its members. At its birth Opus

Dei seemed to have given allegiance to the Church and the pope; as it has grown in influence, its allegiance has changed to more of its own organizational ideology (as we have seen with the Jesuits). It too could easily turn against the “powers that be” within Rome and begin its own agenda of takeover within the Vatican. It could easily become a sleeping cell of committed loyalists to its own vision and against the pope or Roman tradition. Many view Opus Dei’s founder greater than any pope and saint to whom they pray. There is already much fear within Romanism that its members could be preparing the stage for an Opus Dei pope.

If the winds within Rome would change, such as with this present Jesuit pope, what profound effect could Opus Dei have with such committed people? The Jesuits are known for their disciplined life and absolute allegiance to their superiors, even to the point of a committed conscience to such superiors. Opus Dei also has its own “committed,” disciplined people with absolute allegiance to their superiors, yet they live and work among the common man of society. This may give them a greater advantage of influence in a broader spectrum of the Church than the Jesuits have. Then again, Pope Francis may bring about changes that forcefully diminish Opus Dei, which in turn could bring about another mysterious assassination.

Only God knows what forces of evil within Rome will finally emerge on top to bring about the “new” Romanism needed for the final world religion led by Rome.



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