

Catholic Candle

☪ March 2025 ☪ catholiccandle.org ☪ catholiccandle@gmail.com

Words to Live by – from Catholic Tradition

Let Us Beware of Pride!

St. Augustine, great Doctor of the Church, warns us;

If there be holiness in you, fear lest you may lose it. How? Through pride.

Humility of Heart, Fr. Cajetan Mary Da Bergamo, ©1944, quoting St. Augustine in Sermon #13, de Verb. Bom. J.

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Lent is Here! Let Us Fast Generously and Do Penance!

For your easy reference, here is *The Basics of the Church's Traditional Laws of Fast and Abstinence*: <https://catholiccandle.org/2019/12/22/1476/>

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A Lenten Reflection – a Deeper Look into Our Lord's Passion

Note: Below is an extract from St. Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* or *The Mansions* with a few brief comments that we give afterwards.

In obedience to her superiors, St. Teresa wrote this book for her spiritual daughters in the convent.

Extract:

How good Thou art, O God! All is done for us by Thee, Who dost but ask us to give our wills to Thee that we may be plastic as wax in Thy Hands. You see, sisters, what God does to this soul [meaning the soul He is drawing to higher perfection] so that it may know that it is His. He gives it something of His own – that which His Son possessed when living on earth – He could bestow no greater gift on us. Who could ever have longed more eagerly to leave this life than did Christ?

As He said at the Last Supper: “With desire have I desired” this. O Lord! Does not that bitter death Thou are to undergo present itself before Thine eyes in all its pain and horror? “No, for My ardent love and My desire to save souls are immeasurably stronger than the torments. This deeper sorrow I have suffered and still suffer while living here on earth, makes other pain seem as nothing in comparison.”

I have often meditated on this and I know that the torture a friend of mine [this is really St. Teresa herself] has felt, and still feels, at seeing Our Lord sinned against is so unbearable that she would far rather die than continue in such anguish. Then I thought that if a soul whose charity is so weak [*viz.*, the soul to which she just referred] compared to that of Christ – indeed, in comparison with His, this charity might be said not to exist – experiences this insufferable grief, what must have been the feelings of Our Lord Jesus Christ and what must His life have been? For all things were present before His eyes and **He was the constant witness of the great offences committed against His Father**. I believe without doubt that **this pained Him far more than His most sacred Passion**. There, at least, He found the end of all His trials, while His agony was allayed by the consolation of gaining our salvation through His death and of **proving how He loved His Father by suffering for Him**. Thus, people who, urged by fervent love, perform great penances hardly feel them but want to do still more and count even that as little. What, then, must His Majesty have felt at thus **publicly manifesting His perfect obedience to His Father** and His love for His brethren? What joy to suffer in doing God’s will! Yet I think the constant sight of the many sins committed against God and of the numberless souls on their way to hell must have caused Him such anguish that, had He not been more than man, one day of such torment would have destroyed not only His life but many more lives, had they been His.¹

¹ Extract taken from St. Teresa’s *Interior Castle Fifth Mansion chapter II #12-13 (bracketed words and emphasis added)*.

Comments:

This extract is very striking for several reasons. One does not often find books written about the Passion which dwell on the fact that Our Lord suffered primarily because the honor of His Father has been insulted by sin. So many books focus on Our Lord suffering because He loves us. The typical books on the Passion seem to ignore the fact that Our Lord loves His Father with an Infinite Love. Instead, many books teach the perverse error that Our Lord died primarily for us because He loves us *infinitely*.² Although Our Lord is infinite in His nature and all His perfections, yet His external effects in His creatures are not infinite. Thus, Our Lord loves us with a *finite* love because we are *finite* beings, therefore, unworthy and unfit to be loved infinitely.

Thinking about how Our Lord, in His Divine Nature, loves His Father with an Infinite Love and wanted to show publicly how much He honored His Father adds such a deep dimension to one's meditation on the Passion! When we ponder all the physical pain of Our Lord, we must not forget to add to this the constant thought that He suffered even far greater mental anguish and spiritual pain because sin is such an enormous insult to His Heavenly Father – the Supreme Godhead. Mankind has committed countless sins since the beginning of time and will continue until the end of time – and He suffered for every single sin!

St. Teresa also ties together for us the two anguishes Our Lord suffered, namely, the offenses to the Divine Majesty and the ingratitude of souls who damn themselves. She strikingly reminds us that Our Lord wants to save souls from hell and He is sorely grieved when men reject His redemptive sacrifice and plunge themselves headlong into hell anyway. Hence, she vividly demonstrates to us the hideousness of sin.

In this Lent and Passiontide, let us beg Our Lord to forgive us for our wretched sins which caused and continue to cause Him such bitter pain and mental anguish. Let us also beg Him to help us penetrate and better understand His Infinite Love for His Father so we can learn to love Him more deeply and have an ever-increasing gratitude to Him for all He suffered.



***Catholic Candle* note:** The article immediately below is part eight of the study of the Choleric temperament. The first seven parts can be found here:

² For a refutation of the heresy that God loves any creature infinitely, read this article: *God Does Not Infinitely Love Any Creature*. This article is found here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/faith/god-does-not-infinitely-love-any-creature>

This refutation was a response to this heresy taught by Bishop Williamson's Group.

1. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #36: About the Temperaments – Beginning our Study of the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/08/27/lesson-35-about-the-temperaments-the-choleric-temperament/>
2. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #37: About the Temperaments – Continuing Our Study of the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/09/26/lesson-37-about-the-temperaments-continuation-of-the-choleric-temperament/>
3. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #38 -- About the Temperaments – Continuing our Study of the Choleric Temperament – Their Spiritual Combat:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/lesson-38-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat/>
4. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #39 About the Temperaments – Continuing Our Study of the Choleric Temperament – That Temperament's Spiritual Combat – Part IV: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/11/26/lesson-39-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-iv/>
5. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #40: Temperaments – Choleric Temperament – Their Spiritual Combat – Part V:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/12/30/lesson-40-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-v/>
6. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #41 - About the Temperaments - Continuing Our Study of the Choleric Temperament: a Choleric's Spiritual Combat -- Part VI: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/01/27/lesson-41-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-s-spiritual-combat-part-vi/>
7. Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #42: About the Temperaments – Continuing Our Study of the Choleric Temperament – a Choleric's Spiritual Combat – Part VII: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/02/21/lesson-42-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-s-spiritual-combat-part-vii/>

Mary's School of Sanctity

***Lesson #43* About the Temperaments – Continuing Our Study of the Choleric Temperament—Their Spiritual Combat Part VIII**

Note: When referring to a person with a choleric temperament in this article, we simply will label him as a choleric.

In our last lesson we studied more about the nature of anger, both just anger and unjust anger. We also saw the various ways in which anger becomes sinful. Since St. Thomas explained to us how the choleric is prone to anger, it is important to help the choleric analyze his anger.

Since one of our intentions for studying the temperaments is to gain self-knowledge and improve our spiritual lives, it is important to make the appropriate connections between the weaknesses found in each temperament. Making these connections really helps one to find good strategies on how to conquer his bad tendencies which lead him to sin. Thus, we need to look at the weakness of anger in the choleric and see how it is linked to the other weaknesses the choleric has.

St. Thomas tells us that:

The inordinateness of anger may be considered in relation to two things. First, in relation to the origin of anger, and this regards *choleric* persons, who are angry too quickly and for any slight cause. Secondly, in relation to the duration of anger, for that anger endures too long; and this may happen in two ways. In one way, because the cause of anger, to wit, the inflicted injury, remains too long in a man's memory, the result being that it gives rise to a lasting displeasure, wherefore he is *grievous* and *sullen* to himself. In another way, it happens on the part of vengeance, which a man seeks with a stubborn desire: this applies to *ill-tempered* or *stern* people, who do not put aside their anger until they have inflicted punishment.³

In Lesson #42 we spoke of long-lasting anger leading to the horrible sin of hatred. This, of course, means that the choleric must work hard to keep a sharp eye on his anger and be able to discern whether his anger is just or sinful.

Before we discuss ways to help a choleric discern more about his anger, we need to recall that pride, a prominent weakness of the choleric,⁴ is directly linked to his anger. Let us briefly look at St. Thomas's definition of pride in order to see how pride is linked to the typical causes of anger which we discussed in Lesson #40.

St. Thomas defines pride as follows:

³ *Summa Theologica* IIa IIae, Q.158, a.6, *Respondeo* (emphasis added).

⁴ See Lesson #39, in which the pride of the choleric is described.

Pride (*superbia*) is so called because a man thereby aims higher (*supra*) than he is; whereby Isidore says (*Etym. X*): “A man is said to be proud, because he wishes to appear above (*super*) what he really is”; for he who wishes to overstep beyond what he is, is proud.⁵

With this definition in mind let us look at what St. Thomas taught us in Lesson #40. St. Thomas explained, “All the causes of anger are reduced to slight in these three forms: *contempt*, *despiteful treatment* (*i.e.* hindering one from doing one’s will), and *insolence*.”⁶

St. Thomas says that each of the three causes of anger really boils down to some kind of slight. Here are his words:

Each of those causes amounts to some kind of slight. Thus, forgetfulness is a clear sign of slight esteem, for the more we think of a thing the more is it fixed in our memory. [In other words, those things we often think about and which we care about, we do not tend to forget. So, forgetting about a person suggests we don’t care much about that person.]

Again, if a man does not hesitate by his remarks to give pain to another, this seems to show that he thinks little of him: and those too who show signs of hilarity when another is in misfortune, seem to care little about his good or evil. Again, he that hinders another from carrying out his will, without deriving thereby any profit to himself, seems not to care much for his friendship. Consequently, all those things, in so far as they are signs of contempt, provoke anger.⁷

There are two other aspects upon which St. Thomas touches in regard to a cause of anger. He asks two questions, namely, (1) whether a man’s excellence is a cause of his anger, and (2) whether a man’s defect is the cause of his anger. St. Thomas answers these questions as follows:

⁵ *Summa Theologica*, IIa IIae, Q.162, a.1, *Respondeo*.

In that *Respondeo*, St. Thomas further teaches regarding pride:

However, right reason requires that every man’s will should tend to that which is proportionate to him. Therefore, it is evident that pride denotes something opposed to right reason, and this shows it [pride] to have the character of sin, according to Dionysius (*Div. Nom. iv. 4*), “*the soul’s evil is to be opposed to reason*.” Therefore, it is evident that pride is a sin.

⁶ *Summa Theologica*, IIa IIae, Q.47, a.2, *Respondeo*.

⁷ *Summa Theologica* II IIae, Q. 47 a.3 *Reply #3* (bracketed words added for clarity).

The cause of anger, in the man who is angry, may be taken in two ways. First, in respect to the motive of anger: and thus excellence is the cause of a man being easily angered, because the motive of anger is an unjust slight, as stated above (A. 2). However, it is evident that the more excellent a man is, the more unjust is a slight offered him in the matter in which he excels. Consequently, those who excel in any matter, are most of all angry, if they be slighted in that matter; for instance, a wealthy man in his riches, or an orator in his eloquence, and so forth.

Secondly, the cause of anger, in the man who is angry, may be considered on the part of the disposition produced in him by the motive aforesaid. However, it is evident that nothing moves a man to anger except a hurt that grieves him: while whatever savors of defect is above all a cause of grief; since men who suffer from some defect are more easily hurt. And this is why men who are weak, or subject to some other defect, are more easily angered, since they are more easily grieved.⁸

So now let us make a list of the causes of anger and see how each of them can be infected with pride. It should be noted that these apply to any human but we are here considering especially the choleric who St. Thomas has classified as getting “*angry too quickly or for any slight cause.*”

- **A)** Thus, forgetfulness is a clear sign of slight esteem, for the more we think of a thing the more is it fixed in our memory.
- **B)** If a man does not hesitate by his remarks to give pain to another, this seems to show that he thinks little of him.
- **C)** Those, too, who show signs of hilarity when another is in misfortune, seem to care little about his good or evil.
- **D)** He that hinders another from carrying out his will, without deriving thereby any profit to himself, seems not to care much for his friendship.
- **E)** A man who excels in an area is insulted by someone who slights his excellence.
- **F)** A man who is weak or has a defect is easily grieved and angered.

The list of slights when attached to pride and what remedies to take: (These are in connection with the typical pride of the choleric.)

⁸ *Summa Theologica*, Ia IIae, Q.47, a.3, *Respondeo*.

A) When One Feels Slighted Because Someone Has Forgotten Him.

A proud choleric would assume that his friend is trying to hurt him or insult him. Thus, if he feels slighted he should first examine if the offense he feels is real or imagined. He needs to think on a more objective level. He should take care not to make a rash judgment. One thing he should do is give the benefit of the doubt to the one he feels slighted by. There may well be a logical reason why the friend could not accomplish what the choleric expected.

B) When One Feels Offended Because Of Something That Someone Has Said.

Here again, a proud choleric would automatically assume that there was an evil motive and premeditation involved in what was said to him. He must really make every effort to pull out of the situation and be objective. He should assume that no ill-will was intended.

He could *forgive-and-forget* or he could patiently communicate to the person who made the comment that he (the choleric) took it the wrong way. This communication is in itself an act of humility and will help the situation. He should try to “clear the air” and make sure there is no misunderstanding or hard feelings shown about the comment.

The choleric could also think that if someone said something that rubbed the choleric the wrong way, this proves that the choleric is proud and needs to admit to himself that he deserved the comment. Sometimes, people do not know how to approach a choleric to give him fraternal correction and consequently an admonishment or instruction can come out sounding harsh.

C) When One Feels Hurt Because Someone Found Humor in a Mishap/Misfortune that Occurred to the Choleric.

The proud choleric would usually take a great offense at this. Of course, it is against charity to treat someone’s misfortune or accident as humorous. However, fallen human nature often finds humor in some silly circumstance and might laugh yet without intending any slight or insult.

What should one do if he should be laughed at? Our first thought should be of Our Lord who was unjustly mocked and laughed to scorn. He took it with meekness and forgave His offenders, and so we should do likewise.

Also, we can thank God for the humiliation and unite our embarrassment to Our Lord’s. We can remind ourselves that we really do not deserve any better. This is a good way to make reparation for our past sins and learn how to love others, especially our enemies.

D) When One Feels Angry Because Someone Interferes with His Plans, Even Though the Said Someone Does Not Gain Any Profit Thereby.

A proud choleric would typically get very upset about this situation. What should the choleric do? He should remember that when something happens that is outside of his control, then it is God's Will for him at least at that present time.

He should first thank God for the cross. He should examine whether his plans were good for his salvation in the first place. If he finds that the plans were not conducive to his salvation then, of course, he should immediately abandon that plan.

If he is not sure whether his plan was good or not, he must pray for enlightenment from God. He should also seek advice and get help evaluating the situation. He could also use St. Ignatius's technique of considering the plan as someone else's. Then the choleric would ask himself if this plan is conducive to salvation. Likewise, he should ask himself what he would have wanted to do if he were on his deathbed and about to die. Then he could implement the results of his internal inquiry.

All of these thoughts would certainly curb his first inclination to get upset or angry.

E) When One Who Has a God-Given Talent Has Been Insulted by Someone Who Slights his Excellence.

A proud choleric is very prone to get upset and angry when his talents are not recognized. One could say that the proud choleric wants the whole world to acknowledge his talents. This may seem like an exaggeration to make a point, but we would have to admit knowing some choleric somewhere who acts exactly like this. What should this choleric do? First of all, if one has talents, he must give the glory to God. Our Lord and Our Lady are perfect examples of how to magnify God for the excellence they possessed. As St. Paul said, "What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" *1 Corinthians, 4:7.*

We all have to thank God for what we have received. The choleric must do all he can to foster humility in himself and should try to form the habit of thanking God often for all the benefits he has received from God.

He should be meek and offer up the cross of being insulted. This is a great way to make reparation for his past sins and to imitate Our Lord.

He must remember that the insult may be a way for someone to subtly point out the choleric's pride concerning his talents. So this is another reason for the choleric to be thankful that someone has insulted him. His conscience will undoubtedly tell him that he may really deserve the insult to curb his pride.

Of course, the choleric should forgive the person who insults him and this forgiveness must be with his whole heart. Otherwise, he might get the temptation to harbor a grudge against the offender. ⁹

F) When a Man Who Is Weak Has his Defect Pointed Out.

A proud choleric who has a natural weakness and/or a defect will find himself, as St. Thomas says, very easily irked and spontaneously lashes out if anyone makes a reference to his problem(s). Naturally, his pride does not want to face the fact that he has a problem. The most obvious reason for this is that the problem he has could in most circumstances be addressed and fixed. If someone points out his shortcomings, his conscience reminds him that his lack of effort to amend is the cause of the weakness/defect still abiding in him. The old adage, “God helps those who help themselves” is involved here. If the choleric worked hard, first to face himself, then to seek the means to improve and to take those means, then he would be on his way to overcoming the weakness and/or defect(s).

We all have tendencies which need to be conquered in us. As St. Paul says, “But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of my sin, that is in my members.” *Romans, 7:23.*

Of course, St. Paul here is talking about the concupiscence of the flesh which we all must deal with. Consequently, St. Paul exhorts us numerous times to use our reason. God intends each person to use his reason to avoid sin and to conquer the natural weaknesses which are in his temperament.

Therefore, the proud choleric, when his weakness and/or defect is revealed, should force himself to humbly be grateful to the person who makes it known.

We can readily see that if one does not view himself correctly, he would easily take offence at anything that he perceives as negative to him. It is truly a great blessing of God to help us see ourselves the way we really are, especially our defects. God often uses others as His tools to show us what we need to work on most in our souls. Therefore, we should not shun fraternal correction but embrace it to help us conquer pride.

⁹ One could ask the question, “What if the man (even a choleric man) was humble and is slighted for his excellence?” This excellent man would have to weigh the matter carefully and be sure if he should indeed show disapprobation against the offender. For example, if he would cause scandal by not expressing his just anger, then he must be sure to not simply blow off the incident but rather show that he has just anger and use this anger in an appropriate way.

A Short Self-Examination to Check if Pride is involved in One's Anger (based on our discussion above)

- **Do I feel slighted?**
- **Is this slight sent to me to show me that I need to amend some aspect of my life/character?**
- **Should I not take this opportunity to examine my conscience? {Because this occasion may seem to me to be a slight only because it pricks my conscience about one of my failings and, in my pride, I do not want to see myself as I really am.}**
- **Am I imitating Our Lord if I am unjustly accused?**
- **Am I offering up this humiliation for the Glory of God?**
- **Would it not be better to simply say a prayer for the person I feel slighted by and then forget about the incident?**

This short examination can be very helpful to keep in mind the next time one, especially a choleric, feels like he is beginning to boil inside. When one humbles himself, especially seeing all things as coming from the Hands of God, then one can crush angry feelings which are often linked directly to pride.

A Preview...

In our next lesson we will deal more with various ways that a choleric can work on humility to restrain his anger. We will see more how pride greatly influences the choleric's frame of mind. We will connect our investigation of slights (see above) with an examination of how a choleric can slow down his impulsive tendencies to take offense, get angry, and cling to anger for long periods of time.



Catholic Candle note: Occasionally, we analyze the liberal statements of the SSPX. Someone could wonder:

Why mention the SSPX any longer, since they are unimportant as merely one of very many compromise groups?

It is true that a priest (or group) is of small importance when he (or the group) is merely one of countless compromisers. By contrast, an uncompromising priest is of great importance, even though he is only one.

However, regarding the “new” SSPX: we sometimes mention them for at least these five reasons, motivated by charity:

- New *Catholic Candle* readers might not be sufficiently informed of the “new” SSPX’s liberalism to avoid that group. Out of charity for them we occasionally provide these warnings to help these new readers appreciate the danger of the N-SSPX.
- Some longtime *Catholic Candle* readers might forget the N-SSPX poison, or vacillate in their resolution to stay away from the N-SSPX if they never received a reminder warning about the danger of the N-SSPX. This is like the fact that all it takes for many people to become conciliar is to never be reminded about the errors of Vatican II and the conciliar church. Out of charity for them we occasionally provide these reminders for readers who would otherwise “forget” the danger of the N-SSPX.
- The N-SSPX serves as an important study case to examine how leaving the truth often happens. It is a warning to us all about a very common way to depart from the truth and become unfaithful. Out of charity for ourselves we occasionally provide these insights about becoming unfaithful by taking this common road of compromise the N-SSPX is taking.
- Over time, the N-SSPX provides us with a thorough catalogue of liberal compromises, and studying those compromises and errors with the contrasting Traditional Catholic truth is a helpful means of studying our Faith and guarding ourselves from the principal errors of our time. This helps us to fulfill our duty of continually studying the doctrines of our Faith. Out of charity for ourselves, we use the occasion of the N-SSPX’s liberalism to study our Traditional Catholic Faith better and the corresponding N-SSPX liberalism.
- If the SSPX ever abjured its liberalism, it could do great good as it used to do, since its bishops and its priestly ordinations so far have been valid (although the SSPX has taken in some conciliar and doubtfully-ordained “priests” whom it allows to administer “sacraments”). This validity of SSPX ordinations stands in contrast to many compromise groups (such as the FSSP, ICK, and others), all of whose “ordinations” were and remain doubtful from the very beginning of those groups.

For those readers who are firm in their resolution to completely avoid supporting the N-SSPX, they can receive just as much of the substance of those *Catholic Candle* articles, if they substitute the phrase “a liberal could say” anytime they read “the SSPX teaches”.

21 Examples of Liberalism in the “New” SSPX

Today’s SSPX is *not* the same SSPX as the one in the old days. There are countless examples of its teaching and practice to show this. Many are documented in *Catholic Candle*, both on its current website and in its old one, CatholicCandle.neocities.org.

Below are twenty-one examples of this SSPX liberalism, taken from many more which we could have listed here. We cannot ignore the mountain of evidence. You should not either.

1. The SSPX previously taught that the rubella vaccine and other vaccines developed through abortion are always sinful. By contrast, the SSPX now says not only that this same rubella vaccine is justifiable for some people, but also that the COVID vaccines, which were also developed through abortion, are also justified.¹⁰ The SSPX’s new position is wrong, liberal, and contradicts its prior teaching on vaccines developed through abortion.
2. The SSPX says it now accepts 95% of Vatican II¹¹ and says that Vatican II contains no direct heresy and “not so many” errors.¹² The truth the “new” SSPX denies is that the documents of Vatican II are riddled with liberal teachings and heresies.
3. The SSPX now teaches that the religious liberty taught by Vatican II is “a very, very limited one, very limited”.¹³ The truth that the “new” SSPX denies is that the scope of religious liberty that Vatican II teaches is unlimited as long as public

¹⁰ Here are the SSPX quotes (both the new and old ones) in part 3 of this article: <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/01/01/reject-the-covid-vaccines/>

¹¹ https://web.archive.org/web/20130603054101/http://www.sspx.org/sspx_and_rome/is_the_ssp_x_heretical_4_12-19-2012.htm

¹² While he was superior general, Bishop Fellay said:

In Vatican II, there is no direct heresy. There are openings. Openings to the [sic] error. And some direct errors. Not so many direct errors.

Hear Bishop Fellay’s words here: August 24, 2016 video interview , beginning at the 50 seconds’ mark. This video interview used to be here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuCOdk99mfA&spfreload=5> but has been made private.

¹³ Listen to then-superior general Bp. Fellay’s exact words at the following link – listen at minute 1:25 of 6:00 at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdnJigNzTuY&feature=topics>

order is not breached.¹⁴ This is the same meager restriction that the French Revolutionaries insisted upon after the French Revolution. In other words, buddhists, protestants, and even satanists can do what they wish in public, as long as they are peaceful and don't become violent.

4. The “new” SSPX falsely teaches that “many Vatican II texts are traditional”.¹⁵ The truth that the “new” SSPX denies is that there are no traditional documents of Vatican II (much less “many”).
5. Among these Vatican II documents, is *Lumen Gentium*. The SSPX now teaches that this document is free from errors/liberalism.¹⁶ The truth that the “new” SSPX denies is that there are hundreds of heresies, liberal and false statements in *Lumen Gentium*.¹⁷
6. The “new” SSPX called the new mass “Holy Mass”.¹⁸ Besides the “new” SSPX calling the new mass “Holy Mass”, it now calls the Traditional Mass by its conciliar name, *viz.*, the “Extraordinary Form”.¹⁹ The SSPX taught that the new mass is good, but not as good, as the Traditional Mass by likening the new mass to a tin trumpet, and likening the Traditional Mass to a silver trumpet.²⁰ Indeed, while

¹⁴ Read the quote from Vatican II here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/faith/religious-liberty-vatican-ii.html>

¹⁵ https://web.archive.org/web/20130603061829/http://www.sspix.org/sspx_and_rome/is_the_sspix_heretical_3_12-11-2012.htm

¹⁶ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-the-new-sspx-claims-archbishop-lefebvre-endorsed-vatican-ii-lumen-gentium.-as-free-of-all-errors-and-ambiguities.html>

¹⁷ <https://catholiccandle.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Lumen-Gentium-Annotated.pdf>

¹⁸ Bishop Fellay June 30, 2018 interview found at: <https://fsspx.news/en/news/bishop-fellay-interview-are-disturbing-factor-church-19871> .

¹⁹ One of countless examples of this is the SSPX superior general using this phrase to refer to the true Mass here: http://www.angelusonline.org/index.php?section=articles&subsection=show_article&article_id=4242

²⁰ Here are Bishop Fellay's words:

If you welcome a head of state and have the choice between a **silver trumpet and a tin trumpet**, do you use the tin trumpet? That would be an insult; you don't do

Bishop Fellay was superior general, he attended the new mass and afterwards praised it.²¹ His two assistants (who were second and third in authority in the SSPX) attended a new mass on another occasion.²² The “new” SSPX has blamed the dispute between the Vatican and the “old” SSPX concerning the new mass, on how “profound” Archbishop Lefebvre’s “motives” were and the bewilderment of the SSPX priests and followers because they were “fed up” with the “way in which the new mass was being celebrated.”²³ Bishop Fellay says that “**what needs to be corrected**” in the new mass are things like making a better vernacular translation.²⁴ The truth that the “new” SSPX denies is that the new mass itself is evil and sacrilegious.

that. And even the **best new Masses are like tin trumpets in comparison to the old liturgy**. We have to use the best for the dear Lord.

Quoted from the Bishop Fellay June 30, 2018 interview found at: <https://fsspnews.com/en/news/bishop-fellay-interview-are-disturbing-factor-church-19871> (emphasis added).

²¹ Read the news report and quotes from Bishop Fellay here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-promotes-hybrid-mass.html>

²² Read the news report here: <https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2014/05/rorate-exclusive-pope-francis-received.html>

²³ Here is the longer quote from Bishop Fellay, starting with the question:

Q: Cardinal Ratzinger was a connoisseur and veteran promoter of Catholic Tradition and a friend of the Traditional Mass; why couldn’t he reassure the Archbishop?

Bishop Fellay: He did not understand how **profound the Archbishop’s motives** were or how bewildered the faithful and the priests were. Many were simply **fed up** with the **post-conciliar scandals and nuisances and with the way in which the new Mass was being celebrated**. If Cardinal Ratzinger had understood us, he would not have acted that way. And I think that he regretted it. That is why he then tried as Pope to repair the damage with the Motu Proprio and lifted the excommunication. We are truly grateful for his attempts at reconciliation.

Quoted from the Bishop Fellay June 30, 2018 interview found at: <https://fsspnews.com/en/news/bishop-fellay-interview-are-disturbing-factor-church-19871> (emphasis added).

²⁴ Quotation, citation, and analysis here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-promotes-hybrid-mass.html>

7. The “new” SSPX falsely indicates that Pope Francis abides in the truth, and is preserved from error.²⁵ When he was superior general, Bishop Fellay declared that he is “very happy” with a lot of what Pope Francis teaches.²⁶
8. Jesus Christ is God. For this reason, Mary is the Mother of God because she is the mother of a Person Who is God. For the same reason, the Jews committed Deicide because they killed a Person Who is God. Vatican II contradicted the traditional teaching from the time of the apostles, that the Jews committed Deicide.²⁷ The SSPX has adopted this conciliar error and denies the Church’s teaching that the Jews *did* commit Deicide.²⁸ The truth that the “new” SSPX denies is that the Jews *did* commit Deicide – as the Church has always taught.
9. Catholics should not hold it as *certain* that we will go to heaven. But that is what the SSPX now teaches.²⁹ The truth is that the (supposed) *certainty* of salvation is the vice of presumption.
10. The *new* SSPX falsely teaches that Vatican II does *good*, when Bishop Fellay, its then-superior general, stated that the “Second Vatican Council ... illuminates – *i.e.*

²⁵ Read the SSPX quotes and find the citations to the SSPX publications here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/bouchacourt-francis-preserved-error.html#fnref1>

²⁶ Read the SSPX quotes and find the citations to the SSPX publications here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-interview-liberal-timid.html>

²⁷ *Nostra Aetate*, §4.

²⁸ Quotations, citations, and analysis of the Catholic teaching and of the “new” SSPX’s denial of the Catholic teaching, are here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/2014-01-14-bp-fellay-ltr.html>

²⁹ Here is one example of this SSPX teaching: in the November-December 2016 *Angelus* Magazine, Fr. Wegner declares:

Faith makes us know God: we believe in Him with all our strength but we do not see Him. Our faith, therefore, needs to be supported by the **certitude that some day [sic] we will see our God, that we will possess Him and will [sic] be united to Him forever. The virtue of hope gives us this certitude** by presenting God to us as our infinite good and our eternal reward.

<https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-the-new-sspx-teaches-the-vice-of-presumption-as-if-it-were-the-virtue-of-hope.html>

deepens and further makes explicit – some aspects of the life and of the doctrine of the Church”.³⁰ The truth is that Vatican II does no good.

11. Among countless other conciliar errors is the claim that there exist “degrees” of being in communion with the Catholic Church.³¹ The “new” SSPX indicates it accepts this conciliar theory by now using the term of “*full* communion”, as if there were any other kind of communion. *Id.*
12. While he was superior general, Bishop Fellay said that Pope Francis’s exhortation on marriage (*Amoris Laetitia*) “contains many things that are correct and beautiful”.³² The truth is that this is a vile, thoroughly-conciliar document. Bishop Fellay falsely says that Pope Francis’s abominable *Amoris Laetitia* is like a “beautiful boat” with a “very small” hole in it.³³ The “new” SSPX is grossly minimizing the evil of Pope Francis's teachings.
13. The SSPX teaches that Vatican II’s *Optatam Totius* is free from errors/liberalism. The truth is that there are many liberal and false statements in it.³⁴
14. The “new” SSPX published an article about Islam’s hostility toward other religions. This article **stressed the importance of religious liberty for every**

³⁰ Quoted from Bishop Fellay’s April 15, 2012 Doctrinal Declaration (dashes are in the original).

³¹ Quotation, citation, and analysis here:
<https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/schmidberger-conciliar-ideas-jargon.html>

³² Quotation, citation, and analysis here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-francis-eroding-marriage.html>

³³ *Amoris Laetitia* is Pope Francis’s scandalous and heretical document on marriage. The truth, of course, is that this document is a *complete shipwreck!* (continuing Bishop Fellay’s boat metaphor). Plainly, Bishop Fellay greatly minimizes the truth when he says Pope Francis’s “beautiful boat” has a “very small” hole, because most boats have very small leaks. That is why boats have bilge pumps – to remove the water from very small leaks. A very small leak is not ideal but is not a disaster like *Amoris Laetitia* and other teachings of the conciliar church.

Read the SSPX’s *Amoris Laetitia* quotes and find the citations to the SSPX publications here:
<https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-francis-eroding-marriage.html>

³⁴ <https://catholiccandle.org/2019/01/08/the-evils-of-vatican-iis-decree-on-priestly-training/>

religion and omitted to state the Catholic truth that error (including religious error) has no rights.³⁵ The truth is that only the true Catholic Faith has rights.³⁶

15. The “new” SSPX says we must continually change.³⁷ This echoes the conciliar hierarchy, which continually emphasizes the need to change, to “renew” ourselves, and to “ride the wave of revolution of faith”.³⁸
16. The conciliar church refers to promotion of conciliar errors as *The New Evangelization*.³⁹ The “new” SSPX declared that Pope Francis sees the SSPX as a help in *The New Evangelization*. *Id.* This is scandalous since it implies that the N-SSPX approves of and is willing to promote Pope Francis’ modernism.
17. The SSPX now blurs the difference between the Catholic Church and the modernist conciliar church.⁴⁰ Archbishop Lefebvre made this clear distinction.⁴¹

³⁵ Quotation, citation, and analysis here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-jourdan-religious-liberty.html>

³⁶ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/faith/religious-liberty-vatican-ii.html>

³⁷ Quotation, citation, and analysis here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/pflugger-traditional-catholics-change.html>

³⁸ To read the conciliar quotes promoting continual change (and to read an analysis of them), see *Lumen Gentium Annotated*, by *Quanta Cura Press*, pp.66-78, ©2013, available at: <https://catholiccandle.org/2023/06/23/lumen-gentium-annotated/> (free) & at Amazon.com (sold at cost).

³⁹ Quotation, citation, and analysis here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/SSPX-promote-new-evangelization.html>

⁴⁰ For example, here is Bishop Fellay: “The fact of going to Rome doesn’t mean that we agree with them. But it’s the Church! And it’s the true Church!” Bishop Fellay, Flavigny, 09/02/2012).

⁴¹ For example, here is Archbishop Lefebvre relating his discussion with then-Cardinal Ratzinger:

Cardinal Ratzinger repeated it many times, “But Monsignor, there is only one Church, you mustn’t make a parallel church.” I told him: “Your Eminence, it is not us who are forming a parallel Church, as we are continuing the Church of all times, it is you who are forming the parallel church for having invented the Church of the Council, which Cardinal Benelli called the Conciliar Church; it is you all who have invented a new church, not us, it is you who have made the new catechisms, new Sacraments, a new Mass, a new liturgy, not us. We continue to do what was done before. We are not the ones who are forming a new church.

18. The SSPX and Archbishop Lefebvre used to say that the indult groups “are doing the devil's work”.⁴² Now the SSPX treats those groups as colleagues in the Lord’s vineyard.⁴³
19. When he was superior general, Bishop Fellay said that by an agreement with Rome, the SSPX “will return to the Church”.⁴⁴ The truth is that the “old” SSPX (and other Traditional Catholics who correctly saw things) were already *in* the Church. Ironically, the more the “new” SSPX becomes conciliar, the more that “new” SSPX needs to “return to the Church” by rejecting its liberalism.
20. The “new” SSPX, through one of its bishops, approved of a booklet for use in the SSPX, which teaches the conciliar position that a patient or the patient’s caregiver is permitted to choose to starve that patient to death *if keeping that patient alive through providing food and liquids is too much of a burden for that patient or caregiver*.⁴⁵
21. The “new” SSPX promotes the “no nukes” unilateral nuclear disarmament position of Pope Francis and leftist organizations such as Greenpeace. The N-SSPX argues against the pre-conciliar Catholic position that all weapons – including nuclear weapons – can be used as long as the Catholic teachings concerning war and a just defense are preserved.⁴⁶

Econe, Press Conference, June 15, 1988. There are many other examples of Archbishop Lefebvre distinguishing between the Catholic Church and the conciliar church.

⁴² See, e.g., <https://sspx.org/en/two-years-after-consecrations>

⁴³ See, e.g., <https://remnantnewspaper.com/web/index.php/articles/item/2032-catholic-identity-conference-makes-history>

&

<http://histoirepatrimoinebleurillois.hautetfort.com/archive/2015/09/13/premiere-messe-du-chanoine-pierre-dumain-en-la-basilique-de-5684030.html>

⁴⁴ Here is the longer quote: “Anyway, the Pope said that it is only a problem of canonical discipline. An act of Rome will suffice to say it is finished and we will return to the Church. It will come. I am very optimistic!” Bp. Fellay, Interview with Les Nouvelles Caledoniennes, 12/27/10.

⁴⁵ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/tissier-praises-euthanasia-booklet>

⁴⁶ <http://catholiccandle.neocities.org/faith/nuclear-weapons-are-not-evil-but-their-misuse-is.html>



***Catholic Candle* note:** Sedevacantism is wrong and is (material or formal) schism. Catholic Candle is not sedevacantist.

Below is the seventh article in a series which covers specific aspects of the error of sedevacantism. As context for this seventh article, let us recall what we saw in the earlier six articles:

In the first article, we saw that we cannot know whether Pope Francis (or anyone else) is a formal heretic (rather than a material heretic only) – and thus whether he is outside the true Catholic Church – ***based simply on his persistent, public teaching of a heretical opinion.***⁴⁷

Then in the second article, we saw that we must not judge a man to be a formal heretic if he professes to be Catholic and says he believes what a Catholic must believe now, in order to be Catholic now. When a person professes a heretical opinion, we must judge him in the most favorable light (if we judge him at all). So, we must avoid the sin of rash judgment and we must not judge negatively the interior culpability of the pope and the 1.2 billion people who profess that they are Catholic. We must not judge they are not “real” Catholics if they tell us that they are Catholics. Instead, we should count them as Catholics who are very confused.⁴⁸

Thus, we must judge Pope Francis to be a material heretic, not a formal heretic, and that he ***is*** the pope. Regarding any of the world’s 1.2 billion self-described Catholics who hold heresy, we must judge them (if we judge them at all) to be material heretics only, unless they themselves tell us that they know they don’t qualify to be Catholics.⁴⁹

In the third article, we examined briefly the important difference between persons in authority who fulfill their duty to judge those under their charge in the ***external forum***, as contrasted to a sedevacantist or ***anyone else except God*** who judges the ***interior*** culpability of other persons and (rashly) judges them to be formal heretics.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Read this article here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/09/26/cc-in-brief-sedevacantist-questions/>

⁴⁸ Read this article here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/are-we-allowed-to-decide-that-pope-francis-knows-he-is-not-catholic/>

⁴⁹ Read this article here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/are-we-allowed-to-decide-that-pope-francis-knows-he-is-not-catholic/>

⁵⁰ Read this article here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/11/26/bishops-have-excommunicated-heretics-cant-we-judge-the-pope/>

In the fourth article, we saw that it does not help us to protect ourselves better from Pope Francis' heresy by declaring that he is not the pope.⁵¹

In the fifth article, we saw that it is possible for a pope to teach (or believe) heresy and, in fact, popes have taught and believed heresy at various times during Church history.⁵²

In the sixth article, we saw that the Church infallibly assures us that we will have a pope at all times until the end of the world, except during very short interregnums between papal reigns, *during which the Church is in the process of electing a new pope and during which the Church's unified government continues to function*.⁵³

Below, in the seventh article of this series, we see that the Catholic Church is a visible Body and will be visible to all. The Catholic Church has a visible monarchical government and the pope is visible to all. Thus, we know we have a pope and that he is visible to all.

The Catholic Church Will Always be Visible, and Will Always Have a Pope Who is Visible to All

From the preceding articles, we know that we must have a pope. There are a few tiny dispersed groups who so despise the pope in the Vatican, that they concoct theories that there is a hidden pope, whom only their tiny "elite" "knows" about or "knows" is the pope.

These tiny "elite" groups are disunited in their views about *who* the hidden "pope" is. Some hold that he lives in a farmhouse in Kansas. Others claim that the "pope" is in Montana, Croatia, Argentina, Kenya, Spain or elsewhere. Each of these "popes" is "known" and recognized only by his own tiny group.

The Catholic Church is Visible and will Always be Visible.

⁵¹ Read this article here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/12/30/protecting-ourselves-from-a-bad-pope-or-bad-superior/>

⁵² Read this article here: *It is Possible for a Pope to Teach Heresy and Remain the Pope?:* <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/01/27/it-is-possible-for-a-pope-to-teach-heresy-and-remain-the-pope/>

⁵³ Read this article here that the Catholic Church's unified government always continues, even during an interregnum: *The Catholic Church Will Always Have a Pope:* <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/02/21/the-catholic-church-will-always-have-a-pope/>

But we know from our catechism that the Catholic Church will always be visible. This is why Pope Pius XI declared that:

The one true Church of Christ is visible to all.

Mortalium Animos, January 6, 1928. ¶10.

Pope Leo XIII identified the cause of this visibility:

The Church is visible because She is a Body.

Satis Cognitum, ¶3.

Pope Pius XII affirmed this same truth, quoting these words of Pope Leo XIII. *Mystici Corporis Christi*, §14.

St. Francis de Sales replied to his adversaries who “would maintain that the Church is invisible and unperceivable” that he “consider[ed] that this is the extreme of absurdity, and that immediately beyond this abide frenzy and madness.” He then proceeds to discuss at length eight clear proofs that the Church is always visible. *Catholic Controversy*, Part 1, Ch. 5.

Thus, because the Catholic Church will always be a body, she will always be visible.

This visibility of the Catholic Church shows that the Catholic Church has a visible head. We will discuss this in the next section of this article. But the visibility of the Catholic Church also shows that the sedevacantists are wrong in their claim that the 1.2 billion persons who claim that they themselves are Catholic are, in fact, not “real” Catholics and that only the sedevacantists’ own tiny group are the “real” Catholics. The truth is that the sedevacantists are rashly judging those confused Catholics. By contrast, faithful and informed Catholics do not declare that those 1.2 billion self-described Catholics are not “really” Catholics.⁵⁴

This Visible Church will Always have a Visible Government with a Visible Head.

Because the Church will always be visible, and because unity of government is an element of the Mark of Unity⁵⁵ by which the Church can *always* be known, the Church will always

⁵⁴ Read this article about the sin of rash judgment: <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/are-we-allowed-to-decide-that-pope-francis-knows-he-is-not-catholic/>

⁵⁵ Read this article: *The Catholic Church Will Always Have a Pope*, available here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/02/21/the-catholic-church-will-always-have-a-pope/>

have a visible government, so that the true Church can be recognized by this Mark of Unity of Government.

Because the Church's government is visible and monarchical, "the Church, being a visible body, must have a visible head and centre of unity."⁵⁶ This is obviously true. For the Church is not one, with a visible government, if it is unknown "who is in charge". In fact, governing authority is the efficient cause giving unity as one body to any society of men.⁵⁷

For there is not one visible society if it consists of men united only by ideas and not by a unified, visible government. That is why even basic catechisms teach us that the Catholic Church is "under one visible head."⁵⁸

Such a **visible** head has always been necessary, but even more evidently so as the Catholic Church spread throughout the world.⁵⁹ That is why Pope Pius XII sums up Catholic teaching by declaring that "it is absolutely necessary that the Supreme Head, that is, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, be visible to the eyes of all".⁶⁰

Conclusion of this Article

We have no assurance that the pope will be holy or will govern well. We have no assurance that the pope's words and deeds will not be shocking and repulsive. However, we **do** know that the Catholic Church is a visible body and that her head, the pope, is visible to all. Thus, the pope is not living unknown and hidden from the attention of the world, in some Kansas farmhouse or similar place.

Further, it is clear that the pope is also not someone such as Cardinal Siri (whom a tiny group had supposed to have been a secret pope). Such a supposed "pontificate" was not visible. In other words, he was not the pope who is "visible to the eyes of all". *Mystici Corporis*, ¶69.

Thus, we must have a pope who, **as pope, is visible to all**. In other words, **who** the pope is, is not a secret. The pope's identity is known to all, however bad he is. As of March 25,

⁵⁶ *Catholic Dictionary*, Addis & Arnold, Catholic Publication Society, 3rd ed., New York, 1884, article: *Church of Christ*, page 176.

⁵⁷ *Summa Supp.*, Q.40, a.6, *Respondeo*.

⁵⁸ *See, e.g., Baltimore Catechism #4*, Q.115.

⁵⁹ *A Full Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Joseph Deharbe, S.J., Catholic Publication Society, New York, 1889, p.132.

⁶⁰ Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, ¶69.

2025 (the date of this article), that pope is Francis, although as of this date, he is so frail and is and possibly near death.



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