

Catholic Candle

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Words to Live By – From Catholic Tradition

God Sends to Us Life's Blows and Disappointments for Our Own Good

St. Anthony of Padua, Doctor of the Church, invokes the teaching of Pope St. Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Church, about the Crosses that God sends for our own good:

**Constant temporal success is a sure sign of
eternal damnation.**

St. Anthony of Padua, Sermon for the 6th Sunday after Pentecost, quoting Pope St. Gregory the Great, from his work entitled *de Moralis*, XXVI, 18:35.

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Catholic Candle note: The article below is Part XXIV of the study of the temperaments, starting with the Choleric temperament. Here are links to the first twenty-three parts:

1. Part I: Beginning our Study of the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/08/27/lesson-35-about-the-temperaments-the-choleric-temperament/>
2. Part II: A general overview of the weaknesses of the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/09/26/lesson-37-about-the-temperaments-continuation-of-the-choleric-temperament/>
3. Part III: A consideration of the pride of the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/10/24/lesson-38-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat/>
4. Part IV: A general discussion of anger as a passion – in order to establish a foundation for studying anger in the Choleric Temperament:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/11/26/lesson-39-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat/>

[temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-iv/](#)

5. Part V: Concerning the motivations for anger:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2024/12/30/lesson-40-temperaments-choleric-temperament-their-spiritual-combat-part-v/>
6. Part VI: Concerning what anger does to the body:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/01/27/lesson-41-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-vi/>
7. Part VII: Explaining when anger is sinful:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/02/21/lesson-42-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-vii/>
8. Part VIII: Explaining how being slighted provokes anger:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/03/27/lesson-42-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-viii/>
9. Part IX: Explaining how anger turns into the sin of holding a grudge:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/04/23/lesson-44-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-ix/>
10. Part X: Recommendations to help choleric to overcome pride:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/05/20/lesson-45-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-x/>
11. Part XI: Explaining how a person sins by not using his reason:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/06/28/lesson-46-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-xi/>
12. Part XII: Explaining some reasons why a choleric does not use his reason properly: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/07/24/lesson-47-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-xii/>
13. Part XIII: Explaining why the choleric fears to use his reason well:
<https://catholiccandle.org/2025/08/29/lesson-48-temperaments-choleric-temperament-a-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-xiii/>
14. Part XIV: Explaining generally how Satan targets our fallen and weakened intellects: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/09/24/lesson-49-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-choleric-spiritual-combat-part-xiv/>

15. Part XV: Explaining the passions in general, to lay the foundation for our consideration of the passion of fear: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/10/26/3050/>
16. Part XVI: Explaining fear as a passion: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/11/25/lesson-51-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xvi/>
17. Part XVII: Explaining how fear works in the soul and influences all of the temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/12/29/lesson-52-temperaments-choleric-temperament-the-cholerics-spiritual-combat-part-xvii/>
18. Part XVIII: Explaining how pain and death are objects of fear for persons of any temperament: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/01/26/lesson-53-temperaments-choleric-temperament-pain-and-death-are-objects-of-fearf-any-temperament/>
19. Part XIX: Explaining in what way sin is an object of fear for all temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/02/26/lesson-54-temperaments-choleric-temperament-whether-sin-is-an-object-of-fear-for-all-temperaments/>
20. Part XX: Explaining the causes of fear – applying to all temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/31/marys-school-of-sanctity-3/>
21. Part XXI: Explaining the Effects of Fear in All Temperaments: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/04/26/about-the-temperaments-part-xxi-explaining-the-effects-of-fear-in-all-temperaments/>
22. Part XXII: Explaining How to Order Our Loves So We Can Use the Passion of Fear Properly, and How the Devil Attempts to Prevent this Ordering: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/05/28/about-the-temperaments-part-xxii-how-to-order-our-loves-so-we-can-use-the-passion-of-fear-properly/>
23. Part XXIII: Explanation of Sloth in Order to Analyze This Snare of Satan and to Combat Him: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/06/26/about-the-temperaments-part-xxiii-explanation-of-sloth-in-order-to-analyze-this-snare-of-satan/>

Mary's School of Sanctity

Lesson #59: About the Temperaments – Part XXIV – Explaining More about How the Devil Tries to Draw Us Away From Reasoning and From the Things of God

Let us begin our investigation about the allurements the devil uses to drag us away from the use of our reason, as well as the great benefit and the enjoyment that come from thinking deeply. Undertaking this study is crucial if we want to form strategies to fight our arch-enemy.

In a recent lesson we considered the beautiful reality of filial love¹ (*i.e.*, the love of a son or daughter) and the satisfaction we get when using our reason and especially thinking **deeply**. Let us look at some initial considerations regarding filial love and careful thinking.

Some Important Considerations about Filial Love

- Filial love brings satisfaction to the soul;
- Filial love draws us close to the heart of God and to a deep, meaningful friendship with Him;
- Filial love helps us to discipline ourselves and to bring order to our souls;
- Filial love increases the soul's hunger for God and our desire to have companionship with Him; and
- Filial love makes our soul more disposed to understand the truths of God.

Mindful of these considerations, we are able to see how important it is to foster this kind of love in our souls.

Some Important Considerations about Using One's Reason and Thinking Deeply

- ❖ Reasoning (*i.e.*, thinking deeply) strengthens man's highest faculty, namely, the intellect;
- ❖ Reasoning (*i.e.*, thinking deeply) fosters a love of this faculty;
- ❖ Reasoning (*i.e.*, thinking deeply) helps one to increasingly appreciate God and all truth;
- ❖ Reasoning (*i.e.*, thinking deeply) ignites a burning hunger to know more truth.

¹ <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/05/28/about-the-temperaments-part-xxii-how-to-order-our-loves-so-we-can-use-the-passion-of-fear-properly/>

Because of these great benefits, Satan makes every effort to distract people from using their intellects.

Sin Depends Upon the Abuse of Reason

Sin occurs when man does not use his reason for the purpose that God intended and when he puts reason's admonitions aside (*viz.*, his conscience) and consents to evil. Of course, the devil wants people to commit sins. Satan's goal is the downfall of souls. He seeks sin because he knows that every sin is a step closer to his goal of bringing another soul to damn itself.

Satan strives to weaken man's power of reasoning and to induce him to abandon the proper use of his reason. The old proverb is true, "If you don't use it, you lose it." Hence, when a man begins to reason less, he will soon form the habit of ***not*** reasoning well. Then, he will become progressively inclined to not think of the consequences of his actions, which, in turn, leads him to live more and more by his emotions. He will weigh things only based on how he ***feels, or worse yet, upon the yearnings of his base passions.*** . Hence, his life will become very unstable, unreasonable, and disorderly. In this way, he will increasingly lead a life of vice (as we will explain next).

Habits Can Be Stronger than Natural Tendencies

We have discussed how, with our fallen human nature, effort is needed to reason well. We weak humans are disinclined to make efforts. But we can develop good habits that can completely overcome those weaknesses and ill-directed tendencies. But for this to occur, we must work against these tendencies and force ourselves to make the effort to think and especially to think ***carefully.***

Habits are formed by repeated actions. Repeated bad actions form a bad habit, *i.e.*, a vice. By contrast, repeated good actions form a good habit, *i.e.*, a virtue. Consequently, it is crucial that we resolutely make every effort to develop patterns of good actions regardless of the "protests" of our passions and without "counting the cost" to our comfort, convenience, and human respect. In this way, we can foster good habits and a life of virtue.

The devil knows these truths about us humans and so he tempts us to give up trying to form good habits. The devil knows that God created an entire spectrum of souls – each soul having its own personal tendencies and inclinations. Thus, what we treat here is the devil's ***general*** plan of action to ruin souls. But he customizes his plan to fit each individual, tailoring his temptations and tantalizing each with a "particular individualized mix" of allurements and fears through which he strives for that individual's ruin.

Three Things the Devil Does Not Want Us to Know: 1) God; 2) Ourselves; and 3) the Purpose for Which We Were Created.

Knowing God. The devil knows the truths about filial love and deep thinking that we considered above. The devil does not want us to think about **God**. He does not want us to know God and His Divine attributes. This is because the more we know God, the more we will be drawn to love Him (since He is perfectly loveable) and to unselfishly serve Him. Because the devil hates God as well as us humans, he works against us because he does not want us to have an intimate friendship with God.

Knowing Ourselves. The devil does not want us to know **ourselves**. True self-knowledge fosters humility and consequently fosters a love of God. Indeed, the devil wants the exact opposite of this. That is, the devil wants us to be full of pride, having an inaccurate and inflated opinion of ourselves, and to hate God. Satan wants us to pamper ourselves and make efforts only to have a life of pleasure, comfort, and honor because these pursuits will lead us to a life of vice – and ultimately to perdition.

Knowing Our End. The devil does not want us to know **the purpose of our existence**. Knowing our final end will foster a healthy respect for God and fear of the Lord, which in turn, will foster filial love of God. The devil does all he can to distract our thoughts from God. One of the devil's major strategies is to encourage us to be as selfish as possible. Selfishness leads to a life of wretchedness which naturally will lead to sorrow at the spiritual good of any virtue – which is sloth (as we saw in our last lesson).² Because sloth makes a soul reluctant to begin doing any good, one does not feel inclined to *even begin* making any effort to amend himself. The devil can easily convince a soul in this sorry state that, indeed, it cannot change. The devil tells this soul that it simply cannot avoid being the way that it is and that it is useless to try to improve itself.

If We Fail to Know Either God, or Ourselves, or Our End, then the Devil Has Succeeded

The devil knows that all it takes for a soul to be lost is to lose knowledge of *even one* of these three, although often, when a soul is ignorant of one of these, it is also ignorant of one or both of the others. Thus, the devil wages his attacks on the soul to bring that soul to become ignorant of *at least one* of these.

God, ourselves, and our End: these three critical areas of knowledge influence everything in our lives because our relationship with God and our neighbor depends on this

² Read this article: *Mary's School of Sanctity – Lesson #58 – About the Temperaments Part XXIII – Explanation of Sloth in Order to Analyze This Snare of Satan and to Combat Him*: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/06/26/about-the-temperaments-part-xxiii-explanation-of-sloth-in-order-to-analyze-this-snare-of-satan/>

knowledge. In particular, on these three truths depends our willingness to be generous with God and our neighbor.

Charity is necessary for Divine friendship, and indeed, charity *is* Divine friendship.³ Further, charity is necessary for salvation.⁴ So we can readily see how Satan wants charity to grow cold and to die in us. In fact, Satan would never want charity to exist in us at all!

So the devil likes to use the weapon of sloth and to subtly weaken souls to bring them to this vice because ***sloth is a vice particularly opposed to charity***.⁵ The devil knows that persons of all temperaments have the wounds of Original Sin and so can be steadily drawn to laxity in the moral life.

But where does the devil start in his attempts to wear down the soul? Most commonly, he targets a person's prayer life because:

Prayer is the lifeblood of the spiritual life.⁶

Prayer is a tremendous source of strength and spiritual growth in the soul. Prayer fosters 1) our filial love; 2) deep and careful thinking; and 3) the three kinds of necessary knowledge (discussed above). Also, these, in turn, reciprocally foster our prayer life and praying well.

³ For a further explanation of this truth that charity is Divine Friendship, read this article: <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/06/04/sanctifying-grace-companion-charity/>

⁴ Here is how St. Thomas Aquinas, greatest Doctor of the Church, teaches this truth, following and quoting St. Augustine:

Whosoever does not possess charity is wicked, because “this gift alone of the Holy Ghost distinguishes the children of the kingdom from the children of perdition”.

Summa, IIa IIae, Q.178, a.2, *sed contra*, quoting St. Augustine's treatise on the Blessed Trinity, *De Trinitate*, bk.15, ch.18.

⁵ Here is one way St. Thomas teaches this truth: “Sorrow because of the Divine good about which charity rejoices, belongs to a special vice, which is called sloth.” *Summa*, IIa IIae, Q.35, a.2, *Respondeo*.

⁶ Read these articles about the importance of prayer and how to pray well:

† <https://catholiccandle.org/2024/08/10/cc-in-brief-essence-of-prayer/>

† <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/12/11/are-you-in-desolation-stuck-in-a-rut-making-no-spiritual-progress/>

But how do we pray well and counteract the devil's attacks on our prayer life?

A Preview...

In our next lesson we will analyze the devil's tactics to destroy our prayer life (and so also, the rest of our spiritual life). In that lesson, we will consider the importance of knowing ourselves and finding effective ways to counteract the devil's tricks regarding prayer.



The 2026 SSPX Consecrations Do Not Change the Fact that ...

The SSPX is Still Liberal!

Most of the Catholic world has heard the news that the SSPX consecrated four new bishops on July 1st, 2026, in Ecône, Switzerland.

We at *Catholic Candle* are concerned that even many Catholics who consider themselves Traditional and have tried not to compromise, may perhaps be confused or even deceived by these new consecrations. Some people might argue thus: *"After all, does not the Catholic world desperately need more Traditional Catholic bishops? There is a great shortage of bishops who are Latin-Mass and non-liberal. At least these consecrations were a wonderful thing!"* Indeed, the "conservative" media, the friends of the "new" SSPX (such as *LifeSiteNews*) are ablaze with stories and coverage supporting the consecrations.

Further, some might even take a stronger position, something like this: "Rome is clearly even more evil and modernist today than it was in 1988 under Pope John Paul II. So these new consecrations are not only justified, but they are a *sure sign that the SSPX has given up its decades of past liberalism, has given up trying to make a practical deal with modernist unconverted Rome, and has regained the no-nonsense attitude of Archbishop Lefebvre near the end of his life. Since this is the case, maybe we should consider attending the SSPX again.*"

Below is a two-part article which will show these above conclusions to be great mistakes. Here is a summary:

PART ONE We will begin with a brief reminder of the critical lessons Archbishop Lefebvre learned in dealing with conciliar Rome and the modernist popes, and his resulting militant but charitable mindset and convictions.

PART TWO: Then we will contrast Archbishop Lefebvre’s wise approach in the final years of his life with the behavior and words of the “new” SSPX leaders beginning after Archbishop Lefebvre died, and continuing to the present. We will see that the SSPX’s serious liberalism continues *up to the present time* (2026).

CONCLUSION: Thus the “new” SSPX is still a liberal organization. Those who have remained in the “new” SSPX until now, over 14 years since the scandals became plain to see (in 2012), are condoning and supporting the SSPX liberalism. But consecrating new bishops in 2026 (who are themselves liberal) on behalf of a liberal organization – far from helping – only makes that liberal organization more likely to continue, and to continue to attack Genuine Catholic Tradition. Thus the 2026 consecrations themselves are the acts of liberals promoting their own liberal group. Nobody should think the SSPX has “turned around” just because there are new bishops. Much less should anyone think it is safe to return to the SSPX.

(In a future article, *Catholic Candle* will show that the SSPX has for years been continually eroding the central argument and justification for its own continued existence: the state of necessity and supplied jurisdiction. The issue of this erosion is important, and closely related to this present article.)

PART ONE: Archbishop Lefebvre Learned Lessons and Gained Wisdom

In any father-son relationship, it would be very difficult and painful for the son to see his father do and say evil and deranged things. Yet it would be very unlikely that a 16-year old son would suddenly “move out of his father’s home” the first time his father comes home stone-cold drunk and starts throwing furniture around. Rather, the loving son would likely retain hope through even more of such episodes and dangers, not only defending himself each time, but trying over and over again to help his father to see clearly afterwards. Things would likely continue this way until the son’s very life was threatened, and/or that son’s hope and trust in the father’s recovery all but disappeared. At that point, the son would realize – for his own sake – that *he must remove* himself from the *practical control* of the father by placing physical distance between them. Moving out would, of course, not mean the son thinks that his father no longer has any authority over him. Rather, the son moves out simply because he sees he must not allow that dangerous father to put him (the son) in practical danger by allowing him to misuse his authority through evil actions, commands, and bad examples.

The case of Archbishop Lefebvre and the conciliar popes is similar to this illustration, ***but is incomparably more serious***. With the drunk father, it was just the son, and just his *bodily* life in danger. But with the conciliar popes, it is the entire human element of the Church put in danger, and not merely bodily, but put in danger of losing their immortal souls for all eternity. For at least the drunk father never sat down and insisted his son

also get drunk and sin. But that is just what modernist Rome has done to the human element of the Church for 60+ years, attempting to make Catholics accept the heretical documents of Vatican II,⁷ the new mass, and all the other rotten fruits of Vatican II.

During the Second Vatican Council and all through the 1970s and 1980s, Archbishop Lefebvre was amazed at the innumerable and shocking scandals of the modernist popes (most notably Popes Paul VI and John Paul II). These popes were methodically implementing what Vatican II taught. Archbishop Lefebvre saw that these popes were clearly “stone-cold drunk” (as it were) with modernism, and that they demanded that the entire Church believe the same things. Archbishop Lefebvre tried in true charity for many years to help these popes (and modernist Roman clergy) and to protect the true Traditional Catholic Faith. He met numerous times with them and wrote many letters, hoping they would come to see reason and clear Traditional Catholic doctrine.

A Critical Turning Point for Archbishop Lefebvre

But – and here is the key point: eventually, he came to the firm conclusion that, just as was true of Pope Paul VI before him, Pope John Paul II and his staff also **were completely unreceptive to the truth. Instead, they were firmly and hopelessly committed not only to the heretical and deadly documents of Vatican II, but also to the destruction of virtually all that is good and holy in the Church.**

Traditional Catholics could never over-emphasize the importance of this “ah-ha!” moment – this tremendous grace in which Archbishop Lefebvre saw that he should never again work with Rome until it converts. **The entire Church (including each of us) has been the beneficiary of his discovery and subsequent resolve.** He summed up his more guarded, wiser mindset in a number of interviews. First, let’s consider the interview given shortly after the 1988 consecrations, including these famous words which we would all do well to memorize:

“Interviewer: ... What do you think of a possible re-opening of the dialogue with Rome?

⁷ All of the documents of Vatican II are evil and they contain hundreds of heresies. See, e.g., Vatican II’s promoting religious liberty in contradiction to the infallible teaching of the Church. See, e.g., <https://catholiccandle.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Errors-of-Dignitatis-Humanae.pdf>

See also:

- ❖ <https://catholiccandle.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Lumen-Gentium-Annotated.pdf>
- ❖ <https://catholiccandle.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/The-Errors-of-Optatam-Totius.pdf>

Archbishop Lefebvre: We [Rome and I] do not have the same outlook on a reconciliation. Cardinal Ratzinger sees it as reducing us, bringing us back to Vatican II. We see it as a return of Rome to Tradition. We don't agree; it is a dialogue of death. I can't speak much of the future, mine is behind me, but if I live a little while, supposing that Rome calls for a renewed dialogue, then, **I will put conditions. I shall not accept being in the position where I was put during the [early 1988] dialogue. No more. I will place the discussion at the doctrinal level** [saying the following to the pope, if he asks the SSPX to return to talks]: “Do you agree with the great encyclicals of all the popes who preceded you? Do you agree with *Quanta Cura* of Pius IX, *Immortale Dei* and *Libertas* of Leo XIII, *Pascendi Gregis* of Pius X, *Quas Primas* of Pius XI, *Humani Generis* of Pius XII? Are you in full communion with these Popes and their teachings? Do you still accept the entire Anti-Modernist Oath? Are you in favor of the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ? **If you do not accept the doctrine of your predecessors, it is useless to talk!** As long as you do not accept the correction of the Council, in consideration of the doctrine of these Popes, your predecessors, no dialogue is possible. It is useless.” Thus, the positions will be clear. ... **What opposes us is doctrine; it is clear.**”⁸

A few notes on the above quote:

- Archbishop Lefebvre did not make this decision merely because he was “tired of these talks” or from some other personal motive of inconvenience or temporal concern. Rather, he did so because he realized that it is deadly, when dealing with a smooth-talking and tricky enemy, to continue “rubbing elbows” and engaging in dialogue. We must remember that just about any of us would be quite nervous and unable to think clearly if we ourselves were sitting in the office of the most powerful man on earth, the Vicar of Christ (yes, even the destroyer-popes), surrounded by the top Vatican officials. Our filial fear of our father would be present.

On top of that, these Roman diplomats are very experienced with words and pressure techniques. For proof of how dangerous it is to talk with the modernist Romans, consider this: During the talks, Rome at one point even convinced Archbishop Lefebvre himself to put his signature on a deadly practical agreement which would have proven a death-warrant for the SSPX and all of Catholic

⁸ *Archbishop Lefebvre And The Vatican*, interview of Archbishop Lefebvre given to *Fideliter Magazine*, November-December 1988 (emphasis added; bracketed words added for clarity). This interview is found here: <https://www.sspxasia.com/Documents/Archbishop-Lefebvre/Archbishop Lefebvre and the Vatican/Part II/1988-11.htm>

Tradition.⁹ Through a great grace no doubt, he quickly realized his grave mistake, and rescinded his agreement the next day.

- In the quote above, Archbishop Lefebvre used the conciliar-invented and nonsensical phrase “full communion”. He did so not because he really thought there exists such a distinction as “full” and “partial” communion with the Church (he explicitly denied that many times). Instead, he quotes that phrase to the Romans as a sort of tongue-in-cheek technique, using the conciliar popes’ own terminology against them (to help them, not to hurt them).

The same point is drawn out even more explicitly in another interview Archbishop Lefebvre gave a few months later:

- ❖ “They have to stop with their ecumenism; they have to bring back the true meaning of the Mass, restore the true definition of the Church, bring back the Catholic meaning of collegiality, and so on. I expect from them a Catholic, and not a liberal, definition of religious liberty. They must accept the encyclical *Quas Primas* on Christ the King, and the Syllabus [of Pope Pius IX]. They must accept all this, because this is, from now on, the condition determining all new discussions between us and them.”¹⁰
- ❖ “If ever there were a willingness from Rome to resume discussions, this time, I will be the one to set down the conditions. As Cardinal Oddi said, ‘Archbishop Lefebvre is in a strong position.’”¹¹

One might object: “Good heavens, Your Excellency, how in the world is Rome ever going to convert if we Catholics refuse to talk with them and convince them of their errors?” Archbishop Lefebvre certainly did not accept this naïve reasoning (which he knew some of his priests held). In an interview, he reminded us all of the important truth that, “***It is not the subjects that make the superiors, but the superiors who make the subjects.***”¹² Besides, he came to realize that modernism is such a fatal disease that Rome could only be converted by Our Lord’s power and grace obtained by the intercession of Our Lady. Besides, Rome already had all the documents it needed at its fingertips, all the persuasion given in the countless previous meetings and letters from Archbishop

⁹ In early May, 1988, he signed a sort of “truce” and practical agreement with Pope John Paul II (the “May 5th Protocol”). This agreement would have placed the SSPX under the practical control of unconverted Rome, allowing Rome to provide a replacement bishop and set up a sort of official structure for the SSPX within the conciliar church.

¹⁰ Interview in *Controverses* Magazine, 1988 (bracketed words added for clarity).

¹¹ Interview in *Controverses* Magazine, 1988.

¹² *The Protocol of Agreement? No!* (Fideliter, 1988, emphasis added).

Lefebvre himself. Clearly no human means worked in his attempts to convert his superior, the pope.

Archbishop Lefebvre followed up with more interviews and statements, emphasizing how bad it would be to “make a deal” with modernist Rome, stating:

- “*It is dangerous to put oneself into the hands of the conciliar bishops and Modernist Rome. It is the greatest danger threatening our people. If we have struggled for twenty years to avoid the conciliar errors, **it was not in order, now, to put ourselves into the hands of those professing these errors.***”¹³
- “It is, therefore, a strict duty for every priest wanting to remain Catholic to separate himself from this conciliar church for as long as it does not rediscover the Tradition of the Church and of the Catholic Faith.”¹⁴
- “***The See of Peter and the posts of authority in Rome are being occupied by anti-Christ.***”¹⁵
- “We must no longer engage in dialogue with the Roman authorities. They only want to bring us back to the [Vatican II] Council; we must have no dealings with them.”¹⁶

Take good note how Archbishop Lefebvre does not shrink from using the strongest of terms such as ‘antichrist’. This is to teach us just how dangerous modernist Rome is, as well as to show the Romans themselves *true charity* by telling them the great danger they are in. Keep this in mind when we consider the “new” SSPX’s words below.

Archbishop Lefebvre’s Reaction to the (Supposed) 1988 “Excommunications”

In June 1988, Archbishop Lefebvre consecrated four new bishops for the SSPX. Pope John Paul II, claiming Archbishop Lefebvre’s act was disobedient and schismatic, almost instantly “excommunicated” Archbishop Lefebvre as well as the other bishops who were involved in the consecrations. It is not the intention of this article to dispel the myth that there was any validity to the purported excommunications. There are many good articles

¹³ Archbishop Lefebvre, Interview, *Fideliter*, 1989 (emphasis added).

¹⁴ *Spiritual Journey*, by Archbishop Lefebvre, ch.3.

¹⁵ Archbishop Lefebvre, Letter to his four future bishops, Aug 29, 1987 (emphasis added).

¹⁶ Interview in *Controverses Magazine*, 1988 (bracketed words added for clarity; emphasis added).

which prove conclusively that Pope John Paul II's action was unjust, invalid, and of no effect.¹⁷

For our purposes here, let us focus on how Archbishop Lefebvre *reacted* to the fictitious excommunications. Keeping this in mind will help us to assess the current situation of the “new” SSPX. Here are Archbishop Lefebvre's words:

- “We are convinced that all these accusations of which we are the object, **all these penalties of which we are the object, are null, absolutely null! ... We take no account of them at all.**”¹⁸
- In July, 1988 – one month after the consecrations, Archbishop Lefebvre paraphrased Rome's words and his response to Rome: “[Rome:] Since you don't want to come with us, we excommunicate you.’ [Archbishop Lefebvre:] ‘Very well. Thank you. **We prefer to be excommunicated.** We do not want to participate in this shocking work in the Church that has been carried out in the last 20 years.”¹⁹
- Archbishop Lefebvre knew the “excommunications” came from a pope acting on behalf of a new church (the conciliar church) and new religion (the conciliar religion), which were born during Vatican II. Here is his explanation: “But the Church [acting] against her past and her Tradition is not the Catholic Church; **this is why being excommunicated by a liberal, ecumenical, and revolutionary Church is a matter of indifference to us.**”²⁰

But it was not just Archbishop Lefebvre who alone had this spirit and correct thinking. *All the top leadership of the SSPX worldwide also saw the truth and had the correct militant Catholic attitude at that time.* In a 1988 letter to Cardinal Gantin, Fr. Franz Schmidberger (the Superior General of the SSPX) and all the District Superiors, Seminary Rectors, and Superiors of Autonomous Houses of the SSPX worldwide all asked Rome to also be “excommunicated” alongside Archbishop Lefebvre and the newly-consecrated bishops, so little did these SSPX leaders care about such an apparent “stain”. They wanted to help souls to see how evil Rome was, to show the unanimity of the top

¹⁷ For one analysis of this issue, read this article: <https://catholiccandle.org/2026/03/10/since-pope-john-paul-ii-was-a-real-pope-was-archbishop-lefebvre-was-excommunicated/>

¹⁸ Sermon at the Episcopal Consecrations, June 30, 1988 (emphasis added).

¹⁹ *Fideliter* Magazine, issue 65, 1988 (emphasis added; bracketed words added to show context).

²⁰ Words of Archbishop Lefebvre, quoted from *The Biography of Marcel Lefebvre* by Bishop Bernard Tissier, Kansas City, Missouri: Angelus Press, 2004, pp. 547 (emphasis added; bracketed word added for clarity).

SSPX leadership, and most importantly, to show Catholics what they should do if the shepherd turns into a wolf. Here is what they wrote to Rome:

[W]e have never wished to belong to this system which calls itself the Conciliar Church, and defines itself with the *Novus Ordo Missæ*, an ecumenism which leads to indifferentism and the laicization of all society. Yes, we have no part, *nullam partem habemus*, with the pantheon of the religions of Assisi; **our own excommunication by a decree of Your Eminence or of another Roman Congregation would only be the irrefutable proof of this.** We ask for nothing better than to be declared out of communion with this adulterous spirit which has been blowing in the Church for the last 25 years; we ask for nothing better than to be declared outside of this impious communion of the ungodly. We believe in the One God, Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and we will always remain faithful to His unique Spouse, the One Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church ... **To be therefore publicly associated with the sanction** [*i.e.*, “excommunications”] **which strikes the six²¹ Catholic bishops**, defenders of the faith in its integrity and totality, **would be for us** [*i.e.*, the other top SSPX leadership] **a mark of honor and a sign of orthodoxy before the faithful.**²²

While Archbishop Lefebvre was alive, the (old and good) SSPX was at its height. This was especially glorious in the 1980s and 1990s. There was a worldwide and consistent fighting spirit across the SSPX.²³ Its media outlets, pulpits, magazines, books, and nascent websites consistently lit up in reaction to the scandals of Rome and the popes, exposing error, and teaching the opposing truths. It was a beautiful time most of us perhaps took for granted.

Archbishop Lefebvre died in March, 1991, just a few years after providing the Church four new bishops in what he called “Operation Survival”.

Let us recall critical truths here, to prepare for PART TWO of this article:

²¹ Besides Archbishop Lefebvre and the four newly-consecrated bishops, this sixth bishop referred to here was Archbishop Antonio de Castro Mayer, bishop of the diocese of Campos, Brazil. He was faithful to Catholic Tradition, was co-consecrator of these new bishops, and died in April, 1991, exactly one month after Archbishop Lefebvre died.

²² *Open Letter to Cardinal Gantin, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops* from the worldwide SSPX superiors, July 6, 1988 (emphasis added; bracketed words added to show context), published here: https://www.sspxasia.com/Documents/Archbishop-Lefebvre/Archbishop_Lefebvre_and_the_Vatican/Part_I/1988-07-06.htm

²³ In spite of imperfections, some internal scandals, and a great number of defections of priests to the conciliar church, to sedevacantism, and so on.

- Until his dying breath, Archbishop Lefebvre never once spoke with regret of the consecrations;
- Nor did he express any fear of the supposed excommunications. Rather, he spoke about them with disdain.
- Nor did he take back his words that he would never again deal with Rome until Rome converted.

Conclusion of PART ONE: Archbishop Lefebvre’s actions and words were a critical guidepost for us all, showing his fellow Catholics these critical lessons of how to act and think in this crisis:

1. Be confident that it is we, not Rome, that has Catholic Tradition.
2. We should not fear or be pressured into compromise in response to the “scare tactics” from Rome or one’s own local conciliar “bishop”;
3. And perhaps the most important practical lesson: **It is hopeless, vain, and dangerous to “talk” with superiors who do not want to profess the Catholic Truth.** They will “convert” us to their errors, rather than we converting them.

Keep these truths in mind as we now assess the “new” SSPX in 2026.

PART TWO: The SSPX After Archbishop Lefebvre

In the above review, we saw that:

1. Archbishop Lefebvre learned the critical lesson that there should be no dialogue about a practical agreement with unconverted Rome;
2. He completely disregarded Rome’s unjust punishments; and
3. He had no intention whatsoever of placing the (then-good) SSPX into the hands of unconverted Rome.

That review was **necessary** in order to correctly analyze the modern-day SSPX, including the July, 2026 consecrations.

But just talking about 1988 and Archbishop Lefebvre is **not enough** to be able to assess the situation of the current-day SSPX. We must undertake a mini-review of what happened to the SSPX beginning after Archbishop Lefebvre died, and continuing to the present day. Sadly, the old SSPX under its new leadership almost immediately commenced the 20+ year series of scandals which transformed it into the “new” SSPX we

see today.

Various Eras of SSPX Liberalism and Decay

1991 to 2012:

An important event took place in 1994: Bishop Bernard Fellay was elected Superior General, succeeding Fr. Franz Schmidberger. This was an immediate bad sign, for the Archbishop had not thought electing an SSPX bishop as superior of the SSPX was necessary, and in fact, in the 1988 consecrations, he avoided doing this.²⁴

But more importantly, the SSPX's former zeal quickly began to fade. Soon after Bp. Fellay was elected, **the SSPX leaders quietly abandoned the wisdom of their founder and began secret talks with Rome with the specific intention of making a practical agreement with modernist, unconverted Rome.**²⁵

Beginning almost imperceptibly, the SSPX's media outlets and pulpits soon became more and more quiet and less militant about the errors of Vatican II, the conciliar Revolution, and the popes' scandals.

²⁴ https://sspx.org/en/news/archbishop-lefebvres-apostolic-journey-part-2-58917?utm_source=chatgpt.com and

"Moreover, he carefully avoided consecrating the Superior General of the Society at the time, namely Father Schmidberger, to demonstrate this simple role of auxiliaries to the new bishops, who have no governing power."

SSPX statement quoted here: https://mukwonago.wi.sspix.org/en/news/archbishop-lefebvres-consecrations-sspx-video-lesson-59723?utm_source=chatgpt.com

²⁵ Here is a brief description of the secret meetings between representatives of modernist Rome and the liberalizing leaders of the SSPX after Archbishop Lefebvre's death: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_for_Reflection_among_Catholics

Here is the lengthy eyewitness account of one of the participants in these dialogues (after Archbishop Lefebvre's death) seeking this practical agreement between modernist Rome and the "new" SSPX: <https://www.mollat.com/livres/681107/michel-lelong-pour-la-necessaire-reconciliation-le-groupe-de-reflexion-entre-catholiques-grec>

We know about these secret dialogues because this (conciliar) participant decided to publish his memoirs. The SSPX would have preferred to keep these dialogues secret because the SSPX leadership correctly understood that Traditional Catholics would be alarmed by these scandalous negotiations.

This softening was no accident: the SSPX was doing two things:

1. It was positioning itself to be less offensive and more “loyal” to the pope. The “new” SSPX hoped to please modernist Rome so that the SSPX could obtain a practical agreement with Rome. It is awkward and uncomfortable to attack Rome while engaging in “dialogue” seeking favors from it.
2. It was painting those same modernist popes in a better light in order to weaken the resistance of some of its own priests and laymen to making a deal with Rome.

In 2006, Bishop Fellay was re-elected as Superior General for another twelve years – and this would virtually ensure the death of the “old” SSPX, as we will now see.

2012 to 2018:

These seven years produced a Mount Everest-sized heap of shocking scandals. For our purposes here, we will give a brief history and just mention a few of those scandals.

In the summer of 2012, the world suddenly learned about some of the fruits of Bishop Fellay’s years of secret maneuverings and betrayals – which had hitherto been known only to those directly involved. In what is perhaps the biggest SSPX scandal ever, Bishop Fellay gave Pope Benedict a shocking proposal (the “2012 Doctrinal Declaration”). In this document, Bp. Fellay asked Rome to grant the SSPX certain gifts. One of these was that Rome would “lift the 1988 excommunications.” This was a scandal in itself (remember the first part of this article) as is evident from Archbishop Lefebvre and all of the SSPX leadership (at the time) considering it a badge of honor to be “excommunicated” from the conciliar church. Heretofore, Archbishop Lefebvre and the SSPX superiors in 1988 never considered those “excommunications” as real, and they certainly never asked for them to be rescinded. But in 2012, Bishop Fellay promised that, if Rome would “lift the excommunications”, then the SSPX would agree to officially accept the documents of Vatican II as reconcilable with Tradition (which was truly an impossibility), and to accept the new mass and the new Canon “law” as legitimate (which was impossible because evil things such as these could never be legitimate).

It became clearer and clearer that Bishop Fellay had, for many years, had his sights on a deal with Rome at all costs. The whole Traditional world was shocked and many good priests and faithful left the SSPX. In fact, some (but certainly not all) of the SSPX leadership reacted strongly, as shown in a very revealing internal letter leaked to the public in 2012. This letter was written by the other three bishops consecrated in 1988 (Bishops Williamson, Tissier, and Galarreta) to Bishop Fellay. In it, they pleaded with him to stop his destruction and suicide mission of talking with Rome, and instead to follow Archbishop Lefebvre’s wise principle: ***no practical agreement or talks with modernist, unconverted Rome***. Bishop Fellay ruthlessly shut down those three

bishops, painting them as sedevacantists and lacking Faith.²⁶ This was the last significant defense of Archbishop Lefebvre’s policy and of Tradition we would ever hear from Bishops Tissier and Galarreta, for they soon afterwards became insignificant “yes men”, rubber-stamping all that Bishop Fellay did and said.

Shocking SSPX scandals continued at an alarming rate, not only from Bp. Fellay but from many district superiors and articles from the SSPX outlets. These scandals are well-documented in various *Catholic Candle* articles²⁷, but here are a few reminders:

- The “new” SSPX recast the conciliar revolutionaries and destroyers as being “victims” of Vatican II²⁸ and says that the conciliar barbarians including Pope Francis “abide in the truth”.²⁹
- The slide continued in countless ways. The “new” SSPX followed the conciliar church by:
 - Calling heretics by the name “Christian”.³⁰
 - Calling those persons who died for their heretical false faith by the name “martyr”.³¹
 - Declaring that we must continually change.³²

²⁶ This exchange of letters was made public by an SSPX priest who was alarmed by these compromises of Bishop Fellay.

²⁷ For an incomplete but longer catalogue of SSPX liberalism, go to <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/#gsc.tab=0> and click on the SSPX button.

²⁸ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-conciliars-victims> (2015).

²⁹ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/2014-01-14-bp-fellay-ltr> (2014).

³⁰ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-ecumenism-heretics-martyrs> (2015) & <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-calls-heretics-christian> (2015).

³¹ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-ecumenism-heretics-martyrs> (2015).

³² <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-simoulin-challenge-answered> (2015). Quoting SSPX leader Fr. Niklaus Pfluger interview published in the SSPX magazine, *Der Gerade Weg*.

- Contradicting infallible Catholic teaching that the Jews committed Deicide.³³

➤ The “new” SSPX:

- Softened its position on the new mass.³⁴
- Shifted its emphasis from fighting doctrinal errors to instead focus on the Latin Mass “culture”.³⁵
- Began saying kind and soft things about Vatican II.³⁶

This period of years beginning roughly in 2012 commenced a new direction – a new marketing ploy in which the “new” SSPX continued to have doctrinal articles but those were largely in a liberal direction. Thus, there were a great many statements of the “new” SSPX proving its liberalism. But gradually the “new” SSPX began to avoid doctrinal matters in general because they were too controversial. Instead the “new” SSPX focused on positive, “happy” things such as:

- Promoting gratitude to its own elderly priests;
- Promoting its own confirmations, pilgrimages, camps, and (watered-down) retreats;
- Promoting the beauty of the Mass;
- Recounting the lives of the saints;
- Giving a pious thought for each day or explanation of the Gospel;
- Promoting cultural articles about Catholic art and music; and
- Discussions – usually from conciliar “conservatives” of political news in the Church.

³³ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/2014-01-14-bp-fellay-ltr> (2014).

³⁴ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-softer-new-mass> (2014) & <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-simoulin-challenge-answered> (2016).

³⁵ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-focus-on-mass> (2014).

³⁶ <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/sspx-simoulin-challenge-answered> (2016).

As explained by Fr. Jergen Wegner, who was then U.S. District Superior of the SSPX:

A final characteristic of the new style is its positivity. Devoid of any aggressive and imposing elements, we are committed to avoiding unnecessary polemics ... primarily we want to stand out by positive reporting³⁷

All such “happy” published material avoids controversy and avoids alienating modernist Rome.

There is so much more SSPX liberalism we could catalogue. For an incomplete but longer catalogue of SSPX liberalism, go to <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/#gsc.tab=0> and click on the SSPX button.

Many priests and laymen who had left the SSPX had all they could do at that time, writing article after article to warn others. The “new” SSPX eventually expelled the last bishop who was speaking out against its liberalism: Bishop Williamson, who, although he could correctly see Bishop Fellay’s errors, could apparently not see the many serious problems of his own – problems which are documented in many *Catholic Candle* articles.³⁸

2018 – 2026:

On July 11, 2018, during the 4th General Chapter at Écône, Switzerland, Fr. Davide Pagliarani was elected as the new Superior General of the SSPX for a 12-year term (2018–2030). Some faithful did not know that Fr. Pagliarani had for years been Bishop Fellay’s “right hand man” and had been ordained a priest by him. Thus some folks held out the vain hope that there would now be a return to the “old SSPX” since Bp. Fellay was now no longer superior general.

Scandals of the “New” SSPX Under Fr. Pagliarani

Why the “New” SSPX Perhaps Now Merely APPEARS More Conservative Than in Past Years

One way to categorize scandals is whether they are commissions (things said and done) or omissions (things not said or done). During Bishop Fellay’s 24-year tenure, we saw

³⁷ Quoted from *The Last Word*, published in the January/February 2012 *Angelus* magazine.

³⁸ For an incomplete but lengthy catalogue of the liberalism and errors of Bishop Williamson and his group, go to <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/#gsc.tab=0> and click on the Bishop Williamson button.

countless scandals of both kinds, which caused many good priests and faithful to leave the SSPX.

Let us now examine both the commissions and omissions during Fr. Pagliarani's tenure from 2018 to 2026. This will "put the nail in the coffin" to the myth that the "new" SSPX has "turned around".

We will begin with the commissions because we want to leave the end of this article to expose the more difficult-to-detect omissions.

1. Scandalous Commissions Under Fr. Pagliarani

During Fr. Pagliarani's tenure (2018 to the present 2026), there perhaps have not been as many commissions. (The *Catholic Candle* team stopped carefully watching and analyzing the "new" SSPX liberalism at some point around 2017; so we do not have as thorough a list as we would like to provide.) Nevertheless, there have been enough to scandalize faithful and informed Catholics. *Catholic Candle* posted an article in March of 2025 entitled, *21 Examples of Liberalism in the "New" SSPX*.³⁹ The "new" liberal SSPX has never publicly retracted any of this liberalism, as is their duty.⁴⁰

The "new" SSPX under Fr. Pagliarani has added the following additional scandals:

1. The SSPX previously taught the truth that the rubella vaccine and other vaccines developed through abortion are ***always*** sinful. By contrast, the "new" SSPX under Fr. Pagliarani 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. The SSPX's new position is wrong, liberal, and contradicts its own prior teaching on vaccines developed through abortion.⁴¹
2. The "new" SSPX, rather than putting Bishop Fellay somewhere he can do no more damage, has instead retained him in an important role of SSPX leadership – that of First Counsellor General of the SSPX General Council. This shows the

³⁹ <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/03/10/21-examples-of-liberalism-in-the-new-sspx/>

⁴⁰ Read an analysis of this duty here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2020/01/01/duty-to-publicly-correct-our-public-scandals-even-those-we-caused-innocently/>

⁴¹ For an analysis of why it is a mortal sin to use an abortion-tainted vaccine, read this article: <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/01/01/reject-the-covid-vaccines/>

This article also quotes and analyzes the SSPX's old, traditional position and its more recent liberal position on abortion-tainted vaccines.

continuation of the liberalism that Bp. Fellay promoted.

3. The “new” SSPX under Fr. Pagliarani has for years now had deals in place with modernist conciliar ‘bishops’ to use diocesan conciliar buildings in which to pray and say Mass. For example, a conciliar “bishop” in Fribourg, Switzerland had granted the “new” SSPX permissions to use certain “sacred” buildings of his diocese, and the “new” SSPX began taking advantage of those permissions as far back as 2019.⁴² But that same “bishop” withdrew those permissions in July, 2026, in response to the “new” SSPX’s consecrations.⁴³ Multiple *Catholic Candle* articles have shown that there are many reasons why it is a great evil and scandal to use the buildings of the conciliar Revolution, including that sacrileges regularly take place in those buildings, and the danger to the Faith of those who enter and pray in those buildings.⁴⁴
4. The “new” SSPX now promotes the false conciliar “apparition” at Akita, Japan.⁴⁵
5. The “new” liberal SSPX promotes conciliar “saints” and the conciliar “canonization” processes, e.g., of Annella Zervas⁴⁶, an American nun who is currently being promoted in the conciliar church’s processes for “canonization”, and for whom the conciliar church appointed a woman postulator.⁴⁷

⁴² https://www.lifesitenews.com/analysis/swiss-bishop-revokes-permission-for-sspx-to-use-diocesan-churches/?utm_source=daily-2026-07-15&utm_medium=email

⁴³ https://www.lifesitenews.com/analysis/swiss-bishop-revokes-permission-for-sspx-to-use-diocesan-churches/?utm_source=daily-2026-07-15&utm_medium=email

⁴⁴ See these articles:

- The “New” SSPX Promotes the Evil of Going into Conciliar Churches to Pray during the “Holy Year”: <https://catholiccandle.org/2025/04/23/the-new-sspx-promotes-praying-in-conciliar-churches-during-the-holy-year/>
- <https://catholiccandle.org/2020/04/01/the-n-sspx-urges-its-followers-to-join-the-pope-praying-with-false-anti-catholic-religions/>

⁴⁵ <https://catholiccandle.org/?s=akita>

⁴⁶ See, the SSPX Sisters in Browerville describing their pilgrimage to her gravesite. This description is included in their Summer 2026 newsletter.

⁴⁷ <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2026-03/story-annella-zervas-examples-of-holiness-needed-close-to-home.html>

6. The “new” SSPX, (which Rome has once again declared to be “excommunicated” in 2026), has reacted to Rome’s decree of “excommunication” in a way that was **the very opposite of the militant and Catholic way Archbishop Lefebvre did in 1988**. We saw in the first part of this article multiple quotes from Archbishop Lefebvre and the top SSPX leaders that they considered the 1988 “excommunications” to be nothing, proclaiming them null and void, even proud to have received them. Further, Archbishop Lefebvre knew that the “excommunication” came not from the Catholic Church, but from the conciliar church: “This is why being excommunicated by a liberal, ecumenical, and revolutionary Church is a matter of indifference to us.”⁴⁸ By contrast, in July 2026, the “new” SSPX leaders even submitted a canonical appeal to Rome’s decree of excommunication. The “new” SSPX filed this request to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith on July 11, 2026, in an attempt to suspend and even stop the (supposed) legal force of Rome’s ruling of excommunication.⁴⁹ This legalistic approach is a scandal to Catholics:

- By doing this, the “new” SSPX implicitly denies the existence of the conciliar church, and instead, continues its pattern (for over 10 years) of not distinguishing the Catholic Church from the conciliar church.⁵⁰
- By doing this, the “new” SSPX implicitly denies that they are at war with modernist Rome – for enemies at war do not file legal petitions seeking the help of the enemy.
- Pope John Paul II’s horrific 1983 Code of Canon Law includes many evil precepts. But the “new” SSPX in this 2026 appeal process quotes and relies upon only the 1983 Code, and does so in perhaps the most official correspondence to date with Rome.⁵¹ This informs the world that it is okay to

⁴⁸ Words of Archbishop Lefebvre, quoted from *The Biography of Marcel Lefebvre* by Bishop Bernard Tissier, Kansas City, Missouri: Angelus Press, 2004, pp. 547.

⁴⁹ <https://fsspx.news/en/news/general-house-communique-society-files-recourse-against-decree-2-july-2026-60112>

⁵⁰ For a brief comparison of the true Catholic Church to the conciliar church, read this article: <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/10/03/the-devil-v-c-ii-the-conciliar-church/>

⁵¹ Archbishop Lefebvre signed the May 5th protocol and then rejected it the next day. In this bad protocol, he agreed to “respect” the 1983 Code of Canon Law. The (compromising) Fraternity of St. Peter’s protocol with Rome is worse: it states that the FSSP will “adhere” to the 1983 Code. But here in 2026, with this appeal, the “new” SSPX officially argues from the 1983 code with no disclaimers, as if they, like the Fraternity of St. Peter, fully accepted it, practically speaking.

use the terms and rules of the enemy, in order to get what you want.

7. The “new” SSPX under Fr. Pagliarani has continued to rely upon and has never rejected the faculties for confessions and marriages it received from Pope Francis under the tenure of Bishop Fellay.
8. The “new” SSPX under Bp. Fellay began calling the new mass “Holy Mass”.⁵² Now, under Fr. Pagliarani, the SSPX calls the Traditional Mass by its conciliar name, *viz.*, the “Extraordinary Form”⁵³

2. Scandalous Omissions Under Fr. Pagliarani

Omissions are by nature harder to recognize than commissions. For example, it is easy to spot the scandal of a priest who says in a sermon that “all religions are good and are willed by God.” Such things are even easier to spot if repeated over and over. (Hopefully, we would not keep coming back week after week to see if the priest did so!)

But the following is a rarer “catch”, for a hypothetical person to exclaim: “I just love Fr. Jones’ sermons – week after week he always talks about St. Thomas Aquinas, virtues, and charity. It is all so beautiful and inspiring. I feel like I am in heaven after I leave Church. (... long pause – grace enters in ...) *Hmmm.... But come to think of it, he rarely or even never talks about the errors of Vatican II that threaten us all, like Archbishop Lefebvre so frequently did...*” This person has correctly recognized a serious omission. This sort of “Aha! moment” is much rarer, again because it is harder to spot omissions in general, but also because most of us are not as vigilant as we should be. **All it takes for a person or parish to become liberal is to not regularly hear and be warned about those errors.**

Here is another thought experiment. Imagine that “Pope Pius XIII” is elected after Pope Leo XIV dies. Suppose on the good side, Pope Pius XIII commits no modernist scandals, states good general doctrine, and even commands all bishops and priests to allow the Tridentine Mass with no restrictions. In short, suppose he does no commissions to shock

⁵² See, *e.g.*, Bishop Fellay’s words here: <https://catholiccandle.neocities.org/priests/fellay-teaches-the-new-mass-is-good-and-holy>

⁵³ Fr. Pagliarani conference, September 2019, “The Confusion of the Church and the World at the Root of the Crisis”. Here is the quote: “The institutions and the religious communities who habitually celebrate the **extraordinary form** of the Mass have found true stability in number and life.” (Emphasis added.) Fr. Pagliarani’s words are quoted by the “new” SSPX at the following link:
http://www.angelusonline.org/index.php?section=articles&subsection=show_article&article_id=4242

even Traditional Catholic sensibilities. But suppose further that this pope says and writes absolutely nothing to explicitly condemn the previous 60+ years that elapsed since Vatican II – no condemnation of the rotten Vatican II documents themselves, no condemnation of the evil novus ordo rite of mass, and no condemnation of the infinitude of scandals of the modernist destroyer-popes that immediately preceded him, and so on. What should we think of this new pope? Is he a good pope? **He is not!** He is still a bad pope, because he is grossly negligent in his duty. Public scandals and problems must be corrected thoroughly, publicly, and as soon as possible, to avoid the loss of souls.⁵⁴ Imagine the confusion of Catholics under this pope's reign: "So what's the bottom line: Was Vatican II right in all its teachings, or were all the previous popes? Should I go to the new mass or the Tridentine mass? Both are allowed everywhere and are easy to find now." There would be countless other serious confusions, *e.g.*, about the New vs. the Old Canon Law, and so on.

First Omission Under Fr. Pagliarani: Failure to Correct Bishop Fellay's Scandals

Just as in the "Pope Pius XIII" example above, **the "new" SSPX has never distanced itself from, or made public retraction / reparation / correction of, any of the shocking scandals of the 24 years in which Bishop Fellay was the superior of the SSPX (1994-2018).** These scandals were so numerous and many are so serious that almost any one of them could be enough in God's eyes for a bishop or superior to lose his soul at his judgment. Yet, we are not aware of even a single SSPX article written since Fr. Pagliarani became superior general that states, "We were wrong about [such-and-such words and actions], and we seriously endangered many souls for years. We unjustly punished good priests and persecuted good faithful. Now we see that [the opposite] is the right thing to do and say", *etc.*

Second Omission Under Fr. Pagliarani: Failure to Follow Archbishop Lefebvre's Wisdom

Recall in the first part of this article that Archbishop Lefebvre learned the important lesson to never again "dialogue" with Rome without proof of its conversion, for he realized that nothing but great harm to souls could come out of doing so. The "whole world"

⁵⁴ Read an analysis of this duty here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2020/01/01/duty-to-publicly-correct-our-public-scandals-even-those-we-caused-innocently/>

knows that Bp. Fellay ignored that wisdom and persistently attempted⁵⁵ to make a practical deal with unconverted Rome. But many people *wrongly* think Fr. Pagliarani has completely reversed that policy and returned to Archbishop Lefebvre's wisdom.

The truth is that *at best* one might argue that Fr. Pagliarani has merely "suspended" Bp. Fellay's policy of talks, while leaving the "window open" for Rome to see that "we are ready when you are ready".

We can see this clearly by analyzing a February 18th, 2026 letter that the "new" SSPX wrote to Rome.⁵⁶ The historical context of that letter is this:

1. In 2019, **only six months after** Fr. Pagliarani took the reins of the "new" SSPX, **he reached out to unconverted Rome under Pope Francis, asking for new talks.**⁵⁷ **It was he that asked for these talks, not Rome.** On the good side, the subject of the letter was clearly to discuss *doctrine*. (And that makes it better than Bp. Fellay's maneuverings which were merely to make a practical deal without doctrinal agreement.) But on the bad side, in this letter Fr. Pagliarani follows nothing of the firm decision and wisdom of Archbishop Lefebvre. That is, he **omits** to ask Rome: "Before we agree to talk, answer me this: Have you converted? Do you accept the truth the pre-Vatican II popes consistently taught?" In any case, Rome did not respond to the "new" SSPX's request to dialogue.
2. Seven years passed. No doubt the "new" SSPX was in a serious quandary of its own making. During this time, the "new" SSPX would be reflecting: "We hesitate

⁵⁵ For example, recall the secret meetings between representatives of modernist Rome and the liberalizing leaders of the SSPX after Archbishop Lefebvre's death:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_for_Reflection_among_Catholics

Here is the lengthy eyewitness account of one of the participants in these dialogues (after Archbishop Lefebvre's death) seeking this practical agreement between modernist Rome and the "new" SSPX: <https://www.mollat.com/livres/681107/michel-lelong-pour-la-necessaire-reconciliation-le-groupe-de-reflexion-entre-catholiques-grec>

We know about these secret dialogues because this (conciliar) participant decided to publish his memoirs. The SSPX would have preferred to keep these dialogues secret because the SSPX leadership correctly understood that Traditional Catholics would be alarmed by these scandalous negotiations.

⁵⁶ "Letter from Father Pagliarani to Cardinal Fernández"
<https://fsspx.org/en/publications/letter-father-pagliarani-cardinal-fernandez-57315>

⁵⁷ "Letter from Father Pagliarani to Bishop Pozzo, 17 January 2019"
https://sspx.news/en/news/letter-father-pagliarani-bishop-pozzo-17-january-2019-57304?utm_source=chatgpt.com

to offend Rome by consecrations because we want to be accepted into the conciliar church and get lots of favors. But on the other hand, our remaining two bishops are soon going to die and then we'll be helpless!" They made their decision: on February 2, 2026, the SSPX wrote to Rome (now under Pope Leo XIV) and announced that the "new" SSPX intended to consecrate bishops without a papal mandate.

3. In response, Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, invited SSPX Superior General Fr. Pagliarani to Rome for talks. The SSPX knew well that this Cardinal Fernandez was a modernist who had also written grossly impure books, and is guilty of many other grave scandals.
4. Nevertheless, the "new" SSPX accepted the invitation, and the meeting took place on February 12, 2026. Once again, the "new" SSPX asked Rome nothing about whether it would accept true Catholic doctrine before talking.
5. Six days after the meeting, on February 18th, 2026, Fr. Pagliarani wrote a follow-up letter back to Rome. It is that letter we analyze below.

Analysis of the February 18th, 2026, Letter of the SSPX to Rome

Instead of reproducing the entire letter, we will provide excerpts. But we encourage all to read the letter in its entirety, at this link: <https://fsspx.news/en/news/letter-father-pagliarani-cardinal-fernandez-57309>

In that letter, Fr. Pagliarani's SSPX writes the following:

- *"... This was precisely **my intention in 2019, when I suggested a discussion during a calm and peaceful time, without the pressure or threat of possible excommunication, which would have undermined free dialogue—as is, unfortunately, the situation today.** ... **We both know in advance that we cannot agree doctrinally ... [and that] the texts of the [Second Vatican] Council cannot be corrected, nor can the legitimacy of the liturgical reform be challenged**"*

Note: The SSPX says that both sides know that there is no way to agree doctrinally, yet the SSPX seeks to continue meeting and dialoguing. What could another meeting accomplish except a practical agreement without a doctrinal agreement, to put the SSPX under the direct practical control of modernist Rome?

- **The "new" SSPX frames doctrinal discussions as merely 'desirable' and 'useful', rather than essential.** But we already know that for Archbishop Lefebvre, it became a matter of principle that he would no longer talk with

unconverted Rome. Yet the “new” SSPX writes this to Rome: “*For the Society’s part, a doctrinal discussion has always been – and remains – **desirable and useful.***”

- **The “new” SSPX pretends that Rome genuinely loves the Truth and the salvation of souls.** The “new” SSPX is patronizing and scandalous when it writes: “*Indeed, even if we [viz., the SSPX and Rome] do not reach an agreement, fraternal exchanges allow us to better know one another, to refine and deepen our own arguments, and to better understand the spirit and intentions behind our interlocutor’s positions – **especially their genuine love for the Truth, for souls, and for the Church.** This holds true, at all times, for both parties.*”

Note: Although we would not judge or declare that we know that the conciliar hierarchy consciously hates souls and hates the Church, nonetheless, virtually everything they do attacks souls and attacks the Church. So this claim (*viz.*, love of souls and the Church) is contrary to all objective evidence whatever might be their subjective, interior intent. It is as incongruous as watching a man stab people with a butcher knife and say “we know that he and we can agree on loving people and loving life.”

- **The “new” SSPX is firstly concerned with the welfare of the SSPX, not the Common Good:** Fr. Pagliarani writes: “*More recently, we have written twice to the Holy Father: first to request an audience, then **to clearly and respectfully explain our needs and the real-life situation of the Society.***” The “new” SSPX admits here that it writes to Rome to get favors, to get approval, to convince Rome “we are doing good work!”, to get ‘regularized’. All of this is quite different than Archbishop Lefebvre’s language of telling Rome to its face that they do the devil’s work and must convert, so that Rome might then convert the world.
- **The “new” SSPX continues to pretend its own canonical situation is irregular.** There is nothing wrong with the SSPX’s canonical status. All of Rome’s past attempts to illegally and unjustly suppress, excommunicate, and silence it are null and void. Archbishop Lefebvre never recognized the validity of Rome’s “punishments”. Yet the “new” SSPX has for years now continued to tell the world (and Rome) that it believes in the validity of the censures, and that is why a deal is so badly needed. The “new” SSPX exhibits this same false concern in this February 18th letter regarding the “excommunications”. It writes: “*That is why, over the years, the Sovereign Pontiffs have taken note of this existence [viz., of the SSPX] and, through concrete and significant acts, have recognised the value of the good it [i.e., the SSPX] can accomplish, **despite its canonical situation***”. And: “*It asks nothing else of you – no privileges, **nor even canonical regularisation***”.
- **The “new” SSPX is craven in its cowardly attempts to defend Our Lady’s honor:** Our readers probably know that in 2025, Cardinal Fernandez, with the

approval of Pope Leo XIV, blasphemed Our Lady, telling the world to no longer use the glorious titles of Our Lady “Mediatrice of All Graces” and “Co-Redemptrix”. The “new” SSPX closes this February 18, 2026 letter, apologizing to those same modernist Romans as it faint-heartedly defends her honor: “*I pray for you in particular to the Holy Ghost* **and – do not take this as a provocation** – His Most Holy Spouse, the Mediatrix of all Graces.”

Contrast all this with the spirit of Archbishop Lefebvre and the “old” SSPX in 1988 after the supposed excommunications. The tone of the entire February 18 letter is fawning and begging. **The “new” SSPX lacks the militancy of the old SSPX and Archbishop Lefebvre.** That militant spirit is seen in the multiple quotes provided earlier in this article, showing that Archbishop Lefebvre and the entire SSPX leadership took no notice of the “excommunications” and boldly told Rome so. Also, the cringing and soft diplomatic language of the “new” SSPX embodies a **great lack of charity to the Romans**. By failing to tell the Romans the truth (for fear of offending them and wrecking diplomatic relations), there is less chance of them ever converting and instead, them going to hell.

Conclusion

The “new” SSPX under Fr. Pagliarani might appear (though falsely) to have “turned around” because the scandals are less obvious than those under Bishop Fellay. But careful analysis shows that nothing has really changed. The consecration of new bishops in 2026 does nothing to show that the “new” SSPX has begun to come to its senses and reject its liberalism. Rather, it just gives those four new liberal bishops a greater capacity to promote the SSPX liberalism. The entire situation is very much *unlike* that of the beautiful 1988 consecrations performed by Archbishop Lefebvre.

Thus, faithful and informed Traditional Catholics should continue to shun the “new” SSPX and continue to pray for its conversion.



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