



# WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church in preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

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## NEW EVANGELIZATION

PART TWENTY NINE

### FAITH

Evangelization leads to FAITH. Evangelization is the process by which an evangelizer who already has Faith leads a soul or souls towards the proper disposition that will make them deserving to receive the supernatural virtue of FAITH.

What are the effects of Faith in the soul? Here are just a few. The forgiveness of all past sins and the prevention of future sins. This is based on the fact that virtues and vices cannot co-exist. They are exclusive of one another. To commit sin one has to abandon his virtues. The

very abandonment of virtue is already sin.

Another effect of Faith is that the soul knows God's Will all the time thus he is referred to as a 'righteous' person. His will is united to God and, therefore, he has a good will. On the other hand if the soul has no faith, keeping in mind what St. Paul said that everything not of faith is sin, then everything he does is sin.

Faith is what leads us to wisdom, happiness and holiness. If we study the 12 steps in the Act of Faith according to St. Thomas, and the steps in the last post taken from St. Augustine and Blessed John Newman... we can easily know if we have Faith or not. We can even

know if others have Faith or not because these signs are visible signs. In fact these signs are similar to the classical four visible signs of the Catholic Church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic. We can even know the degree of our Faith. These are all the things the Holy Father wants us to know during this year of Faith.

Let us review the two human acts that makeup the beginnings of the 'Act of Faith'. This is knowledge of the proposition and the ASSENT of the intellect to the same proposition derived from Divine Revelation.

We begin with the human act of the mind in possessing a proposition from God,...like 'there is a God.' That is a proposition or a statement of truth or a truth from God...but let us call it a proposition in short. This proposition first exists in the mind through our common sense where all men know that there are creatures and, therefore, there must be a Creator whom we can call God. Then our conscience works and expands that knowledge into the fact that this God must be just and, therefore, 'He rewards the good and punishes the evil.' And conscience continues to find out what are the good things that God rewards and what are the evil He punishes. And conscience will discover that it will commit a lot of mistakes due to fallen nature. But conscience, also, tells him that this good God would try to get in contact with man to make Himself known. And conscience will guide the mind to examining the Old Testament (this is to describe the whole process in

summary form.) Conscience will further conclude that God could find it impossible to communicate with man and so would send His Son to become man to communicate in an easier way with man. This will logically guide the mind to the New Testament.

Using his common sense, his conscience and, now, his logical mind, the soul begins to study Divine Revelation as found in the New Testament, finds it impossible to believe but finds it believable. So the mind seeing the message of Divine Revelation believable convinces the will that it would be good to believe this truth. When the will consents to the assent of the mind that is the Act of Faith.

Faith being an act of assent of the mind to a proposition and the affective consent of the will to the assent of the mind to the proposition is the uniting force of the Catholic Church. The members of the Catholic Church are described as having one heart (will) and one mind (intellect). Members think the same thing and in the same way.

The signs of Faith are obvious so that we know exactly when the apostles reached Faith. We, also, know when St. Augustine and Blessed John Newman reached Faith. In the last post we enumerated the four steps that made up the proper disposition for us to receive the gift of Faith and they are visible human acts. They are so visible that St. Augustine and Blessed Newman could write down when it exactly happened. The Liturgy of the Mass describes the signs of Faith during the 35 Sundays in

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St. Teresa of Avila

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ordinary time. Keeping these in mind any soul can know if he has Faith or not....which is the goal of this 'Year of Faith.' And any Bishop, priest, nun or layman can know if they have Faith or not. And this is what the Holy Father wants us to find out this year. He does not want us to presume we have Faith because if we make a mistake the consequence would be the loss of our souls.

If we have Faith we can lead others to 'Porta Fidei' that is why Faith is the solution to all the problems of the world. While the absence of Faith is the cause of all the problems in the world.

Let us apply the above signs to the discussions during Vatican II. The then Cardinal Ratzinger, writing in 'The Highlights of Vatican II' which contains a summary of the proceedings after each of the four assembly meetings, described the discussions as a 'forest in complete disarray.' He even observed that the discussions did not observe the doctrinal boundaries already made by the Council of Trent and Vatican I. Sort of everyone went overboard. The propositions being presented were not according to the propositions of the Catholic Church as proposed by her spokesman the Pope. Since the documents of Vatican II were not complete and not very clear everybody should have waited for the official interpretation of the Catholic Church through her spokesman the Pope because these documents are supernatural truths that have to be interpreted by the Catholic Church. As the Holy Father Pope Benedict interprets

the documents of Vatican II he had noticed pelagian tendencies both in Gaudium et spes and 'On religious Liberty.'

The fact that the proposition being presented during discussions were different from the proposition already possessed by the Catholic Church, like on Divine Revelation, basing it in the above first step in the Act of Faith shows the words of the document to be devoid of Faith.

Let us not go further than this first step, i.e. having the right proposition in our mind. The cause of the crisis of Faith is having a defective, a wrong and even just having no proposition in mind.

Let us go to a more recent event: the 'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta Fidei.' The proposition God has proposed through our common sense, through our consciences, and through the Catholic Church through her official spokesman the Pope is this: the 'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta Fidei' consists in living a life of conversion. And in the process 'conversion' is the most important. Let us see if the 58 proposals during the last Bishop's Synod is the same proposition as that of the Pope's. The proposals of the Bishop's Synod are based on the unimportance of 'conversion' (as expressed in the Lineamenta) and, therefore, they can proceed to aiming at supernatural ends, like ecumenism, using human means.

Those two proposals are not the same. And though personally the bishops

could have great Faith that can move mountains, the wordings of the document show there is no faith because their proposition is different from God's proposition as expressed by the Catholic Church through the Pope. The document shows the absence of the first necessary step in the Act of Faith. We do not have to be theologians to see that. We only have to know how to read documents and a little thinking to see the non-compliance.

With the Year of Faith we are also celebrating a commemoration of Vatican II where the Pope is telling us to learn the true interpretation of the Documents. We need Faith to interpret Vatican II correctly and this needs compliance of the proposition in our minds with the propositions of Vatican II as interpreted by the Catholic Church through the Pope. We are also commemorating the publishing of the Catechism. The Catechism, especially the Compendium of Pope Benedict as official spokesman of the Catholic Church, contains precisely the proper propositions that should exist in our minds.

Getting the propositions right in our mind is difficult enough and takes a long time. The inability to get it right is the biggest obstacle to this first step in the Act of Faith. Giving an assent to these propositions is also very difficult but easier than the previous step. Pope Benedict, quoting St. Bonaventure, hinted that to make it a little easy for us, we should do these two activities within a good monastery with a superior who has a perfect Faith.....and has, also, the

seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Maybe this last part is hardest to find.

We have just described the need for the mind to have the right propositions as God has revealed them.....and for the will to give its affective consent (still part of the assent of the cognitive faculty) .....for the mind to give its full assent to these truths as believable even if the mind does not understand them fully. Only after that can the will give its full consent to the truth of the proposition finding it good for the soul to believe. Then God grants the soul the gift of Faith.

## SERMON *in a sentence*

The salvation of the multitude is to be preferred to the peace of any individuals whatsoever. Consequently, when certain ones, by their perverseness, hinder the salvation of the multitude, the preacher and teacher should not fear to offend those men, in order that he may insure the salvation of the multitude.

St. Thomas Aquinas