

Fr. Perozich comments —

The exercise of authority is important.

God is the author of all things.

The rest of us are vicars, those who exercise His authority as He commands it be exercised, at each person's level of power in the Church.

For those readers who have not had the benefit of theological studies, some definition of terms help in the understanding of the article.

*“**Ultramontanism** is a clerical political conception within the **Catholic Church** that places strong emphasis on the prerogatives and powers of the **Pope**. It contrasts with **Gallicanism**, the belief that popular civil authority—often represented by the **monarch's** or **state's** authority—over the Church is comparable to that of the Pope.” — Wikipedia*

Redivivus = reborn

Papolatry = deifying the pope as if he were God

From the article:

- *For more than half a century, we have heard the drumbeat of “**the spirit of Vatican II**,” which has caused the Church incalculable trouble. In this essay, I would like to focus on “**the spirit of Vatican I**”—not often spoken of, but which has also caused the Church incalculable trouble in its “**creeping infallibilism**.”*

- *In Newman's 1874 Letter to the Duke of Norfolk, he declared, without fear of contradiction: “**But a pope is not infallible in his laws, nor in his commands, nor in his acts of state, nor in his administration, nor in his public policy. Let it be observed that the Vatican Council has left him just as it found him here.**” Yes, the dogmatic definition did; however, “**the spirit of Vatican I**” brought us to the absurdity of the present Ultramontanism.*

An interesting aside: Tagle's “pledge of loyalty” does have not appear to have been reciprocated by the Pope for, since 2022, Tagle has been removed from both his prominent positions.

- **Endnote:**

It is the Church's infallibility, please note, not the pope's. The pope can exercise that charism under certain clearly defined circumstances, but it is not his personal attribute.

Ultramontanism Redivivus

It is quite amusing that those on the left side of the ecclesiastical aisle give competition to W. G. Ward, the quintessential Ultramontanist, who exclaimed, “I should like a new Papal Bull every morning with my Times at breakfast.”

[July 20, 2023 Peter M.J. Stravinskias](#)

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Pope Francis greets the crowd during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican April 27, 2022. (CNS photo/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

For more than half a century, we have heard the drumbeat of “the spirit of Vatican II,” which has caused the Church incalculable trouble. In this essay, **I would like to focus on “the spirit of Vatican I”**—not often spoken of, but which has also caused the Church incalculable trouble in its **“creeping infallibilism.”**

St. John Henry Cardinal Newman was among the “inopportunist” in the lead-up to the Council. That is, while believing strongly in papal primacy, he considered a dogmatic definition to be imprudent in the moment, and probably also unnecessary. When the teaching was

dogmatically defined at the Council, he was actually quite pleased with its moderate claims. However, **he was deeply concerned that a certain penumbra would develop, almost deifying both the person and acts of a pope.**

Vatican I's dogmatic definition of the Church's infallibility¹ was followed by the loss of the Papal States, causing the pope to become a "prisoner of the Vatican," so that a protective wall was built up to support him, a kind of aura culminating in the pontificates of Pius XII and John Paul II. Make no mistake, I deeply admired and loved John Paul; however, the personality cult that grew up around him helped bring us to the present moment. **Young priests, taking their cue from him to right the course of the ship of a Church nearly sunken, when asked why they were doing certain things all too often answered, "Because the Holy Father does this." Wrong answer: I do something because it is right, not because a pope does it.**

It is quite amusing that those on the left side of the ecclesiastical aisle give competition to **W. G. Ward**, the quintessential Ultramontanist, who exclaimed, "I should like a new Papal Bull every morning with my Times at breakfast." Austin Ivereigh is the ultimate apologist for the Bergoglian mode of governance, while the disgraced Father Thomas Rosica could even utter **this shameless assertion** in 2018: **"Pope Francis breaks Catholic traditions whenever he wants because he is free from disordered attachments. Our Church has indeed entered a new phase. With the advent of this first Jesuit pope, it is openly ruled by an individual rather than by the authority of Scripture alone or even its own dictates of tradition plus Scripture."** Now, that is blasphemy.

However, something rivaling the **papolatry** of Ivereigh and Rosica has come to my attention somewhat belatedly, namely, **a "pledge of loyalty" to Pope Francis** (a kind of parody of the canonical "oath of fidelity"). **It seems the text was introduced in 2018 by Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle when he was Archbishop of Manila. It is recited immediately following the Creed on the Vigil of the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. It must have caught the attention of Francis because the next year Tagle was brought to Rome to head the very important Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (its prefect is nick-named "the Red Pope" because of the power he wields over all the missionary territories of the Church).**

I offer the full text because excerpts could never convey the full flavor; frankly, on first reading, I was left speechless. Truth be told, even Ward may well have been breathless at the **depths of its sycophancy**:

PLEDGE OF LOYALTY TO THE HOLY FATHER

The Presider leads the assembly in the Pledge of Loyalty to the Holy Father.

Presider:

God the Father omnipotent,
God the Son of wisdom,
God the Holy Spirit of love, we ask you,
deign to listen to our pledge of loyalty.
We are your children
firmly believing in your
divinity and eternal providence,
redeemed by the blood of the Son,
vivified by the all-embracing
grace of love eternal,
and sustained on earth
through the powerful intercession of Mary,
our Queen and Mother:
Hail to you, O God!
Hail to you, O Blessed Trinity!

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!
Christus regnat!
Christus, Christus imperat!

Presider:

And to Peter, the very first mortal
who ever exclaimed with deep faith and trust:
“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
And to all his successors,
we say with conviction and joy.
“Blessed are you, Simon Peter,
the rock of the living Church.”

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!

Christus regnat!

Christus, Christus imperat!

Presider:

To Francis, our Pope the Vicar of Christ on earth,
visible head of the Church,

doctor and the teacher of all the faithful,

guardian of apostolic tradition:

To you, Pope Francis,

we pledge our love!

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!

Christus regnat!

Christus, Christus imperat!

Presider:

To the Supreme Pontiff of the Church,
courageous leader of the nations,

the very personification

of the spirit of Vatican II

and upholder of the dignity of holy priesthood:

To you, Pope Francis, we pledge our obedience!

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!

Christus regnat!

Christus, Christus imperat!

Presider:

To His Holiness, the Pope,

tireless defender of the sanctity of the home,

of the innate priceless value of human life

and of the dignity of persons:

To you, Pope Francis, we pledge our hope!

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!

Christus regnat!
Christus, Christus imperat!

Presider:

To the visible head of Christendom,
indomitable teacher,
leader and father of all the faithful,
steadfast in truth in the midst of errors
and misunderstanding,
unyielding in courage
in the midst of danger,
and a most reliable beacon
of spiritual light and consolation:
To you, Pope Francis,
we pledge our undying
loyalty and filial veneration,
now and for ever.

All sing the response:

Christus vincit!
Christus regnat!
Christus, Christus imperat!

Certain phrases simply refuse to trip off the tongue: “**guardian of apostolic tradition**” and “**steadfast in truth in the midst of errors and misunderstanding**” (some cardinals are still awaiting a response to their *dubia*); “courageous leader of the nations” (even John Allen at *Crux* has suggested that papal influence in the geo-political sphere may be at its very nadir at present); “**the very personification of the spirit of Vatican II**” (that should not be regarded as a compliment); “**upholder of the dignity of holy priesthood**” (as priests are regularly insulted by this Pope, many clerics would find that line hard to swallow); “**visible head of Christendom**” (most historians would maintain that the last vestiges of “Christendom” disappeared in the wake of the Protestant Reformation). I am told that the latest recension of the “loyalty pledge” even has a verse in praise of the “synod on synodality”—perhaps an instantiation of “development of doctrine” or “aggiornamento [bring up to date]”?

What we see in this apotheosis of Francis is the very thing Newman feared and what Vatican I (and Vatican II) obviated by very nuanced declarations as **the Petrine office evolves (devolves?) into an *ad***

personam glory. If anyone had dared to compose such a paean to Paul VI, John Paul II or Benedict XVI, he would have been laughed to scorn. In fact, I don't doubt that the "divinized" pope would be called upon to repudiate the hymn of exaltation.

In Newman's 1874 *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, he declared, without fear of contradiction: "**But a pope is not infallible in his laws, nor in his commands, nor in his acts of state, nor in his administration, nor in his public policy. Let it be observed that the Vatican Council has left him just as it found him here.**" Yes, the dogmatic definition did; however, "the spirit of Vatican I" brought us to the absurdity of the present Ultramontaniam.

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