



S S P X

Thank God for our priests!

June 1, 2019

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

“How is the gold become dim, the finest colour is changed, the stones of the sanctuary are scattered in the top of every street?” (Lam. 4:1) As the Prophet lamented before the desolate and despoiled Temple, it is common to hear similar complaints in the face of this dimmed pure gold, these scattered sacred stones of today, that is to say, before the state of the Catholic priesthood. The destroyed Temple was later rebuilt more beautiful than before. The priesthood, scorned, tarnished, altered, will return, will be restored, because it has the promises of the Savior: *“Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world”* (Mt. 28:, 20), and it is one of the seven sacraments so it cannot perish.

This month of June, month of the Sacred Heart, has also been in the Church, for centuries, the month of the priesthood with priestly ordinations around the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Thank Heaven, every year gives us new priests and each new priest is truly a miracle, a gift from Heaven. Thank God for our priests!

Saint Pius X had only one statue on his desk, that of the Curé of Ars whom he had beatified. He himself took him as his model and wanted all his priests to imitate him. It is Saint Pius X who declared Father Vianney, only a blessed then, patron of all the parish priests of the universe. *“Oh! How great is the priest”,* exclaimed the Curé of Ars. *“The priest will understand himself only in heaven. If we understood it on earth, we would die, not of fear, but of love. The other blessings of God would serve us nothing without the priest. What would be the use of a house full of gold, if you had no one to open the door for you? Without the priest, the death and passion of Our Lord would serve no purpose. The priest is not a priest for himself. He is not for himself, he is for you. The beautiful mission of the priest is to be the soul and support of religion. After God, the priest is everything. Leave a parish twenty years without a priest, alas, what will become of it? See the countries where there are no priests, they adore the animals, the plants! ”*

In his first encyclical that announced his program of restoring all things in Christ, individuals, families, the economics, the politics, really all things, this great pope was convinced that this restoration would be done by the Church and by the priests: *“Let your first care be to form Christ in those who are destined from the duty of their vocation to form Him in others. We speak of the priests, Venerable Brethren.”* The Pope is convinced that each priest continues the mission of St Paul to form Christ in souls. That is the first and foremost duty of each bishop. *“All other tasks must yield to this one. Wherefore the chief part of your diligence will be directed to governing and ordering your seminaries aright so that they may flourish equally in the soundness of their teaching and in the spotlessness of their morals.”*

All is to be done today to rechristianize our societies: this will not happen by a miracle or a series of miracles; it will be done by the priest, or it will not happen at all and then society will continue to perish. For, in the words of Cardinal Pie, *“the heart of the sacrificing priest is the hearth towards which everything converges, where all the rays gather in a bundle to reflect themselves towards God. And from*



the hands of the sacrificing priest, afterwards, flow all the graces, all the gifts, all the influences that operate the salvation of creatures."

We must understand this link between the priest and society. The priest, in the midst of society, is a *principle*; and there is nothing that is more a principle than him. That is what makes him powerful and great. He is a principle by his preaching, by his supernatural power, by his sacerdotal character, by the sacrifices to which his life officially commits him, by the consecration he receives, by his prayer, by all his functions. His only presence in society is a great affirmation of principles. He must understand this to understand himself; for it is not a question here of his merit, of his personal qualities, but of the dignity of his office. For there is nothing more intimate and more essential to a people than its religious ideas, and it is in this sanctuary of priestly formation that they have their primary source.

Really and in the last analysis, that is the heart of the social question. At the very root of the question of education, there is that of priestly formation which is the source of sources. If it is shown that priestly formation has been skewed or diminished at a time in our history, as in the quiet revolution, it is not surprising to see the social decline appear in subsequent generations, and the misfortunes of all kinds occur gradually.

This reciprocal and necessary relation between ecclesiastical education and the state of our societies is also found in Scripture. Has not the Holy Ghost told us that when it comes to explaining the evils of the world and to seek responsibility for them, "*The judgment should begin at the house of God*". (I Pet 4:17) For nations who, having lived the Christian life in the Church, have lost the faith or the purity of the faith, one should seek in an original vice of the clerical formation among these nations, the true and deep causes of their fall.

Archbishop Lefebvre had received all this doctrine in Rome itself, and his priestly work is precisely a response to the source of the crisis that the Church is currently facing.

"O wonderful dignity of the priests, in their hands, as in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, the Son of God becomes incarnate. O heavenly and admirable mystery that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost work through you! He who sits in the highest heaven with his Father, is at this moment in your hands in the sacrament of the altar. Oh! how worthy of veneration is the sanctity of your hands, and how your ministry makes you happy! O wonder that is truly the joy of the world!" (Saint Augustin)

*When the priest celebrates Mass,
he honors God,
he gladdens the angels,
he strengthens the Church,
he helps the living,
he brings rest to the departed,
and he wins for himself a share in all good things.
(Imitation IV, 5)*

Thank God for our priests! Tomorrow there will still be Masses!

Priestly Ordinations planned for the Society of Saint Pius X in the coming weeks:

- At Saint-Thomas Aquinas Seminary, Dillwyn, USA, on June 21: 5 priests.
- At Saint Pius X Seminary, Ecône, Switzerland, on June 28: 6 priests.
- At the Seminary of the Sacred Heart, Zaitzkofen, Germany, on June 29: 2 priests.
- There will be a few more ordinations in Australia and in Argentina next December.

Fr. Daniel Couture