

Notes

1. Simon, Yves R., "The Community of Intellectuals," *Cap and Gown*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, December 1957), p. 20.
2. Simon, Yves R., *Freedom of Choice*, ed. Peter Wolff, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1969), p. 106.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
6. Simon, Yves R., *Community of the Free*, tr. Willard R. Trask, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 170-171.

McInerny, Ralph M. *What Went Wrong With Vatican II: The Catholic Crisis Explained*. Sophia Institute Press, 1998. 168 pp. \$14.95 paperback.

In the introduction to his book, Professor McInerny, to make a point, draws on Jacinta, one of the three children in the Fatima apparitions, who said:

I saw the Holy Father in a very large house, kneeling before a table with his face in his hands. He was crying. Many people were in front of the house; some were throwing stones, while others were cursing him and using foul language.

Asks McInerny: "Has anyone described better the beleaguered state of the Papacy and the Magisterium of the Church since Vatican II?"

In seven short chapters, written in his classical but easy style, this Notre Dame philosopher and literary parent of "Father Dowling" takes the reader through the teachings of Vatican II, now forgotten, the *Humanae Vitae* controversy of 1968 (i.e., "the year the Church fell apart"), a discussion of "who" owns the Church, the "whipsawing" of the Catholic laity by the Church's theologians and their resistance to professing the faith, and the emergence of a firm Vatican response to dissent.

The overview is comprehensive, with cameo appearances of poignant moments during and after Vatican II, such as Cardinal Alfrink switching off the microphone of Cardinal Ottoviani: "Ottoviani stumbled back to his seat in humiliation. The most powerful Cardinal in the Roman Curia had been silenced, and the Council Fathers clapped with glee." As when, in the *Humanae Vitae* case, two hundred theologians decided that "the Pope had flunked theology," not only for the content of his message, but for forgetting that "the function of the pope is to promulgate and endorse the consensus of believers."

Ralph McInerny raises a subject that deserves more attention than it has received. He wonders aloud why dissenting theologians considered their

arguments better than the Pope's. Citing one-time Jesuit John G. Milhaven, the author argues as follows:

Milhaven may have felt that he was appealing to the reasoned judgment of married couples, but what he was actually doing was giving them advice that they would accept, not because of the force or subtlety of his reasoning, which was most likely beyond them, but because of his credentials as a priest and as a professional theologian--indeed, as a professor of pastoral theology at Woodstock College.

In other words, dissenting theologians gain stature not because of their logic, but because they claim authority at least on a par with the Pope. The people, it is assumed, are rightfully free to choose them. How did Christ handle that kind of situation, when the Pharisees used Moses as a counter-authority to him on divorce (Mk. 10:2-9)? If truth is the norm, then during controversy the Church's arguments for its teaching--whether it be on a moral or doctrinal matter (e.g., the priestly ordination of men only)--are usually good (as Christ's was on indissoluble marriage). The premises of the disputants frame the conclusions. The Church begins with its faith--a principle of what has been handed down--and leaves to approved casuists the task of dealing with its applications. Dissenters, on the other hand, understand the Church's position but argue to its relativity from the hardship it imposes on believers. Hardship cases, however, are a poor basis for law, as everyone knows; and they never invalidate a truth (e.g., "thou shalt not kill the innocent.")

Whose Church is it anyway? Christ's? Or the Separatists' (i.e., the Pharisees')? An extraordinary Synod of Bishops was convoked in 1985 to deal with the Catholic crisis, and its most important product was *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992), a corpus of Catholic doctrine proclaimed in the light of Vatican II, which "Separatists" also dismiss. The more sinister phenomenon continues to be their anger and resentment at being asked by Rome to make a public profession of faith, a subject which McInerny treats at some length.

Professor McInerny concludes his survey with a query: "How to fix what went wrong?" The issue remains the truth of Christ and the Catholic faith. Which faith? "The choice," he says, "is not between arguments. The choice is between authorities." The authority of Christ and his living teaching office or . . .

Toward that end he summarizes the choices facing bishops:

Today it is a rare bishop who is in charge of the bureaucracy that has metastasized around him. Earlier, Thomas Sheehan had boasted that anti-papal Catholics dominated seminary faculties and university departments of theology; now they are often in charge of Chanceries. Too many bishops are surrounded by bureaucracies that bear the stamp of dissident theology.

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