

Disobedience, a sacred cause (1st part)

(a 3-part article that appeared in Moncton's English-speaking daily newspaper, the Times & Transcript, during July 2007, exposing the Liberal agenda in the Moncton diocese. It is a summary of CUP's document titled *The Establishment of the Communion Church in the Moncton Diocese*, available on this web site)

« Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the evil things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said: « Awake O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light. » » (Ephesians 5 :11-14)

The Bible teaches that evil entered the world through a sin of disobedience: “*You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden – except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.*” A supreme act of obedience to the “will of His Father” was required of Jesus-Christ to redeem it. Through His example, Christ teaches us the redemptive value of obedience.

The Church, our mother in faith, responsible to teach us the ways of sanctity, without which one cannot enter into the glory of God, strives to instill this virtue in the children of God, along with other virtues. The Christian, disciple of Christ, is therefore called upon, according to the catechism of the Catholic Church, “to OBEY in faith and submit **freely** to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. » (#144) or « Having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to Him who died and rose for us. From now on, he is called to be subject to others, to serve them in the communion of the Church, and to OBEY and submit to the Church's leaders, holding them in respect and affection. » (#1269). For members of the clergy, obedience is a fundamental duty tied to the Sacrament of Holy Order: priests must make a vow of obedience to their bishop and the Pope while bishops must make a promise of fidelity to the Pope.

Yet, there are, in the Church of our time, people who make disobedience a sacred cause. Paradoxical, but true! *Disobedience, a sacred cause* is the theme of a conference whose text is found on the web site of Réseau Culture et foi (Culture and Faith Network) (www.culture-et-foi.com), a group of dissident* Catholics, mostly from the province of Quebec, affiliated to the international dissident movement We Are Church. The text is an attempt to “theologically” justify disobedience to Church magisterium on issues such as the ordination of women, the optional celibacy of priests, communion to divorced remarried, same-sex marriage, accessibility of homosexual men to the priesthood, the practice of general absolution, acculturation (adaptation) of the liturgy and moral law, including abortion and euthanasia.

These dissidents not only include lay people, but also priests, ex-priests, religious and ex-religious. Members of this group published a letter in a Montreal daily last year viciously attacking Cardinal Ouellet, Archbishop of Quebec City and Primate of

Canada, for his loyalty to the Pope and Church magisterium. They accused him of being « *the spokesperson of the most conservative fringe group of Canadian Catholicism* ». The authors stated that they « *rejected this type of Church where the faithful must kowtow to the brutal decrees of a central administration, exactly like a Wal-Mart branch in relation to its multinational head office.* » Not very gospel like, to say the least! This statement makes it clear that these people utterly reject the primacy of the Pope and his infallible magisterium, recognized as an element of Catholic doctrine in the Church constitution (Lumen Gentium), which was adopted by the 2nd Vatican Council. Bolstered by this open and bold dissidence, 19 priests from the province of Quebec followed suit by issuing an open letter denouncing the Church's attitude towards homosexuality. Not long after, the Association of Canadian Religious, supposedly representing all religious communities in Canada, made public a letter it sent to Canadian bishops, in which they demanded greater autonomy from « Roman authorities » for the Canadian Church, acculturation of the liturgy, the democratization of the Church, acceptance of dissidence, opening up to the rites of other Churches, the optional celibacy of priests, ordination of women, etc. It is noteworthy that the authors of this letter expressed fidelity to THEIR National Church rather than to the Roman Catholic Church. These events indicate that the dissidence movement is alive and well within the ranks of the clergy and the religious. And these people are becoming increasingly vocal and bold.

The dissidents do not restrict their activities to demanding reforms that fit *their* vision of the Church or criticizing whoever does not share this vision, they know exactly what type of Church they want: they call it the Communion Church. In the second part of this letter, I will address the specifics of this Church model and the presence of the dissident group Culture et foi/We are Church in the Moncton diocese

James Ouellet

Moncton Chapter, Catholics United to Peter/Catholiques unis au St-Père

Note: Dissidence is defined as separate from an established Church because of doctrinal disagreement; refusal to accept the doctrines of an established Church; nonconformity.

Disobedience, a sacred cause (2nd part)

Catholic dissidents do not limit themselves to demanding reforms and criticizing those who stand in their way, they have a fairly well defined plan of the Church model they want to put in place. They call it the Communion Church.

What are the specifics of this Church? It is a “ *Church, people of the baptized, diversified and structured according to a diversity of charisms and ministries, a communion of persons and communion of local churches. [...] The communion is a manifestation that **all are equal** insofar as the common activity and united in solidarity in the mission of a body in which all are different and complementary.*” This Church will not be hierarchical as is currently the case. Every local Church (diocese) will be autonomous: the role of the Pope, bishop of Rome, will be reduced to a mere figurehead, a symbol of the communion between local Churches. This Church will be democratic: the assembly of the faithful or their delegates will make the decisions. Small faith communities will become the parish of the future. Each local Church will adapt its liturgy to the local culture. This process of acculturation will apply as well to the doctrine and moral law that are already relativized by supporters of this Church model: acceptance of the gay lifestyle, the blessing of same-sex marriages, abortion and euthanasia, etc. The lack of priests will lead to local solutions, which could include the ordination of women, of married men, of openly homosexual men and women, or of delegating lay people to celebrate the Eucharist.

You think I am fantasizing? Think again. This is all well documented. Besides, similar models already exist: The National Catholic Church of America, a small schismatic “Catholic” Church in the U.S., made up of “Catholics free from the Vatican” whose “Archbishop-Primate” lives in an openly homosexual relation (<http://members.aol.com/NatCathCh/>). Another model is the Anglican Church, also known as the Anglican Communion, whose American Branch, the Episcopal Church, is likely to be excluded from the Worldwide Communion for having elected its first openly gay bishop and for having blessed same-sex marriages.

The presence of Réseau Culture et foi/We are Church in the Moncton diocese

On March 11, 2006, the diocesan committee, *Femmes en Église* (Women in the Church) had a one day conference titled *Women in the mission of the Church today* in the basement of the Moncton cathedral, the mother church of the diocese. Four panelists, two priests and two nuns presented their vision of a Communion Church criticizing the “Roman” Church for its refusal to allow the ordination of women. One of the intervening priests stated that the “*Pope’s encyclicals did not bind his conscience*”, while the other claimed his right to dissidence, to the approving applause of participants. An intervention by another priest made it clear that at least two of the panelists were involved in drafting the letter to bishops by the Canadian Religious Association referred to earlier. Several days later, the texts of the presentations given by the four panelists were posted on the Culture et foi/We are Church web site, confirming the close ties that unite local dissidents with the national and international dissident organizations.

In addition to promoting a radical feminist theology, this diocesan committee is no less than the grouping of all dissident forces in this diocese, a group that ardently supports the establishment of a new Church, which **will not be** the Catholic Church. The group is quite influential, several of its members having important responsibilities in the diocesan administration, notably the coordinator of the School of Faith program who also coordinates, since June 2005, the diocesan office of Adult faith education, a role that allows her to influence the choice of formation themes given in the diocese.

These people are also opposed to getting priests from outside the diocese, as this goes against their agenda, which calls for the “invention of new ministries for lay people.” Cardinal Daneels of Belgium stated in 2000 that “*without priests, the sacramental life of the Church will disappear. We will become a protestant Church without sacraments. We will have another type of Church, it will not be Catholic.*” The Vatican II decree *Christus Dominus* dealing with the pastoral responsibility of bishops affirmed, back in 1965, that the “*faithful are in danger of falling away from the obligations of the Christian life or even of losing the faith itself due to the scarcity of priests.*”

Finally, dissidents lay claim to the “spirit” of the Vatican II Council when they, in fact, reject important segments of the teachings of this Council. They also lay claim to the *sensus fidelium* or sense of the faith to justify the legitimacy of their demands. However, they completely distort its meaning as the TRUE “sense of the faith” always requires “*obedience to the sacred teaching authority or magisterium*”.

We will see in the 3rd and last part of this letter how the new Church is being established in the Moncton diocese and what actions the faithful must take now to avoid possibly being confronted with a full-fledged schism in the future.

James Ouellet
Moncton Chapter
Catholics United to Peter
Grande-Digue NB

Disobedience, a sacred cause (part 3)

Elements of this new Church model have gradually been introduced in the Moncton diocese: 1- by training the lay people (School of Faith Program) who will be taking on increasingly more important tasks within the diocesan Church; 2- by the establishment of small faith communities at the parish level; and 3- by promoting the attachment to the **LOCAL and NATIONAL** Church to the detriment of the Universal Church.

1- In an attempt to convince the School of Faith participants to support the Communion Church model, they are told that the institutional Church (Roman Catholic Church) is a “*persecuting Church*”, comparing its leaders to “*masters with their slaves, bosses with their employees*”, while the Pope behaves as “*the bishop of the entire Church rather than [solely] the bishop of Rome.*” They are presented with the mission of the diocesan Church in a document titled *Global Statement of the Mission* which concludes as follows: « *...we must give birth to a **LOCAL** Church and make it grow to maturity...I speak here of **creation** (to give birth to a new Church)...its organization, its ministries must be **ACCULTURATED**, localized...worked from the inside by **THE SPIRIT**...to build a better world in which it will live and grow.* » (the fact that the primary mission of the Church is to save souls is completely ignored). A new Church is not created without demolishing in the process the old one. Here’s how this reality was communicated to the students of the 2003-2006 class: « *A forest that is **being cut down** makes much more noise than the one **that grows**. Listen carefully.* »

2- The establishment of small communities of faith has been encouraged in our diocese since late 2004. These are made up of between 3 to 10 people who get together on a regular basis to meditate on the Word of God, reflect and **speak out** (what Culture et foi/We are Church call the “critical function”, i.e. criticizing the Pope and those who remain faithful to him and his Magisterium). Participants study the origins of Christianity, the Counter Reformation and modernism “*to allow them to become aware and to appreciate their contribution to the **mutation of the Church.***” These communities of faith spring forth on the initiative of laity and completely escape the control of Church authorities. “*These are instead **protagonist and autonomous forces** that help the parish to change its manner of being...*” It is most revealing that in other countries where these already exist, they are usually coordinated by dissident organizations. In its September 2004 newsletter, the president of Culture et foi/We are Church stated that her group “**EXPECTED MUCH FROM SMALL FAITH COMMUNITIES**, adding that the **Spirit is at work** in these shoots of generosity...”. The group’s action plan for 2002 called for “*examining the pertinence of **GETTING INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF SMALL FAITH COMMUNITIES.***”

While the catechism of the Catholic Church, which contains the authentic doctrine of the faith, is absent from the School of Faith program, the diocesan bookstore Vision, located in the Diocesan Center in Dieppe, offers published works by well-known dissident authors, spreading non-catholic teachings that contribute to further confuse the faithful. Last Fall, participants of an adult catechesis class were invited to purchase a book by an American dissident priest, Fr. William J. Bausch, titled *A New Look at the Sacraments*, a book that contains falsehoods on the Sacraments. Here’s

what a group of Australian priests had to say about it: « *We submit that a highly dangerous theology of Holy Orders is being widely promoted by means of a book entitled **A New Look at the Sacraments** by Fr. W. Bausch.* »

3- Another element of the Communion Church is the increasing attachment to the local (diocesan) Church versus the Universal Church. A review of the diocesan bulletins (published 3 to 4 times a year) for the last 5 years reveals a total absence of news from the Vatican: messages from the Holy Father, Vatican declarations on various subjects such as reaffirmation of marriage being between a man and a woman, special indulgences, etc. It is very difficult for the faithful to develop an attachment to the universal Church when they are completely cut off from it and to share Church positions when these have never been formally communicated to them.

Furthermore, the absence of priestly vocations is being utilized to justify bringing in radical reforms that in the long-term will affect the Mass and other Sacraments, the structure of the parish, and the leadership of the Church. Archbishop Curtiss of the archdiocese of Omaha, Nebraska, stated a few years ago that the vocations “crisis” had been “*precipitated by people who want to change the Church’s agenda, by people who do not support orthodox candidates loyal to the Magisterium teachings of the Pope and bishops, and by people who actually discourage viable candidates from seeking priesthood and vowed religious life as the Church defines these ministries. I am personally aware, he states, of certain vocations directors, vocations teams and evaluation boards who turn away candidates who do not support the possibility of ordaining women or who defend the Church’s teachings about artificial birth-control, or who exhibit a strong piety toward certain devotions, such as the rosary.*” The archbishop concluded: “*the same people who have discouraged priestly vocations then turn around and promote ordination of married men and women to replace the traditional vocations they themselves have aborted.*”

A temporary solution to the present shortage of priests in our diocese would be to bring in priests from the outside. There are excellent communities of priests right here in Canada, such as the Companions of the Cross, based in Ottawa, and the Legionnaires of Christ, who assist dioceses in need of priests. How then can one explain the refusal of the diocese to call upon these religious orders for reasons other than they are TOO orthodox or that it does not agree with the agenda to establish a Communion Church based entirely on lay ministries.

Since the Archbishop is the person ultimately responsible for the diocesan Church, it is hardly conceivable that the reforms already introduced or anticipated could have been agreed upon without his knowledge and approval. He has the duty of being fully transparent with the faithful on this matter. He is also required by Church norms to discipline dissident priests, ensure that the authentic doctrine of the Church, and that alone, is taught and to propose and explain to the faithful the truths of faith that one must believe. As to the diocesan committee *Femmes en Église* (Women in the Church), as it persists in its opposition to certain elements of the deposit of faith (canon 750), the Archbishop has the duty to abolish it and to refuse the use of Church property to its members.

Every Catholic, faithful to the Pope and to Church Magisterium, has the duty to intervene to defend the TRUE Church and the authentic Catholic FAITH, otherwise

we risk being confronted with a schism in the future: “*we must contend with the institutional Church for now*” profess dissidents. Secondly, since this “new” Church is being established with the generous donations of faithful Catholics, one should seriously consider withholding any further financial assistance to the diocese until the Archbishop has given adequate explanations to the faithful. Catholics must also insist that the diocese bring in outside priests as a temporary solution to a lack of priestly vocations, because without priests, there will no longer be Sacraments, and without Sacraments, there will no longer be a Catholic Church.

At a time when the Church is being attacked both internally and externally, I conclude with these words by Cardinal Poupart, president of the Pontifical Council for inter-religious dialogue, who explains why it is so important to remain faithful to the Pope and his magisterium: “*The Pope, successor of St. Peter, has received the mission, and thus the authority, to guide the faithful in their march towards the Kingdom of God, that is, to indicate the way and to prevent them from going astray. The Christian might not be convinced by the arguments of reason given by the Pope in his teaching. However, he puts his trust in him when the Pope intervenes in the name of his ministry to guide the faithful on the road of delicate and difficult questions. In this light of faith, the Catholic is assured that by obeying to the pastor of all the faithful, he is guided with certainty. Whether he be a lay person, theologian or bishop, he knows that the Holy Father is responsible for the entire Church, built on Peter, of whom he is the successor.*”

James Ouellet
Moncton Chapter
Catholics United to Peter/Catholiques unis au Saint-Père
Grande-Digue NB

Note: the document entitled *The establishment of the communion Church in the Moncton diocese* is accessible at: <http://www.catholicsunitedtopeter.com>