

26. March 2023



LENTEN ITINERARY

Day 33: "Following Christ in anti-Christian times (III)"

The attack on the Church

All that we have heard in the previous meditations on the Antichrist clearly shows us the great danger that the antichristian spirit poses to humanity. It is the most tenacious and perhaps also the last attempt of the Devil to expand his dominion over the whole orb of the earth, to subjugate it and, if possible, to induce mankind to worship him.

Since Christ is present in His Church and is the true Lord, the attack of the Antichrist and his minions will be directed particularly against this Church, as it stands in the way of the realisation of their plans.

Let us listen to what two Popes of the last decades have said in this regard. Pope Paul VI declared on October 13, 1977: "The tail of the devil is functioning in the disintegration of the Catholic world. The darkness of Satan has entered and spread throughout the Catholic Church even to its summit. Apostasy, the loss of the faith, is spreading throughout the world and into the highest levels within the Church." (Paul VI, Address on the 60th anniversary of the apparitions of Fatima, 13 October 1977).

Pope John Paul II, while still a Cardinal, said at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia in 1977, two years before he was elected Pontiff: "We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has gone through. I do not think that wide circles of the American society or wide circles of the Christian community realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel versus the anti-Gospel. This confrontation lies within the plans of divine Providence; it is trial which the whole Church must take up."

Let us also listen to a passage from the messages of the Virgin Mary to Fr. Stefano Gobbi, founder of the Marian Movement of Priests:

"The beast with two horns, resembling a lamb, indicates Freemasonry infiltrated within

the Church; that is, Ecclesiastical Freemasonry, which has spread especially among members of the Hierarchy. This Masonic infiltration into the Church has already been foretold to you by Me at Fatima, when I announced to you that Satan would penetrate to the very apex of the Church. If the aim of Freemasonry is to lead souls to perdition by leading them to the worship of false divinities, the aim of ecclesiastical Freemasonry, on the other hand, is to destroy Christ and His Church by building a new idol, that is to say, a false Christ and a false Church".

(Message of June 13, 1989, Dongo)

Let us listen to another prophetic voice within the Church hierarchy: bishop Fulton Sheen of the United States († 1979):

"The False Prophet will have a religion without a cross; a religion without a world to come; a religion to destroy religions. There will be a false church. The Church of Christ [the Catholic Church] will be one. And the False Prophet will create another. The false church will be worldly, ecumenical, and worldwide. It's going to be a federation of churches. And the religions will form some kind of global association: a world parliament of churches, emptied of all divine content. It will be the 'mystical body of the Antichrist'."

The essence of these statements is always the same: The Church will experience a strong attack and will be divided within. The spirit of Antichrist will penetrate even into the hierarchy of the Church; there will be a great apostasy and many Christians will follow the Antichrist. There will be cooperation between the Antichrist and a false church.

This is reason enough to note carefully where the spirit of Antichrist can be detected at work in the present confusion in the Church. I am aware that this is a very delicate subject, to be treated with great caution.

There is no need to generate fear or despair... In fact, there is no reason to do so either, because the Lord will never abandon His own and He will use all means for our good (cf. Rom 8:28). But we cannot keep our eyes closed if the enemy has taken up residence in the midst of the Church, wanting to lead her astray.

The true "Bride of Christ" remains faithful to her Bridegroom, and nothing can separate her from His love (cf. Rom 8:39). But this Bride must be vigilant, lest she fall prey to the deceptions and seductions of those who would lead her away from her one true

Bridegroom. For this, it is important to know how to distinguish the voice of the Lord from other voices. Let us then, with the help of the Holy Spirit, pay close attention.

In tomorrow's meditation I will mention some elements to be taken into account when applying the spirit of discernment to perceive whether elements of an anti-Christian character have already proliferated in our Church.