

The Spirit of the World¹

Fr. Jonathan Dumlao, IVE

Our Lady of Peace Shrine and Catholic Church

Santa Clara, CA

10/15/2022

¹ For the recorded livestream version of this Marian Consecration talk, “Consecration to Jesus through Mary,” 10/15/2022, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHlprE4qywc> (49:50 minutes).

The 33-day preparatory period of Total Consecration to Jesus *through* Mary is a preliminary period of 12 days in which one strives to die to the *Spirit of the World*. The spirit of the world doesn't refer to the physical world *as such*—which is good as it is created by God—but to the maxims and ideologies that hold sway over the masses, nations, and even the entire geopolitical order. The Book of James unequivocally states, **“Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”**² The chief nemesis of God is Satan, and he is, as St. Paul says, the **“god of this world”** who has **“blinded the minds of . . . unbelievers,”**³ just as Sauron from the *The Lord of the Rings* blinded those who became possessed by the Ring.

St. Louis Marie De Montfort says, **“The first part of the preparation should be employed in casting off the spirit of the world, which is contrary to that of Jesus Christ.”**⁴ De Montfort explains that the spirit of the world manifests itself in a threefold manner.⁵

1. First, **“The pride of life,”** which is expressed by the **“denial of the supreme dominion of God.”**
2. Second, **“Disobedience to God’s laws and the abuse of created things.”**
3. Third, **“Error and darkness to the mind”** and **“corruption to the will.”**

Satan drives the spirit of the world in every age. Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen in his book *Life of Christ* says:

The world has a spirit, as each age has a spirit. There are certain unanalyzed assumptions which govern the conduct of the world. Anyone who challenges these worldly maxims, such as, “you only live once,” “get as much out of life as you can,” “who will ever know about it?” “what is sex for if not for pleasure?” is bound to make himself unpopular.⁶

Sheen observes that the spirit in every age—*zeitgeist*⁷ in German—always tempts people to **“want a religion that suits the way they live, rather than one that makes demands upon them.”**⁸ Sheen was right: **“If you don’t behave as you believe, you will end by believing as you behave.”** Because many Catholics today aren’t behaving as they should, this is why many of these same Catholics are confused about what to believe regarding the infallible teachings of the Catholic Church. Behavior matters.

Dr. Edward Sri in his book *Who Am I to Judge* speaks about a psychological principle called *Cognitive Dissonance*. This principle explains why Cafeteria Catholicism⁹ exists. Cafeteria Catholicism is not so much an intellectual problem as it is a moral problem.

² James 4:4. *The Ignatius Catholic Study Bible New Testament*. RSV 2CE. Henceforth, all Bible verses taken from this version.

³ 2 Corinthians 4:4.

⁴ St. Louis de Montfort, *True Devotion to Mary, The Secret of the Rosary & the Total Consecration* (Christian Heritage Classic), Part I: Twelve Preliminary Days Theme: Spirit of the World. Henceforth, *TC*.

⁵ The threefold list from *TC*, Part I: Twelve Preliminary Days Theme: Spirit of the World.

⁶ Fulton J. Sheen, *Life of Christ*, 1st edition (New Delhi, India: Digital Fire, 2020).

⁷ In English it means, “The general intellectual, moral, and cultural climate of an era.” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/zeitgeist>

⁸ Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *The Cries of Jesus from the Cross: A Fulton Sheen Anthology* (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2018). Quote taken from: First Word, Ch. 5: Fortitude, taken from Sheen’s word *The Seven Virtues*.

⁹ Peggy Frye, “What Is a ‘Cafeteria Catholic.’” <https://www.catholic.com/qa/what-is-a-cafeteria-catholic>

Dr. Sri says:

Psychologists point out that we human beings strive for internal consistency in our beliefs and our actions. We become psychologically uncomfortable when there's dissonance between what we believe and what we do. We're not at peace with ourselves. So when we do something that doesn't match up with our beliefs and values, we have two options: either we change our behavior to align with our beliefs, or we change our beliefs to line up with our behavior. And since it's easier to change our beliefs than change our behavior, many people are prone to find some way to rationalize their actions—to convince themselves that what they are doing is really okay.¹⁰

Cognitive dissonance validates Sheen's observation that

there are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions, however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church.

The multitude of reasons that Catholics sometimes give for leaving the Catholic Church do not hold weight. These same Catholics may also blame the worldliness and woundedness of some of the shepherds of the Catholic Church as proof that the Catholic Church isn't the true Church, but in reality, it is the worldliness and woundedness of these Catholics that, as chinks in their armor, have weakened them, thus making them more vulnerable to the devil's temptation to jump off of the ship that is the Catholic Church.

A real Catholic holds fast to Jesus' promise that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church. A nominal Catholic is shaken by scandals and blown *to-and-fro* by the Spirit of the World. Thomas Kempis in his *Imitation of Christ* says:

Many live in obedience more from necessity than from love. Such become discontented and dejected on the slightest pretext; they will never gain peace of mind unless they subject themselves wholeheartedly for the love of God." (I, 9)¹¹

Sheen recounts a powerful story in his autobiography *Treasure in Clay* which explains what cognitive dissonance looks like in real-life.

I remember a stewardess on an international airline who began instructions [in Catholicism]. When we came to the subject of confession and sin, she said that she could not continue. I begged her to take one more hour of instruction, and then if she did not like what was said, she could leave.

¹⁰ Edward Sri, *Who Am I To Judge?* (San Francisco, Greenwood Village, CO: Ignatius Press | Augustine Institute, 2016). Chapter: Key Six: Relativism Is a Mask

¹¹ Quote taken from: *Constitutions & Directory of Spirituality of the Institute of the Incarnate Word* (New York, Incarnate Word Press, 2013), *Constitutions*, Part 4: Consecrated Life, Article 4: The Vow of Obedience, n. 76. Translated by a team of members of the Religious Family of the Incarnate Word from the Spanish editions, "Constituciones del Instituto del Verbo Encarnado" and "Directorio de Espiritualidad del Instituto del Verbo Encarnado." Editorial assistance/support provided by Come Alive Communications, Inc., West Grove, PA.

At the end of the second hour on that subject, she became almost violent and shouted: “Now I’ll never join the Church after what I have heard about confessing sin.” I said to her: “There is no proportion whatever between what you have heard and the way you are acting. Have you ever had an abortion?” She hung her head in shame and admitted that she had.

That was the difficulty; it was not the sacrament of Penance. Later on I received her into the Church and baptized her first child. From my experience *it is always well never to pay attention to what people say, but rather why they say it. So often there is a rationalization of the way they live.*¹²

Behavior is belief-driven

The founder of the Jesuit Religious Order, St. Ignatius of Loyola, in his *Spiritual Exercises* has a powerful meditation called the *Two Standards*: the Standard of Satan and the Standard of Christ.

The Standard of Satan, which is moved by the Spirit of the World, is similar to St. Faustina’s vision of the two roads, one of them being the broad road to Hell.

One was broad, covered with sand and flowers, full of joy, music and all sorts of pleasures. People walked along it, dancing and enjoying themselves. They reached the end without realizing it. And at the end of the road there was a horrible precipice; that is, the abyss of hell. The souls fell blindly into it; as they walked, so they fell. And their number was so great that it was impossible to count them. (*Diary*, 153)¹³

The Spirit of the World, which is the Standard of Satan, is alive and well in our day. It assumed a modern face at the turn of the 20th century with the rise of modernism. Modernism transposes objective truth to the individual’s subjective standards of truth.

In 1907 St. Pope Pius X wrote his watershed encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*¹⁴ precisely to combat the errors of modernism. Catholic apologist Jimmy Akin summarizes modernism in 6 salient points:¹⁵

- 1. God cannot be known and proved to exist by natural reason**
- 2. External signs of revelation, such as miracles and prophecies, do not prove the divine origin of the Christian religion and are not suited to the intellect of modern man**
- 3. Christ did not found a Church**

¹² Fulton Sheen, [Treasure In Clay](#) (New York, NY: Image, 1982), 278-279. Italics mine.

¹³ St. Faustina’s vision of the Narrow Road to Heaven is as follows: “**And I saw the other road, or rather, a path, for it was narrow and strewn with thorns and rocks; and the people who walked along it had tears in their eyes, and all kinds of suffering befell them. Some fell down upon the rocks, but stood up immediately and went on. At the end of the road there was a magnificent garden filled with all sorts of happiness, and all these souls entered there. At the very first instant they forgot all their sufferings.**” (*Diary*, 153).

¹⁴ *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Doctrines of the Modernists, 09/08/1907.

https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis.html

¹⁵ Jimmy Akin, “Modernism.” 11/01/1994. <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/modernism>

4. The essential structure of the Church can change
5. The Church's dogmas continually evolve over time so that they can change from meaning one thing to meaning another
6. Faith is a blind religious feeling that wells up from the subconscious under the impulse of a heart and a will trained to morality, not a real assent of the intellect to divine truth learned by hearing it from an external source.

Pope Pius X calls modernism “**the synthesis of all heresies.**” (39). *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, citing verbatim St. Thomas Aquinas' definition of heresy, defines heresy as

a species of infidelity in man who, having professed the faith of Christ, corrupt its dogmas.”¹⁶

Fr. John Hardon, S.J. in his *Modern Catholic Dictionary* says:

In the Roman Catholic Church, heresy has a very specific meaning. Anyone who, after receiving baptism, while remaining nominally a Christian, pertinaciously denies or doubts any of the truths that must be believed with divine and Catholic faith is considered a heretic.¹⁷ The key word here is *pertinacious*.

In Pope Leo XIII's reported vision¹⁸ in which he heard a conversation between God and Satan over which century God would permit Satan to inflict the greatest damage upon the Catholic Church, Pope Leo heard which century would be chosen: the 20th century.¹⁹ History attests to the great evil and errors that were unleashed in the 20th century: two world wars and the rise of atheistic Communism which Our Lady of Fatima warned about in 1917. Pope Leo's vision led him to formulate the St. Michael the Archangel prayer, which, by God's grace, we recite here at Our Lady of Peace after every Mass.

A person doesn't wake up as a modernist. Modernism, like any tree, has roots. Modernism has at least three roots, all of which, when fused, produce the tree of atheism.

Philosophical

The first root of modernism is philosophical in nature. The philosophical underpinnings of modernism originates from the principle of *immanence*. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* says:

Immanence is the quality of any action which begins and ends within the agent.²⁰

¹⁶ *Summa Theologica* (ST) II-II, q. 11, a. 1. <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/heresy>

¹⁷ “Heresy.” <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/dictionary/index.cfm?id=33902>

¹⁸ Daniel Demers, “God's Chat with the Devil; The Vision of Pope Leo XIII,” 05/17/2018. <https://catholicstand.com/gods-chat-devil-popeleo/>

¹⁹ Fr. Chris Alar, MIC has a timely talk on an approved Marian apparition, “Our Lady of Good Success,” in which Our Lady infallibly prophesied the turmoil that would occur in the Church and in the world beginning in the mid-20th century. Fr. Chris Alar, MIC, “Explaining the Faith – Our Lady of Good Success: What it Means for Today.” 08/06/2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKKKBud4Ik4> (1:10:20).

²⁰ “Immanence.” Lat. *in manere*, to remain in. <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07682a.htm>

Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650)

The principle of immanence arose specifically in the 17th century through the philosophy of the French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650) who coined his famous dictum: **Cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am)**. In this philosophical principle, the starting point for *being, reality, truth* begins in the mind, *my* mind. Objective reality, therefore, is not the starting point, but rather my own subjective reality, relative to my own ideas, opinions, biases, whims, disordered desires, or what have you.

Decartes' *I think, therefore I am* principle thus opens wide the door to moral relativism: your truth is *your* truth, my truth is *my* truth, and objective moral truths that are binding on everyone do not exist. In his last homily as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger before becoming Pope Benedict XVI, Ratzinger called today's moral relativism the *Dictatorship of Relativism* "**whose ultimate goal,**" he says, "**consists solely of one's own ego and desires.**"²¹ A moral relativist will judge reality (and all contained therein, i.e. God's creation) as better or worse than it really is, but never *as it is*.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Decartes' *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) principle paved the way for another significant philosopher whose philosophy also greatly influenced modernism, namely, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). The *Catholic Encyclopedia*²² observes that "**the basis of modernist philosophy is Kantian**" in that it follows Kant's agnosticism,²³ which denies the role of reason in coming to a knowledge of spiritual realities.

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, he reduces pure intellectual knowledge to mere "**phenomenal or experiential intuition.**"²⁴ In other words, knowledge is experience—intellectual knowledge is only what I can experience with my own senses. In this worldview, reality is reduced to the horizontal plane; the vertical plane is non-existent.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)

The final significant figure I want to speak about whose philosophy greatly influenced modernism was another German philosopher: the 19th century German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. His treatise on how history progresses would become a foundational principle of the Frankfurt School, an intellectual movement which was instrumental in producing the Sexual Revolution.²⁵

²¹ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Homily, Mass for the Election of the Supreme Pontiff, St. Peter's Basilica, 04/18/2005.

https://www.vatican.va/gpII/documents/homily-pro-eligendo-pontifice_20050418_en.html

²² The following quotes on Kant taken from: "Modernism." VII. The Philosophical Origin and Consequences of Modernism. (1) The Origin. <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/modernism#vii-the-philosophical-origin-and-consequences-of-modernism>

²³ *Catholic Encyclopedia* says, "**The word *Agnostic* (Greek *ἀ*, privative + *gnostikos*, 'knowing') was coined by Professor Huxley in 1869 to describe the mental attitude of one who regarded as futile all attempts to know the reality corresponding to our ultimate scientific, philosophic, and religious ideas."** <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/agnosticism>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Cf. Noelle Mering, *Awake, Not Woke: A Christian Response to the Cult of Progressive Ideology* (Gastonia, North Carolina: TAN Books, 2021). Henceforth, *Awake, Not Woke*.

Hegel believed that for a society to attain to its ideal realization, it must have two opposing sides undergoing a dialectical process of tension. **“Dialectics”** is defined as **“a method of philosophical argument that involves some sort of contradictory process between opposing sides.”**²⁶ Hegel’s dialectic has a tripart structure: *thesis*, *antithesis*, *synthesis*. These 3 parts serve as 3 stages in the development of a society. In any given society, the *thesis* is the prevailing status quo (the current state of affairs). The *antithesis* is the internal ever-evolving fighting within the status quo. The *synthesis* is the result of the war between the thesis and the antithesis, which progresses onward to the new status quo. Once the synthesis is achieved, then another dialectical process of *thesis-antithesis-synthesis* begins anew.²⁷

Hegel’s dialectical system laid the groundwork for the rise of *progressivism*, which is just another name for modernism. In the name of *progress* (i.e. getting with the times, following the Spirit of the World), countless errors have abounded in Catholic moral theology and liturgy, marriage and family, education, technology, healthcare, politics, and society at large.

Progressivism is not progress (→) but regress (←)

Theological Roots

The second root of modernism is theological in nature. Pope Pius X speaks about what he calls **“theological immanence.”** This is modernism’s theological face. In this kind of immanence, the Pope says, **“God is immanent in man.” (19).** God is in me, or, worse, I am God. Theological immanence when applied to moral theology leads to disastrous consequences especially in relationship to the natural law, which we’ve seen for decades now.

The utter collapse in traditional Thomistic, Catholic moral theology gave rise to a theological movement called the *New Theology*²⁸ which arose in Europe at around the mid-20th century. The main error of the New Theology was its wholesale rejection or diminishing of the reality of original sin.

²⁶ *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Hegel’s Dialectics.” Substantive revision 10/02/2022. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hegel-dialectics/>

²⁷ Noelle Mering observes, “Hegel believed that all events and ideas are expressions of the spirit of a culture and that, through a process of internal tensions and resolutions, societies work through time toward an idealized, elevated cultural consciousness. Ideas interact with each other and evolve, not randomly, but toward a goal of complete cultural self-determination or self-realization through the development of mind and understanding. The process by which this development toward an ideal state occurs is what Hegel called the dialectic According to Hegelian dialectic, within every society and at any given time there is a status quo, or norm of circumstances and thought, that we tend to accept as products of our time. This status quo is what Hegel called the thesis (the way things are) The next stage is the growing awareness of, and agitation about, the internal conflict within the status quo, eventually leading to a revolt against the thesis. This stage is called the antithesis (the conflicting interest). The third stage is the synthesis: the result of the conflict between the thesis and the antithesis . . . the new order of things. Synthesis will have its own internal conflicts, and so it becomes the new thesis, and the process repeats itself. A tyrant might rule a state (thesis) until those under his rule realize their oppression and revolt (antithesis). They achieve a measure of freedom (synthesis) and begin the next stage of status quo (thesis). Hegel used the French Revolution as an example. First came the revolt against the French monarchy, which, during the Reign of Terror, included massacres and public executions in a glut of rage and revolution. After the Reign of Terror, there followed a constitutional society that seemingly better valued the rights of individual citizens. Each stage played a necessary role in the progress of history, justifying whatever violent means got them there. Guillotines, terror, and the bloodshed of innocents are justified for the sake of the progress of history through which a societal transformation of consciousness makes a god of the collective.” *Awake, Not Woke*, 28-30.

²⁸ Watch Fr. Chad Ripperger, “The Collapse of Moral Theology with Fr. Chad Ripperger.” 07/12/2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSt_3Z3RVi8&t=3115s

Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Humani Generis*²⁹ denounced this New Theology, saying:

Disregarding the Council of Trent, some pervert the very concept of original sin, along with the concept of sin in general as an offense against God, as well as the idea of satisfaction performed for us by Christ. Some even say that the doctrine of transubstantiation, based on an antiquated philosophic notion of substance, should be so modified that the real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist be reduced to a kind of symbolism. (26)

One of the negative effects of theological immanence is the rise of *Situation Ethics*. Situation ethics has been defined as **“the doctrine that denies the existence of intrinsically evil actions not justifiable in any situation {my comment: such as contraception, fornication, abortion, etc.}.”**³⁰ Situation ethics is a self-defeating moral system because it ultimately circles back to moral relativism. If, in the judgment of the morality of a given action, only my personal circumstances matter, and mind you, everyone’s circumstances vary, then Truth is just a meaningless buzzword that has no relevance and even repercussions for my own moral and spiritual life as well as the moral and spiritual lives of others.

Situation ethics seeks to deconstruct Catholic moral theology through the emotions. Gabriele Kuby in her masterpiece tome *The Global Sexual Revolution* remarks, **“One tool for deconstruction is situational ethics: extreme cases that tug at people’s heartstrings are turned into guidelines for fundamental decisions that overturn the whole society’s value system.”**³¹

St. Pope John Paul II (JP2) in his encyclical *Veritatis Splendor (The Splendor of Truth)*³² condemns and corrects the pernicious error of situation ethics by appealing to the importance of properly forming one’s conscience. I’ll break down what JP2 says into 3 salient points:

It is always from the truth that the dignity of conscience derives. In the case of the correct conscience, it is a question of the *objective truth* received by man; in the case of the erroneous conscience, it is a question of what man, mistakenly, *subjectively* considers to be true.

It is never acceptable to confuse a “subjective” error about moral good with the “objective” truth rationally proposed to man in virtue of his end

It is possible that the evil done as the result of invincible ignorance or a non-culpable error of judgment may not be imputable to the agent; but even in this case it does not cease to be an evil, a disorder in relation to the truth about the good. (63) (my comment: regarding the last sentence, there are subjective effects of sin as well as objective effects of sin. Sin is sin, whether venial or mortal)

²⁹ *Humani Generis* of the Holy Father Pius XII. 08/12/1950. https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_12081950_humani-generis.html

³⁰ Edward Pentin, “Pierantoni: ‘Gaudete et Exsultate’ Appears to Support Error of Situation Ethics.” 04/25/2018.

<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/pierantoni-gaudete-et-exsultate-appears-to-support-error-of-situational-ethics>

³¹ Gabriele Kuby, *The Global Sexual Revolution: Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Freedom* (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2015), translated by James Patrick Kirchner. Quote taken from: Ch. 7: Caste Studies of the Gender Revolution: The German Ethics Council and the “Third Gender.”

³² *Veritatis Splendor*, 08/06/1993. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) echoes JP2's remarks:

1755 A morally good act requires the goodness of the object, of the end, and of the circumstances together. An evil end corrupts the action, even if the object is good in itself. The *object of the choice* can by itself vitiate an act in its entirety. There are some concrete acts - such as fornication - that it is always wrong to choose, because choosing them entails a disorder of the will, that is, a moral evil.

1756 It is therefore an error to judge the morality of human acts by considering only the intention that inspires them or the circumstances (environment, social pressure, duress or emergency, etc.) which supply their context. There are acts which, in and of themselves, independently of circumstances and intentions, are always gravely illicit by reason of their object; such as blasphemy and perjury, murder and adultery. One may not do evil so that good may result from it. (my comment: the last sentence refers to the well-known axiom: the ends don't justify the means {cf. CCC 1759})

Another error related to situation ethics is the principle of the *Gradualness of the Law*. JP2 in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*³³ says that this is the principle that holds that there are “**different degrees or forms of precept in God's law for different individuals and situations.**” (34). So this means then that the commandment do not kill or do not committ adultery, etc. allows for a gradation in gravity solely determined by my subjective situation.

The *Law of Gradualness*, on the other hand, is, says JP2, “**step-by-step advance.**” (34). This law is healthy and helpful in that it encourages people to grow closer to God in a *step-by-step*, gradual way, one that is suited to their capabilities. The Law of Gradualness does not *change or tweak the Law*. Applying the Law of Gradualness to marriage, JP2 says, “**Married people cannot however look on the law as merely an ideal to be achieved in the future: they must consider it as a command of Christ the Lord to overcome difficulties with constancy.**” (34)

In 1997 the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family even issued a handbook (called *vademecum* in Latin) for priests hearing Confession. In it, it gave the following warning for Confessors:

The pastoral “law of gradualness”, not to be confused with the “gradualness of the law” which would tend to diminish the demands it places on us, consists of requiring a *decisive break* with sin together with a *progressive path* towards total union with the will of God and with his loving demands. (3:9)³⁴

³³ *Familiaris Consortio* of Pope John Paul II. . . on the role of the Christian Family in the Modern World. 11/22/1981 (Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King). https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio.html

³⁴ Pontifical Council for the Family, *Vademecum for Confessors Concerning Some Aspects of the Morality of Conjugal Life*. Ch. 3. *Pastoral Guidelines for Confessors*, n. 9. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_12021997_vademecum_en.html. In the passage, footnote n. 43 says: “Married people too are called upon to progress unceasingly in their moral life with the support of a sincere and active desire to gain ever better knowledge of the values enshrined in and fostered by the law of God. They must also be supported by an upright and generous willingness to embody these values in their concrete decisions. They cannot, however, look on the law as merely an ideal to be achieved in the future: they must consider it as a command of Christ the Lord to overcome difficulties with constancy. And so what is known as ‘the law of gradualness’ or step-by-step advance cannot be identified with ‘gradualness of the law’, as if there were different degrees or forms of precept in God's law for different individuals and situations. In God's plan, all husbands and wives are called

The constant Tradition of the Church has always taught that if one is conscious of being in a state of mortal sin, this person is NOT to receive Holy Communion without having first received sacramental absolution in the Sacrament of Confession.³⁵

JP2 in apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*³⁶ says:

Care will have to be taken not to reduce mortal sin to an act of ‘fundamental option’—as is common said today—against God, intending thereby an explicit and formal contempt for God or neighbor. For mortal sin . . . such a choice already includes contempt for the divine law . . . Thus the fundamental orientation can be radically changed by individual acts.³⁷ (17)

In *Veritatis Splendor*, JP2 condemns the *Fundamental Option* theory which says that I can be in a state of grace while continuing to make choices and engage in behavior which are grievously offensive to God because in my *heart of hearts*, my fundamental option, I love God. JP2 explains:

By virtue of a fundamental option, remain faithful to God independently of whether or not certain of his choices and his acts are in conformity with specific moral norms or rules. By virtue of a primordial option for charity, that individual could continue to be morally good, persevere in God's grace and attain salvation, even if certain of his specific kinds of behaviour were deliberately and gravely contrary to God's commandments as set forth by the Church. (68)

People who live according to the fundamental option theory may say things like:

- I know fornication is a mortal sin, but we’re engaged and *almost* married so God will understand that we love each other.
- A husband who says I know I cheated on my wife or I know I have a problem physically and verbally abusing her, but I love her.
- A Catholic spouse who knows contraception is wrong and yet due to undue fear and anxiety about having more children consents to the temptation to use some form of contraception.

in marriage to holiness, and this lofty vocation is fulfilled to the extent that the human person is able to respond to God’s command with serene confidence in God's grace and in his or her own will. On the same lines, it is part of the Church’s pedagogy that husbands and wives would first recognize clearly the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* as indicating the norm for the exercise of their sexuality, and that they should endeavour to establish the conditions necessary for observing that norm.’ (John Paul II, Apost. Exhort. *Familiaris Consortio*, November 22, 1981, n. 34).”

³⁵ The Code of Canon Law says: “A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to . . . receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess; in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition which includes the resolution of confessing as soon as possible.” (CIC 916)

³⁶ *Reconciliation and Penance*. 12/02/1984. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_02121984_reconciliatio-et-paenitentia.html

³⁷ Cf. CCC 1855: “Mortal Sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God’s law; it turns man away from God... by preferring an inferior good to him. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, though it offends and wounds it.” CCC 1861: “Mortal sin... results in... the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God’s forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ’s kingdom and the eternal death of hell.” CCC 1862: “One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or complete consent.” CCC 1863: “Venial sin weakens charity... and... merits temporal punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin. However, venial sin does not break the covenant with God. With God’s grace, it is humanly repairable. ‘Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently, eternal happiness.’”

- **A remarried divorcee who was formerly married in the Catholic Church, then later civilly divorced, and entered into another romantic relationship or invalid civil marriage without having received an annulment, and is continuing to receive Holy Communion even though they haven't repented and ceased from their sinful behavior.**
- **I know it's a sin of sacrilege to receive Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin, but I love Jesus and felt like I "needed" to receive Him to feel complete and that I fully participated in the Holy Mass.**

When the traditional Catholic understanding of mortal sin is rejected confusion ensues. Today, we're witnessing this confusion in marriage and family in spades. Sr. Lucia warned in the 1980s that the decisive battle between Jesus and Satan will be over marriage and family.³⁸

Cultural Roots

The final root of modernism is cultural in nature. Philosophy and theology shape culture. Here we must recall the cultural movement called the *Enlightenment* or, more precisely, *Endarkenment*. The Enlightenment was an anti-religious, anti-Catholic intellectual movement that began in the 17th century and reached its apex in the 18th century, particularly with the *French Revolution* of 1789.

This Revolution reached a boiling point during the *Reign of Terror* of 1793 wherein many priests and religious were killed³⁹—the heroic Carmelite nuns of Compiègne (Com-Peen) who were martyred and helped put an end to the French Revolution cannot be forgotten; pray for us!⁴⁰

In any case, going back to the French Revolution, on January 2nd, 1793, stalwart insurrections broke out in the La Vendée, Anjou area of Brittany. The martyrs in the Vendée, some of whom were children, remained faithful to the teachings of Christ's Church, the Catholic Church, and they were killed for their heroism in the face of death.⁴¹ Would that we would all imitate the valor of these holy martyrs in our times. Dr. Joseph Stuart, the chairman of history at the University of Mary, wrote a new book on the Enlightenment entitled *Rethinking the Enlightenment: Faith in the Age of Reason* and in it he says,

The Enlightenment did not simply oppose reason to faith. Anti-Christian rationalism fueling the French Revolution was not the whole story. ... Since the Enlightenment was a cultural movement and not just a set of ideas labeled 'anti-Christian,' a wide population — not simply elite thinkers — participated in it.⁴²

³⁸ CNA Staff, "Fatima visionary predicted 'final battle' would be over marriage, family." 10/13/2021.

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/34155/fatima-visionary-predicted-final-battle-would-be-over-marriage-family>

³⁹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "French Revolution" <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/french-revolution>

⁴⁰ CNA Staff, "Who are the Martyrs of Compiègne?" 07/17/2020. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/45217/who-are-the-martyrs-of-compiègne>

⁴¹ Cf. St. Pope John Paul II's message in France to young people on 09/19/1996. In this message, he mentions the martyrs of Vendée. <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/martyrs-in-the-vendee-courageously-remained-faithful-to-christs-8817>

⁴² John Grondelski, "How Catholics Can—and Should—Engage Modernity." 08/21/2022. <https://www.ncregister.com/features/how-catholics-can-and-should-engage-modernity>

The point Dr. Stuart is making is that the entire cultural milieu of the 18th century was amicable to the principles of the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinking was in the air; it was in vogue. Hence why the Enlightenment was able to take off as it did.

This is why the evangelization of the culture, which is what the charism of the religious order I'm a part of (the Institute of the Incarnate Word) is all about, is so crucial, even more so today in our post-Christian pagan era, an era which has been evangelized by the Gospel but now rejects it.

In the Constitutions of my religious order, it explains that the **“specific and singular end”** of our charism is the evangelization of the culture: **“to work . . . so that the ‘very power of the Gospel should permeate**

- **thought patterns,**
- **standards of judgment,**
- **and norms of behavior.**⁴³⁴⁴

All of you here can apply our charism's specific & singular end to your own vocation, and in so doing you will help to evangelize and transform this Culture of Death into a Culture of Life. Now the above 3 roots of modernism—philosophical, theological, and cultural—all stem from the deadly sin of pride. **“Truly,”** says St. Pope Pius X, **“there is no road which leads so directly and so quickly to Modernism as pride.” (40).** The Pope continues:

- **It is pride which puffs them up with that vainglory which allows them to regard themselves as the sole possessors of knowledge, and makes them say, elated and inflated with presumption, “We are not as the rest of men,” and which, lest they should seem as other men, leads them to embrace and to devise novelties even of the most absurd kind.**
- **It is pride which rouses in them the spirit of disobedience and causes them to demand a compromise between authority and liberty. It is owing to their pride that they seek to be the reformers of others while they forget to reform themselves, and that they are found to be utterly wanting in respect for authority, even for the supreme authority.**
- **When a Catholic layman or a priest forgets the precept of the Christian life which obliges us to renounce ourselves if we would follow Christ and neglects to tear pride from his heart, then it is he who most of all is a fully ripe subject for the errors of Modernism. (40)**

The deadly sin of *pride* in our day—I emphasize the word *pride* to make a point if you know what I mean—has made today's spirit of modernism, the spirit of the world, even deadlier.

Modernism leads to Atheism →

⁴³ Apostolic Constitution, *Sapientia Christiana*, of the Pope John Paul II on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, 1. 04/15/1979 (Solemnity of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ). https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15041979_sapientia-christiana.html

⁴⁴ Institute of the Incarnate Word, *Constitutions and Directory of Spirituality, Constitutions*, Part 2: Nature and Purpose of the Institute, Article 2: Common, Proper, and Specific End, n. 26, p. 27.

Atheism

As I said earlier, the above 3 roots of modernism, all rooted in pride as we just saw, work together to produce the tree of atheism. **“Atheism,”** says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, is a **“system of thought which is formally opposed to theism.”**⁴⁵ Theism is the system of thought that believes in a God. Atheism is the total negation of theism. An atheist rejects God. The Italian Thomist philosopher Cornelio Fabro uses the apt term, which is also the title of his book, *God in Exile*, to describe the nature of modern atheism whose roots trace back to the Cartesian Cogito (I think, therefore I am) principle. Our modern culture has exiled God like never before.

Today’s atheism is analogous to what I would call a liquid dragon or, better put, liquid leviathan. This dragon or leviathan is atheistic in nature, but this nature is even more sophisticated. Cardinal Robert Sarah calls today’s atheism a **“fluid atheism,”** which he says **“is an insidious, dangerous sickness, even though its first symptoms seem benign [it] runs through our veins. It never says its name, but it infiltrates everywhere.”**⁴⁶ Today’s fluid atheism, like water, shape-shifts, in a swift, subtle, and slithery-like way, according to the prevailing *zeitgeist* or spirit of the age. This is why it is so hard to detect and kill.

Unlike the militant atheism of the 20th century, the militancy of today’s 21st century *New Atheism* is more clandestine and cunning as it is more ideological and cultural in nature: Science, Big-Brother, Big-Tech, Big-Pharma, the Me2 movement, and now, Transgenderism and Transhumanism. Cardinal Sarah remarks:

In the twenty-first century, totalitarianism has a more pernicious face. Its name is the idolatry of complete and absolute freedom, which is manifested in its most aggressive forms in gender ideology and transhumanism. Nazism, Fascism, and Communism have terrible successors.⁴⁷

Kristen Van Uden, an expert in the field of religious persecution of Catholics under atheistic communist regimes, was recently interviewed on *Respect Life Radio* (10/10/2022)⁴⁸ about atheism’s origins. She also recently wrote a related article on the *Catholic Exchange* website⁴⁹ and in it she cites a 2022 [study](#), which found that **“roughly 50% of the populations of most Western countries identify as atheist or its noncommittal cousin, ‘agnostic.’”** She also cites the 1971 book *The Gods of Atheism* written by Fr. Vincent Miceli which studied the 17 “godfathers” of atheism, one of them being the notorious figure and father of Marxism and Communism: Karl Marx. She observes that the common thread in the lives of these notorious atheist godfathers was **“a shared practice of Humanism—a man-centered religion that traces its roots to the so-called Enlightenment.”** Fr. Michel aptly says, **“Atheists, like saints, are made not born.”** Kristen explains the four steps that produce an atheist.

⁴⁵ “Atheism.” <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/atheism>

⁴⁶ Robert Cardinal Sarah, *The Day Is Now Far Spent* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2019), translated by Michael J. Miller. Quote taken from Part IV Rediscovering Hope: The Practice of the Christian Virtues, Ch. 18 What Must We Do? Henceforth, Sarah.

⁴⁷ Sarah, *Ibid.*, Part III The Fall of Truth, Moral Decadence, and Bad Political Habits, Ch. 8 Hatred, Ridicule, and Cynicism, Nicolas Diat: How do you view the various twentieth-century forms of totalitarianism and their posthumous children?

⁴⁸ Listen at: <https://www.podbean.com/ew/pb-s3947-12e1c71>

⁴⁹ “How to Make an Atheist.” 09/16/2022. <https://catholicexchange.com/how-to-make-an-atheist/>

1. **Worship the Self** – She says, “Disordered self-love is the easiest and most failsafe method of atheism.”
 - a. **Practical Atheism Precedes Doctrinal Atheism** – She says, “Fr. Miceli explains that atheists often begin as lukewarm believers. The obstinate mortal sinner who prizes self-will above the will of God is already acting as a ‘practical atheist,’ as he terms it. The raw material of atheism is there, and, if the man does not repent, the logical conclusion of his practical rejection of God is an eventual dogmatic rejection of God.” She adds, “The impulse toward atheism is in all of us—it’s a consequence of concupiscence. But the difference that characterizes our post-Enlightenment age is the denial of the reality of this sin of pride, and subsequent enshrining of self-love as a quasi-religious principle.”
2. **Attack the Dignity of God** – She says, “The calculated toppling of Christendom, through a series of events that include the Protestant revolutions and the French Revolution, has accomplished the sad state of affairs in which atheism reigns.”
3. **Sow Doubt** – She says, “Making an idol of science is a surefire way to plant enough doubts into a man’s mind that he rejects metaphysics on principle and denies the possibility of faith in God altogether.”
4. **Promise Utopia** – She says, “Utopia is the perennial false promises of communism.”

Atheism leads to Communism →

Communism⁵⁰

Nearly 100 years ago, Pope Pius XI asked Bishop-now Ven. Archbishop Fulton Sheen to assiduously study Marxism and Communism in order to expose their fallacies in the public arena.⁵¹ Sheen is *the* specialist on Communism *par excellence*.

In Communism, the Spirit of the World is a Satanic Specter,⁵² one that has been hovering over our world since the Fatima event in 1917, and doesn’t seem to be going away anytime soon.

⁵⁰ In my view, exorcist Fr. Chad Ripperger’s conference, “Spiritual Warfare and Communism,” is the most thorough treatment of the nature of Communism. 12/01/2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeXsTgqBKeY> (2:50:04).

⁵¹ Daniel Demarco, “Fulton Sheen and the Persistent Specter of Communism.” 07/13/2021. <https://www.ncregister.com/commentaries/fulton-sheen-and-the-persistent-specter-of-communism>

⁵² Dr. Paul Kengor’s observation is on-point: “Any ideology with a trail of rot like this is not of God but of the forces against God. It is not of God’s creation but a fallen angel’s anti-creation. It is not of the light but of dark. No other No other political ideology has produced as much wretched poverty, rank repression, and sheer violence. In country after country, implemented in varying forms across wide-ranging nationalities, traditions, backgrounds, faiths, and ethnicities, communism coldly and consistently violated the full sweep of most basic human rights, from property to press, from speech to assembly, from conscience to religion In both theoretical and practical form, communism deprives individuals of their unalienable rights. It is a totalitarian, atheistic ideology. Communism’s chief form of redistribution is repression, crime, and murder The communist culture of death has been prolific. Whether by bullet, by starvation, by exposure to the elements, by war and terror against internal citizens and ‘enemies’ of the state, or by whatever means. How many victims? Truly only God knows [Communism is] a long march of destruction, deceit, manipulation, and infiltration. It does not stop with Karl Marx, who was only the beginning. It merely starts with Marx. He was the launching point for an assault on religion that eventually included a penetration of churches worldwide and possibly even seminaries, including within the Catholic Church, and most certainly within Protestant denominations. That infiltration had terrible success in communist countries, of course, but its tentacles also reached into free nations, including the United States of America.” Paul Kengor, PhD, *The Devil and Karl Marx: Communism’s Long March of Death, Deception, and Infiltration* (Gastonia, North Carolina: TAN Books, 2020), Preface: “The Dance of Death”: The Communist Killing Machine. Henceforth, *The Devil and Karl Marx*.

Sheen, responding to the question *What is Communism*, says, **“It is a groan of despair the logical development of civilization which for the last 400 years has been forgetting God.”**⁵³ In his classic work *Communism and the Conscience of the West*,⁵⁴ Sheen makes the observation that Communism comes into our world like a vulture filling **“the nest of a robin.”**⁵⁵ The Vulture of Communism only begins to hover over a civilization, says Sheen, **“whenever”** it **“begins to die morally or spiritually.”** **“Communism,”** he concludes, **“is the scavenger of decaying civilizations.”**⁵⁶

Communism’s fatal error is that its entire anthropology (that is, its understanding of man) is erroneous. In vain, it tries to fill the human heart, which has an God-sized hole, with *infinity and beyond* in terms of \$\$\$ and material possessions. Communism will never solve the human problem because Communism by its very nature is anti-human as well as **“anti-religious”**⁵⁷ (22), says Pope Pius XI.

The Specter of Communism has now morphed into what can be aptly dubbed: Cultural Communism.⁵⁸ Cultural Communism needs the ideologies of *The Sexual Revolution*⁵⁹ to survive.⁶⁰ These ideologies have deep roots in the Frankfurt School also called Critical Theory, founded in 1932, and whose aim, it is said, was to **“develop Marxist studies in Germany.”**⁶¹ When the Nazis closed it down, the School found its way into the United States, where it found a warm welcome at Columbia University in New York City.

A significant figure who significantly influenced the Frankfurt school was the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci. Dr. Paul Kengor in his book *The Devil and Karl Marx*⁶² observes, **“Gramsci . . . looked to culture Gramsci himself foresaw societal transformation coming about by what others have characterized as a Gramscian ‘long march through the institutions.’**⁶³ **That is, the institutions of the culture”**⁶⁴—culture referring to academia, social-media, and even churches.⁶⁵

⁵³ *The New York Times*, 03/16/1936.

⁵⁴ Fulton J. Sheen, *Communism and the Conscience of the West* (Indiana/New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, 1948). Henceforth, *Communism and the Conscience of the West*.

⁵⁵ *Communism and the Conscience of the West*, 164.

⁵⁶ This was Sheen’s response to the question: “*Bishop Sheen, please tell us a few things you said about that stern cousin communism on your television show.*” Joseph Pronechen, “Archbishop Sheen and the Popes vs. Socialism and Communism.” 03/11/2020.

<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/archbishop-sheen-and-the-popes-vs-socialism-and-communism>

⁵⁷ *Divini Redemptoris*, Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Atheistic Communism. 03/19/1937 (Feast of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church). https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19370319_divini-redemptoris.html

⁵⁸ Cf. E.M. McCarthy, “The Cultural Communists and Our Church,” 06/26/2018. <https://www.catholic365.com/article/9014/the-cultural-communists-and-our-church.html> Henceforth McCarthy.

⁵⁹ Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, the Foundress of the Ruth Institute, dedicated to healing victims of the sexual revolution, uses the term *The Sexual State*, which is also the title of her recent book. <https://thesexualstate.com/>. **In her book, she argues that the sexual revolution is founded upon three ideologies: 1) the Contraceptive Ideology, 2) the Divorce Ideology, and 3) the Gender Ideology.**

⁶⁰ How so? Dr. Paul Kengor says, **“Cultural Marxists understand that the revolution requires a cultural war over an economic war. Whereas the West—certainly America—is not vulnerable to a revolt of the downtrodden trade-union masses, it is eminently vulnerable when it comes to, say, sex or porn.”** Kengor, *The Devil and Karl Marx*. Part 6: Conclusion, Ch. 15: “Fundamental Transformation”: Marx’s Enduring Specter.

⁶¹ “The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory.” <https://iep.utm.edu/critical-theory-frankfurt-school/>

⁶² Paul Kengor, PhD, *The Devil and Karl Marx: Communism’s Long March of Death, Deception, and Infiltration* (Gastonia, North Carolina: TAN Books, 2020).

⁶³ Dr. Kengor says, **“There is debate over who first used the phrase ‘long march through the institutions’ to describe Gramsci’s goal and strategy. Most current online sources credit a West German (naturally) Marxist writer and student activist of the 1960s named Rudi Dutschke.”** Kengor, *The Devil and Karl Marx*, footnote no. 673. Noelle Mering remarks, **“The operatives of the Frankfurt School developed their own strategy of marching through the institutions in three main areas: the family, the academy, and the culture.”** Mering, *Awake, Not Woke*, 37.

⁶⁴ Kengor, *The Devil and Karl Marx*, Part 6: Conclusion, Ch. 15: “Fundamental Transformation”: Marx’s Enduring Specter.

⁶⁵ Noelle Mering says that Gramsci **“contended through his concept of ‘Cultural Hegemony’ that societal power is not just through economic means but also through cultural domination.”** Mering, *Awake, Not Woke*, 36.

Today's Cultural Communism has morphed into a cultural juggernaut which today is known as the Cancel Culture, a culture which "cancels" and "criticizes" all of the prevailing traditional Judeo-Christian cultural institutions that have formed the foundation of Western Civilization.⁶⁶

Cultural Communism (Brainchild #1 – Big Brother): *Woke Ideology or Wokeness*⁶⁷

Woke ideology or wokeness comes from the term *woke*, which, according to one expert, has been defined as **"the state of being alert and attuned to the layers of pervasive oppression in society."**⁶⁸ Originally, the term woke began with the issue of racism, but now it has expanded to include all forms of societal oppression against marriage, family, love, human sexuality, gender, etc. Woke ideology is the direct consequence of the errors of the sexual revolution, errors whose roots can be traced back to the errors of Russia which Our Lady of Fatima warned about. One of these errors is:

Cultural Communism (Brainchild #2 – Little Sister): *Radical Feminism*

Dr. Carrie Gress in her timely book *The Anti-Mary Exposed*⁶⁹ observes that the errors of Russia that Our Lady of Fatima warned about, namely, **"that human nature can be changed—melted seamlessly into the promises of the sexual revolution."**⁷⁰ She further points out that that **"the thrust behind feminist ideology is that in order for men and women to have equal treatment, they must become exactly the same."**⁷¹ The chief error in radical feminism is that it seeks to negate and reject, even in a violent way, the opposite sex as something unnecessary, superfluous, and even worthy of contempt. This is why the typical *poster child* radical feminist, often seen among the glitterati, is typically *pro-contraception* and *pro-abortion*, and stridently so. Contraception and abortion, which JP2 in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)* says are **"fruits of the same tree"**⁷² **(13)**, are the two foundational pillars of radical feminism. Radical feminism comes in waves. Its coming to power was the first wave.

The second wave, which we're seeing now, came as a result of the Spirit of the World devouring the first wave. The Spirit of the World behind today's Second-Wave Feminism is a powerful movement, one which, as Dr. Gress says, sees **"children [as] the enemy."**⁷³

⁶⁶ E.M. McCarthy observes, **"The new Cultural Communists define their control by the very word 'freedom' and yet they smash the freedom of religious believers."** McCarthy.

⁶⁷ Noelle Mering says, **"Where the very nature of God is ordered, unitive, and generative, the spirit of this counter movement is at its core the very nature of the devil: chaotic, divisive, sterile."** Mering, *Awake, Not Woke*, 9. In recent related news, former Hawaii congresswoman and 2020 presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard made her shocking announcement that she was leaving the Democratic party due to a variety of reasons, including its hostility to "people of faith" and its "wokeness." Edie Heipel of CAN, "Tulsi Gabbard leaves Democratic Party, cites 'wokeness' and hostility to 'people of faith.'" 10/11/2022. <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2022/10/12/tulsi-gabbard-leaves-democratic-party-cites-wokeness-and-hostility-to-people-of-faith/>

⁶⁸ Mering, *Awake, Not Woke*, 9.

⁶⁹ Carrie Gress, *The Anti-Mary Exposed: Rescuing the Culture from Toxic Femininity* (Charlotte, North Carolina: TAN Books, 2019). Henceforth, *The Anti-Mary Exposed*.

⁷⁰ Gress, *Anti-Mary Exposed*, Part II: Anti-Mary, Inc., Ch. 4: The Big Lie: Changing Human Nature, *The Errors Go Viral*.

⁷¹ Gress, *The Anti-Mary Exposed*, Ibid.

⁷² *Evangelium Vitae* (On the Value and Inviolability of Human Life). https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html

⁷³ Gress, *Anti-Mary Exposed*, Introduction.

But by the look of things it would seem that Second-Wave Feminism is only the beginning, the tip of the iceberg. Could we as a culture be moving towards an even more radical kind of feminism—Third-Wave Feminism? **“Radical feminism,”** says Dr. Gress, **“regularly promotes the ‘nature can be changed’ lie.”**⁷⁴ For radical feminism, Dr. Gress continues, **“Our infinitely changing human nature has made both men and women obsolete. Men have become unnecessary and even the enemy because ‘the future is female.’”**⁷⁵ Second-Wave Feminism opened the door to today’s transgenderism and transhumanism. What exists beyond transhumanism? When will the insanity stop?

As our culture and world continue to descend further into moral depravity and darkness, let us seriously reflect on Our Lady of Fatima’s words: **“Do not offend the Lord our God anymore, because He is already so much offended.”**

In the 3rd Secret of Fatima, the Fatima children saw a terrifying destroyer angel who, with a flaming sword,⁷⁶ was about to set the world ablaze, but the heavenly brilliance that emanated from Our Lady’s right hand immediately extinguished the flames. Our Lady of Fatima also warned about various nations being annihilated—could this annihilation come about through a global nuclear war?⁷⁷

If the Vulture of Communism soon devours our world through a global nuclear war,⁷⁸ will we be ready to meet our Maker? Fulton Sheen in his book *A Declaration of Dependence*⁷⁹ observes that war is a Judgment of God.

By a judgment of God is meant the execution on man who is permitted to suffer the consequences of his own sins.⁸⁰

God chastises nations by war to correct their iniquity, to move them to saving amendment, just as a surgeon cuts a living organism to restore it to health.⁸¹

⁷⁴ Gress, *Anti-Mary Exposed*, Part II: Anti-Mary, Inc., Ch. 4: The Big Lie: Changing Human Nature, *The Errors Go Viral*.

⁷⁵ Gress, *Ibid*.

⁷⁶ In the Vatican’s official statement on the Fatima apparition, the-then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, said in his Theological Commentary, **“The angel with the flaming sword on the left of the Mother of God recalls similar images in the Book of Revelation. This represents the threat of judgement which looms over the world. Today the prospect that the world might be reduced to ashes by a sea of fire no longer seems pure fantasy: man himself, with his inventions, has forged the flaming sword. The vision then shows the power which stands opposed to the force of destruction - the splendour of the Mother of God and, stemming from this in a certain way, the summons to penance. In this way, the importance of human freedom is underlined: the future is not in fact unchangeably set, and the image which the children saw is in no way a film preview of a future in which nothing can be changed. Indeed, the whole point of the vision is to bring freedom onto the scene and to steer freedom in a positive direction. The purpose of the vision is not to show a film of an irrevocably fixed future. Its meaning is exactly the opposite: it is meant to mobilize the forces of change in the right direction. Therefore we must totally discount fatalistic explanations of the «secret», such as, for example, the claim that the would-be assassin of 13 May 1981 was merely an instrument of the divine plan guided by Providence and could not therefore have acted freely, or other similar ideas in circulation. Rather, the vision speaks of dangers and how we might be saved from them.”** *The Message of Fatima*. Year 2000. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000626_message-fatima_en.html

⁷⁷ Joseph Pronechen of the *National Catholic Register* recently wrote a timely article examining the real possibility of a nuclear war in light of the messages of Our Lady of Fatima (1917) and Our Lady of Akita (1973). He says, **“How can we continue to ignore or fail to respond to Our Lady’s warnings of 49 years ago as the news blares about nuclear bomb threats from Russia?”** Joseph Pronechen, “Fatima’s Miracle of the Sun and the Warnings of Akita.” 10/13/2022. <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/fatima-and-akita-connections>

⁷⁸ On March 16th, 2022, Pope Francis at the end of his Wednesday general audience said the following: **“Our imagination appears increasingly concentrated on the representation of a final catastrophe that will extinguish us — what may happen with a possible nuclear war. The ‘day after’ — if there will still be days and human beings — we will have to start again from scratch.”** Courtney Mares/CAN, “Pope Francis: After a Nuclear War, Humanity Would Have to ‘Start from Scratch.’” 03/16/2022. <https://www.ncregister.com/cna/pope-francis-after-a-nuclear-war-humanity-would-have-to-start-from-scratch>

⁷⁹ Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, *A Declaration of Dependence* (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2022). Henceforth *A Declaration of Dependence*.

⁸⁰ Sheen, *A Declaration of Dependence*, 74.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

The youngest Fatima visionary, St. Jacinta, learned from Our Lady of Fatima that **“wars are the punishments for sin.”**⁸² If, therefore, we want to heal and better the current state of affairs in the Church, our culture, and our world, we need to stop following the Spirit of the World and repent and believe in the Gospel.

How to Combat the Spirit of the World?

- **Always Be in a State of Grace**
- **Actively Engage in the Battle Against the Spirit of the World (via Virtue-Building, which counters your Predominant Fault, which is the friend of the Spirit of the World):**
 - In the Constitutions of my religious order, it says that **“we need an explicit decision not to make a pact with, compromise with, capitulate with, negotiate with, surrender to or give in to, the spirit of the world.”**⁸³
- **Sacraments:**
 - **Eucharist (at least every Sunday/Holy Days of Obligation)**
 - **Confession (at least 1x/month, ideally within the context of the nine First Fridays and Five First Saturdays devotions)**
- **Prayer (especially the Holy Rosary):**
 - Sr. Lucia says, **“The Most Holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given new efficacy in the recitation of the Holy Rosary. She has given this efficacy to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families ... that cannot be solved by the Rosary.”**⁸⁴
 - In the 15th promises of the Rosary,
 - **Promise #3 says, “The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell. It will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.”**
 - **Promise #4 says, “The recitation of the Rosary will cause virtue and good works to flourish. It will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God. It will withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things.”**

⁸² Found in: Fr. John de Marchi, I.M.C., *The True Story of Fatima* (St. Paul: MN: Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1952), 158-159.

⁸³ *Directory of Spirituality*, Ch. 2: The Mystery of the Incarnate Word, Article 2: His Earthly Life, e. Public Life, Works, n. 118, p. 245.

⁸⁴ Kathleen N. Hattrup, “There’s no problem, no matter how difficult, that the Rosary can’t solve.” 01/14/2020.