Boston Catholic Journal

NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

The Popularity of Francis

is not a good sign … after all



(an emerging picture ...)

It has been nearly three years into the Papacy of Francis and we have written nothing until now. Why? *You* be the judge ... (and, yes, actually you can).

If you are on good terms with the world, you *probably* are not on good terms with God. (Saint James.4.4)

The lives of the Saints are striking testimony to this. They have not been welcomed, and most often reproached, exiled, despised, and outcast. From Saint Paul to Saint Athanasius, from Saint John of the Cross to Blessed José Luis Sánchez del Río, to name a few. But do not take our word on it: there is a greater Authority:

> "If the world hates you, know you, that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember My word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." (St. John 15.18-20)

"Unprecedented popularity"?

> *"Pope Francis is the 266th pope and **history has seen 37 false or antipopes**," he [Cardinal George Pell] wrote. "**The story of the popes is stranger than fiction**," the cardinal wrote, and today "we*

> *have one of the more unusual popes in history,* ***enjoying almost unprecedented popularity****.”*[1]

The Lingering — and discredited — “Encounter Group” mentality of the 60s

This, of course, is not to make a judgment, nor to imply one either by Cardinal Pell or us.

We do, however, question the implicit paradigm of *Encounter Groups* — “Often associated with the radical social upheaval of the 1960s” [2] — that Francis appears to endorse on a massive scale, insisting that,

“the culture of encounter that is the foundation of peace.” [3]

And all this time we thought — and the Church taught — that it was *God*, *Christ*, the P*rince of Peace*.

Not an Encounter — with Christ

It is important to note that *Pope Francis is not speaking of an encounter with* ***Christ*** — that is to say, an encounter with God and the subsequent conversion

experience to Jesus Christ together with the peace that attends this conversion (for that, after all, would be "proselytism," or the turning of others to Christianity and the Church which he openly and famously deplores as "nonsense") — but with other "*cultures*."

What an odd notion. We wonder if the Holy Father plans Encounter Groups with ISIS and Radical Islam — clearly another "culture" altogether — and after absorbing *their* thoughts on the matter arriving at that "foundation of peace" *through* his policy of the "culture of encounter". In this case — and it is an important one — God cannot be in the mix. After all, by what name would both cultures call Him (and your head may well depend on your answer), and so arrive at peace? Perhaps we could compromise on the Name of God since we have already compromised on so much.

This is no rhetorical question. Pope Francis's mantra, hearkening back to the clarion of Vatican II, is clear:

"A *culture of encounter* demands that we be ready not only to give, but also *to receive*." [5]

Of course, there is very little emphasis — in fact, there is *none at all* — on ***giving*** *to non-Catholics the great gift, beauty, wisdom, and truth of our Catholic Faith* —

only on ***our readiness to receive*** and to *incorporate* into our increasingly adulterated Catholic identity the heretical and/or pagan beliefs and rituals of those outside the Catholic Faith. Somehow the willingness to embrace what is *false* and *contrary to our own Faith* is to be seen as a testimony to our "benevolence," rather than evidence of our stupidity.

This entire narrative offends both faith and reason ... no matter how *non-judgmental* we must "*correctly*" be in order to offend no one in the name of Christ. Ecumenism demands this submission to the world. Christ calls us away from it. [6]

Geoffrey K. Mondello
Editor
Boston Catholic Journal

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[1] Cardinal George Pell (Catholic News Service. October 24, 2014)

[2] http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/encounter+group

[3] (Vatican Radio - Pope at Mass: Culture of encounter is the foundation of peace) Homily by Pope Francis May 22 2013

[4] "Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the

consummation of the world." (St. Matthew 28.19)

[5] http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/pope-francis-all-media-must-serve-a-culture-of-encounter/

[6] St. John John 12:31, 15:18-21, John 17:14-16, John 17:16, 18:36, 1 John 2:15-17, Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2, St. James 4:4, etc.

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Editor
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