

TRANSCRIPT: SSPX PODCAST EPISODE #29 – COLLEGIALITY

-Don Mauro Tranquillo-

*Special thanks to Miss Katherine Gallagher for her transcription work*

ANDREW: Well welcome back to the SSPX Podcasts, and we are very happy to welcome for the first time to this podcast and to the crisis series Fr. Tranquillo, Don Tranquillo. Hello Father, how are you?

DON TRANQUILLO: Hi, nice to meet you. Fine, thank you.

ANDREW: You as well. And it's a pleasure to have you, and for those people who may not know who you are, this is the first time we have met as well, could you tell us a little bit about who you are and what you do, Father?

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes, I'm just a usual priest of the Society, in Italy. I've been a priest since 2002, and I'm now at the priory in Montalenghe, so in the northern part of Italy, where I am from, more or less. I'm from Milan, actually. Montalenghe is near Turin, and we have our apostolate here, as everywhere else, our chapels and Masses and everything, here in Turin and in Milan too. I've been a long time in Remini before and then in Rome, and a couple of years also in Scotland, so that is why I have some knowledge of the English language, yes.

ANDREW: Well, that's great and your English is spectacular, so thank you for taking the time to talk with us. Fr. Franks wanted me to talk to you, Father, specifically about three topics, the first of which we are talking about today. But all three of the topics that we'll be visiting with you about have to do with the papacy, and that is something that you have been interested in and studied; is that correct?

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes, all the aspects of papacy, actually, interested me since my childhood, maybe, yes. So we will talk about Collegiality, which is very much related to the power of papacy; Sedevacantism, obviously; and the abdication of Pope Benedict, and all the issues connected with it. So all these three questions are actually very much connected between them, and we will, all the concepts we will be talking about today will be useful for the other topics, yes.

ANDREW: So let's get started then with Collegiality, Father. This is something, I said this in the, previewing this in our last episode, I said that Collegiality is not something that most Catholics think about on a day-to-day basis. We, Traditional Catholics, think of Modernism, Liberalism, you know these things, Ecumenism, that we just finished studying, Religious Liberty. Collegiality, yeah we know it's bad, but it has to do with bishops and the pope and that's over in Rome and we don't really care. So, why should we care about Collegiality; or before we start with that, what is, what do we mean when we say Collegiality, Father?

DON TRANQUILLO: Yeah, you touched a good point because, Modernism is obviously, you have seen that also in this series, it's a kind of error that touches all the body of the Catholic doctrine, all the concept of religion itself. And so every dogma can be said in the same way as it used to be but meaning something else. But sometimes Modernism goes to touch and change some of the dogmas themselves, not just their meaning, but the literal words of them. We have seen that for Religious Freedom, or now it is for the Communion to the sinners if you like, *Amoris Laetitia*. They go to touch some precise point sometimes, but in general, all the dogmas are given another sense. Collegiality is one of the, maybe the first time,

they went to touch something precisely. They wanted to change, during the Council, something very specific, not just a general sense of the religion, but something very specific. And they wanted absolutely to do that. During the Council the main disputes were about Collegiality, not about, for example, Religious Freedom or Ecumenism, which could seem more important or more grave issues than Collegiality. But the Bishops during the Council had very much to say about Collegiality. It was seen as something that was going to change Catholic Doctrine, by the revolutionaries and also by conservative bishops. They all understood that this was a real problem, something that was to change something that was already determined by the Church, by the popes, and so on. And even when the Society had talks with Rome a few years ago, this was a point they couldn't get out of the situation. We had to talk with very conservative theologians, not revolutionary ones, obviously the Vatican was very correct so they sent to us very conservative theologians, who tried to explain that you can put together Pius IX and the Religious Liberty of *Dignitatis Humanae*. But about Collegiality there was no way to understand, no way to come to some agreement or some explanation even. It was impossible, because you can see and we will see that they touch precisely the doctrines of the Church already defined by the Pope. This is very important because it is a question of Faith. Sometimes we talk about Collegiality like some, "oh yes they have put democracy in the Church, so to say something, and there is a synod of bishops, and this is revolutionary and so on." This is true. This is something, a consequence of Collegiality. But Collegiality itself is an error, you could say, or some heresy, we will see, against the doctrine of the Church. Then it has effects, obviously, on the daily life of the Church, sometimes, on how things go with Modernism or conferences of bishops and the pope and the Vatican and so on. Yes, this happens. But mainly and firstly it is an error in Faith. That is what we are going to see.

ANDREW: So Collegiality as we understand it and it has been promulgated or set forth by Vatican II, Collegiality has to do with the governance and the role of the bishops in the Church. Is that, in a broad sense, that's what Collegiality is all about, it's about the bishops in the Church.

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes.

ANDREW: So, before we dig into that real quickly, Father, could we talk about, well, who bishops are. We know the bishops they give Holy Orders and so forth, but they are, bishops are the ecclesiastical authorities; they have the fullness of the priesthood. And so priests get their powers and their jurisdiction from the bishops themselves. Is that correct?

DON TRANQUILLO: So, yes in the sense that we can understand the word, bishop, in two senses actually. They sometimes go together and sometimes not. This is very important actually to understand for Catholic doctrine because this has been very much clearly defined by the Church. And then, this is one of the we can say two errors of *Lumen Gentium*. *Lumen Gentium* is the document of Vatican the Second where Collegiality is treated. Now, bishops firstly are people, priests, who are ordained by other bishops to give the fullness of the power of the priesthood, the power of orders, the power of Holy Orders. In that sense, all bishops consecrated or ordained, doesn't matter, have the same powers, powers related to the sanctification of souls. It is a sacrament giving the power of sanctifying - the first, higher part of the sacrament of Orders, if you like. Council of Trent says that bishops are superior to priests because they can ordain other priests and give Confirmation and other things, so things related to sanctification of the soul. So this is the first sense of the word bishop. Bishops are the ones who have the fullness of Orders, of Priesthood. More than priests. Doesn't matter how - there is a theological debate - but they are more than priests in the Holy Orders. So we can say "bishops" only talking about ordination, power of sanctification. Bishops of the Society are like that. They received, by the Archbishop Lefebvre, this ordination, and they can do priestly ordination or even episcopal ordinations or give Confirmation and so on. They have the fullness of Orders.

But they have not what we are going to see now. There are also bishops within the – there have always been not only in the Society bishops only consecrated or ordained just for giving Orders for example. They are called Titular bishops, they have no diocese. There are also today in the hierarchy of the Church, bishops just ordained without a diocese. Then we can understand “bishops” – now this distinction will go often together, but not always – bishops as the successors of the Apostles in the governance of a part of the Church, a diocese. In this sense bishops receive power of jurisdiction. So they have power of sanctifying from ordination, and they can have also, also, a power of governing a diocese – which is of divine right, obviously, an institution of divine right – but this power is not given by episcopal ordination; it is given by the pope. Through an act of will, he gives to them the power of governing – governing a diocese usually – and teaching. These two powers are one actually; you teach people you are superior to. They are your subjects, you teach them, you make laws for them, you punish them, you govern them and so on. That’s the power of jurisdiction. So ordinarily bishops in dioceses have obviously these two powers together. Sometimes you have bishops having only the power of Orders. But what we have to believe, that has been defined by the Church, is that the two powers, sanctifying and governing, have not the same origin. One, the one of sanctifying, comes from ordination; the other one comes from the pope.

ANDREW: So you can have a bishop who does not have the authority to teach and to govern, because that comes from the pope, and that can be taken away or it can be granted; but you cannot have a bishop who does not have the power to confer the sacraments, to ordain priests, Confirmations, etc.?

DON TRANQUILLO: Not usually, yes. It would be curious, a curiosity, that somebody is given power of jurisdiction on a diocese and he has not received episcopal ordination. This happened in history, actually. This is theoretically probably possible, but yes. This is not important for us now. You know for example, you receive jurisdiction before, usually before being ordained a bishop, usually, not always. But if you are named to a diocese, you receive jurisdiction by the pope and then you are ordained, quickly. But you have to be ordained, it is your duty to be ordained, otherwise you decay, but you have already entered jurisdiction you could already make acts of jurisdiction. The only men who receive jurisdiction directly from God, from Our Lord actually who has the fullness of all these powers obviously, is the pope himself. Then he gives jurisdiction to others. But he is the only one receiving it directly from Our Lord. We will see that about Sedevecantism; it is very important. This has been defined. We have seen, it is important to remind that. It is not an opinion, it is not our opinion as Traditional Catholics; it is what the Church teaches, has taught for centuries. We have dozens of documents about that. I will quote some of them, because it’s important. For example, the last, the most important on maybe, is *Mystici Corporis* the encyclical from Pius XII so in 1943, quite recently, he told that about bishops in exercising this office they “are not altogether independent; but they are subordinated to the lawful authority of the Roman Pontiff although enjoying the ordinary power of jurisdiction which they receive directly from the same Supreme Pontiff.” And in the same years after the war, there was the schism of the Chinese bishops. They ordained bishops for the patriotic church. Still a problem today, we have seen recently. And Pius XII obviously excommunicated them for the schism, and so on, and he had two encyclicals in 1954 and 1958 *Ad Sinarum Gentem* and *Ad Apostolorum Principis*, where he says very clearly, he repeats very clearly this concept. He says, “by virtue of the will of God is established the twofold sacred hierarchy – namely, of Orders and jurisdiction.” Two hierarchies, a twofold hierarchy. “The power of Orders comes from receiving the sacrament of Holy Orders. But the power of jurisdiction which is conferred upon the Supreme Pontiff directly by divine right flows to the bishops by the same right but only through the successor of St. Peter. And this concept is repeated in *Ad Apostolorum Principis*. And he says that bishops ordained without the permission, the confirmation, of the pope enjoy no powers of teaching or of jurisdiction since jurisdiction passes to bishops only through the Roman Pontiff, as We admonish in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* and so on.” So they can receive Orders sacrilegiously, and illicitly, but not

jurisdiction in any way without the pope. Very important. This teaching is not invented though by Pius XII, obviously. During the Council there was a bishop [---] then became a cardinal, during the debate about *Lumen Gentium* he published this document I have as a copy from the archives of Archbishop Lefebvre. It's a booklet that was given to the fathers, the bishops, during Vatican the Second, and here he quotes all kinds of authorities from doctors of the Church, canon lawyers, popes of all time, saying that powers of jurisdiction comes to bishops only through the pope, by the pope. The last one saying that was John XXIII. So during, just before, in '58 in his, I think, first consistory, he had a speech – probably talking about the Chinese situation again – and he says “clearly upon sacrilegious consecration without apostolic mandate,” so without papal will, “no jurisdiction whatsoever can follow.” Archbishop Lefebvre said that very clearly. I give the power of Orders to these bishops, but I have no pretention, I do not pretend to give jurisdiction to them. This is only up to the pope, not to me. This would be [---], to pretend to give jurisdiction, as the bishops in China did. So this is a very important point. We are going to see how *Lumen Gentium* says completely the opposite of that.

ANDREW: So *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II, could I take a step back before we dig into this, Father? *Lumen Gentium* wanted to revise the way that we see these powers of the bishops. Why? Why would they want to revise this?

DON TRANQUILLO: If you say that the pope is no the only channel through which the power of government comes to the Church, comes to earth if you like, you have destroyed the papacy, that's the point. You will see that you make the papacy something superfluous, something accessory to the Church. You can have Church without papacy. That's a very important point, they understood. This was already the theory of some theologians just before the Council in particular. And these theologians were Rahner and Ratzinger – they wrote a book together just about this question – and the other one we will see Congar, also they were very much working about this question. They found or they invented obviously historical explanation about that or they say that this was too much ridiculous because power was something sacred coming from Holy Orders not from some juridical structure and so on. So they invented many theories. But this was already going on just before the Council in the fifties and sixties, they were working to this thesis. And this book is very important about that, by Rahner and Ratzinger together treats exactly about this question it is just about these questions. *Episcopatus ut Primatus* is the title in German. I don't speak German, but, yes.

ANDREW: And it's interesting, and a little bit of a side-note here, interesting that the Germans are usually the ones wanting to kind of change this up, because we see the Germans doing the same thing today with their synodal path, but whatever.

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes, and now they are still, when you do not believe any more in the rock of papacy you can do what you like, then, but the problem is that the pope himself does not really believe in the papacy, we have seen that, yes.

ANDREW: So *Lumen Gentium*, what does *Lumen Gentium* do then? How do they redefine the relationship between the bishops and the pope, Father?

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes, *Lumen Gentium* says very clearly that jurisdiction, power of government and teaching, is given by the sacrament of Holy Orders, by the episcopal ordination, so, which means that you receive it directly from Our Lord, because you know that a sacrament is the action of Our Lord obviously, a sacrament is not the action of the pope or the priest or the Church but of Our Lord through His instruments which are the ministers, but is Our Lord giving the fullness of episcopacy if you like, so the power of sanctifying, the power of governing, and teaching, altogether. So you understand that this is problematic, because it is exactly the opposite of what we have seen, told, by the previous popes, exactly

the opposite. They say that very, very explicitly in *Lumen Gentium* twenty-one it is said, “episcopal consecration together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the office of teaching and of governing, which, however, can be exercised only in hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college – we will say just later about the college. So they say you have it, there are conditions for the exercise of this power, but not of possession; you have it as soon as you are ordained a bishop; you have the power of governing. And you know that there is this preliminary note of explanation, because there was a lot of dispute about that, so Paul VI wanted this note that should have clarified this question, but the fact is it clarified the question, but in the sense of making clear that you have to understand this in a bad sense.

ANDREW: Right, clarified it in all the wrong ways.

DON TRANQUILLO: “In his consecration, a person is given an ontological participation in the sacred functions,” *munera*, this is absolutely clear to them from Tradition; actually it is the opposite. And they say, “the documents of recent pontiffs,” for example Pius XII, “regarding the jurisdiction of bishops,” we have quoted them, “must be interpreted in terms of this determination of powers.” Not of giving the powers but just the determination of how to use them. We have read them; it is impossible to understand them in this way. They knew that there was something wrong, and so they invented this solution. You understand them, you understand *Mystici Corporis* and the other documents, just for determining how to use jurisdiction, not to have it. We have read, you can listen again to what we said and quoted, and it is impossible to understand in this way. This error went on and on. For example in 2007, Benedict XVI still says to – he was a champion of this problem, this error – he says in his letter to Chinese Catholics, he says, “as in the rest of the world, in China too the Church is governed by bishops who, through episcopal ordination conferred upon them by other validly ordained bishops, have received together with the sanctifying office the offices of teaching and governing the people entrusted to them in their respective particular churches, a power that is conferred by God through the grace of the sacrament of Holy Orders. This is very clear. You see that the hermeneutic of continuity is just in continuity with *Lumen Gentium*; we say the same thing even in a worse way. So bishops validly ordained – and we are talking for example of the Chinese bishops here, of the patriotic church, because that is letter ten – all validly-ordained bishops receive these three powers together, and they can govern their respective particular churches. So even the determination of how to use jurisdiction that was still reserved to the pope by *Lumen Gentium*, now Pope Benedict said that it’s given by consecration. The power that is conferred by God through the grace of the sacrament. So what remains of papacy with that? Of the function of the pope? He does not give the power, and he does not determine how we are to use this power. We will see that even more clearly later. So papacy is superfluous; it is not the rock; you do not build the Church upon it. It is the contrary of the Gospel if you like, and of the doctrine which is defined by the Church.

So you see, this is very important. This is already a first error, the first error – there is another one, very clear – about the relation between episcopacy and papacy. It is the first error, not the only one, unfortunately.

ANDREW: Right. So, so they are saying – again just to summarize what we have been talking about so far – they are saying that the power of jurisdiction and of teaching comes directly from the fact that someone is ordained a bishop, consecrated a bishop; it does not come directly from the pope. Maybe this is getting a little bit too in the details, Father, but who would they say a bishop has the jurisdiction over? If you were ordained a bishop tomorrow, Father, according to *Lumen Gentium*, it says, alright, you have the jurisdiction and teaching authority. Over whom?

DON TRANQUILLO: That's a problem, because they do not have an answer. They say, in *Lumen Gentium* they seem to say that you have the power but then the authority of the college or the pope tells you, determines as we have said, how you have to use it, to exercise this power, but does not give it to you, Absolutely not; this is denied. It is clear that you do not receive that from the pope but from Orders; it is not clear then, how we have to use it. How, you can determine how to use it. It seems in *Lumen Gentium* that this would be the decision of the pope. So to determine how, not to give it. But then if you have read, we have read this quote of Benedict XVI to the Chinese, to understand him then he says that this power given by God through the sacrament of Orders allows you to teach and govern people entrusted to you in your respective particular church, but how determined that is, you don't know how. Especially if you are a Chinese patriotic bishop or an Orthodox bishop, we'll see later this would, this is also for Orthodox bishops. How can you say I am the Patriarch of Constantinople or I don't know of something else, the bishop of Athens, or you don't know. Its just situations; I don't know they don't explain that. But Benedict writes to say that through episcopal ordinations to Orders, to Holy Orders, you have a people entrusted to you in your respective particular church, which is a mistake, but he says that. So what's, what is up to the pope again? Nothing, probably. Then maybe it is just a human convention how this works. I don't know, but they don't explain that. In *Lumen Gentium*, in the preliminary note of explanation, it is also said that there is a question. If I am an ordained bishop illicitly, my Ordinations, my Confirmations are certainly valid. Sacrilegious but valid. As if I am an heretical priest but I am a true priest, I can consecrate, but obviously a sacrilege, but it's valid. Now, in *Lumen Gentium*, there is the question, but what about jurisdiction? If you are a sacrilegious bishop, an illicitly ordained bishop, you have also jurisdiction. If you do acts of jurisdiction, are these acts invalid or just illicit as just the other acts of the Orders? And they say, oh we do not answer to that. It is written like that. We do not want to answer to that. It is written in the preliminary note. So, according to what we are reading, this letter for example of the, to the Chinese Catholics, it seems that then they say that its just valid, just valid acts of jurisdiction. Probably they do not want even to bother, to bother too much about this question. In practice, they accept all the acts of these bishops outside of the Church as true Churches as we will see. So valid acts of jurisdiction, certainly. Well, in *Lumen Gentium* it is written, they do not want to answer to that, they do not want to answer. So the question is good, but there is not a precise answer from the documents. You can understand something but it is not written and even they refuse to answer.

ANDREW: Wow. So taking a step back again, what is the problem with this? That sounds like a very naïve question, Father, but what is then this going to do? Because we know that then there are going to be consequences with this decision. This decision, this *Lumen Gentium* was not made in a vacuum; this wasn't just a theological idea. What are the consequences then? Because to me as a Catholic, I go, ok so they've redefined that a bishop has teaching power when he's ordained. Ok, so what? How would you answer me, Father?

DON TRANQUILLO: The first consequence, so if you believe that, then you say heresy. So something against the doctrine of the Church.

ANDREW: Oops

DON TRANQUILLO: This is quite a dangerous consequence.

ANDREW: Ok, besides the heresy, Father.

DON TRANQUILLO: Because it is defined, so you cannot say the opposite. But then, the consequence, we will see – with the second error we will see that even better – is the destruction of papacy. The destruction of papacy and the possibility of a kind of Ecumenism that we are going to see that gives existence to church outside the Church. We will see that in following with the second error. Because this

is very important. This second error is related to the first and it leads to the consequence more directly; so we are going to see that.

ANDREW: Ok, alright. So where do we go next then, Father?

DON TRANQUILLO: We go to the question that is the second error, the second point of *Lumen Gentium*, about Collegiality, and this is Collegiality in the very sense of the word, we have seen if you want the preliminary of this error. The second error is Collegiality in the very sense of the word – not just the spirit of Collegiality, the spirit of democracy which is something going with, flowing from that – but the very error. The very error is about the subject of the supreme the power within the Church. We know as Catholics that obviously Our Lord is the King of the Church in a spiritual sense, of the world and of the society which is the Church. The Church is a society, a perfect society, having all the powers to govern herself; and the head of this society is Our Lord. Our Lord is, as we know, in heaven; so He has a vicar on earth. And He gives to him – and we believe and we will see, only to him – the fullness of the power of government, of jurisdiction if you like, as we have said up to now. So this is the doctrine of the Church; there is one head on earth. Obviously, everybody agrees that Our Lord is the Head of the Church. Even the protestants, everybody. This is not a problem. But then we have to see if there is a vicar or a subject on earth having the power, the same fullness of power, on the Church. As Catholics and according to Vatican the First, we believe that Our Lord gives to the pope and only to him – this is defined in *Pastor Aeternus*, the document of Vatican the First – we believe that only to him is granted, just after the election, at the moment of the election when he accepts the election, in this very moment he receives the fullness of the power of jurisdiction directly from Our Lord. He is the only one receiving jurisdiction directly from Our Lord and the fullness of it, together. So this is what the Church has defined in particular in *Pastor Aeternus*. Now, *Lumen Gentium* says something different; there is not just one head in the Church. The problem is that they wanted to rest assured the conservative prelates that everything was fine, nobody was going to touch the pope. So, they insisted that the fullness of the power of the pope was still there. The pope could govern by himself as before, and everything was fine, and the conservatives had not to worry about that. This is repeated very much in the document. But what happened is that they said that there is also – also, that is the word – also, another subject, *subiectum quoque*, of this supreme power within the Church; and this subject is the college of bishops. So they say, all the ordained bishops talking together, all together, all the ordained bishops they have received this power of government; and if you take them all together they are a college, like a body, even if one of them is more important – the Bishop of Rome is more important, obviously – but you can take all together as a college, and as a college, they also receive from Our Lord the power above all the Church. So you have two subjects receiving from Our Lord which are the pope alone, which is fine, and the college of bishops with the pope, under the pope, but not from the pope. The college receives its power from Our Lord. We could have said, ok there is the college of bishops, we use this word. The pope gives to it the power of governing the Church with him; but the pope gives, like in the councils, the pope takes all the bishops together and does some acts of government or teaching with them; but it is his authority communicated to the body of bishops. This is Catholic; we can accept that. But that's not *Lumen Gentium*, not at all. *Lumen Gentium* says, from Our Lord to the body of bishops with the pope, under the pope, but from Our Lord. You know the Modernists they always say, the college has the power *cum Petro et sub Petro*, with Peter and under Peter. But they do not say *ex Petro*, from Peter; and that is the heart of the error. Because you can say all the things you like, but then you have to go against this wall; there is one subject or two receiving the power directly from Our Lord, and they say two. And even in the preliminary note, it is clearly stated there is a *subiectum quoque*, another subject. They are also subject of this supreme power. And that is another problem, another error of heresy even; because it is defined that God, Our Lord, gives only to Simon Peter the power of governing the Church, the supreme power. Vatican the First doesn't say

gives to Peter, which would be ok, to Peter and to somebody else, we define that afterwards. Vatican the First says only to Peter, and to his successors, obviously. So this is absolutely something wrong. So this power of governing given from episcopal jurisdiction when you take all the bishops together becomes the power on the entire Church and the supreme power on the entire Church, beside the power of the pope, beside. So there are two subjects in concurrency but with equal power coming from the same source, which is Our Lord obviously. And this is not acceptable. This is not acceptable for a Catholic at all. We are in another mistake, another error actually, another heresy maybe against Vatican the First. In this case and there are definitions, so obviously this I quote Vatican the First as the main definition and more important, more authoritative, but there are many others, obviously, interventions by the Church and the popes during the centuries about this question. So in the booklet we have seen you can find a lot of those things, a lot of those quotes. I quote just the main one, which is enough because it is a definition, a dogmatic definition which, so for Catholics this is more than enough; but it is not invented in 1870. It has a long history.

ANDREW: Right. So with this new definition of the power of the bishops being equal to or being another head of the Church, this allows things like bishops' conferences and synods and these declarations coming from these groups of bishops to have equal weight to what the pope is saying, in a sense.

DON TRANQUILLO: Strictly speaking, this as it is described, *Lumen Gentium*, this thing cannot work, actually. Because unless you have a [---] council it is very difficult to determine the actions of this college, very difficult. Synods are some kind of way of spiritually showing this Collegiality, but not strictly, juridically as it is written down in *Lumen Gentium*. And they do not care very much about that. It is a spirit and that [---] and so actually yes, you have the possibility for bishops to intervene not in accord with the Holy See and so on, if it's needed. But then naturally these things are more part of the Modernist dialectic. But strictly speaking – and even the new Code says that there somewhere, the new Code of Canon Law – these actions of the college as they are described in *Lumen Gentium* are very difficult to have without a council, very difficult. Because how can you have the actions of this body of bishops dispersed in the world? Then, it's not really their problem. They had to put this error as the basis for other things.

ANDREW: So *Lumen Gentium* is not saying that when the U.S. council of Catholic bishops gets together, for instance, as they are just about to do or just have done, that their decisions are equal to the pope; they are not saying that, they are not going that far, but they are, but they are saying is...

DON TRANQUILLO: No, no because the college of bishops is the college of all the bishops, all the ordained bishops, even. All the ordained bishops, we will see that this, where will this lead. But all the ordained bishops together, not the bishops of a country or another country, no no. Bishops' conferences have founded the foundations of their power in this idea, certainly; but they are not considered as theological subjects. They are juridically constituted by the Church to express the spirit of Collegiality, but not the letter of it. The letter would be that all the bishops together have this power, all the bishops of the entire world. All ordained bishops, I repeat; and we will see soon what it means. It means, the consequences are more ecumenical than, the spirit obviously, the chaos of the episcopal conferences comes from these ideas, yes, the spirit; but the consequences are more in the ecumenical field than in the ecclesiological or intra-ecclesial one.

ANDREW: ok, so how is that, Father? What is, how does Collegiality have an impact on Ecumenism?

DON TRANQUILLO: We have to say something about this expression, you know about in *Lumen Gentium* is it said that the Catholic Church, sorry, the Church of Christ, of Our Lord, *subsistit* in the

Catholic Church. You know that we would say that the Church of Christ is the Catholic Church, the Roman Church. But they say *subsistit in*, it subsists in the Catholic Church. So we have to understand why. They have explained that many times; there are different documents about this expression. The most important maybe is the *Dominus Iesus* the document [written in] 2000 by the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith, led by Ratzinger and with the confirmation of John Paul II; these documents are very important to understand what it means. They say that, there is obviously one Church, which is the Catholic Church. But there are also Churches outside of it, sister Churches they say. How is this possible? Because they say in the same time there is only one Church – especially in *Dominus Iesus* but this goes back and is founded on *Lumen Gentium*, it's an explanation of *Lumen Gentium* – but then you have other Churches, other subjects, ecclesiological subjects, outside of it. So they say that, “there exists a single Church of Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him; but the Churches which, while not in perfect communion with the Catholic Church, remain united to Her by means of the closest bonds – that is by apostolical succession and valid Eucharist –” so Holy Orders, “are true particular Churches.” Plural. “Therefore, the Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church.” What does it mean? It means that if you have the power of governing in every single ordained bishop, firstly you have the Church wherever there is an ordained bishop. For example, [---] we would say that it is not the Church, it is a sect, heresies, schisms. Because to be part of the Church, firstly you have to be Catholic, so not to be a heretic, not to deny dogmas; and then you have to receive jurisdiction, so the possibility of being part of the one Church, the one authority, the pope. So when you receive jurisdiction from him, you are part of the Church, you can be part of the Church. Once you have jurisdiction from him you are part of the Church. Otherwise, you are heretic, you do not have Faith, the profession of Faith; or schismatic, if you do not have this communion with Rome, or if you like you do not receive ordinary jurisdiction from the pope. Because there is only one communicating jurisdiction to others: the pope. But if you receive jurisdiction by your consecration, your ordination, you are already the Church. You have not to expect something or to wait for something from Rome. Rome is accessory. You have already everything you need. It is to be noticed that they never talk about Faith, so you can believe whatever. It is not really there that you have at least to believe the same things as the Church. It doesn't matter. On the contrary it is written that, yes, “they are not in full communion because they do not accept the Catholic doctrine of the primacy.” And on many others, maybe. But this doesn't hinder them to be, as we have read, true particular Churches. So from the error of the source of jurisdiction, you have the possibility of having Church outside of the Church, because the principle of unity is the pope. When you destroy that and you can have the power from ordination you have so many powers around, so many Churches around, as many Churches as bishops ordained outside the Catholic Church. And it doesn't matter what they believe, as we have read, and it doesn't matter, obviously, their relation to Rome. It doesn't matter at all. They are true particular Churches, because of *Lumen Gentium*. And they can be, as it is said in the same document, means of salvation. “For the spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them,” these Churches, particular Churches, “as means of salvation which derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Catholic Church,” and so on. The second point is the problem of this universal power, the subject of universal power. If the college of bishops is formed by all ordained bishops – because they all have this power coming from God and so on – there are many ordained bishops outside of the Catholic communion. So there is not the fullness of this college; the Catholic Church has not the fullness of this second subject of supreme power. This is written in a document [---] “The lack of unity among Christians is certainly a wound for the Church. Not in the sense that she is deprived of her unity,” because the Catholic Church in herself is one, obviously, in herself, “but in the sense that it hinders the complete fulfillment of her universality in history.” Which is beautiful, but it means that the Church is not fulfilled without the other, the bishops outside. So the Catholic

Church, the Church of Christ is full. But the Catholic Church has not reached this fullness in history. It is a sign of what should be; a sign – a sacrament as they like to say – of the unity of the Church, of the one Church. But it is not the one Church. Now, you see that in this way, you can say that there is the Church outside of the Church. You can say that the Church is one, that the Catholic Church is one, but there are churches outside of it. So the Church is in the same time one and not one. There are many of Churches. And there is no Church actually, because the true Church is something that has to be fulfilled, in the last time maybe, I don't know, in history. The fulfillment is not reached; it is hindered by this wound of lack of unity among Christians. Well, somebody could say now, ok I understand but, so how can you say that there is one Church and then say that there are many Churches? This would be contradictory to say that something is in the same time one and not one. And this question was asked to Ratzinger in 2000 when they presented this document, *In Dominus Iesus*, because somebody understood that there was a problem. And you can find the answer of Ratzinger, a very official answer actually, in a conference press, in a press conference in [---] *Romano* in four March – March the fourth as they say in the U.S. – in 2000. And he said, yes there is a contradiction. So reality is contradictory he says literally, because sin is the contradiction. This contradiction between *subsistit* and *est* – so he says it is contradictory; to say *subsistit in* or *est* the Catholic Church of Christ *subsistit in* the Catholic Church or to say the Church of Christ *est* the Catholic Church – this contradiction between *subsistit* and *est* cannot be ultimately solved on a logical point of view. So there is a contradiction between these two sentences, What Pius XII said, the Church is the Catholic, the Roman Church, and the Vatican the Second *Lumen Gentium subsistit in*; there is a contradiction Ratzinger says, of course. This a contradiction between *subsistit* and *est* cannot be solved from a logical point of view. The big idea not to be too logical, maybe, for this kind of thing. So in logic, you have it in front of a contradiction that cannot be solved. That is why the theologians of the Society and the theologians the conservative theologians of the Vatican could not arrive, join an agreement; because there is a contradiction. And they wanted to be too logical, maybe. This cannot be solved from a logical point of view. And he says, “in the paradox of the difference between unicity and concreteness of the Church on one side and the existence of an ecclesiastical reality outside of the unique subject, we can see in a mirror the contradiction of human sin, contradiction of division.” Which is beautiful and poetical, but it doesn't say if so the Church is one or not, or the two together is, it's impossible for human people, for human minds created by God and for nature. It's probably possible for some German philosophers, as you have seen in your conferences, but not in reality. But they say that as if it were absolutely normal. You could say – last thing maybe – there was in the same time, in that time this debate about ecumenism. And so there was both the revolutionary theologians of the theology of liberation. And he says oh, Ecumenism is that there are many Churches, confederation, everybody wants, believes and wants and does what they want, but they are all bound together by some sort of Charity, not a juridical organization or something. And Ratzinger said, no, no that is wrong. To be sure it is wrong, we have to be. No he said, it is wrong because, this kind of ecumenism, it is not a necessity. It doesn't come from a wound, it doesn't come from something, an emergency. If we say that [the Church is suffering] because of this dispersion of the college of bishops if you like, this is, this explains the emergency, the necessity of the, of ecumenism; because we are metaphysically lacking of something. We are not just wanting to be all together, cool, even if we believe things, different things, it's not important, or power or...no. There is a necessity of Ecumenism because we lack something, the Catholic Church is lacking something. That is the question, that is what he answered [---] *Romano*, to both, for example. Yes, ecumenism, if you have read *Lumen Gentium*, if you have well read *Lumen Gentium*, is a necessity for the Catholic Church. It is not to help others, is not for, it is a necessity, a metaphysical necessity for the Catholic Church to try to fulfill itself in history, to try to fulfill this, what is just sacramentally and prophetically present, but not really; the unity of the Church. That's what they believe.

ANDREW: So I had no idea, Father, that Collegiality went, and you have probably seen my face in the last ten minutes, I'm like, wow. Because I had no idea, Collegiality was basically a tool, it was a method to say that other religions are equal to or, not equal to, are a part of the Church of Christ. These building blocks are all starting to fall into place in my mind. This is fascinating.

DON TRANQUILLO: Yes. You know, they say that in 2000 and in *Dominus Iesus* they talked about Churches with episcopacy, so wherever there is episcopacy, as we have understood, there is Church. And they say, you know there was a polemic, because they say that but if you have only Baptism like protestants, you are not the Church just an ecclesial community. This was seen as some kind of racism against protestants. But actually, both. You know, it is easy then to, as we are seeing now, but this would be another conference, to go a step forward and say, oh yes we have in common Baptism, this is enough to be Church. You can go from episcopacy to Baptism, because you have destroyed the only thing that makes unity which is papacy. The very problem of those people is papacy. Papacy must be redefined, possibly canceled, possibly changed in some prophetic office; but papacy, papacy as it has been defined by the Church as a juridical and a metaphysical necessity to have one Church, one society, a monarchy, for them is something absolutely unacceptable; and *Lumen Gentium* is there to make it possible to have Church without papacy. This is very important. We will understand even better that talking about Sedevacantism, maybe. But, because all these subjects are very much related to each other. But this is a problem, this is a very big question: papacy. Papacy was hated by everybody in history, by the Lutherans, by the Orthodox, by everybody. This is the main scandal, the stone of scandal, the rock of scandal – that is Peter. And we are, they are now, they are now, they need some other kind of papacy, an ecumenical papacy, or we are going to see even worse in time, redefine papacy as John Paul II said. But they had done that in *Lumen Gentium*. They made it superfluous, accessory. Something more better, maybe for better function of the Church, but not a necessity to the existence of the Church as we know it. And that was their point. There is no Ecumenism with papacy as it was understood by Catholics. There is no possible Ecumenism unless you come back and submit. There is no possibility of other kind of Ecumenism; it could be kind or inquisitorial, but you needed to submit, to make people submit to that. There was no way to go out of that. Now there is; there are a lot of paths to go out of the system of papacy.

ANDREW: Well this has been, this has been fascinating, Father, to review with you. Thank you so much for taking the time to go through it with us. But no, thank you very much, this was very enlightening, thank you. Next time, we will see, or next time we talk with you – I think we have another episode in between the times that we talk, Father – but we will be talking about Sedevacantism and how it is very much related to this. But thank you again for your time. We appreciate it.

DON TRANQUILLO: It's a pleasure, and hope to see you again soon. God bless you.

ANDREW: Yes, absolutely.

DON TRANQUILLO: Bye.