

A Defense of the Consecration of Bishop Joseph Pfeiffer

Rev. Mr. Stephen Kaldawi
October 2, 2020

This brief treatise addresses some of the prevalent objections concerning the consecration of Bishop Joseph Pfeiffer to the Episcopate by Bp. Neal Webster on July 29, 2020.

Objection #1: *Fr. Pfeiffer compromised in the Faith by being consecrated a Bishop by a Sedevacantist Feeneyite Heretic!*

Reply #1: *"The faithful, with due regard for the prescription of par. 3 [excepting those excommunicated by a declaration], can for any just cause seek the Sacraments and Sacramentals from one excommunicated, especially if other ministers are lacking, and then the one who is excommunicated and approached can administer these and is under no obligation of inquiring the reasons from the one requesting." (1917 Code of Canon Law #2261, par. 2)*

Here we see the Wisdom of our Holy Mother the Church, who strives by every reasonable means to provide supernatural sustenance for Her children by the Sacraments, etc., even from those normally considered unworthy to administer them. Now, Bishop Webster is neither excommunicated nor a heretic, because while he mistakenly (and sincerely) professes the Feeneyite error of denying that the Baptism of Desire and of Blood are sufficient for salvation, he has committed no crime deserving of an automatic excommunication, and he has not been reproached nor condemned by the authorities of the Catholic Church as a pernicious heretic. Further, given the Vatican II crisis of Faith, it is understandable that some well-meaning souls may sincerely believe such errors without moral fault. Therefore, there is no juridical or moral restriction against receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders from such a Bishop, especially in our time of great necessity for the continuation of the Sacred Priesthood for the salvation of souls.

According to the 1917 Code of Canon law even the act of receiving Holy Orders from a truly Notorious Heretic or Schismatic is **not a sin against the Faith**, but rather a violation of ecclesiastical protocol. Many priests and bishops down the last 2000 years received orders from heretics or schismatics, especially in the times of the Donatist, Arian, Nestorian crises in the West and in the many Orthodox schismatic Crises of the East. The Church did **not** re-ordain these men. So long as they professed the True Faith and did not follow any Sects, they were accepted in the Church. Saint Athanasius and St. John Chrysostom both dealt with this problem of men illegally ordained by heretical/schismatic bishops while they were absent from their dioceses. Upon return to their episcopal sees they did not condemn those priests on that count. The Canon Lawyer Woywood in his Commentary on the 1917 Code notes that these suspensions do not need any decree lifting them. If the priest or Bishop receive a canonical assignment or a benefice (salary from the Church) the assignment itself nullifies the suspension. Hence we see how this crime in pre-Vatican II world was a relatively minor one.

The Delict (canonical crime) of being Consecrated by a true Notorious Heretic or Schismatic only received a suspension as the greatest punishment of the Church all the way until 1951, when Pius XII for the first time in 2000 years added the unprecedented punishment of Excommunication for consecrating a Bishop Without a papal mandate. This unprecedented punishment was kept in the modernist otherwise more lenient 1983 Code of Canon Law and has been used to prevent the Consecration of Catholic Traditional Catholic Bishops.

Just as in the State of Necessity, a Catholic Layman can receive Extreme Unction and Viaticum from any Heretical, Schismatic Priest or even a priest who “left” the priesthood, without being considered “a heretic or a schismatic or a Catholic who left the Church, So any Cleric who receives ordination from such a one in the State of Necessity should not be considered a Heretic, Schismatic, or compromiser. It is absurd to do so.

St. Thomas in the Summa Theologica (IIIa Q. 60) points out that since Christ is the principal minister of the Sacraments, the Faith of the secondary Minister (priest or bishop) does not confect the Sacraments and therefore the lack of Faith of the Minister cannot invalidate the Sacraments. St. Augustine noted against the Donatist Heretics that Baptism administered by Christ Himself, or by St. Peter, or by St. John or by Judas Iscariot, are all of equal Validity and value Since Christ is the principal minister of every valid baptism.

Objection #2: *Fr. Pfeiffer at least should not have let Bp. Webster offer the consecration Mass! Since this is a “Communicatio in Sacris”!*

Reply #2: "The Mass of ordination or episcopal consecration must always be celebrated by the minister of ordination or consecration himself." (Canon 1003) Rome was so strict in this matter that she specifically required the minister of Ordination to Celebrate the Mass of ordination or consecration even if inhibited by old age or illness.

While we do advise our faithful to not attend the Mass of those who publicly compromise the Faith, the reason for this counsel comes from Abp. Lefebvre, who warned that the laity who do so will be slowly corrupted by the doctrinally erroneous or at least doctrinally deficient sermons, the liberal environment of the parish, etc. Whereas in our case of a single isolated incident in receiving a most gravely needed Sacrament from a Traditional Catholic Bishop personally holding an extreme conservative rather than a liberal error, there is no significant danger of contagion.

Objection #3: *The video of the Consecration by Bishop Webster appears to show repetitions, additions and mispronunciations in the 16 word essential Form making the Consecration either invalid or at least doubtfully valid!*

Reply #3: "In cases in which the obligations contracted from sacred ordination are impugned [disputed], or the validity of sacred ordination itself [is impugned], a libellus [complaint document] must be sent to the Sacred Congregation for the discipline of Sacraments, or if the ordination is impugned due to substantial defect of sacred rite, [to] **the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office**; and the Sacred Congregation decides whether the case will be treated in the judicial order or heard as a disciplinary case." (Canon 1993 #1, 1917 Code)

“The Rite to attack the validity of the ordination rests equally on the cleric and the Ordinary to whom the cleric is subject” (Canon 1994. 1917 Code) (*i.e. not lay theologians*)

“All things are to be observed in ecclesiastical trials . . . and the special regulations laid down in the process of Matrimonial cases with due adaptation to be applied in the cases against sacred ordination... The “defensor Vinculi ordinationis” enjoys the same rights and has the same duties as the defensor vinculi matrimonii.” **(Canon 1996)**

“The appeal in these cases is governed by Canons 1986-1989 on appeal in Matrimonial cases (Canon 1998) (*i.e. Ordination must be considered as Valid in Law by all unless and until the contrary is proven in two separate court trials.*)

“Matrimony (and Ordination) enjoys “favore juris” (favor of Law): therefore in doubt, the validity of marriage (and Ordination) is to be upheld until the contrary is proved, with due regard of Canon 1127” (Canon 1014) (*i.e. this Canon applies to Ordination as well Marriage hence the Word Ordination to Sacred Orders applies here according to above canons.*)

Fr. Cekada and Mario Derksen’s treatise on the Validity of the Thuc Consecrations thoroughly prove that no Catholic has the right to doubt any ordination that is a notorious fact (*i.e. performed before at least 2 witnesses*). Just as a married couple must act as and be considered as Married until a legitimate annulment is

granted, so a consecrated bishop must act as and be accepted as a consecrated bishop by both the ordinand himself and by the remainder of the faithful in the Roman Catholic Church according to Traditional Moral Theology and the 1917 Code of Canon Law.

These canons clearly determine the procedure of the Catholic Church that must take place when anyone attempts to raise a doubt concerning the validity of an ordination or consecration in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. It is therefore **not** the duty nor the right of the laity to contest the validity of such a Sacrament, and much less to attempt to pass definitive or authoritative judgment on such an ecclesiastical matter. The present crisis in the Church is no excuse to further revolutionize the Traditional and Divine constitution of the hierarchy established by Our Lord Jesus Christ and the discipline organized by the successors of the Apostles.

Objection #3B: *Even if normally the notorious canonical fact of Consecration should be accepted by all Catholics, this does not apply in this case since Bishop Webster bungled the 16 word essential form making the Consecration at least doubtful!*

Reply #3B: The form cannot be considered even doubtfully valid unless the one contesting can actually demonstrate that the sense of the essential words were mutated in such a way as to constitute a substantial change in meaning. St. Thomas teaches in the Summa (IIIa Q. 60) that it is the meaning of the words which confer the sacrament, not the words themselves. Hence a Sacramental Form can be had in any language (not just the Aramaic spoken by Christ) so long as the substantial meaning is the same. Also words can be added or subtracted, so long as the meaning is substantially the same: e.g. in the Latin Church we say “I baptize thee...” whereas in the Greek Catholic Church they say “May this Servant of God be Baptized...” Both rites are valid since the meaning is the same.

Application to Ceremony of July 29 2020 found on YouTube 469fitter channel:

Top line is the 16 word form of Pontificale Romanum defined by Pius XII as the essential form. The second line contains the words pronounced by the 76 year old Bishop Webster, with the repetitions and miscellaneous sounds removed.

Pontificale Romanum Text: Comple in sacerdote tuo ministerii tui summam, et ornamentis totius

Bishop Webster’s words: Comple in sacerdote tuo ministerii tui s(a)mmam et ornamentis totius

Pontificale text Continued: glorificationis instructum, coelestis unguenti rore sanctifica.

Bishop Webster words: glorificationis instructum, coelestis unguenti ror(ar)e sanctifica.

The “s(a)mmam” of Bishop Webster is clearly a slight mispronunciation of “summam” which would be easily understood by a native Latin speaker, just as we native English speakers understand when an oriental says in English, “do you want to eat Chinese Foo?” Even Siri understands what “Chinese Foo” means. “Rorare” (“to pour down dew”) the infinitive verb form or “Rore” (“dew”) and hence has the same meaning. A pre-vatican II Judge would throw out any foolish claim that the form was doubtfully valid due to bungled pronunciation. Greg Taylor of the Recusant claims there are at least seven errors in the 16 word form as pronounced by Bishop Webster. Mr. Taylor even takes the sound “eek” and turns it into a Latin word “hic” meaning “this.” No reasonable man after looking more closely at this recording of the form can argue that the sense and words of Pius XII are not correctly conveyed by Bishop Webster according to Catholic Moral Theology, Canon Law and common estimation of men.

Objection #3C: *Doesn’t the repeating of words bring the form into question?*

Reply #3C: No. No. Indeed indeed the answer is the answer is no. Do people miss airplanes in airports because the ground personnel announce “this is the last and final boarding call, the last and final boarding call,

I repeat the last and final boarding call..." The words "Sacerdotibus Tuis", "Mysterii, hic mysterii" "Tui, tui" "sanum", ecce structus "cae-cae-caelestis" do not change the meaning of the 16 word essential form period. "Mysterii, hic mysterii" was not said by Bishop Webster. The good bishop mistakenly first said "mysterii (a common Latin liturgical word), then realizing that he had said "mysterii" and not "ministerii", he made the inadvertent sound "eek" then stated correctly the word "ministerii" and then added "tui, tui sammam" The great Theologian Cajetan notes in Commentary on the Summa IIIa, Q. 60 Art. 7 Ad 3 the following:

“. . . Pope Zachary determined that one who was baptized on account of ignorance by the formula “in the name of the Fatherland and daughter and the Holy Spiritual” (the Latin is “in nomine Patria, et Filia et Spiritua Sancta.”) Where it seems that the corruption changed the signification of the words: for “the Fatherland” does not signify “the Father” but rather “the place of birth.” However, granted that “Fatherland” absolutely signifies something other than “Father,” yet nevertheless it is part of the corrupted prolation of this formula “I baptize thee in the name of the Fatherland and the daughter etc. it judged to signify “Father”: and so the formula taken as a whole is not changed in signification. And this is exceedingly to be noted in cases of corrupted prolation of words occurring in the other Sacraments, whether arising from haste, or a stuttering tongue, or some other accident.” (Commentaria Cardinalis Cajetani, IIIa Q. 60 art. 7)

Hence, Cajetan’s explanation of the law of “accommodation” from St. Thomas most clearly leaves no room for doubt in a case such as the Consecration of Bishop Pfeiffer by Bishop Webster. It is utterly absurd, foolish, ignorant to claim that it could be by any stretch of the imagination considered a doubtful form. However, to emphasize the foolishness and falsity of attempting to question validity, below we provide an translation into English of the Bishop Webster Consecration with “mistakes” included in order to clarify that the meaning of the form is indeed intact. Note further the wise requirement of The Canon Law of the Roman Church that the invalidity or nullity of the Consecration must be **definitively proven to be a morally certain SUBSTANTIAL change in meaning** which must be verified by two separate Ecclesiastical Court judgements from a Roman Court representing the Holy See. Until the decree of Nullity of Ordination (i.e. Ordination was invalid) would be issued with true and proper proofs, all souls are obliged under the Law to uphold the validity of the Consecration/Ordination just as is the case in Marriage annulments.

Pontificale Romanum Text: Complete in thy priest, the summit of thy ministry and after

Bishop Webster words: Complete in thy priest, *thy priests*, the summit *of the ministry here* of thy ministry and after

Pontificale Romanum: clothing him with the brightness of all glory, sanctify him with the dew of celestial ointment.

Bishop Webster: clothing him with the brightness of all glory, sanctify him to pour down dew of celestial ointment.

Argumentum ad absurdum: If the above could be considered incomprehensible or doubtfully valid, then all Asian Baptisms would be invalid since they can’t pronounce the letter “L”. Chinese Baptism’s by Fr. Bruce Wee would go like this “Ego **tse** Baptizo in nomine Patwis et **Fiwiwi** et Spiwitu Sancti.” So many accents from Bishops from so many countries over 20 Centuries would surely make it morally impossible for any priest of today to be validly ordained.

Objection #4: *The conditional consecration video should be made public!*

Reply #4: *“Whenever ordination [or consecration] is to be repeated or any of the rites supplied, whether absolutely or under condition, this can be done outside the [usual] times and secretly.” (Canon 1007)*

The conditional repetition of Matter and Form on July 30, 2020 was done before more than 10 witnesses and was attested both by the Consecrator, and the Consecrand. This makes the conditional Consecration to be also a canonical notorious fact according to the 1917 code and therefore necessarily to be accepted as valid in the event that anything could be considered questionable in the first consecration of July 29, 2020. Hence, any questioning of the first Consecration is superfluous. Those who reject the first Consecration or doubt it, should be confirmed by the second Consecration, leaving no room for doubt.

This was always the practice of Abp. Lefebvre in conditionally ordaining some of the priests who offered to help the SSPX but had been ordained in the Novus Ordo rite. Bp. Pfeiffer and Fr. Hewko well remember as SSPX seminarians setting up and serving such ceremonies, which were exclusively done under strict privacy, and only afterwards did the conditionally ordained priest himself verbally relate the fact to others at his own discretion. Therefore, we cannot justly be expected or demanded to do differently from what our holy founder did, and what the Law of the Church has prescribed.

Objection #5: But Archbishop Lefebvre held the Thuc-line as at least doubtfully Valid and recommended the faithful to stay away from any “Thuc-liner!”

Reply #5: Archbishop Lefebvre did not ever declare Thuc Consecrations to be invalid. Abp. Lefebvre took Fr. Bruno Schaefer, a Thuc ordained priest into the SSPX without ever conditionally ordaining him. Abp. Lefebvre never refused sacraments to any “Thucliner” who came to SSPX chapels for Mass or Sacraments. Abp. Lefebvre never told souls to stay away from Thuc Consecrated Bishops and priest because of their so-called doubtful ordination.

Abp. Lefebvre did indeed recommend faithful Catholics to stay away from the Palmar del Troja Spain schismatic sect, which Sect in 1978 made Bishop Dominguez Pope Successor of Paul VI. Abp. Lefebvre stated in 1982 that Bishop Gerard des Lauriers and the others consecrated by Archbishop Thuc were in danger of breaking with the Church, since he consecrated bishops without the permission of Rome. But in 1988 Abp. Lefebvre changed his former opinion on consecrating bishops in the time of Necessity.

Objection #6: The State of Necessity does not exist now for consecrating bishops for the survival of Faith.

Reply #6: We are not only still in the state of necessity, but we are in the most necessary state yet, since that Evil Council of 1962-1965. The World is more confused now than ever before. OLMC has Seminarians being formed to continue to propagate the Faith, Hope, and Charity of Our Lord Jesus Christ as the Catholic Church has always done for 2000 years. The 21 Seminarians need to work for the Salvation of Souls with the True Faith more than ever. Souls everywhere in the World need to be saved, not just those at “Traditional” Chapels.

Caritas Christi urget nos!

“The Charity of Christ urges us!” (2 Cor. 5:14)