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## **Chancellor's Update**

### **Cultivating a Cult?**

Recently a political commentator, when asked by her fellow commentators why her political party was distancing itself from previous policies, replied, “They are cultivating a cult.”

A cult. Why a cult? The dictionary defines a cult as a fixed, almost religious, veneration for a person or a thing. In the Catholic Church various cults with their own rules and custody exist within the larger establishment. But are there cults, official and unofficial, within philosophy, education, art forms, music, mass media and fashion, as well as in the Church?

Education used to be built upon the parent-child relationship where basic concepts of discipline, respect for authority, absolutes, morality and at least a simple concept of God were taught. However, many within the education establishment as devotees of Freud, Dewey and Spock, promote permissive principles, progressive education and self-determination of pupils.

Art is a mirror of its age and reflects what the artist thinks about life. If the modern artist does not believe in absolutes or purpose, his art will reflect this. Splashes of paint on a canvas or an image of anarchy is representative of modern art.

Music in previous centuries involved sound, vibrations, human voice or instruments, melody, and harmony to arouse emotions, usually pleasurable. Much of contemporary music presents noise, cacophony and causes chaotic thinking.

Movies and television used to present real life experiences, explore famous places, introduce famous people and educate through stories. In more recent times television and movies glorify illicit sex, crime, murder, drugs and often denigrate activities of ordinary and celebrated people.

Sadly, the Catholic Church, which was commissioned by Christ to spread His message of how to achieve eternal salvation, currently has its own collection of unofficial cults. What kind of mindset would allow people to try to destroy their own church from within?

Dr. Bella Dodd, former head of the Communist Party in New York City, testified that during the 1940s and 1950s she personally recruited over 1100 young men to enter the priesthood of the Catholic Church.

Modernism exhibits a preference for what is modern, and disregards what is ancient and medieval. According to Modernists, Roman Catholic reading of the bible was founded on a mythical, not an accurate reading of the bible. The Church of Christ was a spiritual assemblage of communities of believers in whom the spirit of Christ continually evolves. Modernists opposed the papacy and church

hierarchy. The modernist mind existed as “upper ceiling of thought” among intelligentsia. Science was enthralled. Modernism was put to sleep by Pope Pius X in 1907, but went underground and its proponents exchanged copies and met privately.

Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., promoted a progressive theory of evolution and had faith in the promise of technology, research and science. He said that the Church needed a complete rethinking of old values and institutions. Prominent Jesuits sympathized with him. His belief was development toward total unity of all individuals toward omega point when Christ appears at and will be the omega point. Jesus is not really incarnate until the omega point. Jesuit superiors and Pope Pius XII told him to stop publishing and lecturing. With a revolt brewing among the Jesuits, his followers also went underground.

General Congregation 31 of the Society of Jesus met in the spring of 1965 to transform the Jesuits in its goals and in its preparation for action and its actual operation. Traditional language and concepts always used by Jesuits would be used with meanings very different from previous meanings. Renewalists defeated traditionalists.

For the election of a new Father General they looked for someone united to the world to bring salvation to the world in the Teilhardian notion of absorption of all humans in the onward evolution toward the Omega Point. They elected Pedro Arrupe from the Basque region of Spain. He was ordained in 1936 and was sent to Japan in 1938. In the Jesuit tradition he tried to enter the mind and soul of the people he was sent to convert. (“Inculturation” was risky because the would-be converter could be converted to the outlook and religion of the prospective convert.)

On August 6, 1945 Father Arrupe was in Hiroshima, Japan which was bombed by the United States Air Force. He witnessed a bloody example of what a godless society could wreak. Western corruption had accomplished pain, suffering, mutilation of human bodies, and putrefaction of death. In 1965 he left Japan and believed “inculturation” was necessary to reach the non-Christian Western mind, rather than by the methods of Western atheism. The Jesuits saw in him a messianic role with a prophetic vision to end all classes – in Jesuits and in the Church, an end to stronger over weaker, capitalists over worker and entrepreneur over laborer.

As difficult as it seems to understand how these cults have successfully infiltrated the Church, Saint Augustine has offered us a ray of hope. “Mystically, you may understand as the Temple Christ Himself as man, or the Body united with Him, which is the Church. He said: *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again* (John ii. 19). The Temple means the Church united to Him: meaning that there would be those in the Church who would seek their own ends, or who would find there a place of refuge for the concealment of their wickednesses, rather than seek there the love of Christ, and, being pardoned through the confession of their sins, might reform their lives.” Note that like His Resurrection Jesus will rescue the Church.

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