

Paragraph summary of *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*

§§1-5 Introduction

§1. St. Pius X recognizes that the Catholic Church is facing a rising threat, i.e. Modernism, and that it is his duty as Supreme Pastor to defend the Deposit of Faith from error.

§2. The threat is not, as in ages past, coming from without; now, the threat is coming from within the Church herself, and is poised to attacks her core beliefs.

§3. Modernism does not affect merely this or that teaching or dogma: it affects the entire system of the Church's belief, and its proponents are virtually immune to correction.

§4. Though Modernists present their teachings in a confused manner, so as to seem unsure in their conclusions and invite debate, this encyclical shall present their thoughts coherently.

§5. The Modernist takes several roles, each of which must be distinguished and treated separately: Philosopher, Believer, Theologian, Historian, Critic, Apologist, and Reformer.

§§6-13 Modernist as Philosopher

§6a. Modernism's philosophical basis is (epistemological) Agnosticism, i.e. the belief that human reason is confined to phenomena, and cannot transgress this limitation.

§6b. The most important conclusion the Modernist draws from this is religious Agnosticism, i.e. the belief that God cannot be the direct object of scientific or historical investigation.

§6c. From this, the Modernist arrives at Atheism in Science and History, i.e. the position that Science and History must be fundamentally atheistic in their approach to their subjects.

§7a. If God cannot be the object of science, then Natural Theology is destroyed. How, then, does the Modernist arrive at an explanation of religious phenomena? By something he calls "Vital Immanence".

§7b. The doctrine of Vital Immanence states that religion arises as a response to a religious impulse or sentiment welling up within man – and **not** a response of man to God.

§7c. This religious sentiment arises whenever man's consciousness reaches its natural limitation and hits upon the "Unknowable", which the Modernist Philosopher equates with God.

§8a. This confrontation with the "Unknowable" is not merely the source of the Modernist's Faith; it is also what he understands under the term "Revelation".

§8b. In this way, Modernism equates Revelation to Religious Consciousness, opening the way for the revision of the entire corpus of Revelation according to man's sentiments.

§9a. Because Faith, says the Modernist, arises from an interaction with the "Unknowable", it necessarily distorts or disfigures its object, adding unscientific and ahistorical components to it.

§9b. This is the foundation of the Modernist's Historical Criticism, which exhausts itself in separating the "actual" phenomenon of the object of religion from the "false" accretions added by Faith.

§9c. This is how Modernism arrives at the notion of "two" Christs: one historical, natural, merely human, the object of science and/or history; the other fantastic, supernatural, divine, the object of faith.

§10. In this way, the Modernist seeks to explain all religious phenomena, regardless of origin. Subsequently, Catholicism is put on an equal footing with all other religions.

§11. When the intellect, says the Modernist, begins its operation upon the raw data of religious sentiment, it refines the latter, producing propositions or "dogmas".

§12. Dogma, then, is nothing more than a means whereby the believer gives to himself an account of his religious sentiment, and can change according to his consciousness of the "Unknowable".

§13a. It is clear, then, why the Modernist rejects dogmas as expressing absolute truth: They are mere symbols, quite imperfect, needing adaptation to man in his "concrete situation".

§13b. In this way, the Modernist arrives at a core doctrine of his system: the Evolution of Dogma.

§§14-18 Modernist as Believer

§14a. As Philosopher, the Modernist is unconcerned with the objective existence of the Divine; he intentionally limits himself to the sphere of phenomena, which is subjective.

Note: As we saw in §7, for the Modernist Philosopher, "God" can be set equal to man's experience of the Unknowable, which exists just beyond the limits of his consciousness.

What this Unknowable is, the Modernist Philosopher does not venture to ascertain, for he holds it to be strictly impossible (agnosticism).

§14b. As Believer, the Modernist *does* posit the objective existence of the Divine. He grounds his belief, however, not on objective evidence, but on *the experience of the individual*.

§14c. That is, for the Modernist as Believer, God *is* directly accessible, but only through a supra-rational "intuition of the heart".

Note: It is important to clearly grasp the difference between the Modernist - both as Philosopher and as Believer - and the Catholic with regard to the knowability of God.

The Catholic position was defined at Vatican I in three anathemas, viz:

(1) "If anyone says that the one true God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason by means of the things that are made, let him be anathema"

(2) "If anyone says that it is not possible or not expedient that man be taught, through the medium of divine revelation, about God and the worship to be paid Him, let him be anathema"

(3) "If anyone says that divine revelation cannot be made credible by external signs, and that therefore men should be drawn to the faith only by their personal internal experience or by private inspiration, let him be anathema"

The Modernist Philosopher is in error because he denies that God can be known objectively - through, for example, the evidence of history or natural science, or the authority of revelation.

The Modernist Believer is in error because he asserts that his "suprarational intuition" of God is the only true means of knowing God as such.

§14d. Insofar as they come "from the heart," the Modernist opines, all religions are true. Catholicism's only advantage is that it is more "in tune" with this intuition, more "alive".

§15a. The Modernist views Tradition as the communication of an "original (religious) experience" and determines its value functionally.

§15b. That is, Tradition is valuable only insofar as it is able to communicate and bring about the "experience" in new adherents. (All else is "rigid dogmatism", "Pharisaism", etc.)

§16. With regard to Faith and Science, the Modernist separates them entirely. The separation is so complete that it leads, of course, to grave contradictions.

"Thus the conclusion is reached that there can never be any dissension between faith and science, for if each keeps on its own ground they can never meet and therefore never be in contradiction."

This is almost verbatim Stephen J. Gould's "non-Overlapping Magisteria" (NOMA). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-overlapping_magisteria

It's important to note here that the Catholic Modernist was originally trying to insulate faith from the attacks of modern science. Ironically, he ended up sacrificing truth in order to do so.

§17. Yet, while the Modernist separates Science and Faith, he does not make Faith independent of Science; on the contrary, Faith is to be critically evaluated and 'purified' by a Science unfettered by Faith.

§18. This strict separation of Science and Faith is what allows the Modernist to sometimes speak orthodoxy, sometimes rank heresy: His holding Christ to have been 'merely human' does not stop him from praying to Him.

Note: In other words, he is of two minds and speaks with a forked tongue.

Further: Notice that, with regard to Christ, the Modernist is actually worshipping a false God.

§§19-28 Modernist as Theologian

§19a. As noted in the last section, the Modernist has within himself a duality, a split, the product of (1) his thinking as a rationalist empiricist and (2) his believing as a protestant mystic.

§19b. The Modernist as Theologian seeks to overcome this split, to reconcile science and faith, always maintaining, however, the primacy of the former over the latter. He seeks to accomplish this through a number of theological principles, viz.:

§19c. (1) Theological Immanence: "God is immanent in man," given that (a) the principle of faith is immanent (Modernist Philosopher), and (b) that principle is God (Modernist Believer).

§19d. This principle comes close to Catholic teaching, provided it does not equate God's action in man with the acts of nature, which would destroy the supernatural order (pantheism).

§19e. (2) Theological Symbolism: "Representations of God are symbolical," given that (a) the object of faith is represented symbolically, and (b) that object is God.

§19f. This principle is quite dangerous, as it reduces dogma to something optional, something which can be accepted or rejected at the whim of the individual, and something which can be easily changed.

§20a. (3) Divine Permanence: "The object of religious experience, while experienced differently in each individual, is nonetheless in itself constant over time."

§20b. Ex. Sacraments: The religious consciousness of Christ, which is of God and shared by all Christians, gave rise to the Sacraments. Thus, the Sacraments were founded by Christ, but *mediately*, not directly.

Note: This is a heretical attempt to skirt dogma (Trent): "If anyone saith, that the Sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ [...] let him be anathema."

The principle of Divine Permanence is what allows the Modernist to pay lip service to Tradition while at the very same time changing it beyond all recognition.

§21. For the Modernist, the Sacraments serve a two-fold need: (1) giving a sensible manifestation to religion; (2) helping to propagate the same. In short, the Modernist holds that the Sacraments were instituted solely to foster faith.

Note: This is a denial of dogma (Trent): "If anyone say that these Sacraments are instituted solely to foster the faith, let him be anathema."

§22a. In treating Sacred Scripture, the Modernist Theologian simply applies the aforementioned principles, e.g.: God *does* speak in Scripture, but always by virtue of His being immanent in the author.

§22b. Inspiration, say the Modernist, is nothing more than a very powerful poetic "stirring" of the soul, and God's authorship ends with the imparting of this impulse to communicate that stirring to others.

§22c. This allows the Modernist to affirm the dogma that all Scripture is divinely inspired; but when he speaks of "inspiration", he clearly does not mean what the Church means.

§23a. The Modernist holds the Church to be the product of the collective conscience of all believers, i.e. participants in that original experience first had by the man Christ.

§23b. The threefold authority of the Church - pastoral, magisterial, sacerdotal - derives not directly from God, but from the consent of all believers. Thus, if the laity demand democratic governance, the Church *must* democratize.

§24a. Just as the Modernist separates Faith from Science (§16), so, too, does he separate the Church from the State - the former, by reason of their respective objects; the latter, by reason of their respective ends.

§24b. Consequently, as the Church is separated from the State, so is the individual as Catholic separated from the individual as Citizen, and for the Church to interfere in the individual's exercise of civil liberty is an abuse of ecclesial power.

§25a. Furthermore, just as Faith is to remain subordinate to Science (§17), so, too, is the Church to remain subordinate to the State. For example, the public exercise of religion is to be not merely safeguarded, but positively regulated by the State.

§25b. Similar to his opinion of the Church (§23), so does the Modernist hold the Magisterium to derive its power from the consent of the faithful who share in the consciousness it is properly intended to reflect.

§25c. That is, the Magisterium has as its proper role the adoption and promulgation of those formulae which the collective conscience of the body of faithful proposes as reflective of its shared religious experience.

Note: This is the notorious "Magisterium of the Current Year". It is a total perversion of the Magisterium, the true function of which is to safeguard the Depositum Fidei received from the Holy Apostles.

§26a. As noted previously (§13b), the Modernist subjects the entire body of Catholic teaching to the principle of Evolution. This is illustrated on four points: Faith, Christ, the Liturgy, and the Church.

§26b. Evolution in Faith: Faith began as a rudimentary impulse, common to all men, as it arises from human nature itself (and not as a response to God's call), developing through struggle with error.

§26c. Evolution in Christology: Christ was originally a man who had a profound religious experience; once this experience was communicated to others, He became identified with the object of that experience, i.e. divinized.

§26d. Evolution in Liturgy: The liturgy, if it is to remain relevant, must be adapted and modified to suit the customs and concrete situations of the people who celebrate it. Instead of being reformed by the liturgy, the liturgy is reformed by man.

§26e. Evolution in Ecclesiology: The Church, as the product of the collective consciousness of believers, must adapt and harmonize itself to the existing forms of society.

§27a. In accordance with his application of the principle of Evolution, the Modernist views all change in the Church as the result of a conflict between two forces: the Conservative and the Progressive.

§27b. The Conservative force is represented by ecclesiastical authority; the Progressive force is represented by the laity. Thus, the Modernist pits the Church against itself, advancing the people as needing to correct the hierarchy.

§27c. It is for this reason that the Modernist is shocked when rebuked: he sees himself as part of the "prophetic people of God", compelled to speak the truth of his individual consciousness to the power of an ossified hierarchy.

§27d. Yet, he refuses to leave the Church outright, because his goal is to subvert and gradually transform the collective conscience so as to make it conform to his "prophetic" and unique insights.

§28. [This paragraph presents several quotes from Pius IX' Syllabus of Errors (https://kek.gg/u/d_wz) as well as Vatican I (<https://kek.gg/u/Fkp->), showing that Modernism is by no means new.]

§§29-30 Modernist as Historian

§29. "After having studied the Modernist as philosopher, believer and theologian, it now remains for us to consider him as historian, critic, apologist, reformer."

§30a. The Modernist Historian vehemently denies that he is influenced by any philosophy so as to maintain the appearance of being an objective and impartial judge of the data of history. Nonetheless, the conclusions he draws can be deduced directly from the philosophical underpinnings of Modernism.

§30b. The Modernist principles utilized by the Historian are three: the Principle of Agnosticism (§6), the Principle of Transfiguration (§9), and the Principle of Disfiguration (§9). In what follows, we shall examine how these are applied by the Historian.

§30c. Agnosticism: "History deals with (subjective) phenomena, the objective correspondent of which must be treated as the object of Faith." In particular, History must remain neutral with regard to the question of God's intervention in human history.

§30d. Where the divine and the human are inextricably intertwined, as in the life of Christ, the Modernist Historian forces a division between them, claiming the human/material component for himself, while relegating the divine/spiritual component to Religion.

§30e. Transfiguration: "Historical figures must be stripped of all non-naturalistic attributes, i.e. transfiguration." That is, the critical work of History is to view its object through the lense of naturalism, eliminating all traces of supernatural realities.

§30f. Disfiguration: "The natural attributes of historical figures are the logical consequence of the age in which they lived; all else is disfiguration." That is, even human attributes must be reduced to deterministic, cause-effect relationships.

Note: This is a three-step program of Historical Reductionism: (1) reduce history to the study of phenomena; (2) reduce historical phenomena to natural phenomena; (3) reduce natural phenomena to deterministic causal residua.

This should come as no surprise, as (1) Agnosticism, (2) Naturalism, and (3) Determinism - one flowing from the next - are at the foundation of the Science! worldview.

§§31-34 Modernist as Critic

Note: This is one of the more technical sections of the encyclical, and is rather difficult to summarize in a satisfactory manner, as St. Pius presupposes familiarity with the so-called Historical Method of literary criticism.

For this reason, I suggested last week that the members of the #Pascendi Chat read some of the work of Fr. John F. McCarthy on the Historical-Critical Method, in particular “Neo-Patristic Exegesis” (Part I: <http://www.rtforum.org/lt/lt75.html>; Part: <http://www.rtforum.org/lt/lt76.html>)

§31a. Just as the Historian receives his conclusions from the Philosopher, so does the Critic receive his from the Historian. What the Historian has allowed to remain after performing his reduction is ascribed by the Critic as belonging to Real History; all else is Internal (Non-Real) History.

§31b. For example, the Critic applies the division in Christ developed by the Historian - i.e. the Christ of History vs. the Christ of Faith - to his reading of Scripture. This results in a massive redaction of all Scripture into two parts.

§32a. The work of the Critic, then, is largely focused on determining how Faith produced the text of Scripture as we have it today, i.e. the Internal History of Scripture. For this, he uses the Philosopher’s principle of Vital Immanence.

§32b. Vital Immanence proposes that Faith is always a reaction to some internal need of man. In the context of Criticism, it means that what appears in Scripture is always subsequent to the need that it satisfies.

§32c. In this way, the Critic attempts to divide up the Internal History of Scripture according to the imagined sequence of events in which the needs of the Christian faithful emerged.

Note: For an example of what St. Pius is referring to, turn to §11 in “Neo-Patristic Exegesis”:

“[Bultmann] concludes that ‘controversy dialogues are all of them imaginary scenes’ having their *Sitz im Leben*, not in the life of Jesus, but ‘in the discussions the Church had with its opponents, and as certainly within itself, on questions of law’.”

That is, because Scripture is subsequent to the need it satisfies, everything Jesus said concerning the law in opposition to the Pharisees must have been composed after the Church felt the need to distinguish itself from the Jews on matters of the law.

Thus: §13: “The form-critical analysis of Rudolf Bultmann [...] had been and remains shattering to Catholic belief in the Gospels.”

§33. All of this is done with a view towards portraying Sacred Scripture as the product of an evolutionary process. In this way, we see that both the Critic and the Historian are actually in the service of the Philosopher.

Note: The entire undertaking is an exercise in circular reasoning: Evolution is assumed in order to arrange and explain historical events; then, the arrangement of historical events is offered as proof of evolution.

§34a. The first thing to be discarded by the Modernist as Critic with regard to the Bible is the authorship of the individual books: Even in the best cases, the claimed author can only be responsible for a ‘first draft’ of a text. This, in turn, undermines the authority of all of Scripture.

Note: Wellhausen’s Documentary Hypothesis, which views the Pentateuch as the work of four different hypothetical authors, was universally accepted in the 20th century, even by Catholic biblical scholars. It has been largely abandoned by Protestants today, but is still taught in Catholic seminaries.

§34b. The Historical-Critical method thus allows the Modernist as Critic to place himself above the Fathers and Doctors of the Church in their interpretation of Sacred Scripture, as they lacked sufficient ‘insight’ into the ‘true nature’ of the Bible.

§34c. Catholics who would defend the traditional reception and reading of Sacred Scripture against the Modernists are summarily treated to public scorn, and are portrayed as hopelessly ignorant, anachronistic and anti-scientific - because it works.

Concluding Notes: In my opinion, exegesis is *the* most important field of Catholic study needing Restoration. To those who are interested, I strongly recommend The Roman Theological Forum (<http://www.rtforum.org/>), especially ‘Living Tradition’.

Some of the fruit of my own research into the crisis of Biblical Exegesis can be found in the following three articles:

A Crisis of Meaning: Sacred Scripture & the Rise of Modernism (Part I): <https://onepeterfive.com/a-crisis-of-meaning-sacred-scripture-and-the-rise-of-modernism-pt-i/>

A Crisis of Meaning: Sacred Scripture & the Rise of Modernism (Part II): <https://onepeterfive.com/crisis-meaning-sacred-scripture-rise-modernism-pt-ii/>

A Chink in the Armor: Biblical Inerrancy and *Divino Afflante Spiritu*: <http://theradicalcatholic.blogspot.ch/2016/05/a-chink-in-armor-appendix-to-crisis-of.html>

§§35-37 Modernist as Apologist

Note: "Apologetics" as used here refers to any argument or systematic discourse made in defense of the truth of the Catholic Faith. From the Greek *apologeisthai*: "to speak in one's defense".

Just as St. Pius demonstrated how the Modernist Historian and Critic is completely dependent upon the Modernist Philosopher for the substance of his conclusions (§31), he will now do the same with regard to the Modernist Apologist.

§35a. The Modernist as Apologist begins his work by declaring his total submission to the philosophical assumptions of his traditional opponent, i.e. the Enlightenment Rationalist.

Note: As mentioned previously, Modernism began as an attempt to salvage Catholic teaching from the attacks of modern Science, which rests upon the principles of Agnosticism, Naturalism and Determinism.

The Modernist has accepted these principles, not only to deprive the Rationalist of his most familiar weapons against Church teaching, but also - and most importantly - because he genuinely believes them to be true.

The entire enterprise of the Modernist, then, can be summarized as the subjugation of Catholic Truth to the principles of Enlightenment Philosophy. This becomes most clear when we examine the work of the Modernist as Apologist.

§35b. As noted above (cf. §15, §26), the Modernist holds that religion is spread by the communication of an "original experience" to prospective adherents. Accordingly, Modernist Apologetics is concerned with this communication.

§35c. To facilitate this communication, the Modernist Apologist has two main approaches open to him, viz.: (a) the objective, arguing from the data of History and Psychology/Anthropology, and (b) the subjective, arguing from the needs of the individual.

Note: When the Modernist argues from the data of History, he doesn't mean History as contained in Scripture; rather, he means History stripped of Faith, reduced to natural phenomena and deterministic residua (§30).

§35d. (a) Objective Argument: When we examine the history of the Church, argues the Modernist, we are confronted with the sense that, even after explaining the development of the same causally, some unknown element remains.

§35e. This unknown element, argues the Modernist Apologist, transcends the scope of rational inquiry, and can be attributed to God (§7). In this way, the Agnosticism of the Modernist as Philosopher merges with that of the Modernist as Believer.

§36a. In taking his approach, the Modernist Apologist is forced to conclude that Sacred Scripture contains positive errors in matters of History and Science, claiming it to possess authority only in matters of Faith and Morals.

§36b. Yet to do this is to accuse God of uttering officious lies, i.e. "false statements made in the way of duty", which St. Augustine (Ep. 28.3) condemns in the strongest of terms. Nonetheless, this has become standard practice today.

§37. (b) Subjective Argument: Every person, argues the Modernist, feels within him a need for the divine which manifests as a desire for religion. The more developed this need, this desire, is, the more a person will be drawn to Catholicism.

Note: One cannot help but be reminded of the opening paragraphs of the 1994 Catechism promulgated by John Paul II, where it speaks of 'Man's Capacity for God', i.e.:

"§28. In many ways, throughout history down to the present day, men have given expression to their quest for God in their religious beliefs and behaviour: in their prayers, sacrifices, rituals, meditations, and so forth..."

"...These forms of religious expression, despite the ambiguities they often bring with them, are so universal that one may well call man a religious being."

Key here is the refusal to refer to the worship of pagans as false. Instead, pagan religions are portrayed as 'stepping stones' to truth, as 'partial truths', as they, too, are intended to satisfy that 'universal' need of man - which, it is claimed, they do, though imperfectly.

Modernists attempted to raise this novel understanding of non-Catholic religions to the level of official Church teaching at Vatican II in the document 'Gaudium et Spes'. Understandably, Traditionalists have taken issue with it.

While we are rightly hesitant to accuse an official Catechism of preaching outright heresy, we should not shy away from recognizing that such passages are, at best, capable of a double interpretation.

§38 Modernist as Reformer

§38. The Modernist Reformer is maniacal in his drive to 'update' - and, in effect, subvert - everything in the Church: philosophy, theology, history, dogma, the liturgy, the Curia, morals, the clergy - everything must 'evolve or die'.

Note: This section reads like a recipe for the program of reform undertaken in the Church since Vatican II and continuing into the present. Even the notion of God has been modified: Today, we are to worship the "God of Surprises", i.e. the God of Perpetual and Unprecedented Reform.

Anyone interested in reading more of my take regarding the "God of Surprises", see the following blog post: <http://theradicalcatholic.blogspot.ch/2015/01/vital-immanence-revisited.html>
It is particularly relevant to Pascendi.

§39 Modernism and the Synthesis of All Heresies

Note: There is a typo in this paragraph on the Vatican website edition: "You know it from your own dealings with sounds" > should read "souls" not "sounds".

§39. [This paragraph is little more than a very dense summary of everything which has preceded it, the main thrust of which is this: Modernism is the Synthesis of All Heresies.]

§§40-43 The Causes of Modernism

§40a. There are two immediate **moral** causes of Modernism in the individual: curiosity and pride. Curiosity, when left unregulated, leads frequently to error. When combined with pride, correction becomes nearly impossible.

Note: The quote from Gregory XVI (my current avatar) is worth meditating on, especially with regard to the desire of the human intellect to "know beyond what it is meant to know". It could be effectively argued that we live in the age of unbridled intellectual pride.

§40b. Thus, bishops - as heads of their respective seminaries - are instructed to identify individuals in whom intellectual pride is manifest and ensure that they do not rise to positions from which they might spread their errors.

Note: St. Pius also composed an oath against Modernism, to be taken by all clergy upon ordination. The text can be viewed here: <https://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/p10moath.htm>

This oath was abolished by Paul VI. You can draw your own conclusions as to why.

§41. The primary **intellectual** cause of Modernism in the individual is ignorance - which, it must be added, is usually self-inflicted, as the Modernist has consciously rejected the intellectual discipline of clear thinking as taught by Scholastic philosophy.

§42a. To the spread or propagation of their error, Modernists recognize three principal obstacles, viz: (1) Scholastic philosophy, (2) the authority of the Fathers and Tradition, (3) the authentic Magisterium of the Church. Thus, they set about to undermine all three.

§42b. (1) *Contra Scholastic philosophy*: The Modernist argues that Scholasticism is hopelessly outdated and ill-equipped to deal with the advances of modern thought and the progress of the natural sciences.

§42c. Bl. Pope Pius IX declared as erroneous the Modernist proposition: "The method and principles which have served the doctors of scholasticism when treating of theology no longer correspond with the exigencies of our time or the progress of science." (No. 13)

Note: The full text of Pope Pius IX' Syllabus of Errors can be found here:

<https://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/p9syll.htm> It deserves a very careful reading, especially as Pope Benedict considered Vatican II to be an "anti-Syllabus" of sorts.

§42d. (2) Contra the Fathers: The Modernist argues that the Fathers are no longer reliable guides to the Faith, because they had no knowledge of history and criticism, living as they did in a 'different age'.

§42e. This is in direct contradiction of the the 4th Council of Constantinople, which professed total fidelity to "every one of those divine interpreters, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church."

Note: This issue of the Fathers also plays a central role in the matter of biblical exegesis, as the documents of Vatican I declare that Scripture may never be interpreted contrary to the unanimous opinion of the Fathers. Cf. <https://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v1.htm>

§42f. (3) Contra the Magisterium: The Modernist attempts to undermine the authority of the Magisterium by pointing out supposed contradictions, errors or "evolutions" in her promulgations.

Note: This is one of the favorite arguments today, i.e. "The Church changed its teaching on usury, so it can change its teaching on anything else, too."

§42g. This was condemned by Pope Leo XIII: "To bring contempt and odium on the mystic Spouse of Christ, who is the true light, the children of darkness have been wont to cast in her face before the world a stupid calumny,..."

§42h. "...and perverting the meaning and force of things and words, to depict her as the friend of darkness and ignorance, and the enemy of light, science, and progress."

§42i. In combination with the above, the Modernist does not hesitate to collaborate with the outright enemies of the Church provided only that they help in the work of undermining the three obstacles mentioned above (§42a.)

§43. The Modernist uses every means available to him to spread his errors, and does so with astonishing success, corrupting the minds of the next generation - both in clergy and in the laity - knowing that the hierarchy must adapt if the foundation is altered.

§§44-58 Remedies

§44. While Pope Leo XIII undertook efforts to shore up the Church's defenses against the errors of his day, especially with regard to Sacred Scripture and its interpretation, much more can and should be done to stop the spread of Modernism.

Note: Most of the remedies proposed by Pope St. Pius are of purely historical interest to us today, as they were neglected by Popes Pius XI and Pius XII and consciously rejected by Popes John XXIII and Paul VI. The notable exception is the revival and study of Scholastic philosophy.

§45-47 The Study of Scholastic Philosophy

§45. Scholastic philosophy, especially in the form it attained under the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas, must remain the basis of the Church's intellectual life, as was mandated by Pope Leo XIII in *Aeterni Patris*.

Note: The full text of *Aeterni Patris*, which called for a renewal of Scholastic philosophy in the Church and brought the Neo-Scholastic movement into existence, can be found here: <https://kek.gg/u/32LXr>

§46. More energy should be put into the development of Positive Theology, though it should not be allowed to become estranged from Scholasticism.

Note: By "Positive Theology", St. Pius means "that part of theology which seeks to establish the truth of the Church's teaching from the *evidence* of Scripture, tradition, and the analogy of faith" (Fr. Hardon), to which could be added "the evidence of history".

§47. Also, Natural Science should be studied energetically, though not to the extent that the Sacred Sciences be neglected in any way, as this is a sure way to help the spread of "perverse doctrines and monstrous errors" (Leo XIII).

Note: One need only read the work of a luminary of the scientific community such as Stephen Hawking to see proof of this, i.e. an intellect of obvious superiority seemingly incapable of understanding even basic metaphysical axioms.

To those who are looking for a basic but thoroughly orthodox introduction to Scholastic philosophy, I highly recommend de Poissy's 'Elementary Course', approved by Bl. Pius IX: <http://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/cp.htm>

§48-58 Various Practical Remedies

As noted above, the remaining practical remedies proposed by Pope St. Pius X were poorly enforced and eventually rejected in the wake of Vatican II. Most notably, the Oath against Modernism and the Index of Forbidden Books were abolished in the mid-60's.

Addendum: Modernism Today and the Crisis of Our Age

Pascendi was successful to the extent that it alerted the Catholic world to the threat posed by Modernism. But it was ultimately a failure insofar as it only served to push the Modernists underground, where they could not be so easily observed.

Overlooking the episode of Teilhard de Chardin and his Cosmic Evolution of Christ Consciousness (!), Modernism remained mostly underground until Pope John XXIII announced a new ecumenical council in 1959. Men such as Küng, Schillebeeckx and Congar saw that their moment had finally come.

The first wave of Modernist had largely contented themselves with setting forth an overarching ideology of reform; the new Modernists - so-called 'Neo-Modernists' of Vatican II - sought to train that ideology on the accomplishment of practical, concrete goals.

It is no coincidence that, as the majority of the Neo-Modernists hailed from the Rhineland countries of Germany, France, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, their immediate goal was to use Modernist principles to bring about a reunification of Catholicism and Protestantism, particularly Lutheranism.

But unlike previous attempts at reunification, the Church would not call the Protestants to reject their heresy and convert; instead, these men would get the Church to soften her language so that Protestants would no longer take offense, even going so far as to change the Mass to suit them.

To treat the changes which took place during and after Vatican II at the behest of the Neo-Modernists would fill several scholarly volumes. To those looking for such a work, I warmly recommend Romano Amerio's *Iota Unum*, quite possibly the best history & analysis ever written.

For our purposes, we will take note of a list of 17 errors plaguing the modern Church composed by Bishop Athanasius Schneider. Bp. Schneider is one of the most vocal proponents of orthodoxy in the Church today, and could be classed as a strong conservative with traditionalist tendencies.

Bp. Schneider drew up this list to encourage the notion of a new *Syllabus errorum* reminiscent of the Syllabi of Bl. Pius IX and St. Pius X. In what follows, we will examine each error and its connection to Neo-Modernism.

Error 1: The notion of a pre-conciliar and a post-conciliar Church in the sense of rupture or discontinuity, preferring the "post-conciliar" Church, and considering the real Church as the "conciliar church", creating thereby the notion of a new church, the "Church of Vatican II".

Note: There are two moments or elements to be noted in this error: (1) viewing Vatican II as a "rupture" with the past, and (2) viewing the "post-Conciliar" Church as the "real" Church.

Bp. Schneider is **not** attempting to whitewash the obvious break which occurred in the Church after Vatican II. Rather, he is rejecting any reading or interpretation of Vatican II which contradicts settled teaching. This has consequences for both Modernist and Traditionalist.

For the Modernist, it means that nothing in regard to doctrine has changed, and every appeal to Vatican II as somehow changing or evolving Church teaching is erroneous. There is no "Church of Vatican II": the Church today teaches what she has always taught - no more, no less.

For the Traditionalist, it means refusing to allow the Modernist to claim Vatican II - as **he** interprets it - as a victory for Modernism. When we claim Vatican II contains positive error which breaks with the past, we risk feeding into the narrative of the Modernist.

The Traditionalist cannot permit the Modernist to maintain this narrative of the "Church of Vatican II", as this allows him to claim fidelity to the Magisterium, and portray the Traditionalist as a regressive, disobedient reactionary.

Instead, the Traditionalist must reclaim Vatican II, giving interpretations in harmony with established doctrine. Where a contradiction is apparent, then we **must** take recourse to previous Magisterial teaching, as it trumps everything in Vatican II, the so-called "pastoral" Council.

In this regard, please note the document 'Dei Filius' from the First Council of the Vatican (Vatican I), §14: "Hence, too, that meaning of the sacred dogmas is ever to be maintained which has once been declared by Holy mother Church, ..."

"... and there must never be any abandonment of this sense under the pretext or in the name of a more profound understanding. May understanding, knowledge and wisdom increase as ages and centuries roll along, and greatly and vigorously flourish, ..."

"... in each and all, in the individual and the whole Church: but this only in its own proper kind, that is to say, in the same doctrine, the same sense, and the same understanding."

That is to say, there **is** no rupture because **there can be** no rupture in the Magisterium. Anyone teaching at odds with the traditional doctrine is not part of a "new" Church; they are heretics who have fallen away from the **one** Church.

Error 2: The notion that other Christian confessions or other religions are objectively also ways of salvation wanted by God.

Note: Cf. Pascendi (§§10, 14, 37), This error has been fueled by ambiguities and contradictions contained in various documents and statements made by prelates after Vatican II. As an example, I contrast the following two statements:

(1) "The union of Christians can only be promoted by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it." - Pope Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos* (1928)

(2) "Today we no longer understand ecumenism in the sense of a 'return', by which the others would 'be converted' and return to being Catholics. This was expressly abandoned by Vatican II." - Cardinal Kasper as Prefect of the Pont. Council for Christian Unity (2001)

Here, we see the work of "evolution" (§26). This is also a prime example of the Modernist claiming Vatican II as a "rupture", when Vatican II *cannot* teach at odds with what the Church has always taught, i.e. that, if they are to be saved, heretics and schismatics *must* return to the Church.

Error 3: The notion that women have to receive access to ordained ministries, at least to the diaconate, an aspiration which is favored by the widespread practice of female acolytes and lectors.

Note: This would have been unthinkable in St. Pius' time, as everyone understood the role of the priest as *alter Christus*. Though fueled largely by feminism, historical revisionism has played a role here, with the unanimous witness of the Fathers being simply discarded as "outdated" (§42).

Error 4: Doubts about the perpetual virginity of Our Lady, especially about the virginal birth of Jesus and of the virginity of Our Lady during birth giving (*virginitas in partu*).

Note: These dogmas are usually rejected as examples of Transfiguration (§9), i.e. accretions of Faith added to the "real" phenomena of History. It is not only a direct denial of key Marian dogmas, it is indirectly a denial of the divinity of Christ.

Error 5: The notion that the Holy Mass is predominantly a fraternal banquet and that the sacrificial aspect of the Holy Mass is only metaphorical or a sacrifice of praise.

Note: This error, as it exists in the Church, is largely the product of false ecumenism, being more or less the notion of the Mass maintained by some Protestant sects, particularly Lutherans. In itself, it is a fruit of Modernism's understanding of the Sacraments (§21).

Of course, the most visible manifestation of this error is the manner in which the New Mass is celebrated. To explore this issue would explode the boundaries of this chat, but I recommend the following overview:

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/modernproblems/newmass/comparison.htm>

For the sake of comparison, I recommend viewing the following video of a modern Lutheran “Divine Service” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwCv0rjLCeM> Note that, in many ways, it is *more* conservative than how the New Mass of Paul VI is commonly celebrated.

If you don’t have time for the above, this shorter clip containing the “Liturgy of the Eucharistic Meal” should suffice to make the point: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1g8Jel76Ko8>

Error 6: A lack of the belief in transubstantiation and even in the Real Presence.

Note: As Bp. Schneider observes, this has been fueled by the modern practice of receiving Holy Communion in the hand - something which was not permitted by Vatican II, but introduced by bishops and then, reluctantly, permitted by Paul VI.

The practice originated with Protestant “Reformers” who wanted to erode Catholic belief in both the Real Presence and the sacramental priesthood. In the Church, the “priesthood of the laity” is emphasized as justification for unconsecrated hands touching the body and blood of Our Lord (cf. No. 16).

For the Modernist, this error is a necessary consequence of his understanding of the Sacraments (§21) and his notion of Theological Symbolism (§19), as well as his general approach, i.e. thinking as a rationalist empiricist and believing as a protestant mystic.

Error 7: Erroneous opinions about episcopal collegiality, attributing to the college of the bishops an ordinary supreme power of government of the universal Church, creating a kind of double-head of the body of the Church, what is against the Divine constitution of the Church.

Error 8: An erroneous application of the principle of episcopal collegiality by means of the Episcopal Conferences on national and international levels, weakening thereby the Divinely established individual authority of teaching and governing of the diocesan bishop.

Note: At the time of Pope St. Pius X, Modernists wanted the Church to democratize (§23). Today, the bishops are attempting to consolidate ecclesial power under episcopal conferences (national churches), taking power away from both the pope and the local ordinary.

Error 9: Doubts about the eternity of hell.

Error 10: Doubts about the real possibility of eternal condemnation to hell of human beings, which means that hell is empty.

Note: The proximate cause of these errors being added to the list was a widely circulated video produced by Fr. Robert Barron in which he opined, in commenting on a thesis by Urs von Balthasar, that we have a reasonable hope that all men are saved, or will be saved, and that hell is empty.

This thesis was explicitly condemned by Bl. Pius IX in 1863. A fuller treatment, which I recommend, can be found here:

<http://unamsanctamcatholicam.blogspot.ch/2013/11/fr-barron-and-mark-shea-and-balthasar.html>

This error was taken to new heights by Pope Francis himself when he stated in an interview that the souls of the damned are simply annihilated upon death: <https://kek.gg/u/8hcF> This is heresy, but excused on the grounds that the interview was “unofficial”.

Error 11: Doubts about the necessity of expiation of temporal punishments in purgatory.

Note: This is a common extension of the previous two errors, and has been allowed to grow in the Church due to false ecumenism, as Protestants deny the existence of purgatory altogether.

For anyone interested in how the doctrines of hell and purgatory are part of a cohesive whole incorporating that most infamous dogma, “extra Ecclesiam nulla salus”, see here: <http://theradicalcatholic.blogspot.ch/2015/05/on-virtuous-pagan-limbo-and-theology-of.html>

Error 12: A naturalistic view of the Christian life and truth, so that activism and social engagement become predominant to the detriment of prayer and adoration of God, which means a kind of neo-pelagianism.

Note: This is the fruit of the activity of the Modernist as Historian (§§29-30), i.e. after the Faith has been subjected to the program of Historical Reductionism, all that remains on the practical level are the corporal works of mercy.

The phrase “neo-pelagian” was made popular by one of Pope Francis’ insults directed at Traditionalists, and Bp. Schneider is turning the phrase against the Modernist as one who proposes that man is saved by his own activity, i.e. without divine aid.

Error 13: Non-recognition of the grave immorality of contraception.

Error 14: Practical errors about the indissolubility of a valid matrimony.

Error 15: Errors about the objective disorder of homosexual acts and of homoeroticism and the objective immorality of same sex civil unions, because they favor ultimately sodomy.

Error 16: Confusion about the essential difference of the ministerial and the common priesthood.

Error 17: Doubts about the convenience of the clerical celibate and his perennial value because of apostolic tradition.

Note: These five errors are all the product of the ecumenical program of the Neo-Modernists, as all of them have been either promoted or at least accepted by the mainline Protestant denominations.

Postscript: Objective Truth and the Crisis of Faith

The attentive reader might have noticed that, while the effort behind the list is commendable, nowhere does it address the underlying problem, i.e. Modernism itself and its denial of objective truth. Bp. Schneider is a good and holy man, but even he appears to misjudge the extent of the corruption.

I make note of an article which appeared just yesterday penned by the former director of the Vatican Bank (!) in which he correctly, in my opinion, diagnoses the problem: <https://kek.gg/u/Hf8v> Note the conclusion:

"The Pope's failure to answer the dubia would illustrate that doubts must be resolved subjectively because Truth is no longer objective. Thus, the Church today seems to be declaring that she does not want to have a doctrine to propose to the world. ..."

" ... She believes that circumstance determines doctrine, rather than the contrary. Therefore, the new Church seems to want to give moral suggestions but without precepts, without laws. It is useless to ask if this is so."

This is the heart of the problem, as Pope St. Pius X noted at the very beginning of Pascendi: If we deny objective reality and/or the ability of the mind to know it, we ultimately reject Christ, who is the Truth, and everything we touch becomes corrupted.

It is no surprise, then - to borrow a phrase recently uttered by Monsignor Bux, theologian and former periti to the CDF - that "we are in a full crisis of faith":

<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/edward-pentin/monsignor-bux-we-are-in-a-full-crisis-of-faith>