

What the Pope Fears

by Dr. Robert Moynihan on Jun 29, 2011

Walking in Rome in recent days, I noticed on a newstand the cover of the Italian magazine Focus. It has a picture of a human face in two parts, half-normal and half-transformed into a futuristic being. The title says “Uomo 2.0” (Man Version 2.0) and the subtitle reads: “Siamo un'altra specie” (“We are a new species”).

Is the claim far-fetched? Perhaps.

But it represents a general sense in the world today that we are on the verge of epochal, unprecedented changes in human life. Perhaps even changes in human beings themselves.

Now, as the Roman sun of early summer begins to beat down on this ancient city, on this holy feast day of the two patron saints of the Church of Rome, June 29, a period of frenetic activity in the Church is drawing to a close.

The Vatican has just launched a new and rather comprehensive web site (www.news.va), prepared under the close supervision of Archbishop Claudio Celli, head of the Vatican's office of Social Communications (who seems poised to be promoted to a still more important post). The Pope himself launched the new site with a click from an iPad yesterday evening, the vigil of today's feast day. Here is a link to an interesting video of the Pope launching the new web site:
<http://www.youtube.com/vatican#p/a/u/2/tty87WDBukk>

Final preparations are right now underway to receive some 1 million young people in Madrid in August for World Youth Day.

But the main news, the essential news, is that the questions facing the Pope, the Church, and mankind are becoming ever more basic, ever more essential, as the elites of our world attempt to pilot humanity into a new age, free from the “shackles” of traditional values and beliefs.

The essential question is the question of man.

I repeat: the essential question of our time is the anthropological question, the question of man.

What is man? What is his nature, his meaning, his duty, his destiny?

Scripture tells us that man is a being mysteriously, almost paradoxically, endowed with a double nature: one physical, and so transient, doomed to the vicissitudes of change and then to pass away; and one spiritual, immortal, destined for eternity.

But the modern world has, for the most part, denied this definition or understanding of man.

The modern world has, for the most part, embraced a reductionist view of man, viewing man as a physical being only, moved by chemical reactions and hormonal drives, condemned by the haphazardness of an essentially meaningless universe to create himself and his own meaning according to his own desires, without any transcendent reference of any type, not to mention the reality signified by the word “God,” which only arouses polite snickers in elite circles.

Pope Benedict has often made this point — that our age suffers from the absence of God.

By why should this be a cause of suffering?

Isn't the absence of God rather a cause for rejoicing, as there is no limit, no bound, no restraint, to human aspiration? Cannot men simply become God, or their own gods? Isn't this an outcome devoutly to be wished, and pursued?

Strangely, the answer is no.

Because, oddly, it is of the essence of being a man, of being human, that man transcend himself. Unless man transcends himself, he is not man. This is the paradox at the heart of our being, the strangeness of our humanity.

Without God, without the transcendent, without the holy, man is bereft of what is of its essence beyond man, of the divine, of the “above,” of the sacred, of that which surpasses the purely digital, the purely numerical, and arrives at the personal, and so at the threshold of meaning — of what the Greeks, and Christians, refer to as “logos.”

If man is bereft of the “logos” — of meaning — he is bereft of Christ, because Christ, as St. John told us, was essentially the logos.

An “a-Christic” society (not anti-Christic, but simply a-Christic, uninterested in Christ, uninterested in meaning) is a logos-less society — a meaning-less society.

But it is meaning that man most craves, not pleasure, not wealth, not power, not sex, not procreation... Meaning.

We were made essentially for meaning, for a personal meaning, to have a name, to be named, and to name, and, in the process, of being persons with names, persons able to love, and to sacrifice.

All the problems humans face, whether in law, or in science, or in economics — and I refer obliquely to the recent vote in favor of homosexual marriage in New York, and to the Fukushima nuclear reactor in Japan, and to the riots today in debt-suffocated Greece — are only able to be truly analyzed and solved with logos, with reason, with meaning — true meaning, not superficial meaning.

This is the reason why Christians, why John Paul II in his time and Benedict now, are crying out to the world: “Return to meaning, return to reason, return to true science — return, yes, to Christ, the true man, who is logos incarnate,” in order to avoid tragedy, cruelty, bloodshed, and the hopelessness of life without logos, without meaning.

This is the “new evangelization” the Pope is calling for, in our troubled “modern” age.

This is the new witness he is calling on Christians to make in the face of a world anxious to create a “new species” out of the human genetic material... in the face of a world wishing to redefine men and women as ultimately interchangeable and indistinguishable... in the face of a world which claims to have science, but which is marred by a massive and devastating ignorance of the true processes of genetics and of life.

The end of man is to become eternally blessed, inwardly transformed into the image and likeness of God, filled with the Spirit of God, and this end is far more desirable than to live 1,000 or 10,000 or 100,000 years, even if the years are dense with sybaritic pleasures, on this revolving asteroid we call earth.

We must return to the logos, to reason, to meaning — to Christ. In this will be our happiness, and fulfillment. Every other path leads to frustration and death.

This is the message Benedict is preaching as he gracefully ages and approaches the end of his human journey. We should listen attentively to him as he preaches these things daily, with eloquence and power.

What Pope Benedict Fears

In an article published on the internet in three parts beginning on May 21 and concluding on June 22, the writer Antonio Margheriti Mastino presents what he says are the words and thoughts of Spanish Cardinal Antonio Canizares Llovera, currently the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship in the Vatican.

Among the many interesting statements made in this report, one stands out: the statement that Pope Benedict, who is known to regard Canizares with favor, told Canizares personally meeting that he (Benedict) has three great fears:

- (1) The secularization within the Church;
- (2) The peaceful invasion of Europe by Islam;
- (3) The ever-greater control — and the next words are within quotation marks, meaning Margheriti Mastino is presenting these words as an exact quotation of what Cardinal Canizares said to him — “of freemasonry on the cultural level and of the centers of power of the European Union.”

Here is the passage in the original Italian:

Per la verità, qualcosa un pochetto inquietante sul papa, Canizares la diceva già un paio d’anni prima del suo “esilio” romano. Facendo intendere che ne avesse parlato direttamente con l’interessato. E il papa gli avrebbe confidato delle “tre cose” che temeva. La prima, la secolarizzazione interna della Chiesa. La seconda, l’invasione pacifica dell’Europa da parte dell’Islam. La terza, ed è la più inquietante, il controllo sempre più grande “della massoneria a livello culturale e dei centri di potere dell’Unione Europea”, a Bruxelles, dove crescono in modo esponenziale le lobby di provenienza massonica, organizzatissime, padrone ormai incontrastate della sua burocrazia legislativa, quasi tutta in mano ai loro uomini. Canizares, riferisce che il papa, proprio in questa attività lobbistica nel cuore d’Europa, vede la mano invisibile che ispira il movimento culturale che c’è nel Vecchio Continente, sempre più specializzato nella persecuzione “legalistica” del cattolicesimo. Tutte cose che il papa “teme”. E a giudicare dagli episodi dell’ultimo anno, non a torto. Per la verità, qualcosa un pochetto inquietante sul papa, Canizares la diceva già un paio d’anni prima del suo “esilio” romano. Facendo intendere che ne avesse parlato direttamente con l’interessato. E il papa gli avrebbe confidato delle “tre cose” che temeva. La prima, la secolarizzazione interna della Chiesa. La seconda, l’invasione pacifica dell’Europa da parte dell’Islam. La terza, ed è la più inquietante, il controllo sempre più grande “della

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