

On RJMI and Mary's Little Remnant

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VB's Letter (3/4/14)

3/4/2014

Dear Mr. Ibranyi,

First, I would like to introduce myself. My name is VB. I have a wife and three children (soon to be four). My father grew up in Russia and embraced the Russian Orthodox faith, which I now understand is schismatic but my 5 siblings and I were raised Orthodox as well. When I met my wife, she was not attending any church, however, she was a Catholic rejecting the Vatican II church. She converted me to her faith and together we stayed at home and said our own prayers to honor the Lord's Day, which we still continue to do with our young family. About three years ago a friend introduced me to your website and my wife and I began studying your books and listening to your videos and sermons, which we still continue to do. We both appreciate your recent works on the Great Apostasy and agree with your conclusions.

All that being said, I have been making a list for some time of different questions I have had and that people have put to me regarding you and Mary's Little Remnant. I was afraid to burden you unnecessarily here and there, and I understand even now that your group is very busy and you may not be able to answer my questions right away. I will patiently await your answers whenever your time permits. Thank you in advance for the work Mary's Little Remnant has put into teaching the Catholic Faith to lost sheep. Please do not think I am being impertinent with my questions. I just like to be direct with any questions I ask of *anyone* and I am sure you will respect that.

1) I was looking at your calendar for Mary's Little Remnant (which my family uses all the time!) and I noticed the "Rules" you have for Mary's Little Remnant. You say that you are a "Catholic Lay Order." What does this mean? Also, I presume that you are the head of this Order, yes?

Please help flush this out for me. What does this mean regarding "authority" you have over your people? Are you considered the "Father Superior" of Mary's Little Remnant and do your members have to take specific vows in order to join? From what I understand, they have not taken vows, however, I could be wrong and that is why I want to ask. Personally, I was thinking since all of your recent findings on the Great Apostasy beginning due to sins of omission and false and sinful obedience to bad superiors, I was thinking that in our latter days, it would be more prudent **not** to take vows to one person in particular lest demons of human respect find their way into good Catholics and we create our own greater Apostasy than before. I can understand if the Church was in a Golden Age, as it seems it was most definitely under Emperor Charlemagne, then it would not be an issue. But since we are still learning things, even as of July 2013, I personally think it would be more prudent not to. I am sorry if you think me a rebel. I just do not want to commit the same sins we see repeatedly happening through the centuries.

If the members of MLR have **not** taken vows, what or what not can you tell your people they can or cannot do? If you **do** have to take vows in order to join, what do these entail?

I mean, depending on the vows, would you be able to tell someone where he has to work? or where he has to live? Of course, if the person in question, Mr. X, works for an immoral company or lives in a completely homosexual community, etc., then it would be any Catholic's obligation to tell Mr. X to leave his job or to move. But on the other hand, if Mr. X works as a computer hardware engineer or lives in a small, quiet town, not dangerous to his family's souls, would being a member of Mary's Little Remnant demand in obedience that he leave his job and move his family to New Mexico?

2) Can you demand in obedience of members of MLR non-sinful things that are against their will? For example, if Mr. X doesn't prefer to watch sports because he would rather go for a walk or listen to music, could he be demanded under obedience to watch sports? Of course, as long as he does not look down on people that do watch and enjoy non-sinful sports.

Also, can you demand in obedience that members of MLR have to drink alcoholic beverages if they do not "personally" enjoy them or like the effect they get from them, since each person is different in the "buzz" they get? Of course, if that same person was to condemn those that **do** drink and enjoy alcoholic beverages then they would be wrong, since alcohol can be used in a good way. I guess I am referring to my wife. I am Russian, I have no problem with alcohol intake! And I know that she has no problem with this. When I come home from work she always brings me a cold beer before dinner and sometimes she loves to experiment with different alcoholic drink recipes during our family celebrations. She has also talked about making wine for me. However, she herself does not prefer to drink, simply because she says 1) she doesn't "love" the flavor of alcohol; 2) because she doesn't personally like the after-effect she feels from it. Again, she has never made me feel uncomfortable for doing it. So, back to my original question, can you demand in obedience that members of MLR have to drink alcoholic beverages if they do not "personally" enjoy them or like the effect they get from them?

3) If someone in MLR sins publicly, do you dole out their penance? If so, how do you judge what is a good penance?

4) Do members of MLR go to you for confession? I have been asked this a million times, and I always reply that I don't believe you would (or could) demand this since you are not a priest and cannot grant absolution.

5) Is it mandatory for members of MLR to go strictly to you for counsel? What happens if someone disagrees with your personal advice (not regarding the Faith or dogmatic moral issues) and doesn't follow your advice because they don't think it's wise for their particular situation? Will he be punished for disobedience?

6) This may come across as a challenge or impertinent, but who do you take counsel from? I guess a more direct way would be to ask: How are **you** kept in line? I am asking this question because years ago people told me you think you are "the pope" and no one can tell you what to do. However, even a pope has a confessor. For example, if one of the members of MLR felt you were grievously sinning regarding something and they

admonished you on it, who would resolve the issue if you personally did not *think* you were wrong?

7) Is it possible to be Catholic but not a member of Mary's Little Remnant? It would seem that your "Lay Order" would only be a specific group inside the Catholic Church. For example, St. Francis could not have said "there is no salvation outside the Franciscans." But since we do not have a pope, what would become of a person that wanted to be Catholic, but just not a member of MLR. What authority would you have over that person? My thought is that it would be the authority that one Catholic has over another. Basically, that you could condemn non-members of MLR when they are professing heresy or living immorally, but other than that, they would be "on their own" regarding fasting, prayers, etc. Of course, as long as they would not refuse to be in religious communion with MLR.

I have heard so many stories that I did not believe and I am wanting to get my facts directly from you because I can't stand people that play the Telephone Game with information when all they have to do is contact you directly instead of making up lies to defame your group. I know from traditional circles I have seen online, people are very confused as to what exactly MLR actually is. They would rather call you a "cult" and not investigate what you really believe.

I hope I am not re-asking questions that you have written about on your site. If so, please direct me to what you have written on the "authority" issues I have mentioned.

Thank you again for your time and help, please do not brush me aside as a bad-willed, rebellious person. I am sincere in my questions and would greatly appreciate an end to all the calumnies that I have heard from people not willing to take the time to ask you directly.

Sincerely,

VB

RJMI's Reply (6/28/14)

Introduction

6/28/2014

Dear VB,

Thank you for coming to me directly in order to confirm or disprove things that have been said about me or other members of Mary's Little Remnant. And thank you for your direct and good questions. It has taken awhile to answer your questions because I have been busy (I just completed my book *The Great Apostasy*), and I wanted to take some extra time answering your questions because I may post your letter and my answers on my website for the benefit of others. I will not use your name but only your initials.

Mary's Little Remnant and other Catholics

A Catholic can form his own religious order but must present it to the proper authority for approval. St. Francis of Assisi started his own order before it was approved. Because there is no pope and because I know of no Catholic bishops and Catholic priests, I must wait for my lay order to be approved. I am the superior of Mary's Little Remnant. I have not yet required anyone who belongs to Mary's Little Remnant to take vows because I know they keep the rule, although I would have the right to do so as superior of the order.

Not everyone has to belong to Mary's Little Remnant to be Catholic. I do not force converts to belong to Mary's Little Remnant. There may be Catholics that I do not know about in Europe or elsewhere. But Catholics must never refuse to be in religious communion with good Catholics; if they do, then they are formal schismatics and not Catholic.

The authority issue

Authority derived from respect and necessity

The Bible teaches that men can take authority unto themselves in emergency situations as long as they do so justly: "*He that taketh authority to himself unjustly shall be hated.*" (Eccus. 20:8) Conversely, a man who takes authority to himself *justly* shall be loved by good Catholics.

The authority I have over Catholics who do not want to belong to Mary's Little Remnant is an authority that is derived from respect and necessity. It is an authority of respect for the work and mission God has given me, respect for my sincerity in teaching the Catholic faith, and respect for my sincerity in trying to live a good Catholic life and helping others to do the same. This is the kind of authority that Moses had, which God eventually backed up with miracles. The authority question was also brought up regarding Moses, St. John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ, all of whom opposed the prevailing authorities of their day:

“And going out the next day, he [Moses] saw two Hebrews quarrelling: and he said to him that did the wrong: Why strikest thou thy neighbour? But he answered: Who hath appointed thee prince and judge over us?” (Ex. 2:13-14)

“And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to him, to ask him: Who art thou? And he confessed, and did not deny: and he confessed: I am not the Christ. And they asked him: What then? Art thou Elias? And he said: I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered: No. They said therefore unto him: Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself? He said: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias.” (Jn. 1:19-23)

“And when he [Jesus] was come into the temple, there came to him, as he was teaching, the chief priests and ancients of the people, saying: By what authority dost thou these things? and who hath given thee this authority?” (Mt. 21:23)

My authority over Catholics is also one of necessity because I am the only one they know of who is teaching the full deposit of the Catholic faith and helping others to live by it. Hence this is one place at least where the Catholic faith and Church is:

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: That you esteem them more abundantly in charity, for their work’s sake. Have peace with them.” (1 Thes. 5:12-13)

Hence catechumens and Catholics owe me obedience in all religious matters that are not sinful. If there were another person in Europe who is teaching the full deposit of the Catholic faith and helping others to live by it, then those who learn from him would have to be obedient to him—just as when there was a pope ruling the Catholic Church or a local bishop ruling his diocese.

Authority that all Catholics have to admonish one another

The other authority I have when admonishing brothers is the authority all Catholics have to admonish and rebuke one another when they sin and to inform them what they need to do in order to get right with God. St. Paul says, “*Admonish one another.*” (Rom. 15:14) “*Reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.*” (2 Tim. 4:2) “*Rebuke the unquiet.*” (1 Thes. 5:14) And “*Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.*” (Titus 1:13) Jesus says, “*If thy brother shall offend against thee, go, and rebuke him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother.*” (Mt. 18:15) That is one of the main problems with those who always bring up the “authority issue.” They do not want to confess and repent. They do not want to give up their mortal sins and thus do not want to be admonished or rebuked. “*He that hateth to be reproveth walketh in the trace of a sinner.*” (Eccus. 21:7) “*Instruction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way of life: he that hateth reproof shall die.*” (Prv. 15:10) The more an obstinate sinner gets admonished, the angrier he gets towards those who admonish him. That has been the case with everyone who either left us or was kicked out. They were either obstinate feminists, effeminate, fornicators, adulterers, masturbators, pornographers, buffoons, lovers of the evil world, lovers of family and friends over lovers of God, alcoholics, drug addicts, gluttons, racists, lovers of money, lovers of immodesty, lovers of sinful music, scrupulous puritanistic Pharisees, or heretics. No good-willed person would want to live with such people. You can just image what it would be like to

have a reunion of all these obstinate sinners that were once with us, all of them together in one room. I do not think they would last for more than ten minutes without discords, dissensions, envies, jealousies, detractions, calumnies, and fights breaking out. If you let people like that stay in a good Catholic camp or among good Catholics, it is no longer a good Catholic camp but a camp of discord, dissension, etc.

For the record and so you do not get the wrong impression, we do not kick out or separate ourselves from every person who is guilty of these mortal sins and any other mortal sin but work with them in order to help them repent. As long as they confess their sins and sincerely try to overcome them, they remain among us even if they have not yet overcome them. At times I may have let some stay too long. But what inevitably happens is the more obstinate a sinner becomes the more he does not want to be around us and we do not want to be around him. Oil and vinegar, good Catholics and bad Catholics (that is, Catholics in obstinate mortal sin), do not mix:

“Shall two walk together except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3)

“The perverse heart did not cleave to me: and the malignant that turned aside from me, I would not know... With him that had a proud eye, and an unsatiable heart, I would not eat. My eyes were upon the faithful of the earth, to sit with me: the man that walked in the perfect way, he served me. He that worketh pride shall not dwell in the midst of my house: he that speaketh unjust things did not prosper before my eyes.” (Ps. 100:4-7)

Bad or nominal Catholics also do not mix with good Catholics because an obstinate mortal sinner consistently lacks charity and thus becomes more and more uncharitable toward good Catholics. Obstinate sinners do not want to come to the light that their sins may be exposed and cured:

“For every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God.” (Jn. 3:20-21)

Hence obstinate mortal sinners either leave us or we kick them out. This is proof that when they were with us, at least for a good amount of time, they were not really of us:

“They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us; but that they may be manifest, that they are not all of us.” (1 Jn. 2:19)

Before obstinate sinners leave us or are kicked out, they look for things to use against us in order to justify their leaving or their unjust animosity toward us:

“He that hath a mind to depart from a friend seeketh occasions: he shall ever be subject to reproach.” (Prv. 18:1)

“Let us find occasion of word against him.” (Job 19:28)

If they cannot find anything to use against us, they lie by making up things that never happened or by taking things out of context and thus are guilty of the mortal sin of calumny. Or they are guilty of the mortal sin of detraction for accusing us of a sin we have already confessed and overcome. Or they accuse us of a heresy that is not a heresy, and thus it is they who are the heretics. Or they accuse us of a sin of immorality that is not a sin of immorality; and thus they are guilty of the mortal sin of calumny, which is especially true of scrupulous puritanistic Pharisees. The following proverb applies to

them: *“He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, both are abominable before God.”* (Prv. 17:15)

No doubt those who are no longer with us think they are Catholic (unless they have become Moslems or Buddhists, etc.) and thus believe they can be in a state of grace. But they cannot be in a state of grace for two reasons: 1) They are guilty of the mortal sin of formal schism for refusing to be in communion with us good Catholics. 2) They are guilty of mortal sins of calumny or detraction, which, even if they were Catholic, they would have to confess and make reparation for in order to have these mortal sins remitted. Indeed, they are in the camp of Satan and on the broad road to hell whether they know it or not.

We pray and sacrifice most for those who were once with us in order that they may repent and convert and thus be with us good Catholics once again. I tell the brothers that if they ever go bad and leave us or are kicked out not to despair because as long as they are alive they can repent and convert. I tell them that it is truly my hope that God punishes them severely in order to help effect their conversion because the worst curse an evildoer can be under is the curse of false peace, security, and confidence. I pray they will do what the Prodigal Son did:

“I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: I am not worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son. And the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.” (Lk. 15:18-24)

“I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.” (Lk. 15:7)

Catholics are not exempt from obeying superiors just because of bad superiors

Are we to say that for fear of bad superiors we should no longer have any superiors at all? That would be Protestantism! There have always been bad superiors from Pentecost Day onward. Referring to bishops, St. Paul said,

“I know that, after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts 20:29-30)

So who keeps a superior in check when he sins, especially if he has no superior above him, as is the case of a pope? The answer is simple. His inferiors! It is the duty and obligation of all inferiors to rebuke, denounce, and avoid a sinful superior if his sins merit it:

Pope Gregory the Great, *Epistle 1*, TO JANUARIUS, BISHOP OF CARALIS (Cagliari). Gregory to Januarius, etc.: “The preacher of Almighty God, Paul the apostle, says, Rebuke not an elder (1 Tim. 5:1). But this rule of his is to be observed in cases where the fault of an elder does not draw through his example the hearts of the younger into ruin. But, when an elder sets an example to the young for their

ruin, he is to be smitten with severe rebuke. For it is written, Ye are all a snare to the young (Isai. 42:22). And again the prophet says, The sinner being an hundred years old is accursed (Isai. 65:20)."

Being around good Catholic brothers is the best safeguard for staying on the right road, superiors and inferiors alike. The brothers admonish me when they think I have sinned and correct me when they think I have taught an error or heresy. If they are right, I correct myself and confess my sin. I always tell the brothers that "If I go bad, all you have to do is leave me. I do not force anyone to stay under my authority. And if I am indeed bad, please pray for me that I come to my senses." However, if I am not bad and a brother maliciously and falsely denounces me, then it is he who is in trouble with God, me, and other Catholics.

The problem most people have with obedience to authority is a rebellious spirit

The problem most people have with the authority issue is that most men in today's world are rebellious to all authority, a heresy they picked up from the democracy mentality. That is why you see so many rebellions in the world today:

"It is like the sin of witchcraft to rebel; and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey." (1 Ki. 15:23)

Wives are disobedient to their husbands, children to their parents, laymen to religious superiors, and citizens to police and civic rulers. Almost everyone in the world today wants to be their own boss, their own god, even if they do not say so. Hence, no one is going to tell them what to do.

Not all Catholics have to live with or near us

I do not tell every catechumen or brother where he has to live or work. We have brothers who do not live or work near us. I do tell brothers that if they are living in a dangerous situation, like a big city, it would be best to move away from it if they can. And I do tell them it is better to live among or near good Catholics than among pagans if they have the opportunity to do so. Most of the people who make the complaint that "Ibranyi says everyone has to live near him" are either bad Catholics or not Catholic at all (secret heretics). They do not want to even visit us or have us visit them. They cannot stand to be around us let alone live near us, which is a mortal sin of schism for not wanting to be in religious communion with good Catholics. Oil and vinegar do not mix. Good Catholics do not mix with heretics or Catholics who are in obstinate mortal sin. Refusing to be in religious communion with good Catholics is the mortal sin of schism.

Not everyone has to like sports

I do not force anyone to like, look at, or play sports. Some people do not like sports, and that is fine as long as they do not condemn sports or condemn or look down upon people who like sports. And some people do not like chess and other games of the mind, and that is fine as long as they do not condemn chess and other games of the mind or condemn or look down upon people who like these games. I happen to like sports and

chess and other games of the mind. There are many kinds of recreation, and not all people like the same recreations. All recreations that are not sinful are good provided that one is a good sport and thus does not cheat and is not proud, etc. *“Do what thou hast a mind, but not in sin or proud speech.”* (Eccus. 32:16)

Not everyone has to drink alcohol

I do not force anyone to drink alcohol and do not look down upon those who do not. However, if someone thinks drinking alcohol is evil or has a scruple about it, then I do command them to drink some alcohol to see if they overcome their heresy that drinking alcohol is evil or overcome their scruple of feeling guilty if they drink alcohol. This is the same thing I would do to Jewish converts regarding pork. They do not have to like or even want to eat pork, but they must not say that eating pork is a sin. If I suspect that a Catholic Jew thought it was a sin to eat pork, I would command him to eat it under pain of mortal sin. But that does not mean that he has to go on eating it.

Confessing sins and on penance

Because we have no Catholic priests to confess our sins to, we must confess them to God with the promise to confess to a Catholic priest as soon as one becomes available; and God will remit our sins. (See my book *Sacraments without a Priest: Confession without a Priest*.) I tell the brothers to ask God to send a priest from heaven, such as St. Anthony of Padua, to hear their confession; and hence they confess their sins just as they would to a Catholic priest in the confessional. I firmly believe that the priest sent from heaven gives them absolution if their confession is sincere; that is, contains true sorrow and a firm purpose of amendment.

If a brother's sin is public and mortal, then he must also confess his sin before those whom he scandalized and to let them know that he is penitent. If not, then Catholics must presume he is obstinate and avoid him in religious matters and unnecessary social matters:

“I have written to you, not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or a server of idols, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such a one, not so much as to eat.” (1 Cor. 5:11)

Hence if a brother is guilty of a public mortal sin, I first tell him he must confess his sin to God, as stated above, and then he must confess his mortal sin in front of the brothers whom he scandalized. *“Them that sin reprove before all: that the rest also may have fear.”* (1 Tim. 5:20) I then give him a fraternal blessing and ask God through St. Anthony of Padua to grant him absolution. I do not give the absolution because I am not a priest. Beware of those who lie by saying that I give absolution. I then give the penitent a penance in line with the penances given by good Catholic priests. If for some reason they cannot do that penance, then I give them a different one. Just because there are no Catholic priests does not mean that Catholics no longer need to do penance for their remitted sins.

I have publicly confessed my public mortal sins before the brothers and confessed them before the world on my website in cases where my mortal sins were in the public domain.

If a brother's sin is secret, then he does not have to make a public confession or even seek counsel from me or some other Catholic if he is sincerely trying to overcome his sin. All he has to do is confess to God with the promise to confess to a Catholic priest as soon as one becomes available. I tell him to make sure he does some penance to have some of the punishment due to his confessed sins remitted.. However, if a brother is struggling and not overcoming his secret mortal sin, then he must seek counsel from me or some other Catholic or else he is guilty of the sin of pride. Eventually it will become obvious that this bad, prideful Catholic is in mortal sin because his charity will grow colder and colder and hence he will become more and more miserable, nasty, and anti-social with good Catholics. Oil and vinegar do not mix. Good Catholics and bad Catholics do not mix. A Catholic who commits a mortal sin and sincerely confesses it is not a bad Catholic but a good and penitent Catholic. Once he overcomes his mortal sin, he then becomes a good Catholic. Hence there are three kinds of Catholics: good Catholics, good penitent Catholics, and bad Catholics. Bad Catholics are Catholics who are obstinate mortal sinners.

Counsel

Receiving and giving counsel is a spiritual act of mercy:

Catholic Catechism: "322. Which are the seven Spiritual Works of Mercy? ...to counsel the doubtful."

"My son, do thou nothing without counsel, and thou shalt not repent when thou hast done." (Eccus. 32:24)

"But without thy counsel I would do nothing." (Phile. 1:14)

"The prudent man doth all things with counsel: but he that is a fool layeth open his folly." (Prv. 13:16)

"Designs are brought to nothing where there is no counsel: but where there are many counsellors, they are established." (Prv. 15:22)

"There shall be safety where there are many counsels." (Prv. 24:6)

Hence Catholics should always be willing to give and accept counsel. It does not always mean they have to follow the counsel. However, a Catholic who does not want counsel from a brother who could give good counsel is a rebel and full of pride. The brothers do not always have to ask counsel from me but can go to another Catholic for counsel. Bad Catholics shun counsel, at least in the area where they need it most, because they do not want to give up their mortal sins and amend their lives or they do not want anyone to tell them what they have to do or what they should do.

I ask the brothers for counsel many times regarding many things. And many times they give me good counsel, and thus I heed it. No Catholic can be a good Catholic if he is too proud to seek counsel or publicly confess his public mortal sins.

Lastly, when seeking counsel a Catholic must be very careful to choose a good Catholic to give him counsel regarding religious matters or a competent and honest counsellor regarding secular matters:

"Consult not with him that layeth a snare for thee, and hide thy counsel from them that envy thee. Every counsellor giveth out counsel, but there is one that is a counsellor for himself. Beware of a counsellor. And know before what need he

hath: for he will devise to his own mind: Lest he thrust a stake into the ground, and say to thee: Thy way is good; and then stand on the other side to see what shall befall thee. Treat not with a man without religion concerning holiness, nor with an unjust man concerning justice, nor with a woman touching her of whom she is jealous, nor with a coward concerning war, nor with a merchant about traffic, nor with a buyer of selling, nor with an envious man of giving thanks, nor with the ungodly of piety, nor with the dishonest of honesty, nor with the field labourer of every work, nor with him that worketh by the year of the finishing of the year, nor with an idle servant of much business: give no heed to these in any matter of counsel. But be continually with a holy man, whomsoever thou shalt know to observe the fear of God, whose soul is according to thy own soul: and who, when thou shalt stumble in the dark, will be sorry for thee. And establish within thyself a heart of good counsel: for there is no other thing of more worth to thee than it. The soul of a holy man discovereth sometimes true things, more than seven watchmen that sit in a high place to watch. But above all these things pray to the most High, that he may direct thy way in truth. In all thy works let the true word go before thee, and steady counsel before every action.” (Eccus. 37:7-20)

Tithes

You did not ask about tithing, but this is a subject that comes up. Catholics (catechumens and the faithful) are obliged to give tithes to the Catholic Church, generally ten percent of their net income, under pain of mortal sin:

“Thou shalt not delay to pay thy tithes and thy firstfruits...” (Ex. 22:29)

“I have given to the sons of Levi all the tithes of Israel for a possession for the ministry wherewith they serve me in the tabernacle of the covenant.” (Num. 18:21)

“All tithes of the land, whether of corn, or of the fruits of trees, are the Lord’s, and are sanctified to him. And if any man will redeem his tithes, he shall add the fifth part of them. Of all the tithes of oxen, and sheep, and goats, that pass under the shepherd’s rod, every tenth that cometh shall be sanctified to the Lord.” (Lev. 27:30-32)

“He commanded also the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give to the priests, and the Levites their portion that they might attend to the law of the Lord. Which when it was noised abroad in the ears of the people, the children of Israel offered in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey: and brought the tithe of all things which the ground bringeth forth. Moreover the children of Israel and Juda, that dwelt in the cities of Juda, brought in the tithes of oxen, and sheep, and the tithes of holy things, which they had vowed to the Lord their God: and carrying them all, made many heaps.” (2 Par. 31:4-6)

“And let him that is instructed in the word communicate to him that instructeth him, in all good things.” (Gal. 6:6)

“Let the priests that rule well, be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the word and doctrine: For the scripture saith: Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and the labourer is worthy of his reward.” (1 Tim. 5:17-18)

Catholic Commentary on 1 Tim. 5:17-18: “**The priests:** or ancient ministers (i.e. bishops, priests, &c.) deserve a double honour; i.e. to be more liberally supplied and maintained by the flock, especially when they labour in preaching the word. **Thou shalt not muzzle:** See (1 Cor. 9:9). It is the obligation of the faithful to provide a decent maintenance for the Catholic Church and her pastors and the duty of pastors to be content with little.”

Imprimatured Book, 20th century: “Generally defined as ‘the tenth part of the increase arising from the profits of land and stock, allotted to the clergy for their support or devoted to religious or charitable uses’. A more radical definition is ‘the tenth part of all fruits and profits justly acquired, owed to God in recognition of his supreme dominion over man, and to be paid to the ministers of the church’. The custom of giving tithes reaches back into unknown antiquity. It is mentioned in Gen., xiv, without anything to indicate that it was something newly instituted. Just as Abraham is there represented as offering tithes of the spoils of the enemy to the royal priest, Melchisedech, so in Gen., xxviii, Jacob is recorded as giving a tithe of all his possessions to the Lord. Under the Mosaic Law the payment of tithes was made obligatory. The Hebrews are commanded to offer to God the tenth part of the produce of the fields, of the fruits of the trees, and the firstborn of oxen and of sheep (Lev., xxvii, 30; Deut., xiv, 22). In the Christian Church, as those who serve the altar should live by the altar (1 Cor., ix, 13), provision of some kind had necessarily to be made for the sacred ministers... The payment of tithes was adopted from the Old Law, and early writers speak of it as a divine ordinance and an obligation of conscience.”

If one believes that I am the only Catholic he knows who is teaching the full deposit of the Catholic faith and helping others to live by it, then this is one place at least where the Catholic faith and Church is. Hence he is obliged to pay tithes to me because I am a teacher of the Catholic faith and the only ruler that he knows of in the Catholic Church.

I use tithe and donation money for the greater glory of God and His Catholic Church and faith. I use it to help the brothers, to buy whatever is necessary to help propagate the Catholic faith and convert souls, to help the poor and needy, to donate to political candidates who are the lesser of evils, and for my sustenance. After all, if there were a true pope, true Catholic bishop, or true Catholic priest, then you would be obliged to give tithes to him.

I live frugally and in poverty. Anyone who has visited me knows this is true. Listen to my audio sermon *Men Must Be Frugal* (Asr231).

Sincerely,

Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi
To Jesus through Mary

VB's Reply (7/9/14)

7/9/2014

Dear Mr. Ibranyi,

...Thank you again for your time and effort spent on my questions. I am glad that you posted it on your site for others to read. Now we have something to stand by when people throw nonfactual statements and lies out there. Thank you also for understanding my direct questions and not thinking me of bad will. Just as a side note—I do enjoy watching sports! My favorite is soccer, but hockey is a close second. That question was asked on behalf of my niece.

Now, if it is not too much trouble, I would greatly appreciate some clarification on a few points of interest. Again, I ask that you don't think I am being picky or of bad will.

Under “Not all Catholics have to live with or near us” you wrote: (my emphasis)

“I do not tell every catechumen or brother where he has to...work.”

Not every, but some? I mean, in context with the rest of your statement I would understand that as long as a job is not sinful, you could not tell *any* catechumen or brother where he has to work. But in the event that you do tell some catechumens and brothers where they have to work, how would it be determined “which” ones? As a point of interest, since it's on this topic, I always wondered if a pope would have the authority to tell someone where to work. I read in the past of certain people being promoted to “pope's tailor” or some such thing... what if a man didn't want the promotion and wanted to live in his quiet little town. Would it be right to refuse the pope? I mean, in something secular like this, the pope could request, but not demand, right? or could he?

Under the heading “Catholics are not exempt from obeying superiors just because of bad superiors” you wrote:

“The brothers admonish me when they think I have sinned and correct me when they think I have taught an error or heresy. If they are right, I correct myself and confess my sin.”

I guess my question here is, if there was a situation that came up where a brother admonished you on a non-dogmatic matter and you disagreed with his admonishment, how do you determine who is right if he consistently maintains that his points are valid? I know you said “if they are right, I correct myself and correct my sin” but how is that determined? I mean, many people have said that you often ignored their admonitions and “transferred the shock” by instead accusing them of some sin you believed they were committing or deliberately ran over the top of them, misconstruing their statements, and thus it was them that got admonished and not you. Let me say, for the record, I do believe that as of now, everyone that has left your group was kicked out for a good reason. And if

a charitable and factual admonition, although debatable, was brought against you by a brother of good will, I personally can't understand how there could be differences that could not be worked out peaceably. And that is why I am wondering if there is some form of "law and order" as to how this hypothetical situation could be worked out and result in something other than a banishment?

Please respect my questions rather than suspect them as I have examined my conscience and believe I am sincere and of good will. I understand St. Paul says even though he has nothing on his conscience he is not justified, but I also understand that it is written to "try yourselves." I know you must already have answers to my questions, I would just like to know how to answer when the situation demands. Thank you for understanding yet again...

Sincerely,

VB

RJMI's Reply (7/29/14)

7/29/14

St. Martha

Ss. Felix II, Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice

Dear VB,

On a person's work or vocation

...When I said that "I do not tell every catechumen or brother where he has to...work," I meant what you said I meant; that is, if he is working in a sinful place, it is my obligation to tell him he cannot work there. Hence I did not mean that I can tell him where he has to work or what type of work he has to do as long as it is not sinful.

No pope, king, or even parent has the authority to tell a person what his vocation must be or what kind of work he must do to make a living or where he has to do that vocation or work. The most they can do is counsel the person. But they do have the authority to tell a person what vocation he cannot have or what work he cannot do for a living if that vocation or work is sinful, such as a man who wants to work for the mafia or a woman who wants to be a prostitute.

However, a parent does have the authority to tell their children what work they must do around the house or for the family as long as their children are living under their parents' authority. This is not the same thing as a vocation or what kind of work the child chooses to do for a living. In the same way, a person who is in temporal servitude to the pope or a king or anyone else (such as a slave, servant, employee, or prisoner) must do what the pope, king, master, or boss orders unless the order is sinful or impossible to obey. That is not the same as telling a person what vocation he must have or what work he must do for a living. For example, once a man chooses by his own freewill to be a Catholic priest, he is then in temporal servitude to the pope. He must do whatever the pope tells him and go wherever the pope sends him as long as it is not sinful or impossible to do.

On Catholic brothers who think I am wrong and the false accusation that I do not listen

If a Catholic brother thinks I am wrong even though I believe I am right, then he must act accordingly and even separate from me if he thinks he must. But if he is the one that is wrong and had access to good evidence that proves he is wrong, then it is he who is in serious trouble with God, not me, and vice versa. As you have said, when good Catholic brothers have disagreements, they work it out charitably and peacefully—one listening to the other and responding honestly. This is how disputes are handled among good Catholics and even good-willed non-Catholics.

The people who say that I do not listen to them or ignore their accusations against me are liars. It is they who ignored my good admonishments against them when they were in obstinate mortal sin and thus throw the blame on me. They are unrightfully angry with me because they refuse to give up their mortal sins.

If a difference of opinion arises over an allowable opinion, such as the baptism dispute regarding baptism of blood and desire for catechumens, one is free to hold either allowable opinion. If a Catholic brother thinks that what I call an allowable opinion is a heresy, he must denounce me as a heretic and treat me as a formal heretic and thus avoid me in religious matters. However, the fact that he knows me also means he knows or should know my position. If he has read my position, and my position is correct and clearly presented, then he is guilty of the mortal sins of lying and schism.

Sincerely,

Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi
To Jesus through Mary

Original version: 7/2014; Current version: 8/2014

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