



Heresy in Actions

I would like for you to think of the scariest movie you have ever seen. One that had you sinking in your seat, with your hands over your eyes, fearfully peering through the cracks between your fingers so as not to be seen by the awful image on the screen. I suppose that somehow covering the eyes protected us. Can you remember the fear that you experienced from watching these images projected on a screen that we knew could, in no way, harm us? Can you remember the feelings that went through your body as this fear saturated your emotions to such an extent that days later you were afraid to be alone? Did you ever ask yourself why you and the rest of the people were able to be terrified by watching a movie that you and everyone knew was not real?

About now you might be saying to yourself, "What does feeling terrified at a movie have to do with heresy?" Heresy has to do with the breaking of official Church teachings, it has nothing to do with emotional fears. Could the author be confused as to just what constitutes heresy?

For the sake of clarity I would like to give the definition of heresy. From THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA we read: Heresy is the denial or doubt by error of judgment, publicly or privately, by a baptized, professed person of any truth revealed by God and proposed for belief by the Catholic Church. Now that we know what constitutes heresy let us proceed with a consideration of the learning process, that process which is associated with our ability to be educated.

EDUCATION

Father John Hardon S.J. has this to say on the subject of education: All education begins with the senses. What we hear, what we see, what we taste, what we touch, what we feel, is the source of everything in our lives. Everything.

All sense experience leads to thought. We would not have a thought in our minds unless it first began in the senses. We teach in philosophy that there is nothing in the intellect which has not first been in the senses. In other words, education begins in the senses. Education then spans all of the faculties of both body and soul. Of the emotions, of the feelings, of the mind, and will.

Fr. Hardon's explanation concerning education and the senses, makes it clear that the way in which something is presented has a tremendous effect on how people will respond to it. The understanding of human emotions by the movie industry enables them to put fear in our hearts, even when we are surrounded by hundreds of people in a movie theater. These movie professionals are well aware that if the same horror scene were filmed in the middle of day instead of some dark and dreary location, if the music had been some lively jazz, instead of the eery music that accompanies these horror scenes, the fear effect would have been completely lost. The movie industry knows that the way something is presented will, to a great degree, determine the audience's responses.

Those who know human nature can make us laugh or cry. They can get us excited or make us feel despair. They can even make us feel lustful, but they can also stir us to reverence and devotion. They can have tremendous control over the feelings of people. Not to understand this is to be naive and, as such, makes us vulnerable to the manipulations of our adversary. The problem we have to deal with when confronting this situation in the Church is the fact that those who do not understand, many times do not know that they don't understand. One can see that these people are in grave danger and, in many instances, could unknowingly spread unhealthy practices in the liturgy. The heretics unlike the naive are well aware that the way the Mass is offered, with dignity, reverence, and awe, or with laughing, dancing, and clapping will determine, to a great extent, the depth of belief in the faithful. Yes, the heretics know what they are doing, even if the faithful do not. Catholics are being educated by the actions they encounter in the churches, and these actions in many instances, are telling them loud and clear, "***This is not really the Body and Blood of Christ.***"

Yet not a word may have been spoken. Here is where the heresy in actions comes in. For a detailed illustration we will use the loss of faith in the Holy Eucharist. If we are directed to act in a similar manner as one who does not believe that the Eucharist is the Body of Christ, then as Father Hardon pointed out, we are being educated by that person that the Eucharist is truly not the Body of Christ, yet there were no words spoken. Cunning is it not? Just imagine how an atheist would act if he were to attend a Catholic service; would he act any differently from the average Catholic in the church? Now if the atheist acts the same as the average Catholic, then we must acknowledge that the average Catholic is acting as an atheist. Remember the sayings: Actions speak louder than words, and Your children more attention pay to what you do than what you say.

This is the question I pose to the reader. If we are being encouraged to act as one would act who does not believe the Eucharist is truly the body of Christ, (which is a doctrine of the Church) are we not being taught heresy? Can you see now how 70 to 80 percent of our Catholics have been robbed of their belief that the Eucharist is truly the Body of Christ? I know that the following statement will be hard for the reader to believe, but here it is. Some bishops and priests try to convince the faithful that there is no problem of faith in the Church. Amazing is it not? This is what causes one to think that what is being promoted might be done with full understanding or should I say, it could be formal heresy. I must hasten to add, it is possible that they may be ignorant to the fact, if so, it would be material heresy, but in either case the faithful are being taught heresy and are losing the belief that the Eucharist is truly the Body of Christ.

In many Catholic churches today, people are being psychologically prepared for a different emotional experience than that of the past. The Church, being a wise mother, has always tried to bring about a sense of reverence and awe in her sacred liturgy. She was well aware that to secularize the liturgy would be to destroy the sense of the sacred, and once the sense of the sacred is destroyed, there is no longer, in the minds of the people, a sacred liturgy. Some of these innovators may be innocent victims due to their lack of understanding. Only God can judge the hearts of men. We certainly can and must judge the fruit of their actions. Just as the home suffers great harm when the father is either immature or less than holy, so too the Church is made to suffer when the clergy is either immature or less than holy. Whether it be prelate, priest, or parishioner, as the belief in the Real Presence diminishes so does the desire to make converts. Only a deep belief in the Real Presence will make one want to share this great gift with others. Those who have lost the belief in the Real Presence will not only not make converts, but will most likely cause those in their charge to lose the faith.

Let us look at the matter from a family standpoint. Suppose the father comes in and starts playing with the baby, throwing him in the air, laughing and tickling him. You can picture the baby enjoying every minute of this joyous occasion. This situation would seem completely reasonable, until you find out that the mother was preparing the baby for a much needed nap. Now if the father was completely unaware of the situation that would be one thing, but it would be quite another, if he knew that the mother was preparing the baby for a nap. In either case the father completely disrupted the baby's emotional readiness for a nap. Why? Because the baby is a little human being and he has to be prepared, just as adults must be prepared for the response that we want from them.

If the father did this unknowingly, at worst he could be accused of being unwise or imprudent. If he did it with full knowledge, then he would be guilty of something far worse. No one could get into the father's head to know which of the possibilities are accurate. This is what is happening in the Church. There are those who, like the father in our little scenario, have joyfully and

enthusiastically got us little ones in the pews excited and, in the process, completely destroyed the psychological preparation mother (Holy Mother Church) had prepared for us. That preparation being, the right disposition for the most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

CONCLUSION

Let us close with these thoughts. The dignity of fatherhood can be destroyed by insinuating that all fathers are good. The dignity of motherhood can be destroyed by making all mothers out to be good. Virtue can be destroyed by making everything virtuous. Reverence can be destroyed in the faithful by labeling every action reverent. Belief that the Eucharist is truly the Body of Christ can be destroyed by encouraging the faithful to render to their fellow man or to some material object, that reverence which should only be rendered to God.

If it is heresy to deny that Christ is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, then it could be said that heresy is rampant in the Church today. If 70 to 80 percent of Catholics no longer believe in the Real Presence, then we must admit, nonbelievers have become the majority. This being so, it is easy to see how peer pressure itself could be viewed as heretical. The true believers, who are now in the minority, will find it increasingly difficult to hold on to their faith.

The continuous mandating of secular and non-reverential postures and actions, though legitimate in and of themselves, are a major factor contributing to the loss of belief in the Real Presence. People who truly believe in the Real Presence conduct themselves quite differently when in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament than those who do not truly believe. Only the naive or the heretic will disagree with this statement.

I do not blame the liberal, nor do I blame the evil, though they certainly initiated the problem. Blame goes most to the good and the so-called loyal, for it is they who have not stood up to the challenge. The liberal and evil enthusiastically and courageously fight, while the good and the faithful are timid and fearful. Therefore in the eyes of God, the good and faithful may be most to blame.

Beware of the heresy in actions.