

Schuckardt – Mt. St. Michael's

Brother Francis and Brother Dennis in the late '60s and very early '70s traveled around the country talking to various conservative Catholic groups about the problems in the Church and one's duty to have devotion to the Blessed Mother. They started a group called the Legion of Mary Immaculate in order to promote devotion to the Blessed Mother and to promote traditional Catholic ideas.

The Schuckardt / Mt. St. Michael's group is particularly interesting to study in order to see the effects of schism. As was stated above this group was quite spiritual when it was started. Then in October 1971, Brother Francis Schuckardt was ordained a priest by an Old Catholic bishop, Bishop Brown. Old Catholics had been declared schismatic in the late 1800s and this led Schuckardt down the path to schism and possibly worse as they were heretics because they wouldn't accept the dogma that the pope can be infallible. In November of the same year (1971) the now Father Schuckardt was consecrated a bishop by Bishop Brown. Note: Possibly the sacraments given were valid but very illicit or illegal which made them an extreme sacrilege. Also the group took a sedevacantist position which rejects the Pope. From this point forward one can mark the deterioration of Schuckardt and his organization spiritually. True, the organization grew to great proportions. What it built was at the cost of the Church, not just in a financial sense but in the souls who went to Schuckardt for Catholic instruction and sacraments, neither of which they received. The sacraments received were without grace and the instruction was of a church built by man; a church that failed to teach a fear of schism and a love of the true Church. Of course one would not expect a schismatic to teach a fear of schism.

Being without the true sacraments it was only a matter of time until things would become so foul that even one with a clothespin on the nose could tell that something was seriously wrong. His underlings removed Schuckardt from his position (a real democratic group) and a search was made for someone to take the place of the ousted Schuckardt. Note: From a pious Legion of Mary Immaculate to a common criminal because of schism?

Bishop Mark Pivarunas

The subject of this article as a whole is sad and depressing but of all so far covered, nothing is as sad as the circumstances that take a young boy to the position of Bishop Mark Pivarunas. The fruits of schism and the way in which schism steals souls from the Church and among them souls that have the potential of great saints is a scenario worth studying.

At about the age of thirteen, Mark and his parents heard Brother Dennis (of Schuckardt fame). No doubt they were impressed by what Dennis had to say. Mark went to Bishop Schuckardt's boarding school to study.

In speaking with Bishop Pivarunas he said that while at Schuckardt's he had gone to Masses offered by an older priest and had had no worry as to being schismatic. One of the older priests had told Mark and others that Bishop Brown, who had consecrated Bishop Schuckardt had gone to confession and had been forgiven for his schism (Who knows what one confesses?). Did he then put himself under the pope? Did Schuckardt put himself under the pope? How did Bishop Schuckardt propose to get out of the doghouse (while holding this bad dogma)? There was not only schism but also that of the heresy of not accepting Papal infallibility, a proclaimed dogma of the Church, which is part of the theories that support sedevacantism.

In his historic Formula of Hormisdas of 519, Pope Hormisdas required of the schism of Acacius a profession of faith and a condemnation of the leaders of the schism in order to bring it back to the Church. Note: This information is to be found in the Catholic Encyclopedia under articles of Hormisdas, schism, and abjuration.

At Schuckardt's Mt. St. Michaels, schism was considered simply a sin and that confession was all that was needed to correct the problem. This was not just a personal sin but a very public sin with hundreds or thousands of Catholic souls being led astray.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the Church to perform a solemn ritual when schismatics are brought back into the Church is to impress all with the gravity of the situation.

In the conversation with Bishop Pivaranus, he repeatedly emphasized that there was no intent to be separated from the Church. But yet they subscribed to sedavacantism which rejects the pope and sets about building a parallel church.

Most traditional Catholics easily understand that a Protestant who goes to hell goes mainly because he didn't care enough about the truth to seek it out. In other words he is condemned because he didn't search the truth earnestly enough to find the Faith. The same principal would seem to apply to schismatics who just follow the leader all the way to hell by sticking their heads in the sand and not earnestly seeking the truth.

But in spite of all the condemnation above it is easy to see how there would be an atmosphere of trust and awe toward Bishop Schuckardt and the beautiful catholic-looking organization. The beautifully sung Masses, the sixty or so Sisters, the two hundred-plus students, all were to be found nowhere else in America and perhaps not in the world. So why would one stop, look and listen? Because it was one's duty.

At any rate, Mark progressed to the point of entering Bishop Schuckardt's seminary and was awaiting ordination when Bishop Schuckardt was exposed and voted out as head of the group.

Because of its schismatic history (therefore lack of understanding of schism) and probably because of its unwillingness to understand the seriousness of its past wrong the Schuckardt group asked Bishop Musey to come and correct its errors in order to clear its name.

Bishop Musey

The background of Father Musey, although not bad, was not that which one would expect of a man destined to become a bishop. But nevertheless, in April 1982, Bishop Carmona of Mexico, who had been made a bishop by Bishop Thuc in

October 1981 consecrated Father George Musey a bishop.

By the end of August 1982 Bishop Musey had consecrated another to bishop, Father Louis Vezelis.

Those of the faithful of Colorado first heard of this arrangement by a separate sheet of paper bearing the announcement enclosed in Father Dan Jones' newsletter. The announcement stated that Bishop Musey was the head of the Western Catholic Diocese of the U.S.A. (and Florida), a nice sized kingdom, and that all true Catholics within the territory were to put themselves under his jurisdiction or be schismatics and heretics.

Bishop Musey wasn't alone. Bishop Vezelis appointed Father Altenbach Vicar General of the Eastern Catholic Diocese of the U.S.A.. October, 1993 was evidently the kick-off date for these bishops' proclamations because a copy of a complimentary first issue of the Official Publication of the Western Catholic Diocese of the U.S.A. is dated so. And in October 1993, in an open letter to his friends, Father Altenbach as Vicar General states, "You and every traditional Catholic are here-by warned against the heresy and/or schism of attending Divine Worship conducted by any priest who is not under the only available Bishops with genuine Apostolic Succession thru valid and licit consecration, namely, His Excellency Bishop Louis Vezelis OFM (East of the Mississippi) and His Excellency Bishop George J. Musey, (West of the Mississippi and Florida)." What could they have done to be more explicit in establishing a parallel church there/by establishing a schism?

Dean of Canon Law at the Catholic Institute of Paris, a Father Patrick Valdrine was quoted as saying, "It is not the consecration of a bishop which creates a schism; what constitutes a schism is to confer

afterwards upon these bishops an Apostolic mission. For this usurpation of the powers of the sovereign Pontiff would be the proof that a parallel Church would be thus formed."

The fact that the Schuckardt group asked a bishop to reconcile it says volumes concerning the true understanding of the group as to the fact that they were indeed schismatic.

The sad part is that these poor souls asked a schismatic bishop, Bishop Musey to correct their schismatic situation. Evidently after Bishop Musey had done his thing the group felt secure and proper so promptly went back to sleep, failing to study the situation.

Bishop Musey re-ordained the priests of the Schuckardt group and in 1985 ordained some of the seminarians, among whom was Father Mark Tarcisius who was destined to become Bishop Mark Pivarunas.

In 1986 the Schuckardt group (now calling themselves Mt. St. Michael's) split with Bishop Musey because of problems that arose among them and because they didn't want to obey Bishop Musey's commands. In 1989 the former Brother Dennis, now Father Dennis, was removed as leader of the group and Father Mark Tarcisius took over leadership of Mt. St. Michael's. In 1991 Bishop Carmona of the Thuc lineage and who had consecrated Bishop Musey, visited Mt. St. Michael's and later consecrated Father Mark Tarcisius as Bishop Mark Pivarunas.

During our telephone conversation I had expressed to Bishop Pivarunas my concern about his orders which came from Bishop Musey. At this he laughed and said that Bishop Musey had tried to get him to make a written statement that Bishop Musey had not claimed to himself a territory. Bishop Pivarunas said he couldn't give such a document since Bishop Musey obviously did take a territory to himself.

The reason for bringing up Bishop Musey's attempt to cover his tracks is that it shows to me that he knew he was wrong but either didn't know how to correct the error or didn't care to go to the trouble of correcting it in a proper manner. Once a man has burned his bridges he can't go back without a great deal of trouble. The Sedevacantists have burned their bridges and have no realistic way of returning to the Church without flat admitting that they made a mistake. They can't go to the Society of St. Pius X for reconciliation because they claim that St. Pius the X Society is heretical since it does not reject the Pope.

So the Sedevacantists are to some extent trapped in their error. Bishop Musey evidently, to some extent, wanted to make amends and I believe Bishop Pivarunas is in the same position. He has moved from the Mt. St. Michael's group and started a convent separate from that group. But he can't get away from the past because he himself is the number one person continuing to carry the schism forward.

Bishop Pivarunas consecrated Father Dolan (a priest trained and ordained in the Society of St. Pius X) a bishop in 1993. This removes a barrier to a whole new group of traditional Catholics who can be infested with schism. Those who had before been isolated from 'Thucites' and Schuckardtites' by the ideals, teachings, priestly training of the Society of St. Pius X are now more subject to schism.