Opinion



by NCR Staff

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In a recent video appearance, Hollywood actor Mel Gibson espoused anti-Vatican II views and endorsed the Coalition for Canceled Priests, a new organization for priests whose bishops have removed them from ministry.

I confess my head nearly exploded when I read Brian Fraga's article about Mel Gibson's support of right-wing clerics in the Catholic Church. Have none of these hard right-wing people ever read the New Testament?

Jesus called the Pharisees and Sadducees of his day "hypocrites" and "whited sepulchers" as they were plotting against him because he was fostering and teaching his followers to think and act with love, kindness through God's grace.

I remain astonished at those Roman Catholics who are still resisting the Holy Spirit's grace that flowed through the Vatican II process and that our good Pope Francis, and those clerics and lay persons who follow Francis are promulgating. I sincerely believe the Holy Spirit was the guide for Vatican II. I literally pray every single day that our good God will send for his Spirit and renew the face of his church.

MARY WUDTKE

Chicago, Illinois



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Who cares what Mel Gibson says about the church or anything else? Why is this news or the lead article? This is tabloid fodder.

DAVE MURRAY

Cedarville, Michigan

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I have never seen Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" nor do I ever intend to. However, my interest was piqued today by Brian Fraga's report that Gibson may be working on a sequel to his blockbuster movie.

It is to be entitled "The Passion of the Donald." It is the story of a man whose followers believe he has been sent by God to save the white race from extinction. All is going according to plan until his election as the fourth person of the Trinity is stolen from him by godless forces led by Prince Ivermectin.

Now this I got to see.

BILL KRISTOFCO

Parkville, Maryland

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Reading Mel Gibson's comments about Vatican II; they are both hilarious and alarming at the same time.

"There was nothing wrong" with the Catholic Church before Vatican II's reforms, Gibson said, adding: "It didn't need to be fixed. It was doing pretty well."

I have never heard that there was anything "wrong" with the church prior to Vatican II. What the comment shows is that people have been poorly catechized by the church about Vatican II as to make foolish statements about it.

As for "Fr." James Altman, and I use the quotes with reason, if he doesn't want to teach to the magisterium, and feels "canceled," perhaps he should ask to be laicized. Then he can call himself whatever he wants and say whatever he wishes.

As for the phrase '"canceled," I find that rather immature. Most of us have been told all through our lives, sometimes politely, sometimes not, but to "shut up and sit down." There is nothing wrong with that. It is the over privileged complainers who take offense. I am 69 and I cannot count how many times I have been told that. Sometimes for good reason. It is time for people like Mel Gibson and "Fr." James Altman to grow up and act like the men they purport themselves to be.

STEPHEN HEALY

Seattle, Washington

Advertisement

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Recent news items about the zealous reactionary priest, James Altman, should remind us of other loose cannons (or should I say loose "canons") in American history that had eventually to be suppressed by the hierarchy, conservative though it tends to be.

In the 1930s, Fr. Charles Coughlin started out as a supporter of President Franklin Roosevelt, then veered into a fascist mode preaching anti-Semitism on his popular radio program and his newspaper.

Less influential, but notorious in his own way, was Fr. Leonard Feeney, a Catholic chaplain at Harvard University after the Second World War. He was another anti-Semite who narrowly interpreted the dictum, "no salvation outside the church," to mean that all non-Catholics were damned. Rather than being rare "bad apples" these are, I fear, just more prominent voices among some clergy who would view the Second Vatican Council as a disaster.

WILLIAM J. PEASE

San Diego, California

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