Pope Francis – Confusing Traditionalists – Homosexuals-Homosexuality & God's Mercy

New Era World News and Global Intelligence:

EXACTLY ONE YEAR HAS PASSED since Cardinal Burke and three other "Red Hats" issued their well known clerical "dubia", which might be interpreted as a public prosecutorial attempt to "cross-examine" the Vicar of Christ (*Amoris Laetitia*) whose pastoral approach to divorce and remarriage is not quite to their liking and apparently beyond their comprehension. Although two of the original dubia architects have gone to their death during this one-year period and although the former Prefect for the Congregation of the Faith (CDF) clearly indicated that there was nothing in the pope's exhortation on divorce and remarriage that contradicted the Church's perennial teachings about marital union, despite these things, the remaining two cardinals have *not* relented, have *not* relinquished their demand to publicly cross examine the Vicar of Christ as if somehow they, they and not the Successor of Peter, are the guarantors of the Supreme Magisterium.

Rather than continue to deflect the assault on the papacy regarding the issue of *Amoris Laetitia*, as we have done elsewhere, it is hoped that there is didactic value in demonstrating the ludicrous and base assertions contained in three related attacks on the reigning pontiff (homosexuality, the death penalty, and marriage) thereby lending credence to the supposition that it is *not* the Vicar of Christ but the prelates who are causing the confusion. The fact that the pope's rudimentary remarks on these three topics, in the context of mercy, *supposedly* caused confusion among ranking

churchmen raises various questions: Are their aging minds becoming too feeble to remember basic catechesis or to dull to make moral distinctions necessary for pastoral theology or are they so rooted in negativity that they are unable to see the good being proposed by the pope (Luke 6: 40-42)? Since these men are towering "Princes of the Holy Roman Catholic Church", questions about their intellectual ability should be readily dismissed; it is safer to presume that they are endowed with the requisite intellectual virtues. It is *not* they but their readers and facilitators who are either easily confused or willing purveyors of their confusing confusion, purveyors who should be clarifying the confusion rather than enhancing it.

If questions regarding intellectual ability are dismissed, as it seems they should be, other more *dubious* questions arise pertaining to motive, intriguing questions, which require investigation beyond the scope of this article. **The purpose of this article** (and two companion articles) **is to explore the absurdity of what now seems to be daily base assertions**, assertions that are so clearly fallacious that they tend to force the inquiring mind to pray for rational insight that explains their ongoing dogged persistence, a persistence that has the net effect of defaming this pope. When these three issues are examined (homosexuality, the death penalty, and marriage), when it is demonstrated that any person trained in rudimentary catechesis should be able to grasp what the pope is saying, it should be clear, or at least plausible, that it is *not* Pope Francis who is causing confusion; rather, the confusion is being engendered by a set of dubious detractors.

HOMOSEXUALITY

Several adherents of the extreme "Religious Right" stepped up their attacks against Pope Francis following his July 29, 2013 statement in response to a question posed by journalist Ilze

Scamparini during a press conference granted to journalists on a flight back from Rio de Janeiro following World Youth Day. A veritable fire storm broke out over the pope's response:

"If a person is gay and seeks the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge that person?"

Ilze Scamparini

Scamparini's specific question was:

> *"I would like permission to ask a delicate question: another image that has been going around the world is that of Monsignor Ricca and the news about his private life. I would like to know, Your Holiness, what you intend to do about this? How are you confronting this issue and how does Your Holiness intend to confront the whole question of the gay lobby?"*

Scamparini's inquiry consists of two parts; to the first question Pope Francis replied:

> *"**I did what canon law calls for, that is a preliminary investigation**. And from this investigation, there was nothing of what had been alleged. We did not find anything of that. **This is the response**. But I wish to add something else:…If a person, whether it be a lay person, a priest or a religious sister, commits a sin and then converts, the Lord forgives, and when the Lord forgives, the Lord forgets and this is very important for our lives. When we confess our sins and we truly say, "I have sinned in this", the Lord forgets, and so we have no right not to forget, because otherwise we would run the risk of the Lord not forgetting our sins. That is a danger. This is important: a theology of sin. Many times I think of Saint Peter. He committed one of the worst sins, that is he denied Christ, and even with this sin they made him Pope. We have to think a great deal about that. But, returning to your question more concretely. **In this case, I***

> ***conducted the preliminary investigation and we didn't find anything.***"

This first query involving interim Vatican Banker, Msgr. Ricca is *not* relevant here; we are (as is Pope Francis) interested in the second query, dealing with homosexual "tendencies" and a purported "gay lobby" (or any perverse lobby) operating at the Vatican. Before proceeding to the second part, the part dealing with the "gay lobby" and homosexual tendencies, it is important to note that **the pope's remark, "who am I to judge" was NOT made in reference to the first question**, although his detractors like to make it appear as if it did.

As John Thavis astutely noted:

> *"Amid the media attention that inevitably followed, it's important to note that although the pope was responding to a question about an alleged "gay lobby" in the Vatican, **his comment was not specifically about gay priests**."*

> *"Some media have portrayed the pope as saying he would not judge priests for their sexual orientation, which would seem to call into question the Vatican's 2005 document that ruled out ordination for men with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies." Based on the pope's actual words, I think that's a stretch."*

In fact, Pope Francis did make a judgement to conduct an investigation, as he should of. **The words "who am I to judge were made in reference to the second question pertaining to a gay lobby which takes precedence over the question about gay priests. Francis shifted emphasis from gay priests, such as Ricca, to focus on the question pertaining to a gay lobby, but he never separated the gay lobby from his response about penitent gays, which he expands in response to the second**

question. This is clear because at the end of his first answer, following the words ” I conducted the *preliminary investigation* and we didn’t find anything”, he stated

> *“This is the first question. Then, you spoke about the gay lobby.”*

In answer to this latter question, Francis responded:

> *“So much is written about the gay lobby. I still haven’t found anyone with an identity card in the Vatican with “gay” on it. They say there are some there. I believe that when you are dealing with such a person, you must* ***distinguish between the fact of a person being gay*** *and* ***the fact of someone forming a lobby****, because not all lobbies are good.* ***This one is not good*** *(a gay lobby).* ***If*** *(on the other hand)* ***someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him?****”*

> *“The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains this in a beautiful way, saying: “****no one should marginalize these people for this, they must be integrated into society****”.* ***The problem is not having this tendency,*** *no, we must be brothers and sisters to one another, and there is this one and there is that one.* ***The problem is in making a lobby of this tendency****: a lobby of misers, a lobby of politicians, a lobby of masons, so many lobbies. For me, this is the greater problem.”*

On Return Flight from World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro Pope Francis asked: ‘If a person is gay… who am I to judge?’

The problem is not the tendency but making a lobby of the

tendency. In other words, being penitent and remaining "in the closet", that is keeping one's homosexuality tendency to one's self **while working on it** is *not* a problem that deters the pope or the Church from conducting its works. **What is a problem**, a BIG problem, however is *not* being penitent, but rather **being defiant, publicly defiant and forming a militant yet mondaine lobby of dilettante rebellious sophisticates to challenge the Church from the inside**. The pope clearly says that **this is a problem**. This problem is obviously on his mind!

Before continuing, Francis states clearly that such a gay lobby is "**NOT GOOD**". He then states, that in contradistinction to a "bad", defiant, publicly vocal, and rebellious gay lobby of homosexual sophisticates, a single person who is penitent and fighting homosexual urges while keeping peace in the community is *not* a problem, *certainly not,* especially when compared to the former, which he hints might exist at the Vatican:

> *"I still haven't found anyone with an identity card in the Vatican with "gay" on it. (Nonetheless)* ***They say there are some there.****"*

Msgr Ricca, however is not one of them, presumably he falls into the second grouping to which the pope addressed his now famous words:

> ***"If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him?***

The pope reiterates this point by quoting the Catechism followed by some more personal remarks that drive his point home :

> ***"No one should marginalize these people for this, they must be integrated into society****". The problem is not having this tendency, no, we must be brothers and sisters to one another,*

> *and there is this one and there is that one.* ***The problem is in making a lobby of this tendency****: a lobby of misers, a lobby of politicians,* ***a lobby of masons****, so many lobbies. For me, this is the greater problem."*

This problem has grown so acute that it has apparently penetrated the hallowed ramparts of Malta leading Pope Francis to order a purge of Freemasons from the Knights of Malta.

For a long time, many on the right have been pleading for the popes to clean house; now that the cleaning has commenced many of the supplicants ravenous for a papal crackdown, are finding themselves on the bristles tips.

In the Holy Father's own words:

> *"There are also cases of malicious resistance, which spring up in misguided minds and come to the fore when the devil inspires ill intentions (often cloaked in sheep's clothing)."*

> *"This last kind of resistance* ***hides behind words of self-justification and often accusation****," he said. "It takes refuge in* ***traditions****,* ***appearances****,* ***formalities****, in the familiar, or else in a desire to make everything personal, failing to distinguish between (among) the* ***ACT****, the* ***ACTOR*** *and the* ***ACTION"*** *(please remember that Francis said this).*

By using words such as *traditions*, *appearances* and *formalities*, it is quite clear whom the pope is referring to. His words are similar to those of Cardinal Ratzinger when he headed the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (CDF):

> *"It is necessary to be strong in faith and to resist error even when it masquerades as piety."*

The culprit is then brought into stark relief when the sacred scriptures point their light on the theme or error, piety, tradition *etc*:

> *"And what I do I will continue to do, **in order to end this pretext** of those who seek a pretext for being regarded as we are in the mission of which they boast. For **such people are false apostles**, deceitful workers, **who masquerade as apostles of Christ**. And no wonder, for even Satan masquerades as an angel of light. So it is not strange that his **ministers** also masquerade as ministers of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 11: 12-15).*

The Issue is Clear enough for a School Boy, Why are the Dubia Cardinals Confused?

Clearly, Pope Francis was speaking about penitent homosexuals who in humility keep their sins to themselves rather than forming lobbies of defiant and rebellious epicuren gourmands working to undermine the Church. Moreover, the distinction that he made by the words "Who am I to judge" is so basic a mere school boy possessing elementary catechesis could make the distinction necessary to understand what the pope was saying in this *supposedly* confusing case.

The folks as Novus Ordo Watch (NOW) are apparently as confused as the dubia cardinals and other purveyors of dubious papal ideas. According to them (NOW):

> *"For a supposed Vicar of Jesus Christ to make such a comment is beyond irresponsible and foolish, not to mention harmful and scandalous. Francis plays right into the wrong-headed but widespread idea that some people are homosexual in their identity, **in their nature**, as part of "who they are". This is exactly what modern-day liberals want you to believe, that just as people are biologically either male or female, so*

> *they are also biologically either heterosexual or homosexual."*

The pope *never* made any mention of biological determinism. He merely said, "The problem is *not* having this tendency" (or, the problem is *not* this tendency). To say that he meant a biologically determined tendency is to put words into his mouth, corrupt words that vitiate his meaning. More positively, Francis' words can be taken to mean concupiscence, urge, temptation *etc*. which when acted upon habitually orient a person towards sin. This is the "tendency" he is talking about. **The problem is not concupiscence, but acting on it**. A worse problem, the one pointed out by Francis, is not only acting on the tendency but also flaunting it, defending it and militantly fighting for it by forming an advocacy group such as a lobby of churchmen; this he refers to as "bad", very bad indeed. Is anyone with a sane mind going to disagree with his analysis thus far? What is worse (1) having a temptation to sin and fighting it, (2) having a temptation and acting on it but afterward expressing penitence and remorse as well as a resolve to fight it and keep it private while admitting error or (3) arguing that homosexuality is not morally illicit, but a natural expression to be lauded and publicly supported by high ranking churchmen? Now, honestly, which is worse, if you said (3) then you agree with the pope. Why is this confusing?

An even more basic distinction is the one between **judging actions** and **judging intentions** (actor) having to do with eternal salvation. Clearly such distinctions must be made, as Francis indicates, among Act, Actor and Action. Almost every lay person is familiar with the famous dictum to "hate the sin (act) but not the sinner' (actor) or to "judge the sin but not the sinner". This distinction is so basic, how can any honest person miss it. Are we to presume that the self proclaimed brilliant theologians at Novus Ordo *et al*, those brilliant enough to call the pope a heretic and schismatic, are we to

suppose that such brilliant people are bereft of elementary school knowledge as to be unable to make such a rudimentary distinction? What in Heaven's name is going on here?

To quote scriptures, as they do, about the necessity of judging all things does nothing to counter the pope's remarks. He is well aware of the distinction. Every schoolboy knows it is licit to judge acts but impossible to make judgements about eternal salvation, which belongs to God alone (Revelation 20:11-14). Thus, when scripture says to judge all things, it is referring to acts.

> *"But the spiritual man judgeth all things; and he himself is judged of no man" (1 Corinthians 2:15).*

Because they fail to distinguish among act, actor and action, they also fail at understanding the pope's meaning. When Francis asks "who am I to judge", he is referring to eternal damnation or intentions in the soul (the actor-not the act) which only God knows. Because radical sedevacantists and many less radical traditionalists fail to give the pope this much, this much that even a Catholic school boy can be presumed to know it, they not only get it all wrong, they cause scandal and disseminate confusion as do the folks at NOW:

> *"So, Francis asks rhetorically, "Who am I to judge?" Holy Scripture may help in answering this question: "But the spiritual man judgeth all things; and he himself is judged of no man" (1 Cor 2:15). So, who is Francis to judge? Well… obviously not the spiritual man! Thanks for making it clear, Mr. Bergoglio."*

Not so quick boys, Francis is the pope; he is not your straw man. Clearly he is referring to subjective intentions and eternity not *about* objective atcs. HE IS TALKING ABOUT AN INABILITY TO JUDGE SUBJECTIVE CULPABILITY (the actor) especially the moral or theological culpability of a person

who manifests "good will" and "who seeks God". Francis is *not* referring to those so steeped in sin that they make a lobby out of it; these he has no problem judging; clearly their acts are, as he says, "bad". By referring to such perverse lobbies as "bad' Pope Francis has made a judgement in accord with (Jude 1:22):

> *"And **some indeed reprove, being judged**: But **others save, pulling them out of the fire**. And **on others have mercy**, in fear, **hating also the spotted garment which is carnal**."*

Clearly, the pope has no problem judging manifest corrupt actions. But he carefully and correctly refrains from judging the eternal destiny of any man, his subjective culpability before the Throne of God. Those who need reproving, those whom he does judge as "bad' are the scandalous non-penitents. So to argue that the pope refrains from judging and somehow approves of sin or somehow supports it, is not only puerile it is basically ridiculous, perhaps intended for the ignorant and easily persuaded or for the naysayers looking for anything to defame another, *esp* another whom they dislike, such as the pope who as the Vicar of Christ has many enemies. Are you going to be dissuaded by this childish cabal meant only to confuse?

More recently (Nov 30, 2015), the pope reiterated and clarified his thoughts on this issue:

> *"I will repeat what I said on my first trip. I repeat what the Catechism of the Catholic Church says: that they must not be discriminated against, that they must be respected and accompanied pastorally. **One can condemn, but not for theological reasons**, but for reasons of political **behavior** (that is for crimes) … But these are things that have nothing to do with the problem. **The problem is a person that has a condition, that has good will and who seeks God, who are we to judge?** And we must accompany them well…this is what the*

> *catechism says, a clear catechism."*

Ultra Right Sedevacantists have twisted the hell out of this by failing to distinguish between penitent and manifest non-penitent sinners as Pope Francis does and by failing to make a proper distinction between condemnation of acts as crimes and condemnation of persons to hell, and also failing to make clear the fact that judgement MUST PRECEDE condemnation. One cannot condemn a person until one has judged that person. Clearly, a "political judgment" (a licit condemnation) for a violation of a moral precept resulting in temporal punishment for a "crime" can be made as Francis clearly states, but not a theological judgement leading to condemnation of a person for eternity, which only God can make. Why is this so hard?

The pope clearly states that evil acts or "behaviors' can be judged as bad (he even referred to the homosexual lobby as bad). However, when he speaks about an inability to judge, he is NOT speaking about **Time** *but* **Eternity**, not speaking of judging a person's objective acts but the subjective guilt or innocence of a person's soul. T sedevacantists at One Peter Five not only miss this basic distinction; they misuse the words judge and condemn:

> *"Amidst that super-sized word salad are some key points…and a reinforcement (rather than a corrective clarification) of Francis' own controversial stance on this issue. Francis asserts that "One can condemn, homosexual people/behaviors but not for theological reasons…(so far ok).*

But then they assert:

> *"Of course, this is absolutely false.* ***Not only can we condemn sodomy****, we must if we wish to exercise an authentic pastoral care and concern for souls."*

Sorry, but NO we cannot "condemn sodomy" (unless it is a crime

– did they miss this?). **God does *not* condemn sodomy; He *proscribes* sodomy** (act) as a moral evil **and *condemns* sodomites** (actors or persons). A human judge however, can both judge sodomy to be wrong and condemn a sodomite to prison (if such a law exists-Francis refers to this as a "political" condemnation – not a theological condemnation, which is not possible). When it comes to the pope's statement about not being able to make a judgement, he is referring to making a judgement about a person's intentions and eternal destiny. **He is aware, as is any school boy, that acts can be judged, put persons cannot be condemned "theologically"**. Francis judges homosexuality (action) to be objectively bad, but he is unable to either condemn the homosexual (actor) "*theologically*" or to make a judgement about a homosexual's hidden intentions or the eternal destiny of their souls. No one can condemn another (to hell), only God can do this. **Thus, the pope is correct, there is NO THEOLOGICAL REASON for condemning a soul**. Rather, it is the correct attitude, an attitude of love and mercy, to accompany a sincere soul seeking God on the road to perfection, a road on which they will conquer their sins and wrongful inclinations. Now who is confused, the pope or the traditionalists at One Peter Five?

In saying "Who am I to judge", the pope is clearly referring to a person who is penitent and seeking God (see video 1:00). Why is this hard to understand?

Francis was clearly making a distinction between judging acts and judging person's intentions. Moreover, he was making a distinction between penitent and non-penitent sinners. To drive the point home, consider the following:

In the wake of the "Who am I to judge" affair, Monsignor Krzysztof Charamsa, a Polish priest who worked for the CDF, **publicly announced** that he was in a gay relationship.

Following the spin given by the pope's enemies and detractors, would you be surprised to learn that Msgr. Charamsa was relieved of his duties at the Vatican as well as his teaching posts at two of Rome's Pontifical universities? He was relieved of his duties because he intended to remain in a sinful relationship.

In fact Msgr Charamsa wrongfully insisted that Pope Francis "revise Catholic doctrine on homosexuality, which considers same-sex relationships sinful."

The pope had no problem judging the monsignor's acts as wrong – they were obvious, he persisted in, boasted about, and sought to justify his sin thereby hurting himself and causing scandal; nonetheless, **Francis did not and could not 'condemn' the churchman** (that is for eternity), but he did judge his blatant actions. As far as his intentions, the msgr. made them known to all by persisting in sin and seeking to justify it, thereby making it easy to judge his ill intentions – a person who sins and repents and acts well does not provide any evidence by which to judge his intentions. The non-penitent, who claims he has a right to sin, who forms a bold lobby thereby loudly proclaiming his intentions can be judged (but not condemned **unless his corresponding acts are also crimes**), in such a case, he can be politically or temporally condemned. The forgiven penitent who seeks to serve God can be both judged and condemned politically, his acts can also be judged theologically (acts of which a sincere penitent presumably has few if any, in fact, there might not be any remaining acts to judge), but he *cannot* be condemned theologically – this is Francis point!

Clearly, the pope's "Who am I to judge" remarks have been twisted, perverted and misrepresented. **It is not the pope who is causing confusion, but his detractors.**

If this is not enough, the pope chose to answer his detractors in his recently released book *"The Name of God is Mercy "* in

which he states:

> *“On that occasion I said this: If a person is gay and seeks out the Lord and is willing, who am I to judge that person?” the pope says. “I was paraphrasing by heart the Catechism of the Catholic Church where it says that these people should be treated with delicacy and not be marginalized.”*

> *“I am glad that we are talking about ‘homosexual people’ because before all else comes the individual person, in his wholeness and dignity,” he continues. “And people should not be defined only by their sexual tendencies: let us not forget that God loves all his creatures and we are destined to receive his infinite love.”*

> *“**I prefer that homosexuals come to confession**, **that they stay close to the Lord**, and that we pray all together,” says Francis. “You can advise them to pray, **show goodwill**, **show them the way**, and accompany them along it.”*

The pope clearly has no problem clarifying his statements, apparently to good-willed people not intent on perverting them. Even a schoolboy can follow the pope’s elementary thinking. How often did jesus reuse to answer his detractors?

Please ask yourself: Am I confused because I actually read what the pope said (if so please re-read with these notes in mind). Or am I confused because someone else told me about what the pope wrote? If so please ignore that person and find out for yourself.

Part II to Follow