

## Daily Meditation 01/03/2023

### Pope Benedict XVI's Legacy, continued

Good morning.

We continue our meditations on the legacy of Cardinal Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict the 16th. There's a lot of sweet talk going on about the man these days since he's died. Much of it is, of course, been promoted in the media, with the Opus Dei label on it, because Opus Dei is very involved in the media, in America and in Europe.

The media and finance are their primary interests, and of course, politics, including the Supreme Court in America. They have a lot of money behind them. One Opus Dei operative received \$1.6 billion personally last year to do whatever he wants to support right-wing causes. So what we're hearing is a lot of mythology and a lot of cover-up. And nonsense about this man.

I'm trying to help you to consider the facts and make up your own mind. I'm going to talk today about the theological abuse, if you will, the abuse of theologians, just as there was a tremendous amount of sexual abuse under his watch as head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, which is responsible for wayward priests and which did practically nothing for decades even though the evidence was on Cardinal Ratzinger's desk of such horrible people as Father Masiello. Only late in the game did he step up and that was when the press got hold of it.

But one victim of the Inquisition was Father Tissa Balasuriya of Sri Lanka. His ministry was among the poor of his country, which is a very poor country. He was attacked, mistranslated, and eventually excommunicated by the CDF. This is what he said about the experience.

*We can no longer accept secret anonymous denunciations. Those who accuse others to Rome must be subject to reasonable norms of inquiry. If they defame or falsely accuse someone, they should be subject to punishment. This is operative in civil society.*

He says,

*It strikes me that there's widespread fear among Catholics when they deal with theology and institutions such as the CDF. As a result, almost all of the structures of the church become inoperative.*

So when you have far right-wing, minorities, very loud, complaining about this priest or that priest or this theologian or that theologian, as he says, fear spreads, and it is fanned at the top of the pyramid, in Rome. The structure of the church broke down.

*At all levels--diocesan, national and even the international level-- everyone becomes stymied. There's a sort of 'holy fear,' a kind of religious reign of terror --*

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*...with threats of hell, excommunication, and exclusion. These psychological weapons are used to frighten people as the threat of torture was in the past by the Inquisition. That is why it is important to emphasize that where there is love, there is no fear. If we do not become a community of love and acceptance, people will just bypass the Church.*

Now these words were written over 20 years ago. And I think that that a lot of bypass, a lot of bypassing of organized religion, of institutional religion, and certainly of the Roman Catholic religion. And of course, a big chunk of it is due to the revelations of pedophile priests and the cover-up by the hierarchy.

But another dimension is the expulsion of thinkers, the squelching of theologians, because thinking people want a thinking church, and they do not want just a church built on obedience and blind obedience, such as was the case in the time of Nazis where questions were not allowed, but obedience was held up as the one and only virtue.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.