Dear Fr. Pagliarani,

I am writing to urgently beg your intervention in defense of faithful Catholics who are rightly scandalized by the willingness of churchmen worldwide to cede authority to the State, with neither protest nor qualification, over matters that pertain to the God-given mission of the Holy Catholic Church. I will offer but example out of many.

On 23 March, **British Prime Minister Boris Johnson** issued an order to the nation declaring:

We’ll stop all social events​, including weddings, baptisms and other ceremonies, but excluding funerals … If you don’t follow the rules the police will have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

In response to this unlawful edict from the State, **Fr. Robert Brucciani, SSPX**, dispatched a letter to Society faithful that reads in part [with emphasis added]:

An announcement this evening by the British PM **has left us with no choice but to cancel all public religious ceremonies…**  We are able to tend the sick and the dying **within the government restrictions**…

Dearest Father, I do not presume to inform you of Catholic tradition in this matter, but clearly this attitude (*we have no choice but to follow government restrictions*) is irreconcilable with the true faith as taught by the venerable pre-conciliar popes. If I may offer just two citations:

Whatever, therefore in things human is of a sacred character, whatever belongs either of its own nature or by reason of the end to which it is referred, to the salvation of souls, or to the worship of God, is subject to the power and judgment of the Church ... To wish the Church to be subject to the civil power in the exercise of her duty is a great folly and a sheer injustice. Whenever this is the case, order is disturbed, for things natural are put above things supernatural… – Pope Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*

It naturally follows that the Church is … a society eminently independent, and above all others, because of the excellence of the heavenly and immortal blessings towards which it tends … It is equally certain that Christ has given the Church full freedom to judge and decide as to the things that may best suit Her ends. – Pope Leo XIII, *Officio Sanctissimo*

That access to public Mass and the Sacraments is being blocked by restrictions imposed by the civil power, *without even so much as a whisper from our sacred pastors concerning their exclusive right to regulate such matters*, is a grave scandal.

To be perfectly clear, surely it is within the rights, and at times perhaps even the duty, of the ecclesial power to restrict access to public Mass (as during the Spanish flu). It is quite another thing, however, for the ecclesial power to *relinquish its* *exclusive jurisdiction* to the civil power, or to even give the appearance of doing so, thereby giving witness to a falsehood; namely, that the Catholic Church is simply another society that exists within and, worse, *under* the State.

The unique freedom of the Catholic Church from the dictates of the State in these matters is, of course, *a direct consequence* of Our Lord’s Kingship and His Sovereign Rights over every nation. When churchmen behave as if the Church has no other choice but to operate under government-imposed restrictions, this is tantamount to renouncing the Kingship of Christ.

As you know better than I, Archbishop Lefebvre often lamented the widespread rejection of Our Lord’s Kingship in the years following the Council. In a sermon delivered for the Feast of Christ the King on 29 October 1989 in Dublin, Ireland, Archbishop Lefevre said with “great sadness”:

But you know, now, in our time, many refuse to acknowledge the Kingship of Jesus Christ. They are opposed to the principle of the Kingship of Jesus Christ … We need to do everything possible to extend this Kingdom of Jesus Christ in our souls, in our bodies, in our families, in our countries.

Now, more than three decades later, the great majority of those who call themselves Catholic don’t so much *refuse* the traditional doctrine on the Sovereign Rights of Christ the King; most *simply do not know it!* Many, in fact, have never even heard it mentioned, much less taught in any detail or applied to a concrete situation such as the one we are presently facing.

It is for this reason that I implore you, Father, please issue a brief public statement along the following lines, as I, and many others, are looking to the Society of St. Pius X to set the record straight on behalf of Our Lord:

The State (civil power) has no authority whatsoever to place restrictions upon the Holy Roman Catholic Church in the exercise of her salvific mission, a mission that was given to her by Christ the King. This includes such things as the offering of public Mass and the administration of the Sacraments. Those who exercise ecclesial power are at times, however, required to apply their exclusive jurisdiction in such matters by making the prudential, yet painful, decision to temporarily suspend public Mass for the protection of the faithful in their care. It is in this spirit, and with unwavering devotion to the Social Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Society of St. Pius X, in light of the dangers posed by COVID-19, has undertaken such measures in certain places.

I beg you, Fr. Pagliarani, please do not forgo this blessed opportunity to raise high the banner of Christ the King for every nation on earth to see, not only for the good of the SSPX, but for the good of this world that is utterly lost without Him.

Yours prayerfully in Christ the King,

Louie Verrecchio