

VATICAN ILLUSIONISM

Ratzinger's defence of Tucho is Vatican media fake news

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Vatican News is the newspaper of a regime. Not that there was any doubt about that, but Andrea Tornielli, its editorial manager's latest performance demonstrates just how low he is prepared to stoop for the cause. [Fiducia supplicans: Non-liturgical blessings, and Ratzinger's distinction](#)

is the audacious title of an article by Tornielli (and if not by him who else?) on 27 February, which essentially argues only one point: the distinction introduced by FS between liturgical and pastoral blessings is not Tucho's work, but none other than that of Cardinal Ratzinger.

Here is the Tornielli's proof, the smoking gun: the [Instructions on prayers to obtain healing from God](#) of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, at the time - A.D. 2000 - headed by Ratzinger himself. What this document says, among other things, Tornielli explains: "So it states that there are liturgical or ritual prayers of healing, and others that are not, but which are legitimately admitted". And he adds: "From these quotations from the text signed by Ratzinger and approved by Pope Wojtyla one can see how the meaning of the term "liturgical" used in *Fiducia supplicans* to define ritual blessings, as apposed to pastoral ones, certainly represents a development, but one that is in line with the magisterium of recent decades".

Now let's see what the *Instruction* has to say about this; in Article 2 of the section 'Disciplinary Provisions' we read: 'Prayers of healing qualify as liturgical if they are included in the liturgical books approved by the competent authority of the Church; otherwise they are non-liturgical'. 'Liturgical' is taken as synonymous with 'ritual'. Now, it is quite obvious that any prayer can be liturgical or non-liturgical: the morning and evening prayers that Christians say in their homes are non-liturgical; Lauds and Vespers are liturgical prayers. *Nihil sub sole novi*.

The same criterion applies to prayers for the sick. The context of the Instruction is to regulate prayers for healing, practised by "charismatic groups", and from art. 1 of the "Disciplinary Provisions" it is made clear that "every member of the faithful is permitted to raise prayers to God to obtain healing"; when, however, recourse is made to the Ritual, then it is clear that these prayers are raised by the competent minister, with the vestments and formulas provided.

So, what is the subject of the document and the subject of the statement in Article 2? The healing prayers, ritual or non-ritual. Not blessings. One thing is prayer and another is blessing; more precisely: one thing is prayer and an ascending blessing (an invocation) and another is a descending blessing (a blessing proper). And when FS opens to the blessing of irregular or homosexual couples, he speaks precisely of descending blessings (cf. n. 30), blessings on these couples, given to these couples. This means blessings essentially differ from prayers.

The implications: the priest can perform non-liturgical prayers, like any other

Christian; whereas when the priest blesses (descending blessing), he blesses as a minister of the Church, even if his blessing is not ritual. Is this last blessing liturgical? If by 'liturgical' we mean an action of the Church, yes, it is. If, on the other hand, we understand 'liturgical' as synonymous with 'ritual', then it is not always so. But in both cases, the priest blesses as a minister of the Church, while he does not always pray as a minister of the Church.

A prayer for the sick, like any other prayer, may not be liturgical, that is, not performed in the name of the Church, even when a priest participates in it. While this is not the case for a priestly blessing, which is always ecclesial and, in this sense, liturgical, even if not ritual.

Tornielli therefore drops a clanger when he claims to pose the distinction made by Cardinal Ratzinger, which concerned prayers for the sick, as a precedent to legitimise the one introduced by FS, because he does not consider the fundamental distinction between prayer, as well by the priest, and blessing.

Then there is a second obvious difference, which escaped (perhaps) Tornielli.

Namely that between a sick person and a couple that is gay or living more uxorio. If the editorial director of the Vatican Media had reflected for just a moment on this distinction he would have understood why it is impossible to bless the latter, while instead it is completely legitimate to bless the sick (by the way, the Instruction of 2000 does not speak of blessing the sick, but of prayer). And the answer always lies in that Responsum of 2021, with which FS has entered into blatant contradiction: "are therefore compatible with the essence of the blessing imparted by the Church only those realities that are in themselves ordered to serve those designs". Ordered. And the sick person is ordained to serve God's designs, the relationship that constitutes the couple living sexually outside of marriage is objectively disordered.

Also at the end of the article, Tornielli makes an additional, rather gross

mistake. According to him, the pastoral blessing of the FS would in no way legitimise extra-marital sexual praxis, because it would have the simple meaning of 'an invocation to God to allow the seeds of goodness to grow in the direction He desires'. But an invocation is an ascending prayer or blessing, not a descending one, which is precisely what FS introduced. But, in this case, the priest does not have to make any priestly gesture of blessing on the presenting couple, such as drawing the sign of the cross or laying on the hands. This, on the contrary, is taking place, as seen in so many public photos - like those of Father James Martin - to be criticise, to which Mr Tornielli did not even bother to devote a single line.

Tornielli, a professional magician-mentalistic, must be quite rusty in his illusionist art if he really thinks he can pull the wool over everyone's eyes with the pseudo reference to Ratzinger. Rather, such an article demonstrates once again, the now total lack of authority of this pontificate, which the appointment to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith of a theologian of Fernández's 'calibre' could only make worse. It seems vital for this pontificate to resort to Ratzinger's authority in order to give authority to its claudication, when not patently inadmissible, inventions. This phenomenon had been evident from the very beginning, with the performance of Tornielli's colleague, Monsignor Dario Edoardo Viganò, who had tried to enlist Ratzinger among the supporters of Francis's elevated theology, immediately debunked by his clumsiness and the finesse of the Pope Emeritus. Now VaticanNews has tried again, without any improvement, but the point still remains: this pontificate has no authority of its own and constantly needs to resort to external authoritative confirmation. Which in fact does not exist: they are just the illusions of the magician Tornielli.