



VITA MUTATUR, NON TOLLITUR

EULOGY FOR BISHOP RICHARD NELSON WILLIAMSON

A 8 March MCMXL – Ω 29 January MMXXV

*Tuis enim fidelibus, Domine,
vita mutatur, non tollitur;
et, dissoluta terrestres hujus incolatus domo,
æterna in cælis habitatio comparatur.*

For to Thy faithful people, O Lord,
life is changed, not taken away:
and when the home of this earthly sojourn is dissolved,
an eternal dwelling place is being prepared in the heavens.

Præf. Defunct.

A dear Friend, a venerated brother in the Episcopate, a companion in battle has concluded his earthly pilgrimage and has passed into eternity. And in these hours of mourning, alleviated only by the eyes of Faith, we cannot but weep for his departure, recall his strenuous fight, his fidelity, his work in the service of Holy Mother Church, and turn to prayer for the suffrage of his soul.

My fraternal friendship with Bishop Williamson is relatively recent. It began when I found myself clashing with the Roman authorities, after having reached an awareness of the *conciliar revolution* and its devastating effects – an awareness to which His Excellency had arrived long before me. Of our meetings, I retain the memory of his ability to temper his unconditional adherence to Catholic Truth with a spirit of true Charity and an untiring strength in preaching the Word, *opportune, importune* [in season and out of season]. I remember his humble and affable manner. A true British gentleman, he had a keen sense of humor. His vast erudition did not prevent him from conducting himself in a simple and modest manner, even in the poverty of his attire. I recall well the threadbare cassock he habitually wore and his reluctance towards artificial formalities.

Having converted from Anglicanism and been formed in the traditional Faith in the school of a great Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, he knew how to remain faithful to him even in the face of the failings of his confrères, when human considerations and diplomatic calculations gained the upper hand over the legacy of the French Archbishop. Bishop Williamson was *disobedient* for an apostate Rome; *disobedient* for an enfeebled conservatism that had forgotten the true reasons for its existence; *disobedient* for a world incapable of bearing the truth spoken to its face. This apparent disobedience – which binds him indissolubly to the figure of Monsignor Lefebvre, the “rebel Bishop” who dared to challenge the modernism of Paul VI and John Paul II – was the reason why in 2012 he was abandoned and expelled from the Society of St Pius X, to which he belonged, due to his refusal to accept an agreement with conciliar Rome and with the pseudo-conservatism of Benedict XVI.

From that time, Monsignor Williamson dedicated himself to the construction of a “Catholic resistance” that could effectively counter, on the one hand, the apostasy of the Roman authorities, and on the other, the compromises and concessions of the Society of St Pius X, whose superiors were increasingly absorbed in the pursuit of canonical normalization. Bishop Williamson was a free man, particularly in refusing to conform to *political correctness*, and he never concerned himself with the image that the press painted of him. In his clear geopolitical vision, he foresaw many ideas that today are confirmed by facts, beginning with the role of Zionism in the attack against Christian society. He endured trials and humiliations without seeking attention, maintaining serenity of soul, and in all things seeking only the glory of God and his own assimilation to Christ the Priest.

When, in 2020, I raised my voice to denounce the psycho-pandemic fraud, we had the opportunity to share the same vision of the world and its geopolitical struggles, identifying in globalism the point of convergence of modern ideologies, and in the relationship between the *deep state* and the *deep church* the true threat to humanity and to the Church.

He was a fervent devotee of the most holy Virgin, and especially of Our Lady of Fatima. His conviction in the victory of the Immaculate Heart, according to the promises of Our Lady, was the beacon of his interior life and of his action, and the faithful recitation of the Holy Rosary his invincible weapon.

The cerebral hemorrhage that struck him in recent weeks did not prevent him, by the grace of God, from receiving the consolation of the sacraments and from being accompanied by those who were close to him at the moment when *obdormivit in Domino* [he fell asleep in the Lord]. Thus, in a quiet sleep of the body, the Lord willed that he should conclude a life spent as a fighter in the trenches of Holy Church, mourned by friends and still respected by adversaries.

Catholic doctrine on suffrages, marvelously expressed in the traditional liturgy which Bishop Williamson always jealously preserved and transmitted, draws from the second book of Maccabees in the Old Testament: *Propterea Judas Macchabaeus... pro defunctis expiatorium sacrificium obtulit, ut a peccato solverentur* [Therefore Judas Maccabeus... offered the expiatory sacrifice for the dead, that they might be absolved from sin] (2Macc 12:45).

It is this expiatory Sacrifice that we celebrate with the solemn obsequies of our venerated brother Bishop. A sacrifice prefigured by the signs of the Old Law and fulfilled in Christ in the New and Eternal Covenant. A sacrifice that Bishop Williamson celebrated daily, in the form preserved through the centuries by Holy Church, for he rightly saw in it the fulfilment of ancient promises, and the promise of infinite graces for the future.

It is the Holy Mass, in the end, that unites all Catholics, and in particular us Ministers of God, in an unbroken procession that traverses every region of the earth and every time until the end of the world. It is the Apostolic Mass, the Mass of St Gregory the Great, of St Pius V, of St Pius X, of Padre Pio, of Monsignor Lefebvre. The Mass that is *ours*, inasmuch as it is the prayerful synthesis of our faith, of the faith of the Church. The Mass that is ours and the faithful's, and yet which conciliar and synodal Rome would deprive us of, for it well knows that that venerable Rite confutes and condemns all its errors, all its cowardly silences, all its vile complicities.

Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech [Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec], says divine Wisdom. So long as there are priests and Bishops who follow the example of true shepherds like Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop Williamson, the perpetual Sacrifice shall not fail, and it is thanks to it that we shall succeed in victoriously passing through these dramatic moments of tribulation that herald the last times.

This assimilation to the Sacrifice cannot be merely ritual. Every priestly soul – I say this to you, dear brethren clerics – must also become a mystical victim, in the model of the pure, holy, and immaculate victim, in order to fulfil in its own flesh *what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for the good of his body, which is the Church* [*adimpleo ea quæ desunt passionum Christi, in carne mea, pro corpore eius, quod est Ecclesia*] (Col 1:24). This is what Bishop Williamson did, who accepted to suffer persecution and exile for the love of Christ, and to avoid reneging on the solemn commitments assumed in the fullness of the Priesthood.

In Paradise, gathered in adoration of the Lamb and of the most holy Trinity in the eternal celestial liturgy, all the Saints of all times are united by love for the perfect

Sacrifice. Let us pray that Bishop Williamson may be received among the heavenly ranks, and that from there he may watch us as we repeat the sacred gestures and the holy words which he had upon his lips until a few days before he left us.

The episcopal motto of Monsignor Williamson was *Fidelis inveniatur* [Let him be found faithful], drawn from the first letter to the Corinthians: *Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei. Hic iam quæritur inter dispensatores ut fidelis quis inveniatur* (1Cor 4:1–2). [So let a man consider us as ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God. Now what is required of dispensers is that each be found faithful]. For the dispenser is not the owner of the good, but the one who must pass it on as he received it to those who will come after him. And this is exactly what our brother bishop did, mindful of the words of the Apostle: *Ego enim jam delibor, et tempus resolutionis meæ instat. Bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi, fidem servavi. In reliquo reposita est mihi corona justitiæ, quam reddet mihi Dominus in illa die, justus iudex: non solum autem mihi, sed et iis, qui diligunt adventum ejus.* [For I am even now ready to be sacrificed: and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day: and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming.] (2Tim 4:6–8).

+ Carlo Maria Viganò, *Archbishop*

January 31, 2025
S. Joannis Bosco Confessoris