

ROSKOVÁNYI, AUGUSTUS

Bishop; b. Szenna, Hungary, Dec. 7, 1807; d. Feb. 24, 1892. He was ordained in 1831 after studies at the college of the Piarists at Kis-Szeben (1817–22), and at Eger (1822–24), and his theological studies at Pesth and the Augustineum in Vienna. In 1839 he received the Abbey of Saar as a benefice and in 1841 was appointed rector of the seminary at Eger. He was consecrated auxiliary bishop in 1847 and named bishop of Waitsen in 1851. In 1859 he was named bishop of Neutra. His works are noted for the documents they contain. Among his more notable works are *De primatu Romani Pontificis eiusque iuribus* (Augsburg 1839; 2d ed. Agram 1841); *De matrimoniis mixtis* (5 v. Funfkirchen 1842; Pesth 1854, 1870–71); *De matrimoniis in ecclesia Catholica* (2 v. Augsburg 1837–40); *Monumenta catholica pro independentia potestatis ecclesiasticae ab imperio civili* (14 v. Funfkirchen 1847; Pesth 1856, 1865, 1870–71); *Coelibatus, et breviarium: duo gravissima clericorum officia . . .* (11 v. Pesth 1861; Neutra 1877–81); *Romanus Pontifex tamquam primas ecclesiae . . .* (16 v. Neutra and Comaromii 1867, 1878); *Beata Virgo Maria in suo conceptu immaculata* (12 v. Budapest 1873–74; Neutra 1877).

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[L. R. KOZLOWSKI]



Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì.

ROSMINI-SERBATI, ANTONIO

Founder of the Institute of Charity, philosopher, theologian, and patriot; b. Rovereto, Trentino (then under Austrian domination, now part of Italy), 1797; d. Stresa (Lago Maggiore), 1855. Against the initial objections of his parents, he was ordained in 1821. His retired life until 1826 can be considered as a preparation for his work. During this period, his studies embraced mathematics, political theory, education, medicine, natural sciences, Oriental languages, and all branches of philosophy and theology. *The History of Love*, an early work of Rosmini on holy Scripture, bears witness to his intense application to the word of God and to his great talent for synthesis.

Rosmini's deliberate aim, in an age characterized by liberal ideas and revolt against established order, was to achieve a balance between old and new by showing how true development in every science depends upon growth from basic and unchangeable principles. On the advice of Pius VII he devoted himself to this task, principally in philosophy.

Rosmini's personal traits were defined and established in these early years. Prayer and devotion to the will

of God became habitual with him; he grew familiar with practical affairs through the management of the large fortune inherited from his father; and his extraordinary capacity for lasting friendship with different types of men manifested itself (Manzoni, Tommasco, Capellari [later Gregory XVI], and Gustavo Cavour were among his many intimates). The plan of his Congregation, for which he had the active encouragement and advice of St. Maddalena di Canossa, was completed in 1828. His chief ecclesiastical work during this time, and what he called "nearly my only recreation," was the formation of a clerical circle at Rovereto to study the then too-much-disregarded St. Thomas Aquinas.

In 1826 Rosmini went to Milan to continue his research and to begin publishing the results of his philosophical studies. He was a writer of astounding fertility and originality. His complete works, many published posthumously, are at present (2001) being edited in a planned 80-volume critical edition (Rome-Stresa, 1966–). About 30 volumes have been produced to date. To these must be added 13 volumes, with some 700 pages

per volume, of letters (Casale 1905). He treated thoroughly the problem of the origin of ideas and certitude, the nature of the human soul, ethics, civil society, the relationship between Church and State, human rights, metaphysics, grace, original sin, and the Sacraments in general. It is impossible to name a single school of thought to which he can be said to belong. Basing himself upon an encyclopedic reading of philosophers and ecclesiastical tradition, he endeavored to present principles that would interlock and serve as a basis of unity for all knowledge.

As the foundation of his system he placed the intuition of universal and undetermined being, which he was careful to distinguish from the concept of God. Although many of his adversaries (M. Liberatore, SJ, for example) later maintained that there could be no distinction between the two concepts and consequently accused Rosmini of ontologism and pantheism, this accusation is no longer accepted by scholars (see Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Note on the import of the doctrinal Decrees concerning the thought and works of the Priest Antonio Rosmini Serbati*, n. 6, Vatican, 1 July 2001). The “idea of being” is for Rosmini the objective and infallible light of reason, the source of man’s dignity as a person, the font of moral obligation, the unshakable foundation of human rights, and the spring of the immortality of the soul. Man’s moral goodness or badness depends upon the use or misuse of this innate light according to which he can either evaluate things in their objective order or attempt to place them in an order of his own creating.

Theological works published during Rosmini’s lifetime concern the nature of original sin, which he maintained was more than a mere lack of sanctifying grace, the providence of God and what he called “supernatural anthropology,” a study of fallen human nature restored through the Sacraments.

His ascetical works are not numerous, but their content regards the fundamental issues of the Christian life. This is especially the case with *Maxims of Christian Perfection* (Rome 1830), in which he shows how all duties culminate in devotion to Christ’s Church—a devotion that he himself manifested in submitting fully to the ecclesiastical prohibition of two of his works. *Maxims* form the basis of his *Constitutions of the Society of Charity*, synopsis in the Apostolic Letters *In Sublimi* (Gregory XVI, 1839) which approved the *Rule* of Rosmini’s religious Institute.

From 1826 until his death, Rosmini’s growing influence as a leader in the forces opposing the domination of sensism in European thought was subject to continual attack. He was looked upon with suspicion by Austria on

account of a panegyric on Pius VII (Modena 1831), in which he condemned Josephinism. His *Treatise on Moral Conscience* (Milan 1839), which contained an attack on the use of probabilism as applied to the natural law, was repudiated especially by P. Ballerini, SJ, who wrote anonymously as *il prete bolognese*. Rosmini’s teaching on original sin and the distinction he made between sin (*peccatum*) and fault (*culpa*) were also the source of bitter criticism. *The Five Wounds of the Church* (Lugano 1847), in which he treats of the dangers to the Church from within, and *A Constitution Based on Social Justice* (Milan 1848) were placed on the Index (1848) for unspecified reasons in the troubled days that followed the assassination of Pellegrino Rossi at Rome. At the same time, Rosmini, following Pius IX in his flight from Rome, fell from favor at Gaeta after expressing his views for a constitution and against Austrian domination.

In 1854, after a full examination of Rosmini’s published writings, a papal commission, with Pius IX presiding at its final sitting, declared that the works under consideration were to be dismissed without censure. Posthumously, 40 propositions taken from all the works of Rosmini were condemned without any specific theological censure in 1887 under Leo XIII (*Enchiridion symbolorum*, 3201–41). Their contents cover practically every point of Catholic theology, but supporters of Rosmini have always denied that they express his genuine thought. Their position has been officially accepted today by the Magisterium in its examination of the 19th century doctrinal decrees concerning Rosmini’s works (see Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Note on the import of the doctrinal Decrees concerning the thought and works of the Priest Antonio Rosmini Serbati*, n. 6, Vatican, July 1, 2001).

Rosmini exercises a growing influence through the philosophy of Christian spiritualism, and through his ascetical writings. John Paul II numbered him among modern thinkers in whom a fruitful meeting between philosophical knowledge and the Word of God has been realized (see Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, n. 74). He is also acknowledged as a man of great sanctity of life whose beatification process is currently (2001) with the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

See Also: ROSMINIANS; SPIRITUALISM.

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[D. CLEARY]

ROSMINIANS

The Institute of Charity (IC, Official Catholic Directory #0300), as the Rosminians are officially entitled, was founded in 1828 at Calvario in Piedmont, Italy, by Rev. Antonio ROSMINI-SERBATI, at the instigation of St. Maddalena CANOSSA. The ascetic principles expressed in Rosmini's *Maxims of Christian Perfection* (1830) determined the nature of his religious institute, which was approved as a congregation of exempt religious by Gregory XVI in 1839.

In 1832 the congregation, which had spread in northern Italy, became associated with the Sisters of Providence, founded by one of Rosmini's disciples and given papal approval in 1946. In 1835 Rosmini sent three priests to England, where they were later joined by other recruits. Notable among them was Luigi Gentili, a zealous and ascetic Roman, who exercised an important influence on the Catholic community in England from 1842 to 1848. He spent three years evangelizing the newly developed industrial towns of England, preaching missions of two to three weeks duration. In 1848 he went to preach in Dublin, Ireland, where he died of cholera. Among the innovations brought to England and Ireland by the Rosminians were the introduction of the clerical (or Roman) collar, the wearing of the cassock and religious habit in public, the preaching of missions, the practice of the Forty Hours, May devotions, the use of the scapular, the celebration of novenas, public processions, and the blessing of throats on the feast of St. Blaise (February 3).

Members of the Institute of Charity profess the three religious vows. They carry out such ministries by the need of their neighbor or the invitation of the pope or

bishops. No work is preferred and none refused; work once undertaken may not be abandoned for a more attractive apostolate. The institute has no distinctive habit, only the cassock.

The Rosminians first arrived in the U.S. in 1877. In the U.S., the congregation is principally involved in parish ministries. The U.S. headquarters is in Peoria, IL. The generalate is in Rome.

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[C. R. LEETHAM/EDS.]

ROSS, JOHN ELLIOT

Priest, sociologist; b. March 14, 1884; d. Sept. 18, 1946, New York. Ross's family could trace its roots back through the colonial period to William the Conqueror. Among this lineage was George Ross who had signed the Declaration of Independence, as well as George's daughter-in-law, Betsy Ross. Ross grew up in Maryland, and after graduating from Loyola College in Baltimore he worked in the District of Columbia's Engineering Department while pursuing a master's degree at George Washington University. In September 1909, he joined the Paulist community at the Catholic University of America, where he began doctoral work in sociology under Monsignor William Kerby. He produced a dissertation that was later published as *Consumers and Wage Earners: The Ethics of Buying Cheap*. Two weeks prior to his graduation from CUA, on May 24, 1912, he was ordained to the priesthood at St. Paul the Apostle Church in New York.

After a brief period of studying in Rome, Ross was sent to a parish in Chicago, where he stayed for a year. In 1915, he was assigned to the University of Texas at Austin as chaplain to Catholic students. While in Austin, Ross wrote four books and was a mentor to the social historian Carlos Castañeda. During this period he began research into the effects on Catholics attending non-sectarian colleges for the United States bishops. The studies were never published. In 1923, when the Paulist general, Thomas Burke, sought to reassign Ross, the University administration asked the governor of Texas to intervene on Ross' behalf. In 1924, Ross was back in Washington teaching moral theology at the newly completed Saint Paul's College. The following year, he returned to chaplaincy work, this time in Columbia University's Newman House.

In 1929 Ross was given a long-awaited opportunity to join a non-sectarian faculty as a full professor. The University of Iowa had founded a School of Religious Studies, supported by private money, and sought out